

UPDATED VALUE ADDITION MATERIAL 2024

INDIAN SOCIETY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

URBANIZATION AND IT'S SOCIAL EFFECTS



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URBANISATION AND ITS SOCIAL EFFECTS

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The 21st century is witnessing a monumental shift in global demographics – the rise of cities. Urbanization, as defined by the World Bank, is "the increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas compared to rural areas."

Thus, the core aspect of urbanization is the increasing proportion of people residing in urban areas. This is measured by the percentage of a country's population classified as "urban" based on specific criteria like population size, density, and economic activity.

In India, an area is classified as urban based on the following criteria:

Statutory Towns: Governed by a municipal corporation, municipal council, or nagar panchayat.

Census Towns:

1. Minimum population of 5,000.
2. At least 75% of the male working population in non-agricultural activities.
3. Population density of at least 400 persons per square kilometer.

The Urban Transition

- India's population stood at 1210 million in 2011, with an urbanisation level of 31.1% (Census of India 2011).
- Notwithstanding a low level of urbanisation, India's urban population is 11% of that of the world.
- India will be 50% urban by 2050 (UN-Habitat, 2017).

Undercounting of urbanisation in India

In the last decade leading up to the 2011 Census, India witnessed a significant rise in the number of regions meeting urban criteria but not officially recognized as such. While statutory towns, areas officially recognized as urban, increased by a mere 5%, the number of census towns—those that satisfy urban parameters but remain undesignated—soared by over 185%. This numeric disparity brings to the forefront a **pressing concern: the undercounting of India's actual urbanization.**

Drivers of Urbanization



Urbanization is not simply a demographic shift, but a dynamic process that transforms societies across various dimensions.

1. Urbanisation as a Process

1.1. Urbanization as a Social and Cultural Process

Beyond demographics, urbanization is a social and cultural transformation. Migrants adapt to urban lifestyles, acquiring new behaviors, social structures, and knowledge systems.

- **Acculturation:** acculturation refers to the process by which migrants adopt aspects of the dominant culture in the city
 - Cities expose migrants to diverse ethnicities, religions, and cultural expressions. This can lead to a breakdown of traditional social structures and a shift towards more individualistic values.
- **Diffusion of Urban Culture:** Urban culture spreads to rural areas through media, migration networks, and social interactions, potentially leading to cultural homogenization.
- **Education and Social Mobility:** Cities offer greater access to education, which can empower individuals and create new social hierarchies based on educational attainment rather than traditional caste systems.

Urbanism:

Urbanism refers to the way of life characteristic of urban settings. It encompasses the social structures, cultural norms, and physical environment that define urban living. Here's a breakdown of key aspects:

- **Social Interactions:** Urban life involves a higher degree of anonymity and impersonal interactions compared to rural areas. Social networks are often based on professional or shared interests rather than kinship ties.
- **Heterogeneity:** Cities are melting pots of diverse cultures, ethnicities, and social classes. This diversity can be enriching but also lead to social challenges.
- **Fast-Paced Lifestyle:** Urban life is characterized by a faster pace, with a focus on efficiency and achievement. This can be stressful for some but also provide a stimulating environment.
- **Material Culture:** Cities have a distinct material culture evident in architecture, infrastructure, transportation systems, and access to technology.

1.2. Political-Administrative Process

- **Shifting Power Dynamics:** As urban populations grow, their political influence increases. This can lead to a decentralization of power and a greater focus on urban infrastructure and services.
- **Urban Governance Challenges:** Rapid urban expansion often outpaces the ability of local governments to provide adequate infrastructure and services, leading to slums, overcrowding, and social unrest.
- **Emergence of New Social Movements:** Cities provide a platform for social activism and political movements seeking change, pushing for reforms in areas like labor rights, environmental protection, and social justice.

