Chapter-I

INTRODUCTION TO URBANIZATION: AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE:

It is difficult to organize statistical data on urbanization without defining what is “URBAN”, owing to its multi-dimensional structure: demographic, social, economic, physical, geographical and political. Urbanization is a process of social transformation of the rural people, their social structure and culture. It is a continuous process of change, though with differing directions, intensities and degrees. It is a spatial concomitant phenomenon involving the complex process of change involving population concentration.

Structural transformation and socio-psychological change affecting both people and places. Urbanization has profound effects on economy, ecology and lifestyles of the areas inhabitants. Hence, change in these aspects of human society resulted in the emergence of towns and cities. Such settlements were called “URBAN AREAS”. While the erstwhile urban areas with the change in the perception of towns and cities may be referred as rural aggregations. Today’s big village was yesterday’s towns, and today’s village may also become a town in course of time. Thus structural and demographic changes in human settlements determine the divide between village and town and
gradations of towns. Though there are vast differences between the ancient urban areas like Mohenjodaro and Harappa when compared with modern metropolises, yet they have many common features. Thus, such as Urban sprawl, urban sociology, and new urbanism are all terms that come as a result of such urbanization. But, urbanization isn’t new; rather and old concept that has recently catalyzed into something increasingly more common – a new way of life.

1.1 DEFINING URBANIZATION:

Urbanization, by definition, is the increase in population over time. Demographically, the term denotes redistribution of population from rural to urban settlements. According to the definition of 1961 Census, a human settlement is defined as “URBAN”, if it has the following features:

1. minimum population of 5000;

2. 75% of the male working population engaged in non-agricultural activities;

3. A density of at least 1000/ sq miles, and

4. Distinct urban characteristics (e.g.: industrial areas, areas of tourist importance, etc).¹

Urbanization defines as a process, when a nation can go in their transition from agrarian to industrial society (Rao et al.2004; Davis, 

¹ Ibid; p: 3
1972). In other words, it delimitates as a process of massive shifts of labour and capital from predominately rural to urban areas/activities. It is an index of modernization and largely associated with economic growth and development (Prakash, 2005). Urbanization is a natural part of development and substantially helpful for poverty alleviation in the rural areas (Fan et al., 2005). It is a multi-dimensional process and to a large extent, it depends upon the incentives for industrial and service sector development. Supporting to this, Mills and Becker (1986), pointed out that “urbanization is an inevitable process that experience by all nations in their transaction from agrarian to industrial and service societies and is a necessary factor behind the economic growth ”.

“URBANIZATION”, can be also defined as the rapid and massive growth of, and migration to large cities. Positive and negative consequences resulted. In U.S. urbanization, some of these issues were: employment, sanitation, housing, sewage, water, fire, social welfare, role of government, political machines etc. – WIKIPEDIA DEFINITION.

Urbanization definition according to BABYLON ENGLISH DICTIONARY:

(1) transformation into a city; impartation of urban characteristics,

(2) the social process whereby cities grow and societies become URBAN.
Urbanization definition from **Science and Technology Dictionaries and Glossaries: (PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY TERMS AND MEANINGS)**

Expansion of cities into rural regions because of population growth. In most cases, population growth is primarily due to the movement of rural based people to urban areas. This is specially true in Less Developed Countries. Vacuum: (1) space devoid of atoms or molecules; (2) empty of air.

Urbanization definition from **Social Science Dictionaries and Glossaries**: The increasing concentration of human population into cities, i.e. the physical growth of rural or natural land into urban areas as a result of population in – migration to an existing urban area.

Urbanization is also defined **UNITED NATIONS** as movement of people from rural to urban areas with population growth equating to urban migration.

**WORD REFERENCE.COM.DICTIONARY** definition: Urbanization – the social process whereby the cities grow and societies become urban.

**CATEGORY TREE:**

? Phenomenon
?? process
?? human process
?? social process
= ‘URBANIZATION’
Urbanization refers to both spatial and human change, but in fact, it has been measured and expressed chiefly in terms of population-census-statistics that are presumed to distinguish inhabitants of towns and cities from those of countryside. Moreover it also implies that an increasing proportion of human society becomes townsfolk, and as this happens, towns grow in population, spread in area, and make an ever increasing impact upon the countryside, both upon its appearance and upon the life of its inhabitants. More and more landscape becomes townscape, and people come to live in an environment that is both physically and socially ‘URBAN’.2

Urbanization deals with land as well as the machine production and is closely linked with the concentration of people at one place through migration from the fringe and surrounding areas with an ambitious hope for future materialistic self development.3

In urbanization one notes the change of economy which may be from forest to agriculture, agriculture to manufacturing centres and centres for exchange of goods. During ancient times Urbanization was the basic way of life in the valley of Nile, Greece and Indus valley. After the industrial revolution, a worldwide preferment of urbanization was quite noticeable. Hence, urbanization is a component of regional

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3 Mandal and Peter, Urbanization and Regional Development, Concept, Publishing Co; New Delhi.
economic development because urban centres provide inter-alias, a variety of centralized services for the surrounding zones of influence. This transformation of rural service centres in both time and space, give rise to the development of urban centres. The increasing intensity of such processes over a landscape leads to urbanization.

