CHAPTER TWO
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REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 THEORY AND METHOD OF URBAN STUDIES

Urban studies has emerged as an important independent sub-discipline and occupies major space among various social sciences. There is no dearth of literature on its various aspects such as urban politics, urban local government, urban problems and urban administration, urban affairs etceteras both within the country and outside the country. A quick browsing through the literature, at the first instance, reveals that an enormous diversity exists in the urban field, especially in terms of “diversity of topics covered, diversity in the (social and disciplinary) backgrounds of researchers, diversity in methodology. Often a single topic is, upon reflection, a matrix of underlying processes and outcomes (multi-disciplinary)” (Andranovich and Riposa, 1993:3-4). This variation in topics is further intensified by variation in the focus of different disciplines like economics, geography, anthropology, architecture, political science, urban politics and urban administration etceteras. That is to say that, urban field is replete with numerous / multiple paradigms upon the perspectives from which they are designed. However, this multiplicity of focus and perspectives does not mean that they are totally different from each other in all respects. Instead, we find considerable commonalities among these competing urban perspectives. - These
commonalities converge on the use of various theories and methodology for studying urban affairs across the social science.

An overview of this literature on urbanization and urban issues immediately reveals two major facts. One is the academic domination of this field by western scholars as is evident from any bibliographical citations in urban studies. This is also the case in most literature on any of the social sciences just referred to above. The disciplines of social sciences, in the developing countries, are under an immense influence of western tradition of inquiry. Second major aspect that draws one’s attention is highly polarized conception and treatment of the issue of urbanization. For instance, most sociological conceptions focus on the miseries of urban poor in the cities of the developing nations and therefore, argue in favour of the social and cultural advantages of decentralization in form of local urban government (Wunster, 1962:277-96). For an economist the prime issue is to view the cities as engines of growth and strengthen overall economy of the country. Hence, they plead for policies to create large metropolises on the basis of intensive and highly diversified investment for infrastructural facilities (Harris, 1962:261-77). Thus, the studies on urbanization tend to take single factor approach rather than adopting a multi-disciplinary approach.

In addition to this larger trend in the literature on urbanization, there is an emerging trend of producing literature on Indian urbanization. It is mostly sociological, economic and demographic in nature. It is dominated by a plethora of generalizations like 'urban crisis', 'urban explosion', 'over urbanization' or
rurbanization / ruralization' and the role of 'push and pull' factors (Shah, 1997; Bhattacharya, 1986; Kundu, 1993). Another emergent corollary of this development is the tendency among Indian urbanologists to look up to the west for understanding and interpreting multi-faceted Indian urban experience. One is certainly aware of the dangerous and counter productive implications of viewing universal phenomena from a myopic view, based on spatial, ethnic, continental or nationalistic contexts. At the same time it must be stated that there are ethnocultural, socio-historical and politico-economic specificities, which leave a distinct mark on the crisis as well as its resolutions. It is pointless to ape west in all totality without questioning its relevance to the local contexts. It is amply clear that western approach to urban problems is not wholly relevant for non-western societies. Their proposals of 'urban renewal', 'satellite towns' or 'green belts' have actually overlooked the environmental or ecological implication of such solutions. This does not demean the contribution of western literature in understanding the Indian urbanization and similar cross-cultural experiences. It simply means that any transplantation, devoid of ecological considerations may lead to greater disaster or failures causing irretrievable damages to an urban space in developing societies. The need therefore, is to make a greater effort to perceive the problem not only holistically but also comprehensively so as to reach levels of policy making rather than arriving at single point statements or directionless or fragmentary piecemeal like policies.

An effort is here made to review the existing stock of literature on this subject. It is a collection of studies based on researches undertaken from various
relevant angles and presented in such forms like major books, reports, monographs, papers, unpublished dissertations etceteras. This effort covers quite a vast terrain but restricts itself to public space or public sphere. In other words, this review is more focused in terms of its research interest. It has restricted itself to examining urban local administration, urban politics and urban problems or issued requiring urgent policy attention. The focus of research has ranged from urban institutional and organizational studies like municipal bodies, development authorities, special purpose agencies to focusing on processes evident in certain functional themes like housing, transportation, urban institutional pattern etceteras (Bhattacharya, 1986:50).

It is now proposed to review the questions of theory, method and findings of a few pioneering and path breaking works in order to posit the present doctoral research on hand. Reviewing such studies have afforded excellent scope to acquire valuable insights in the field of urban affairs administration.

(a) Theories of Urban Politics

One of the greatest, erudite, landmark and scholarly works on urban studies has come from Manuel Castells (1977), a French Neo-Marxist urbanologist. He first published it in French in 1972. The fundamental aim of this book (1977) by Castells is "to develop new tools of research while criticizing the traditional categories with which the social science, technocracy and the mass media have usually conceived
urban problems" (p. vii). Castells is also deeply concerned with deconstructing all those mechanisms which are used by the socially dominant interest to displace the real fundamental questions and distort our vision of reality.

Castell's work is a product of an empiricist intellectual tradition which has inspired this research effort. His work mainly is a scholar's reaction to a large number of unanswered questions that were thrown up by the earlier empirical researches. Originally, Castells was also concerned with the same urban questions such as urban crisis, rapid urbanization, eco-ideologies, over-interventionist state, ill effects of urban planning, popular revolts, NGOs and urban policies. These questions were attempted to be answered by old urban sociology and technocratic perspective of the new urban political science. He felt that existing intellectual tools were not capable of dealing with these questions and his search for new tools ended in taking recourse to Althusserian Marxist tradition. He has tried to answer the questions by linking them to such concepts as social classes, class struggle, revolt, contradiction, conflict and politics. These terms and themes involve analysis of society as structure of the class struggle. Castell's contribution lies in applying Marxian framework to urban analysis. He has taken up immensely large theoretical and radical questions such as interpreting the historical process of urbanization, exploding the myth of urban culture and urban crisis, outlining elements of urban structure and theory of space, and exposing
anti-people role of urban policies that control urban development. Emergence of theoretical field of urban politics, research on urban planning and urban social movements are new themes in urban studies which are seriously taken up by him. However, it must be stated that his theoretical work has yet not reached the stage of discoveries, though he has succeeded in raising the ‘urban question’ admirably and inspiringly. It is felt that, ours is a modest step in the direction by Castells, though not so much theoretically as empirically.