1.3. Economic Process

- **Job Creation and Economic Growth:** Cities are hubs for economic activity, attracting businesses, industries, and financial institutions. This generates employment opportunities, boosts economic output, and fuels national development.
- **Informal Sector:** Rapid urbanization often leads to an expansion of the informal sector, with individuals engaging in street vending, small-scale manufacturing, and other unregulated economic activities to survive.

1.4. Geographical Process

- Urbanization leads to the physical growth of cities and towns. Existing boundaries expand, and new urban settlements emerge around industrial zones or transportation hubs.

2. Nature of Urbanisation in India

While rapid growth is a common theme, the Indian experience presents a unique set of characteristics that shape its impact on society.

- **Predominantly Migration-Driven:** Unlike developed nations where urbanization often stemmed from industrialization, India's urban growth is primarily driven by rural-to-urban migration. Millions leave villages in search of better education, employment opportunities, and a higher standard of living.
- **The breakneck pace of urbanization:** This rapid influx of people strains existing infrastructure and resources, leading to unplanned sprawl and a shortage of essential services like housing, sanitation, and transportation.
 - This unplanned nature of growth creates a vicious cycle, as the lack of proper infrastructure discourages further planning efforts to accommodate the ever-increasing population.

Sub-Urbanization

Delhi is a typical example. Sub-urbanization means urbanization of rural areas around the cities characterized by the following features: a sharp increase in the 'urban (non-agricultural) uses' of land inclusion of surrounding areas of towns within its municipal limits, and intensive communication of all types between town and its surrounding areas.

Conurbations

Conurbation refers to the very long and narrow strip of urban settlements along a major road or railway route.

- **National Capital Region (NCR):** The NCR encompasses Delhi along with satellite cities like Gurgaon, Noida, and Ghaziabad. It has witnessed rapid economic growth due to its proximity to the national capital.
- **Kolkata Metropolitan Area:** Kolkata, along with Howrah, Hooghly, and North 24 Parganas, forms the Kolkata Metropolitan Area.
- **Uneven and Dispersed Growth:** Urbanization in India is not uniform across the country. Certain regions, particularly coastal areas and established economic hubs, witness a faster pace of growth compared to others. This uneven development can exacerbate regional disparities and create challenges for balanced national development.
- **Growth of Urban sprawls:** Urban sprawl is the uncontrolled expansion of cities and towns, often resulting in the encroachment of urban areas into surrounding rural or undeveloped land. The main causes of urban sprawls are lack of proper urban planning, population growth, migration from the rural areas, and government policies.
- **The Rise of Mega-Cities and Tier 2 Cities:** India is witnessing the rise of mega-cities like Mumbai and Delhi, along with a growing number of Tier 2 cities like Pune and Ahmedabad. These metropolises attract significant investment and talent, but also grapple with issues like congestion, pollution, and a strained social fabric.
- **The Persistence of the Informal Sector:** The formal economy often struggles to absorb the influx of migrants, leading to a large informal sector in Indian cities. Street vendors, construction workers, and domestic workers form a significant part of the urban workforce, but face challenges like job insecurity and lack of social security benefits.

3. Effects of Urbanisation on the Social Structure and Institutions

India's rapid urbanization has significant social implications, impacting various aspects of life:

3.1. Family and Kinship

- **Shifting Family Structures:** The traditional joint family system, with multiple generations living under one roof, is gradually giving way to nuclear families due to smaller living spaces and economic pressures.
 - This can lead to a sense of isolation and a weakening of traditional kinship networks.
- **Changing Dynamics:** Urbanization alters family dynamics. Women may seek employment, leading to a more equal distribution of household responsibilities.
 - However, this can also create challenges in balancing work and family life.

3.2. Women

- Cities offer women more educational and employment opportunities, leading to greater independence and empowerment.
 - Despite progress, issues like gender-based violence, lack of childcare facilities, and unequal pay persist.

3.3. Children

- Urbanization can provide better access to education and healthcare facilities for children.
 - However, challenges like child labor, street children, and inadequate sanitation in slums remain.