Thus, urbanization is a polarization technique which has been adopted for regional development.

In a demographic sense, urbanization is an increase in the proportion of the urban population to the total population over a period of time. The process of urbanization is not merely a concomitant of industrialization but a concomitant of all the factors underlying the process of economic growth and social changes.

Urbanization thus has been characterized by a phenomenal growth of large cities. Rural-to-urban migration has been a major component of this rapid growth. Towns and cities expanded, they consumed the contiguous villages that came in its way.

Thus “URBANIZATION” is the process of becoming ‘URBAN’. It is difficult to define and measure urbanization. The fact that urbanization is frequently equated with the “quality of life” and “quality

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5 Bougue and Zachariah: “Urbanization and Migration in India”, in Roy Turner (ed) op. cit. ; p. 28.
of environment” – further complicates any exercise in the measurement of this process.6

It can be said that Urbanization and Urban development are the catchwords not only in the western world but even in the orient as well. The process of population growth in urban areas along with its economic infrastructure have favored the recent spurt if urban development throughout the world. This has accelerated problems of slums and squatter settlements besides enhancing the linkages of industrial centres thereby increasing the entropy of urban places.

1.2 HISTORICTY OF URBAN GROWTH:

The civilizations characterized by Indus valley, Greece and valley of Nile, undoubtedly examples of URBANIZATION. Historians have collected ample details about Mohenjodaro and Harappa as ancient urban conglomerations. Initially, it was lower order production centres that developed into urban areas. What gave the decisive big push to urbanization the world over was the helping hand of industrial revolution. Slowly the centres of policy decisions moved from the silting rooms of rural landed gentry to the decision making chambers of Government official in the cities.7

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After the Green Revolution in the 1960’s and 1970’s the surplus labour increased in the countryside due to mechanization of agriculture. In search for employment, they migrated to towns and cities and settled in the urban areas with more people. Problems of towns and cities became acute and multifaceted.

Other conditions that contributed to the growth of cities are:

1. technological development,
2. commercial revolution,
3. increased efficiency of transport system,
4. demographic changes vis-à-vis economic and social development.

1.3 URBANIZATION TODAY:

The 2005 and one half Revision of the UN World Urbanization Prospects report described the 20th century as witnessing “the rapid urbanization of the world’s population”, as the global proportion of urban population rose dramatically from 13% (220 million) in 1990 to 29% (732 million) in 1950, to 49% (3.2 billion) in 2005. The same report projected that the figure is likely to rise to 60% (4.9 billion) by 2030. Urbanization rates vary across the world. The United States and United Kingdom have a far higher level than China, India, Swaziland or Niger.
According to the **UN- HABITAT 2006** Annual Report, a majority of people worldwide started living in towns or cities, for the first time in history, from the year 2007, which is referred to as the arrival of the “**URBAN MILLENNIUM**”. In regard to the future trends, it is estimated 93% if urban growth will occur in Asia, and Africa, and to a lesser extent in Latin America and the Caribbean. By 2050 over 6 billion people, two- thirds of humanity, will be living in towns and cities.

### 1.4 Changing Form of Urbanization:

Traditional urbanization exhibits a concentration of human activities and settlements around the downtown area. When the residential area shifts outward, this is called **suburbanization**. A number of researchers and writers suggest that suburbanization has gone so far to form new points of concentration outside the downtown. This networked, poly-centric form of concentration is considered by some as an emerging pattern of urbanization. It is called variously, **exurbia**, **edge city** (Garreau, 1991), **network city** (Batten, 1995), or **postmodern city** (Dear, 2000). Los- Angeles is the best example of this type of urbanization.

**New Urbanism**: New urbanism was a movement which started in the 1980’s. New urbanism believes in shifting design focus from the car- centric development of suburbia and the business park, concentrated pedestrian and transit- centric, walk able, mixed-use communities. New urbanism is an amalgamation of old- world design
patterns, merged with present day demands. New urbanism includes people and destinations into dense, vibrant communities and decreasing dependency on vehicular transportation as the primary mode of transit. Urbanization is an inevitable process; surplus is one of the defining features of **URBANIZATION**.
Chapter-I References:


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