Theory building in urban studies is considered to be quite lagging and it is therefore, befitting to begin the review of relevant urban literature from the vantage points of theory and method of urban studies. An important contribution to the theory building research in urban politics is conducted and reported by David Judge, Gerry Stoker and Harold Wolman’s edited book (1995) titled, ‘Theories of Urban Politics’. It can be regarded as a textbook of the important theoretical debates that structure urban studies / politics. This work is a collection of 14 articles by the renowned scholars in the west and is divided into four sections. Each of these sections focus on the key issues that are organized around four major questions. Authors of these articles “deal with the exposition and explanation of the theory, illustrations and applications of it, critiques and criticism and also provide their own overall evaluation and original insights” (1995:1).
This major book opens with an introduction of urban politics and attempts to clarify what 'theory' means. The authors have taken a very encompassing conception of theory which 'can be normative or empirical, they can be models, conceptual frameworks or perspectives. We also include, under broad tent of theories, 'theorizing' – systematic thinking about or speculation concerning important issues in urban politics' (Judge, et.al., 1995:1). A brief analytical summary of each article is provided by the editors.

The first section of the book deals with the key issue of power in urban communities and covers both traditional and contemporary theories. This section discusses pluralist, elitist and regime theories – each of these theories have different 'assumptions about the nature and meaning of power, and each claims to be 'correct' in its conceptualization and measurement of power' (Judge, 1995:4). Each of these theories, they argue, have undergone an advancement and re-considerations in their initial claims on theory and method of studying power.

Second section discusses the nature of public bureaucracy and the importance of political leadership in urban government. The underlying theme of this section is democracy and it provides an analytical thread to hold various theories together. It also deals with one of the fundamental problems of modern democratic theory i.e. how non-elected bureaucrats can be subjected to effective controls in urban political systems. Further,
in this section, Clarence N. Stone examines the nature of democratic political leadership in an urban context. He begins by asserting that there is a lack of developed theory of political leadership. He, therefore, aims to first define the concept of leadership and second to identify the challenges of leadership in the urban area (Stone, 1995:96). Another article in this sections focus attention on the competing theories underpinning the 'most appropriate size for municipalities and most appropriate organization for metropolitan areas' (Keating, 1995:117). The prime focus is on the consolidationists and public choice theory, and Keating has raised the normative dimension in this whole debate. He asserts that the 'size of the municipality is a matter of the local circumstances and value judgement of the observer' (Keating, 1995:117). That is, like any other debate in urban politics, this debate is also driven by ideology, 'interest' and value judgement (Judge, et.al., 1995:8). Further in this section, Wolman (1995) has examined the local government institutions and democratic governance. His institutional concerns are larger than mere consideration of the internal arrangements of local government. In addition to this, he dwells on informal norms, roles, relationships and operating practices that are so stable, structured and accepted that they can be said to be 'institutionalized' (Wolman, 1995:135). He does not undermine the importance of institutional structures in translating the basic purposes and values of a society into reality. However, a mere focus on the formal structure has become irrelevant and unproductive unless it is supported
and facilitated by 'institutional norms underpinning local government activity' (Wolman, 1995:135).

In the section on the issue of citizens involvement and their role in the processes of urban politics, Lowndes (1995) gives an outline of the treatment of citizenship debate in urban politics, which she says, is an old fashioned term in social sciences. According to her "1990s has witnessed a revival of interest in citizenship. This interest arises out of a renewed concern with the 'triangle' of relationship between individuals, communities and government" (Lowndes, 1995:160). It is generally noticed that this triangular relationship has broken badly where individuals have been alienated from their communities, and government institutions have either become inaccessible or unresponsive to the individuals' needs. She has discussed this issue in two parts – the first part deals with citizenship and urban politics, emphasizing primarily on community identification, political participation and political education. The second part deals with the revival of interest (from theoretical and policy perspective) in citizenship wherein she tries to differentiate between an 'individual rights' and a community membership' perspective. Fainstein and Hirst, in this section deal with urban social movements (USM) which they categorize as new type of social movements differing from the traditional social movements. This movements lack any form of class basis, they operate out of the production area and has a participatory ethos. That is "the orientation of USMs towards cultural, racial – ethnic and
quality-of-life issues made the economistic underpinning of the Marxist analysis unsatisfactory for examining the genesis and effects of these new movements” (Fainstein and Hirst, 1995:182). They further discuss various issues like social movement and class, the progressive character of urban social movements and movement autonomy involved in the USMs. Numerous movements that have taken place in European countries and America are illustratively discussed.

Clarke, Stecheli and Brunell, deal from rather recent feminist or gender perspective. Their contention is that, so far, existing theories have neglected gender relation which results into partial and often misleading construct of a locality. They affirm that feminist perspective contributes to urban politics and reveals many features which go unnoticed otherwise. Feminist contributions according to them is in three following ways (Clarke, et.al. 1995:220-22):

(a) it provides an epistemological critique of existing gendered, analytical frameworks;

(b) it contributes to the theoretical debate on gendered processes; and,

(c) they provide a normative perspective on urban governance and citizenship.

Fourth section of this book is concerned with the context in which urban politics operates i.e. the economic and political frameworks. These
three articles deal with important aspects like autonomy of local bodies, Marxist theories of urban politics. Emphasis is also on regulation theories that have borne out of the debate within Marxist tradition on the question of the reasons for capitalism survival?

One of the excellent works fulfilling basic requirement of the field is by Andranovich and Riposa through their book titled *Doing Urban Research* (1993). It is an attempt to provide the general practical guidelines for undertaking research in urban studies either from academic—theory building perspective or applied—policy making framework. This book pays more attention to the research in the applied field and gives a detailed guideline to ask the right kind of questions and also implementing or operating the applied framework. The book comprises of seven chapters and a comprehensive reference list for further readings.

To begin with, it firstly, clarifies as well as defines rather ambiguous concept of ‘urban’ which has been used differently. Along with this it traces the general practices in urban research. Although it emphasizes on applied urban research and also deals extensively with it, it does highlight that any urban issue has a theoretical base and applied research should be continuously linked to the theoretical issues. Further, they introduce various level from which an urban issue can be analyzed and categorize them into five—neighbourhood; city; region; national system of cities and world system of cities (1993:12). They emphasize
that the levels of analysis helps in ‘linking solutions both to and across spatial hierarchies’ (1993:112). This again is essential as the urban phenomena, to be understood properly, requires that both the problem and its solution are placed in an urban context.

They dwell upon levels of analysis and show how they can be used in conducting applied urban research. They contend that the level of analysis provides focus to the research design and data analysis by apt and precise framing of research questions. It is regarded as an important tool as the “urban phenomena is a result of specific courses of action or inaction undertaken by various actors (e.g. individuals, governmental institutions and private interests of large or small institutions) at the local regional, national and even global level” (Andranovich and Riposa, 1993:15). That is, it takes the ecological approach in understanding urban phenomena and affirms that linkages between the cities and their environment are critical for understanding urban phenomena.

Subsequently, they argue and stress upon the ‘strategic thinking’ as an important requirement of applied research. They argue that “not only what the research is about and how it is to be conducted is important but also how and to whom the research will be presented is equally important” (1993:vii). This requires considering little intricacies, details in order to create more realistic research design. That is to say, it encompasses the
whole range from the scope, design and administration of the research project.