3.4. Caste

- The caste system continues to exist in urban areas, although its rigidities may loosen somewhat or could lead to formation of identities beyond caste.
- Discrimination in housing, employment, and social interactions can still be faced by lower castes.

Overall, the impact of urbanization on these social structures is complex and multifaceted. While it offers opportunities for progress and change, it also presents challenges that require policy interventions and social change initiatives.

4. Challenges and Issues of Urbanisation in India

The rapid urbanization, while a driver of economic growth, presents a complex set of social challenges.

1. Overcrowding and Housing Shortage:

Overcrowding is a defining feature of urban life in India, particularly in major cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, Pune, and Kanpur. India faces a critical housing shortage, particularly for low-income residents.

Factors leading to Housing Crisis in Urban Areas

- **Rural distress** due to climate change and limited agriculture drives urban migration, causing **housing demand to exceed supply**, leading to overcrowding and scarce affordable options.
- **Despite high-density areas**, underutilized land remains due to fragmented ownership and bureaucratic hurdles.
- **Restrictive Floor Space Index** regulations and stringent rent control laws raise housing prices and deter rental investments.
- **Low-income groups** lack access to housing loans due to insufficient creditworthiness and informal employment.
- **Ambiguous land records** further hinder housing development by discouraging investment.

- 85-90% of households in these cities make do with just one or two rooms, often cramming five to six people into a single space (Census of India, 2011).

- A 2018 report by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) estimated a national shortage of over 20 million urban housing units. This deficit, coupled with rapid urbanization, has led to the proliferation of slums.
- Dharavi, Asia's largest slum is spread over 2.4 square kilometers, it houses an estimated 1 million people living in cramped, unsanitary conditions.

Magnitude of Slum Population:

According to Census 2011, 17.3% of the urban population in India lived in slums.

Urban slum conditions significantly impact health, education, security, and social cohesion.

- **Health Concerns:** Overcrowding creates unsanitary living conditions and hinders ventilation, facilitating the spread of infectious diseases.
 - A 2015 study by the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) found a higher prevalence of tuberculosis in overcrowded slums compared to non-slum areas.
- **Social Issues:** Limited space can lead to social tensions, domestic violence, and a sense of apathy and indifference amongst residents.
 - **Oscar Lewis' theory of the "Culture of Poverty"** (1965) suggests that such living conditions can contribute to a cycle of poverty, where negative coping mechanisms and feelings of hopelessness are passed down through generations.
 - Overcrowding and inadequate lighting in slums can create security concerns for women and girls, impacting their freedom of movement and safety.
- **Economic impact:**
 - The housing crisis disproportionately affects low-wage earners and informal sector workers, who often struggle to find secure housing near their workplaces, leading to longer commutes and reduced productivity.
 - A persistent housing shortage discourages businesses and skilled professionals from migrating to cities, hindering overall economic growth and development.

2. Strained Infrastructure:

Rapid urbanization puts immense pressure on existing infrastructure. Cities struggle to provide adequate water supply, sanitation facilities, transportation networks, and power grids. A 2019 report by the World Bank titled "India's Urban Opportunity" stated that only 58% of India's urban population has access to piped water supply, highlighting the infrastructural deficit in many cities.

3. Environmental Degradation:

Urbanization has a significant impact on the environment. Increased construction activity, industrial waste, and vehicle emissions contribute to air and water pollution. A 2020 report by the World Health Organization (WHO) ranked 14 Indian cities among the top 20 most polluted globally.

- Industrial waste, untreated sewage, and religious offerings have severely polluted the river, rendering its water unfit for human consumption and aquatic life.

4. Social Issues on the Arrival Platform

- Many migrants find themselves in informal, low-paying jobs, struggling to make ends meet. This social marginalization can lead to feelings of alienation and social unrest.
- Urbanization also disrupts traditional social structures. The close-knit communities of rural life are replaced by a more impersonal urban environment. The caste system, though weakened, can persist in cities, leading to discrimination and social exclusion for lower castes. The breakdown of traditional family structures can also lead to social problems like crime and juvenile delinquency.

