

Urbanization and Migration

Abstract

The effect of Urbanization and Migration has been studied with reference to Kathua town. The ill effects of large scale industrialization on the health of the residents has been discussed. The study reveals that it is not only the metropolitan cities which are effected by urbanization and migration but even the small towns are facing the consequences. Some remedial measures have been suggested for controlling this urbanization and migration.

Introduction

India is witnessing an unprecedented rise in urbanization and cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Calcutta are over-crowded with people. Now nearly one-third of the population lives in towns and cities. The urban population, however, is economically very important and contributes 50 to 55 percent to the total GNP. It also means that the hub of all modern activity is concentrated in major cities, which continuously attract migrant workers in search of their livelihood. There is another prime factor responsible for urbanization and that is the natural rural to urban migration because the Indian villages are not developed at all and they do not have the employment opportunities and they are economically backward.

- Urbanization occurs as individual, commercial, and governmental efforts to reduce time and expense in commuting and transportation while improving opportunities for jobs, education, housing, and transportation. Living in cities permits the advantages of the opportunities of proximity, diversity, and marketplace competition. However, the advantages of urbanization are weighed against alienation issues, stress, increased daily life costs, and negative social aspects that result from mass marginalization.
- However, unlike the big cities in rich countries, Indian cities are not able to take in more and more people because of poor urban management and resource constraints. The people continuously confront problems of safe drinking water, power, sewerage and garbage disposal. With rapid natural increase and inflow of rural population, cities are growing rapidly and there is an urgent need for better governance, transport and basic amenities for the growing population. Here it is worthwhile to point out that most people including many social scientists and journalists believe that rural to urban migration is the prime factor of urbanization. This myth has already been exploded by demographers. Studies have clearly established that natural increase has been the most potent factor behind rapid rise in urban population not only in India but also in most developing countries of the world.
- In a recent survey of 27 big Asian cities with over a million population, India's four largest cities have been ranked among the five worst with respect to availability of water per day. Physical losses due to water wastage in these cities are high despite low pressure and intermittent supplies. Low pressure can lead to 'back syphonage' and contamination, responsible for many water-borne diseases affecting the urban population. The lack of sufficient water affects the urban poor still more. In Delhi, when the official supply per capita is supposed to be 200 liters a day, around nine million people (a third of the population) get less than 25 liters a day. Also, 36 percent of the urban population does not have access to proper sanitation and most slum-dwellers do not have a toilet of their own.
- Another major problem associated with rapid urbanization is environmental degradation. Most of the industries are very near to towns and cities because of the easy availability of the roads and transportation and also the easy availability of human resource and hence the most pollution effected areas are these towns and cities .If you talk of cement industries , they will be emitting gases like carbon-dioxide due to the decomposition of calcium carbonate and also due to the burning of fuels. Besides heavy metals such as Thallium

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Cadmium and Mercury which are highly toxic are also liberated by these cement industries. Metals like Nickel, Zinc and Lead are also present in the clinker required for cement. Arsenic is another toxic metalloid produced in some metalloid industries and is responsible for diseases like cancer. Industries like plastic, paper, paints, oils and chemicals are responsible for the production of a large number of toxic substances. Increase in pollution levels in urban areas is also fuelled by ever-growing traffic. Poor maintenance of these vehicles is another factor responsible for the increase in pollution in urban areas.

Kathua Town

A case study of Kathua town shows that large scale industrialization is causing a poor visibility because of the great number of pollutants in air and driving is really becoming a problem particularly at night in the Hatli Morh area of the town where such industries are working. The outbreaks of water borne diseases like cholera, hepatitis, gastro-entritis, etc. is a common feature.

- A nearby place Govindsar has even the problem of abnormal growth of new born babies because of ill effects of these industries. According to a survey conducted in the village almost 30-40 cases of handicapped children were found. No handicapped child was born in the village before industrialization. Even the ex- serpanch of the village had four members of his family who were born handicapped.
- Even the health and stamina is effected and the present generation surviving in that village is not healthy and lacking stamina. More number of heart patients. Asthma, bronchitis and skin diseases are also common. Children have developed asthma and pneumonia.
- If you sleep outside during night, the white covering sheet totally turns black due to the carbon particles.
- The crops are being effected and the plant leaves are always covered with the pollutants in the air.
- The total number of industries in the area is 150.
- Total area covered is 15 sq.km.
- Total population effected by this large scale industrialization is almost ten thousand.
- The main industries causing the pollution are cement, metal, plastic and medicine.
- CTM producing viscose (thread) involving the process of mercerization, dyeing and boiling is also responsible for the production for pollutants.

Remedial Measures

One school of thought says that very soon half the world's population will live in urban areas. By the year 2015, cities of developing countries, Mumbai, Lagos, Dhaka and Sao Paolo, will head the list of mega cities after Tokyo. And by the year 2030, some 60% of the world's population will live in cities. This will surely create more problems and survival in these cities shall really become a challengeable task. Some remedial measures should be taken at the earliest to control the unending process of urbanization. Some of these measures are:

- 1) **Protests like Chipko Movement:** In order to protect and conserve the local resources, some

protests like Chipko Movement should be started. In this movement, women literally encircled trees with their bodies, embracing them in an ultimate gesture for protection and care –thus “chipko” which comes from the Hindi word meaning “to hug”. The Chipko protests spread throughout the Himalayas and to forested hill regions in the South of India such as the Western Ghats. As such the tree felling ban was extended to include all land from Kashmir to Bhutan, thereby protecting a vast expanse of land once subjected to uncontrolled tree felling. This movement is among the best known cases of local forest people organizing freely and democratically to protect resources held in common and prevent migration elsewhere to secure a living.

- 2) **Honduras movement:** In the pine forests of Honduras more than six hundred families depend on resin tapping for survival. In the 1970s these villagers launched logging blockades and organized cooperatives to obtain forestry concessions for extractive resin harvesting to conserve the pine trees on which their livelihood depends, thereby eliminating the need to migrate to urban areas to ensure their existence
- 3) **Mexico struggle:** In 1980, in the heavily forested Sierra de Juarez of southern Mexico, thirteen communities formed the organization for the Defense of the Natural Resources and Social Development of the region to fight the Mexican Government's decision to renew a logging concession to a private, multinational timber corporation. The group began its protests by publishing its own newspaper and at last they won the battle after a court case.
- 4) **Resources:** More and more resources should be provided to the villagers.
- 5) **Employment:** Small scale industrial units should be set up to cope up with the problem of unemployment.
- 6) **Development:** Schools, hospitals, roads and other infrastructure should be developed.
- 7) **Agriculture:** Agriculture sector should be developed by making use of latest technology.
- 8) **Development of Municipal Corporations:** In order to cope with an increasing population, the municipal corporations could invite greater private sector participation in the urban infrastructure so that critical services are better managed. More money would also be needed by municipal corporations to look after the growing population. Corporatization of municipal finances is one way of raising additional funds. For example, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation has raised money through bond issues. A demand for greater accountability from municipal corporations will prevent corruption and cost over runs. This will need the involvement of local self-help and civil society groups. But providing adequate education, power, water and public transport to its poorest inhabitants will continue to remain a major challenge for any municipal governments when faced with continuous increase in urban population through natural increase as well as cityward migration.

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