The research design process and common threat of validity, to which applied research is prone and susceptible, are admirably dealt and discussed by them. To remedy this, they contend that, the research design should be intrinsically linked to the purpose and function of the research. It is an administrative tool which oversees and guards against common risks. They have discussed three purposes – exploration, description and explanation (1993:62). They have also gone into the details of data collection which is regarded as both an art and a science. After clarifying what data comprises of, they divide it into primary and secondary data. They offer sources of collecting these data. However, they say that for an accurate picture, one should use multiple indicators and multiple methods for data collection as it allows for the triangulation of evidence (1993:85).

The final part deals with themes of reporting and examines prospects for applied research. The main elements of good reporting are planning what has to be reported, to whom (audience) and effectively highlighting important information. They have covered both written and oral presentations and also discussed various problems that can arise in both types of reporting. In the last chapter, they discuss the future issues that may dominate the urban research like – the globalization and internationalization of the economy, quality of life issues, environmental
concerns, and the capacity of urban authorities to resolve these problems (1993:95).

The book, in its lucid presentation, gives various checklists and questions to increase the perception about applied projects. It helps by "providing methods to break the research process into manageable tasks and then the means to organize these tasks to address the purpose and to meet the needs of the project" (1993:98). Although this book is more of a primer in survey research, but what makes it distinctive is its focus on urban research and various innovative insights on method of studying urban affairs. It is not only relevant for the beginners but equally important for those who are halfway through their research. It provides guidelines and techniques to make research more focused and in yielding appropriate results (checks detractions during the research).

From this discussion on existing urban theoretical literature we must now turn our attention to that part of literature which is trying to understand and interpret the Indian urban experiences.

2.2 URBANIZATION, URBAN POLITICS AND URBAN ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

Let us now take up the most recent additions to the existing literature on urban affairs and try to review the contemporary efforts in first identifying the
challenges (Bose, 1973; Shah, 1997; Ramchandran, 1989) and then improving quality of life in urban India. Bose’s book titled *India’s Urbanization 1901 – 2001* (1978) is a revised edition of his earlier work titled *Studies in India’s Urbanization 1901 – 1971* (1973). This edition has incorporated revised projections in the old areas like population growth, public utilities, housing needs, disposal of industries and new areas like protecting urban environment, human settlement, metropolitan growth, quality of urban life and fresh thinking on population policies which were lacking in the first version.

His earlier work titled *Studies in India’s Urbanization 1901 – 1971* (1973) is mainly a collection of articles as well as research reports that were written between 1963 – 72, with the aim of meeting the demands of papers for conferences, seminars and reports for various research assignments. The book offers interesting and vast information on India’s urban experience and scene. However, its crippling deficiency lies in its extensive use of 1961 Census data inspite of 1971 Census being available at the time of its publication. As a result, to a considerable extent the vast mass of diligently compiled and computed statistical information becomes somewhat redundant. This gap could have been filled through a postscript to the work, interpreting the new data synoptically and tracing its implications on the overall trend of urbanization in India. On the other hand, the book still remains a landmark in the field as it continues to offer relevant ideas for the formulation of national urban policy (which is absent even today). At the outset, he begins by stating the need to differentiate the concept of urbanization from the concept of housing and housing problems. This for a
change, is a different stand and refreshing approach from the common and usual bias to view urbanization and housing as one social phenomena. Such an approach according to Bose, alienates the phenomenon of urbanization from the mainstream concerns of macro economic growth. Bose argues that this is the main hindrance in the evolution of urban policy on one hand and implementing any urban development plans on the other. Viewed in this sense, urbanization is taken as a mere town – planning problem and not as an integral aspect of macro and micro economic growth. It overlooks the economics of urbanization process and regards urbanization as evil and bad. But if viewed from the perspective of urban space as the epicenter of all growth, it clearly shows that urbanization is not only desirable but also inevitable phenomenon for economic growth and social change in a society, as it has been in many developed countries.

The 1951 – 61 decade is regarded as the first normal decade of growth of urban population / urbanization in India. In the context of industrial development through first Five Year Plan. However, the 1961 census data reveals a different and surprise findings. The total population growth rate showed increase whereas, urban growth rate was found to be low, which was contrary to the expectations. Many scholars have found it difficult to give an account of these unexpected findings. They have raised the point about the validity and applicability of the notion that there is a close relation between urbanization and secondary sector and non—agricultural opportunities. Bose, on the basis of his analysis, has assumed that rapid population growth becomes a factor in reducing the migration from
rural to urban areas. This is contradictory to the role that push factor plays in enhancing urbanization.

Later in his book, Bose talks about the secrets of land and housing markets in Delhi on the basis of empirical data covering the period between 1947 - 67. His analysis confirms that money can easily be made from the housing market which is viable and booming. However, he entirely blames the government for cutting the supply of residential land and also the Delhi Development Authorities policy of auctioning land to the highest claimer / bidder. He strangely underplays the role of private sector in this regard.

Some of the interesting proposals like National Labour Bank and National System of Cities are also discussed which though are idealistic yet merit serious theoretical and realistic consideration. He emphasizes and pleads for evolving regions as development units depending on the availability of raw materials, power, transportation etceteras. He rejects the idea of marking modal points without economically integrating them with their regions. This is a good effort yet is not a sufficient attempt towards shaping India’s urban policy.

In the second revised edition (1978) of his earlier work, he has undertaken a comprehensive study not only of the past trends of urbanization (1901 – 1971) but has also tried to predict the future trends of urbanization specially for three decades (1981 – 2001) in India. Primarily, he is concerned with the demographic aspects of urbanization and his statistical analysis is based on census data. He has
analyzed the growth of cities and towns decade by decade till 1971 and has attempted projections of urban population up to 2001. The future trends are discussed in the larger context of rural transformation and its implications. The migration trend is again analyzed with reference to linguistic dispersal. In addition to this, economic aspects of urbanization are discussed with the help of a case study of Delhi with respect to land prices, land speculation and house rents.

Mookherjee and Morrill’s book (1973) titled *Urbanization in a Developing Economy: Indian Perspectives and Patterns*, help in discerning and understanding the complex and often elusive and deceiving phenomena of urbanization in India. This is essential for policy formulation to check and ensure that the policies cater to the real needs of the Indian society and citizens. They have attempted a systematic analysis of the industrialization process and patterns in India. They are able to generate and obtain some fresh empirical insights into the field of Indian urban studies by using the multiple regression models for exploring the relationship between urbanization and select demographic, socio-economic, developmental and spatial variables. It is their contention that any planning strategy that aims at only decentralization and relocation of industries from large cities to medium and small urban areas will have little impact in relieving the nation’s urban stress. They believe that relocation of existing industries will probably increase the weakness of these urban economies and will make them unviable. Therefore, they advocate and stress on creating more job opportunities in any planning endeavour. However, the limitation of this otherwise flawless study is the data used is of 1961 census where as, 1971 census
data at the time of its publication, was available. Using latest data would have updated and increased the validity and relevance of the book for more years.