5. Government Initiatives and Schemes

1. Infrastructure Development and Upgradation:

- **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT):** to provide basic infrastructure in urban areas, including piped water supply, sewerage systems, green spaces, and waste management.
- **Smart Cities Mission:** Focuses on developing technology-driven solutions for urban infrastructure and services, including smart transportation, waste management, and e-governance.
- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) - Urban:** Provides financial assistance for affordable housing in urban areas.

2. Improved Living Standards and Service Delivery:

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban):** Aims to achieve cleanliness in urban areas by promoting sanitation and waste management practices.
- **Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM):** Provides skill development and self-employment opportunities for urban poor households.

3. Effective Urban Planning and Governance:

- **Scheme for Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP):** Aims to improve living conditions in slums by providing basic amenities, infrastructure development, and relocation where necessary.

4. Sustainable Urban Development:

- **Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF):** Evaluates cities' preparedness for climate change and encourages them to adopt sustainable practices.
- **National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy (NUHHP):** Promotes sustainable urban development through principles like efficient land use and environment-friendly construction practices.

Master plan Delhi 2041

Master Plan Delhi 2041 is a proposed long-term development plan for the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, India. It aims to guide the city's growth and development for the next two decades, with a vision for a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient Delhi by 2041.

Here are some key aspects of the MPD 2041:

- **Livability and vibrancy:** Creating a high quality of life for all residents with access to green spaces, public amenities, efficient transportation, and cultural experiences.
- **Sustainability:** Promoting cleaner air and water, reducing waste, and encouraging energy-efficient development.
- **Economic dynamism:** Establishing Delhi as a hub for economic activity, particularly in IT, hospitality, and service industries.
- **Equity and inclusivity:** Addressing social inequalities and ensuring equitable access to opportunities and resources for all residents.
- **Resilience:** Making Delhi more resilient to climate change, natural disasters, and future challenges.

* The MPD 2041 is a draft plan and is still under development by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA).

6. Strategies for Managing Future Urbanization in India

India's rapid urbanization presents a complex challenge. Here are some key strategies to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth:

6.1. Strengthening Urban Planning and Governance

- **Mixed-Use Development:** Promoting mixed-use developments that integrate residential, commercial, and recreational spaces within peri-urban areas can create more vibrant and self-contained communities, reducing reliance on travel and improving quality of life.
- **Infrastructure Investment in Peri-Urban Areas:** Investing in infrastructure like water supply, sanitation, and waste management systems in peri-urban areas can make these areas more attractive for housing development, offering a viable alternative to congested city centres.
- **Empowered Local Bodies:** Strengthen local governments (municipalities) by providing them with greater financial resources and decision-making power. This allows them to be more responsive to local needs and plan for future growth.
- **Citizen Participation:** Encourage active citizen participation in urban planning processes. Public hearings and feedback mechanisms ensure residents have a say in shaping their cities.

The **Baan Mankong (or "secure housing") project in Thailand**, which was launched in 2003, has been extremely successful in addressing the housing problems of Bangkok's poorest urban citizens.

- The success of this program has been largely credited to putting the city's slum dwellers at the centre of the policy making process.

The "Cities Alive" report by UN-Habitat sheds light on creating inclusive urban environments that address the issues of women and to empower women in cities.