Ramachandran’s work (1989), *Urbanization and Urban Systems in India*, is an attempt to distinguish salient features of urbanization from a geographical viewpoint. He has tried to highlight the temporal and spatial aspects of urbanization at both the national and inter-city levels. He begins with a description of the origin of the urban studies in India and its present status. He also traces the history of urbanization in India as it developed from pre-historic times to the present, in subsequent chapters. He has dealt with the economic, political, administrative and geographical processes which have significantly contributed to urbanization during the historic times. He distinctly points out that urbanization in India is highly varied and complex process and the rapid suburbanization adds to the complexity of urbanization phenomena. Later in his book, Ramachadran discusses the normative theories of settlement location with the help of a case study undertaken by him in Meerut district. He has covered twelve villages where he lists out the distances traveled by these villagers and also the kinds of goods they purchase from urban areas. It is a valuable study of the travel behaviour between rural and urban areas. He has also attempted to delineate various stages through which the fringe villages get transformed into urban villages and the subsequent land-use problems that crops up as a result of this transformation. Lastly, he narrates India’s Five Year Plans and the views adopted in developing urban policy. He considers these views to be instrumental in providing unique character to the urban growth in India. All through the book
he has asserted, with utmost emphasis, on positive approach the urbanization processes and also gives various postulates towards a holistic urbanization policy.

Another valued contribution to the field has been by Misra and Sarma (1979). Their book titled *Distribution and Differential Location of Public Utilities in Urban Delhi*, is an empirical research work that was undertaken to study the issue of disparities found in the distribution of public utilities in urban areas. It is a case study that was conducted in Delhi with the objective of analyzing the horizontal and vertical inequalities in the distribution of public utilities like water-supply, electricity and public transport. Through their empirical evidences, the authors have attempted to identify the causes of such inequalities between localities on the hand and the citizens of different income groups on the other. They further make an attempt to consider policy options in terms of location, supply of the service, pricing of the urban services, in order to reduce the differential distribution.

Bijlani's book (1977), entitled *Urban Problems* aims at bringing an awareness of urban problems. It deal with numerous urban problems like slums, poverty and over population, transport problems in congested areas, pollution, quality of life in cities etceteras. The significance and contribution of this work is that it places the urban problems in the context of a developing country. This he says, demands a different approach altogether to handle these problems effectively within the given constraints such as limited finance, social and cultural habits of people as well as technological advancement. He opines that implanting planning
principles and methodologies of the western countries in the developing countries will not yield result. Instead the planning principles should be problem centered, as there is vast difference between the pace of development, problems etceteras of developing countries from developed ones.

Thorbek's book (1994), titled *Gender and Slum Culture in Urban Asia* is a timely contribution to urban studies. This work compares the social and cultural life in two Asian slums — one on the periphery of Colombo in Sri Lanka and the other in the centre of Bangkok. Both these slum have common background of Theravada Buddhism, however, they have pursued different economic policies which generated considerable differences in the development and urbanization processes. The author has traced the commonalities and differences in both these slums, focusing basically on the gender identity and the impact of slum life on women. She examines how urbanization influences people's life and gender relations, how gender identity is defined as well as the cultural characteristics of slum life and importance of gender in shaping slum culture.

Naidu's book (1990) entitled *Old Cities New Predicaments: A study of Hyderabad* is an empirical investigation on communal conflict and urban decay. Hyderabad is one of the old cities like Delhi and Ahemdabad which once was a centre of Muslim imperial power. In the post independence period, she maintains, communal conflagrations have become a feature of life. Very often, walled parts of old cities become ground of raising such tensions. Naidu has made an attempt to assess the extent to which conflict occurs over identity symbols or is the
outcome of the psychological scars left by the earlier inter-communal enmities. She also examines the impact of urban decay on reinforcing these conflicts and the multiple deprivations experienced by the inhabitants of the area. The author believes, that these walled cities can be restored to a viable urban form with a two-pronged revitalization programme. She recommends a people oriented approach to area – oriented approach. On the one hand lives of the inhabitants of the walled cities should be uplifted and on the other efforts should be made to conserve the cultural heritage of these cities.

Some of the recent publications in urban studies like Calcutta, the Living City (Chaudhuri, 1995) and edited book in 2 volumes, is an interesting addition to the literature. The first volume deals with the past and second volume with present and future predictions. It is a comprehensive work covering a wide rage of topics to the extent that they have become the standard reference guides to the Calcutta city. Both volumes together contain around 80 articles covering various aspects like demography, economic prospects, civic growth, music and theatre, Victoria Memorial etceteras. In addition to its diversity of topics covered, these volumes are written in easy and lucid style which sustains as well as holds the interest of the generalist as well as specialist readers.

Another edited work by Patel and Thomor (1995), again in two volumes, entitled – Bombay : Metaphor for Modern India and Bombay : Mosaic of Modern Culture respectively, are important additions to contemporary urban studies. All the articles in these volumes are substantiated with historic and ethnographic data
and are lucid as well as well argued. To name a few other recent additions in urban studies are: S. Muthiah’s Madras Its Past and Its Present (1995), Indu Banga’s The City in Indian History (1996), Urban India in Crisis by Singh and Steinberg (1996), etceteras. Individually each of these labouriously conducted and compiled studies are useful, informative and analytical but they all, somehow, do not cumulatively add up to build a reasonable theoretical base for capturing the theoretical insights thrown up by empirical narratives of the isolated individual urban cases in India. Such a vast amount of subject matter, rich in range, coverage and diversity, unfortunately lacks in understanding theoretical framework. The literature on urban studies is mostly excessively descriptive or unrealistically prescriptive which does not contribute much to theory-building in urban studies.

After knowing about the processes of urbanization, now it is quite timely to explore the impact of urbanization from the viewpoint of quality of life. We have picked up the case of urban miracle in Gujarat.

Shah’s (1997) recent work entitled Public Health and Urban Development: The plague in Surat, is extremely focused and pointed in its arguments in quality of life in contemporary urban India. His work shows that not all is well in our cities, especially in two respects. One is the public health system and second is the path of urban development that is adopted in India. This study was undertaken at the time when Surat was hit by plague in 1994. The author treats “the Surat episode as a symptom of a socio-political disease related to the value
system of the populace, the lopsided nature of development, the crisis in governance, and a fragile and fragmented civil society” (1997). Although the main focus in on the issue of health and the reasons for outbreak of plague in Surat, the author, however, has covered larger theoretical issues like the deterioration and decline of the political system in India, the crises of legitimacy of the state in managing society and total lack of social consciousness and social action.

He begins by outlining and posing the problem of health and explains the methodology adopted in conducting the study. In this book he places the health issue in its proper (capitalistic) context and relates it to science and sanitation. He argues that advancement in science or medicine may not necessarily mean that the people’s suffering or incidences of epidemic and diseases are reduced. Health of the individuals, he argues has more to do with the external environment in which they live. A clean and favourable standard of living is essential for healthy life. It is the responsibility of both society and the state to provide and maintain healthy quality of life through effective maintenance of minimum services like “housing, potable water and sewage system” (1997:23).

Second chapter is analytical description of the growth pattern in Surat in particular and Gujarat State in general. The author gives a detailed account of the state of industrialization in Gujarat and its impact (pollution, population explosion etceteras) on the cities of the state. Later in the chapter he specifically discusses
the development of Surat city. Discussing the adverse impact of industrialization, he comments that (1997:77):

Small-scale industries, mainly power-looms and diamond-cutting, have mushroomed in Surat. Correspondingly, the informal sector has flourished. These industries have contributed a great deal to the unplanned growth of the city. Of course such growths has provided employment to a large number of people and attracted immigrants from various parts of the country. Though the labourers get relatively more wages than they would get in their native place, their wages have not kept pace with the periodic price rise. Their working and living conditions are hazardous, and they are susceptible to all kinds of diseases.

Added to this is the ever-deteriorating, insufficient, ill-maintained basic amenities in Surat and more specifically in the low-income areas. All this provides ripe breeding grounds for the intermittent outbreak of communicable diseases that proves hazardous to health of all in city. Criticizing the underperformance of Surat Municipal Corporation, Shah states that “it has failed to meet the changing needs of the city. Problems related to water, health and sanitation, traffic and the police system are on the increase and the SMC is unable to cope with the increasing needs of the population” (1997:78).
Shah examines, in great details, the state of urban public health system and various diseases to which Surat has become prone. Inspite of this, Surat has the lowest infant mortality rate (IMR) in Gujarat. However, increasing deterioration and degradation of environment (pollution, congestion, traditional hygienic habits, consumer lifestyle etceteras) leaves the city vulnerable to malaria, gastroenteritis, diarrhoea, hepatitis diseases (1997:109). These diseases have almost become regular features of the city. Shah has gone a step further and analysed differential impact of this on various strata of urban society. He particularly focuses on the vulnerable sector of the society who were affected by plague. Shah has also compared them with non-victims. His findings show that those areas which lacked in basic amenities specially in the urban periphery became the outbreak point for plague and being a communicable disease it soon spread all over the city.

Shah takes a view from below and explores people's perception of the epidemic and examines their reaction to the outbreak of plague. As a next logical step, he scrutinizes the resources and efforts on the part of government institutions to manage such eventualities or calamities respectively. Shah's narrative of the divers perceptions of people linked with their education and culture, and equally diverse responses makes a very interesting and enriching reading. One of the alarming findings of Shah's work is the revelation that common people were not trusting the authorities during plague period. They did not believe in the figures of casualties given by local authorities. The local authorities had failed to take the signals about the outbreak of epidemic (as Surat had already faced the problem of
flood prior to plague) well in advance and be prepared to handle the calamity. As a result, it fell short of required medicines, staff and protective equipments for those who were treating the victims. However, they did respond spontaneously in case of deputing senior officers, procuring medicines etceteras.

Shah’s work, earnestly and incisively reflect on the over all urban situation and his findings and conclusions, facilitate drawing crucial lessons from Surat experience to check and avoid urban calamities in future. The book ends with the postscript which deals with the new image of Surat. It is a live, clean, healthy and vibrating city, and all because of the effective transformations carried out by the Municipal Commissioner, S. R. Rao. He has done the miracle of transforming a dirtiest city to a clean city. It draws a major lesson that such dedication, commitment towards one’s duty along with the people’s support, that Rao showed, can turn impossibilities into possibilities. Reincarnation of New Clean Surat is truly a politico – administrative dream come true in broad realm of urban governance.

An urban space, urban affairs and urban governance is truly a phenomena of enormous proportion and complexity. As we just saw, many well – conceived, well – conducted and well – intended urban studies have not contributed much to the general theoretical pool of our knowledge of urban phenomena. It is felt that this inadequacy and deficiency is mainly due to the very nature of the process of urbanization which is full of particularities, specificities and uniqueness from one context to the other.
While the process of theory building is an ongoing, slow and complex, we have focused our attention to more urgent, pressing and dehumanizing consequences of urbanization in India, namely the neglected strata of urban poor in urban slums. In the cities, not only of India but world over, if there is any one area that warrants immediate policy and decisional attention, it is the plight of urban poor where quality of life index has well crossed over the limits of decencies of civilized and humanized survival in cities. Slums in cities are differently viewed, studied and approached. A glimpse into the sectoral urban literature on urban poor, slums and slum problems by way of review, is undertaken in order to locate the present study into the overall context of the mainstream of slum studies in India.

2.3 URBAN STUDIES ON SLUMS

Das’ book (1994), titled, Socio – Economic Study of Slums in Surat City, is an extensive data based study on the lives of the slum dwellers and the extent of availability of basic services in these localities. It is perhaps the first study of its kind which was undertaken to understand one of the perennial problems of urban areas, i.e. ever increasing and expanding slums. This work has generated massive data on various aspects of slum life like – income, literacy, types of hutment, availability of basic services, occupation etceteras.

The entire book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter explicitly states the problem of growing slums and this process is claimed to be understood
in the larger context of urban growth trend. It is assumed that urbanization inevitably gives rise to slums and slum proliferation. This study basically tries to understand physical profiles of slum localities, their social and demographic character, their location within the urban economy and their living conditions, their dependence on various sources for meeting their daily needs of water, electricity, bathing and toilet facilities etceteras. That is, the objective of the present study is to locate both the slum dwellings as well as slum – dwellers in the urban space and economic structure of a city. Such knowledge and results will help in ascertaining priorities of those areas that require immediate developmental intervention by the government. After examining critically the existing definitions of slum, Das (1994:2) chooses to define it as:

Contiguous, yet at times physically separated geographic spaces within the ‘legal’ urban limits of a city that are characterised by a serious lack, of basic amenities and sanitation with dense and overcrowded housing conditions where dwelling units range variously in terms of the use of material for walls and roofs available rather cheap with substantial contribution of one’s own and very cheap labour for the shaping of such dwellings and surroundings.

Das has adopted a very systematic and elaborate method of sampling where he first prepared a list of all slum pockets within the city. This itself is a strenuous and difficult task as it carries the inherent problem of identifying these
localities distinctly from each other. The slum areas sprawl haphazardly making it difficult to find the beginning and end of one particular slum locality. Name is another mode of identification, but it is found that even their names keep changing. The next step is preparation of slum profiles that clearly indicates the socio-economic characteristics of these localities and also the availability of specific amenities in these areas. All this information and data are collected with the help of an extremely well designed schedule, incorporating questions on demography, socio-economic conditions, dwelling characteristics, infrastructural quality and miscellaneous institutions, which was canvassed to collect data on slum families. This is followed by preparing Household Schedule covering as many as six aspects – demographic, social, economic, dwelling characteristics, land and tenancy status and sources of water (Das, 1994:5). The household schedule is detailed and comprehensive covering variables like religion, caste, linguistic groups, family types etceteras. Further Das highlight the operationalization of the schedule for collecting data. He also lists, at this point, some field problems that were encountered by the field workers, such as identification and demarcation of one slum area from that of the other; non-responses from respondents even after repeated visits, incorrect information regarding income (non-revelation of secondary income, if any) etceteras. The data was simultaneously collected for six blocks and took about fourteen months.

Das (1994), has admirably and illustratively traced the historical background of Surat city. He argues that on account of its geographic location, Surat gradually has emerged as a port city, ideally suited to be centre for trade and
commerce in the past. He also attempts a detailed description of Surat, its importance and viability even in contemporary times which has placed Surat on second place in the state of Gujarat. He has extensively used data and easily readable maps to show population growth, increase in density of population and proportion of residential area in Surat. All his claims and arguments are well supported by relevant data.

Then, he logically, traces the growth of slums in Surat and at the same time gives information on physical profile of the slums, their location, the average number of households in the slums in various blocks, age of slums, land status – government, private or municipality. The information about the status of land (private, public) is of utmost importance, since this factor is detrimental to the nature and extent of services available in the slums.

The book contains mineful of rich socio – demographic profile of slum dwellers in Surat (Das, 1994:53). He has painstakingly captured the details of religion, caste, language, migrant status family type and literacy levels of the slum dwellers. Each of these variables are statistically compared and contrasted to show the variations and relationship among the variables, in terms of percentages to the total population or universe. His findings indicate that Hindus dominate the slum population and are found to be to the extent of 81 percent, whereas Muslims account for only 18 percent of the total slum population. Among the Hindus, it is the lower caste which is in majority whereas in few cases some upper caste families were also found to be dwelling in the slums.
Das has devoted substantive part of the book on mapping the economic conditions of slum dwellers and their response to the urban labour market (1994:79). He observes that, Surat has a combination of both capital intensive industries as well as small enterprises, processing and repair units. This provides ample job opportunities to the slum dwellers in textile (power looms) industry, lathe machine, engineering units etceteras (Das, 1994:80). According to Das, such employment opportunities is the single most responsible factor for providing an environment for the spread of slums in Surat. He goes on to categorize the numerous jobs taken up by the dwellers into following categories –

1) White Collar
2) Blue Collar
3) Self-employed (high level occupation)
4) Self-employed (low level occupation) like sales, production, processing, repairs, services)
5) Agriculture and;
6) Other occupation.

He also reflects on the major causes of migration – which are dominated by economic factors. It is true, to considerable extent, that when compared to rural area, an urban area offers greater opportunity to earn some livelihood and thus survive as compared to no earning and problem of survival in rural area.
Das has made a serious attempt to identify the nature and availability of basic services in the slum pockets. Along with this, he also focuses on health related aspects associating it with the availability of gutter and drainage, water supply, lighting arrangements, toilets and bathing spaces, location of slums in relation to medical facilities and fair price shops. Apart from this, he also takes a stock of generally found diseases, their types and frequency and the factories responsible for high birth and death rates in slum areas. In spite of living in scarcities of various sorts, he says “the slum dwellers in the city face high pressures and stresses emanating from their economic conditions, household needs, various essential services and degradation of environmental conditions at the community as well as individual household levels and over the time, develop mechanism to cope with various crisis at different levels. While some such mechanisms succeed and some other fail, efforts are made continuously which reflect in the form of different set of responses to the changing developmental scenario in general and an immediate urban context in particular (Das, 1994:131).

Das has concluded his work by summarising and categorising major observations under the following headings:

(a) some of the major observations emerging from the description and analysis presented in the text of the book,

(b) questions and issues that emerge as important areas needing further research in the larger context of urban poor, and
some aspects related to policy and programmes in larger context of urban growth in the state and regions (Das, 1994:133).

According to his findings 45 percent of the total population in Surat district lived within Surat Urban Agglomeration Area till 1991. Out of the total city population, he says, 29 percent population lives in slum areas (Das, 1994:134). Similar to the general trend in the million plus city, the density of dwellings in slums is found to be high. This results into congestion and since they are located on public lands, they live in constant fear of eviction at any time by the authorities. Such insecurity works as disincentive for any efforts of self-help by the slum dwellers to get the services.

Another interesting work in the same context is done by Archana Ghosh, Sami S. Ahmed and Shipra Maitra (1995), titled Basic Services for Urban Poor: A Study of Baroda, Bhilwara, Sambalpur and Siliguri. This book again is based on extensive field work, that was undertaken by the research team of the Urban Studies Department in the Institute of Social Studies. This work is third in the Urban Studies and it basically tries to fulfil the issue raised in the earlier volume of the urban studies series namely – to study at the micro level the delivery of basic services, and the access of the urban poor communities to these basic amenities along with their involvement in the developmental programmes.

This work is selective in the sense that it focuses on the evaluation of the government sponsored urban basic services (UBS) programme which was
initiated in 1986, as pilot project, in lower order Class I cities and in middle order towns in India. The present study has selected only those cities which had adopted the UBS programme in the earlier form (UBS has undergone significant changes since 1990's and is called Urban Basic Services for the Poor – UBSP).

This study has selected slums from a total of four cities, located in different states. From among these, two cities belong to Eastern Region and the other two are from Western Region. The book has in all six chapters, of which four chapters contain case studies of the cities. In addition, it has an introductory as well as concluding chapter.

The very first chapter introduces the subject of the research, its objectives, its scope, methodology etceteras. This chapter also gives a background of the present study by tracing the origin of participatory approach in delivering community services. The authors contentions are that “ineffectiveness in the service – delivery model has resulted into this innovative effort to mobilize people's resources towards improving the urban environment” (Ghosh, et.al., 1995:4). This type of self – help had been practiced in rural areas for ages in Asia however, in cities such methods of delivering the basic services are a recent phenomena. Further they illustratively explore the practice of participatory approach in Korea, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong. In dealing with the Indian experiment in this approach, they believe that only since the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974 – .79), a perceptible change can be noticed in viewing urban poverty issues. So far as management of urban services are concerned, gradual
shift has started from mere "trickle-down service-delivering mode towards increasing community participation at all stages of service provision—planning, implementation and evaluation" (Ghosh, et al., 1995:9).

The concluding chapter summarised and gives a comparative analysis of the four case studies. It also distinctly raises some issues that resulted from the analysis. A great amount of difference was noticed in the findings, specially in the community involvement aspect (though the objectives, questionnaire implemented and programmes evaluated were identical). For example, "in the case of Baroda, Sambalpur and Bhilwara economic factors influenced each city's primate position in the state but in Siliguri, certain socio-political circumstances led to its enormous population growth" (1995:266).

Even the slums characteristics were found to be different in the four cities. In Sambalpur and Bhilwara not all slums are "dilapidated and makeshift arrangements" rather most of them fall in the category of extended villages. They have become part of the city yet they retain some of their rural characteristics and demarcated as degraded pocket within the lavish neighbourhood. Whereas in Baroda and Siliguri slum population has high percentage of migrants and their huts are normally on unauthorized land. Although these slum dwellers have the ownership of their hut, yet the shelter situation is precarious (Ghosh, 1995:267).

The study has focused on the availability of basic amenities like water supply, drainage and garbage disposal, toilets in the slums of the four cities. Also
the social infrastructure like health and non-formal education facilities under the UBS programme are covered. Analysis is well supported by the data. Conclusively, the results show that the strategy of planned intervention through community-based poverty alleviation programmes have been successful to some extent, they however, failed to alter the availability of minimum facilities in these areas. They are the issues of communities and neighbourhoods. Therefore, the authors suggest to fill one of the lacunae of UBS programme by effectively involving the Non-Governmental Organizations. They can be useful in “monitoring the programme, motivating people, creating effective demand by working as intermediaries between the local government and the beneficiaries” (Ghosh, 1995:299).

Another important contribution in developing human development indices of the urban poor is by Amitabh Kundu, an expert in regional planning and urban development. His work (1994), *In the Name of the Urban Poor: Access to Basic Amenities*, is an attempt to find out whether the urban poor have been able to take advantage of the subsidies meant particularly for them like sanitation, housing, health and public distribution systems (TOI, 1996:3).

His work is divided into seven chapters. He begins by introducing the prime concern or objective of the study and the methodology adopted. It focuses on five basic amenities – shelter, water supply, sewerage and sanitation, health and public distribution of food grains (Kundu, 1994:19).
The subsequent chapters deal with the assessment of urban poverty and its characteristics where the author discusses the poverty line, what is meant by urban poverty, affordability of poor to get basic amenities, their economic standard and expenditures on various necessities of life. Two chapters are devoted to the housing problem where he discusses various programmes adopted by the government to house the poor, various financial agencies that are involved in the housing development. He also dwells on and assess various basic services programme undertaken by the authorities like sites and services schemes, slum upgradation — cum — improvement programmes, urban community development programme etceteras.

He concludes that although government has launched many subsidized services for the betterment of poor people but it is the rich who had taken advantage of these subsidized services. That is, money allocated for the urban poor has actually not reached to them rather it has been manipulated and reached either to the middle level or upper level people. To ameliorate such situations, Kundu suggests for altering the system in order to ensure that the benefits reach to the people for whom they are meant.

Kosambi (1994:70) holds that in India majority of the literature on housing problem do not use ‘slum’ in Western sense. She differentiates the term slum as it has been used in the West and in India. She says that in the West the term ‘slum’ denotes old and dilapidated but authorized and originally standard types of housing. Whereas in India, this term is used to describe squatter
settlements. Main distinction between a slum and squatter is that squatter is illegally occupied land whereas slum is legal holding of the land. That is to say there is a generic difference between squatter settlements and slum. In the Western literature these type of squatter are referred as ‘Shanty towns’, or “hutment colonies”. Moreover, in India these very settlement are known by different names in different states. For example, in Delhi these are known as Jhuggi Jompris, in Calcutta they called Bustees, in Chennai Cheri and in Mumbai the are called Zopadpattis, in Baroda they are known as bustees or Zopadpattis.

In India, the problem of ‘slum’ and squatter settlement attracted general attention since the passage of the first slum legislation in 1956 (Nangia, 1988:131 – 41). Generally, the physical conditions in slum areas, he says, are either scarce or there is a total absence of toilets and underground sewerage systems. To worsen this situation, they normally are forced to occupy low-lying areas that are prone to floods and stagnation of water during the monsoons. There have been many attempts like provision of built-in-tenements, sites and services-schemes, in-site financial assistance to slum dwellers, to improve and better their conditions and shelters. Nangia, however, believes that all these attempts have only marginally benefited, whereas the major portion remains as it is.

There is no doubt about the proliferation of slums all over the country. The common line of thinking with regard to the rise of squatter or slums is that they are a result of rural immigration. They migrate to the cities with lot of hopes to get jobs or some work to survive. With them they carry rural poverty to the
urban areas. Mitra (1988:29-42), however, challenges this perception and holds that this tricky slum problem is a 'long term phenomena and not a short term seasonal phenomena'. Therefore, only migration is not the factor responsible for rise of slums. Instead other factors like 'downward social mobility' coupled with land scarcity and housing shortage etceteras are equally responsible.

Interestingly, Alfred de Souza (1981:174-96) differs in this regard. His contention is that the slum and squatter problem are neither due to industrialization nor a result of size of the city. Instead, they are the results of prevailing urban poverty and socio-cultural marginalization of the urban poor. He also intrinsically relates the slum problem, especially in metropolitan cities, to the migration. In this article he has examined in detail the nature of migration, the income of migrants, their living conditions etc. He concludes that apart from the filthy conditions in which they live, the problem of housing the urban poor aggravates due to lack of security of land. This discourages urban poor from making any efforts to improve their squatter / hutment.

M.C.K. Swamy (1987:22-28) views slum creation as 'ruralization' of urban area because the migrants introduce rural living conditions to these pockets which are very densely concentrated and on a large scale. He affirms the inevitability of slum proliferation in India. Both rural and urban poverty, he says, are rapidly increasing and this will make the 'slum lifestyle' the only way of life, therefore, acceptable. In fact, he believes that all measures, programmes for urban development perpetuate slum creation rather than diminishing them. If this is the
case, then urban development plans should be supported and contain measures for this fall-out problem of slum creation.

Kosambi (1994:72) infers that the physical and social conditions of slums are similar all over, with minor local variations as reflected in the works of Mookherjee (1982:47-48) for Calcutta; Pandey (1984:36-52) and Pillai (1983:244-76) for Bombay; G. K. Misra (1979a:99-119, 1988b:35-45) for Delhi; Naidu and Deb (1987:177-87) and Shorey (1987:115-20) for Hyderabad etceteras. The salient features of these studies as summarized by Kosambi (1994:72) are as follows:

The situation of Calcutta 'slum' is more complex than elsewhere due to the historical three-ties tenancy structure – the land-lord who own the land, the short-duration lease (or thika tenant) who erects and lets out huts to slum-dwellers (or bustee tenants). G.K. Choudhury also stresses that the case of squatter in Calcutta is unusual in that, after large scale legal bustees or hutment colonies had exhausted the available private land, illegal squatter colonies erupted on private and public lands because of continued distress migration and refugee streams. Their occupations ranged from begging to casual labour, hawking, rickshaw pulling, paper and rag picking to regular day labour and domestic service with very low incomes (Kosambi, 1994:72).
Even Chandigarh, the first planned city of the country after independence, according to Sarin (1982a:54-93) "acquired a sizeable ‘non-plan’ settlement of construction workers from the very start of construction." She in this article examines the growth of slum in the city, gives a socio-economic profile of slum dwellers, points out various efforts undertaken for their resettlement including the grant of security of tenure, and encouragement of self-help housing etceteras.

2.4 EVALUATING VARIOUS URBAN STUDIES

A modest attempt is made here to assess the state of Social Science inquiry in this particular sub-area during the preceding decades. Urban administrative research can be examined from either the disciplinary perspectives of public administration or from that of urban studies.

A cursory look at the literature of public administration reveals that the urban administrative problems and studies have traditionally be undertaken in institutional terms i.e. studies about the municipalities or corporations, their structures and powers, functions of these bodies. Even in the larger discipline of public administration this institutional bias is clearly evident. Subsequent changes in the paradigms in the study of public administration, especially the behavioural approach and advancement in management sciences, have had its impact on the sub-areas of the discipline. Urban administrative studies is no exception to this general trend. It has been variedly influenced by the
“methodological shifts in public administration analysis especially the institutional and behavioural varieties” (Bhattacharya, 1986:41).

Urban Studies, on the other hand, is comparatively a new and emerging field. The field of urban administrative studies is regarded as an inevitable component of urban studies where it undertakes a study of the structures, process and behaviour in urban institutions. Moreover, these structures, processes and behaviour are intrinsically related with and the gets influenced by the environment in which they function. Therefore, the historical, socio-economic, political and technological factors become important for any analysis on urban studies. In this regard, urbanization processes assume importance for the creation, growth and malfunctioning of the urban administrative institutions (Bhattacharya, 1986:42).

According to Bhattacharya “the study of urban public administration has been evolving steadily in both substantive and methodological terms. The institutional – structural approach, the behavioural movement, the management science approach and the new political economy paradigm represent gradual diversification of an ‘intellectual field which is being subjected to more and more rigorous and broad-based analysis” (Bhattachary, 1986:46-7). Even the coverage of researches undertaken so far are both impressive and quite wide ranged. However, the organizational, political and financial studies dominate as compared to other studies on policy, environment and administration relations or citizen – administration relationship. Within the organizational studies also, one notices the lopsided treatment, the focus is on municipal bodies whereas the other
organizations like special purpose bodies, development authorities, the voluntary organization, non-governmental organization either remain neglected or receive little attention from the researches. Specially in this changing era of state rollback and assertion market and civil society, the contribution of NGO's or voluntary organization is going to increase manifold and this demands more serious consideration.

Another neglected area in the urban administrative studies is the management aspect – financial, organizational and personnel. Even if one comes across any of the study on these aspects, it is superficially dealt or has been given scant attention. In addition to these larger problems of research, we also notice that full-fledged researches are rare phenomena in urban studies. The general trend of research in this sub-are is either in the form of an article in a journal or a short monograph.

Bhattacharya (1986:59) observes that distributive aspects of urban development have received occasional attention. Under a widespread urban poverty, the equity issue in urban management calls for more careful research designing and planning. Who gets what, when and how in urban areas deserve attention on a priority basis. However, this aspect of urban politics has remained under-researched. Furthermore, urban researches are mainly descriptive and methodologically unimpressive, and lacks in rigorous research methods. Bhattacharya asserts that, largely, 'the urban administrative research has been governed by the pluralistic managerial notion of urban management. 'Objectivity'
and 'descriptive research' are basically status quo oriented. Urban situation, is characterized by mass scale poverty, deprivation and gross inequality which demands innovative paradigmatic shift in the mode of administrative analysis' (Bhattacharya, 1986:59).

2.5 THEORY OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND URBAN STUDIES

From this rather exhaustively long review of literature, a few interesting and useful insights are obtained into the status of theory, method, approach, concept and directions of urban studies. This is an emerging field and requires careful nurturing. In a democratic political system which is rooted in a constitutional framework, it is very important that goals of speedy economic development and equal distribution of gains of development takes place. A democratic society cannot afford to be sluggish on economic front and lopsided in distributing the fruits of growth on the principles of justice and equity.

These macro principles of democratic governance are equally relevant at urban micro level too. The cities are as plural, stratified and differentiated as larger national societies. The issues of distributive justice and equity in as mundane but dynamic areas of basic civic concerns as public utilities such as water supply, conservancy services, transport, health, housing, education etceteras are of utmost significance and objectively contain within them explosive potential upon their unfair distribution or denial to those who need it most. Slums in cities
are a major test of good urban governance. If we cannot intervene in the formation of slums effectively as it is linked to the macro systemic and structural factors, the urban civil society and urban local government, must at any cost, intervene to meet their basic human needs of basic public services as a minimum to the goals of democratic governance.

Bhattacharya's those words, quoted in previous section are of immense significance. We must try to fill this gap in urban research studies by focusing on the distributive aspect of politics. In a city, how public services are distributed, especially in slums and how people view it is of utmost importance. This study aims at taking over from the point where most studies on urbanization, urban problem, urban politics, urban administration, urban slums or urban poor have stopped. It is not enough to study cities in their historical glory, growth, fluctuations in fortunes and status, planning epicentres of economic growth, urban mess or as engines of growth. The focus must shift to studying the conditions of living and status of quality of life index among the poorest in urban society, hounded into confinements of slums or ghettoes for lifetimes. If the democratic politics and administration cannot prevent slum-formation, slum eradication or converting slums into decent renewed locality like others in the city, then it can at least provide them with somewhat adequate supply and fair distribution of public services which are basic to their existence and survival. Continuous denial of access to reasonably good life, in some case from one generation to the other generation in slums, is potently bad and undesirable for a democratically governed good, humane society (Kothari, 1988). This study, therefore, cuts out on a small
slice of focus from this theoretical concerns and makes a modest attempt to peep into the conditions of life in slums of Baroda as perceived by the slum dwellers themselves, their leaders, NGOs, academicians, political parties, urban administrators and wider civil society.

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