Key Dimensions for Empowering Women in Cities:

- **Safety and Security:**
 - **Addressing Sexual Harassment:** Public spaces should be well-lit, patrolled, and designed to minimize secluded areas. Zero-tolerance policies and efficient reporting mechanisms for sexual harassment are crucial.
- **Justice and Equity:**
 - **Promoting Gender Equality:** Eliminating discriminatory practices in education, employment, and housing ensures equal access to opportunities for women. Policies and laws need to actively promote gender equality and provide women with legal recourse in case of discrimination.
- **Health and Wellbeing:**
 - **Quality Healthcare:** Ensuring access to affordable, quality healthcare services, including maternal healthcare and reproductive health services, is essential for women's well-being.
 - **Sanitation Facilities:** Providing clean and well-maintained sanitation facilities in public spaces and residential areas is critical for women's health and hygiene.
- **Enrichment and Fulfillment:**
 - **Women's Leadership:** Encouraging women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels of governance creates a more inclusive urban environment. Initiatives promoting women's leadership in city planning and management are crucial.
 - **Public Recognition of Women:** Giving space to women's contributions through public art, monuments, and historical markers celebrates their achievements and inspires future generations.
- **Gender-Responsive Urban Planning:**
 - **Considering Women's Needs:** Integrating women's perspectives into the planning process, from infrastructure development to transportation systems, ensures cities cater to their needs and safety concerns. This includes designing public spaces that are accessible and user-friendly for women of all ages and abilities.

- **Climate Change and Resilience:**
 - **Climate Impacts on Women:** Climate change often disproportionately affects women, who may be responsible for water collection and sanitation. Urban planning needs to take into account the gendered impact of climate hazards and integrate strategies for building resilience.
- **Collaboration for Change:**
 - **Stakeholder Engagement:** Achieving gender equality in cities requires collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector entities, and local communities. By working together, they can create policies, programs, and initiatives that address the specific needs of women in urban areas.

6.2. Inclusive Development of Smaller Cities

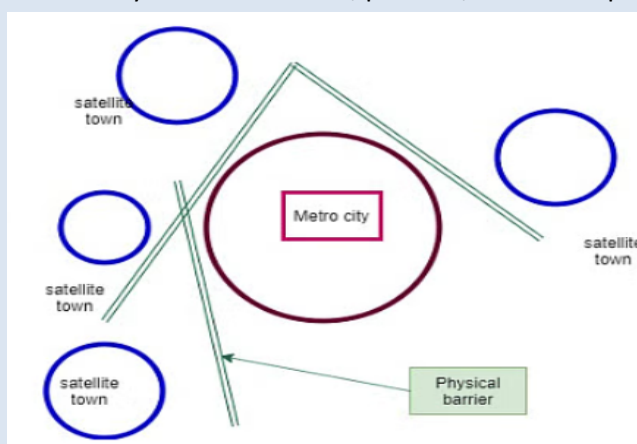
- **Focus on Tier 2 and 3 Cities:** Invest in the development of smaller cities (Tier 2 and 3) to create a more balanced urban network. This reduces pressure on megacities by offering alternative destinations for migrants seeking opportunities.

Creation of satellite towns can help in mitigating the top-heavy urbanisation of India

Satellite cities are planned cities, adjacent to a prime city. Such cities manage and contain the increasing urban sprawl. Satellite cities are entirely standalone cities, planned, and developed outside metros. They are self-containing, independent cities.

Need for satellite cities-

- To Decongest the Main City
- To Develop an Economic Sub-Centre
- To Utilization of Land in the best possible manner
- To Save the degradation of ecology
- To Converting Labour Force to Workforce
- To Strengthen the Economy Overall Growth & Resource Optimization



Satellite towns in the periphery of the major metro will bring new options for financial investment. The potential of satellite town for regional growth with proper resource utilization is more optimum and beneficial to human beings.

6.3. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

- **Prioritize Public Transport:** Promote TOD principles by creating walkable, well-connected neighborhoods with efficient public transport systems. This reduces dependence on private vehicles, leading to less traffic congestion and pollution.

1. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):

- **Leveraging Expertise:** Utilize PPPs to leverage private sector expertise and financing for infrastructure development projects like water treatment, waste management, and public transportation.

2. Sustainable Practices and Resource Management:

- **Circular Economy:** Adopt a circular economy approach that prioritizes resource efficiency, waste reduction, and recycling. This minimizes environmental impact and promotes long-term sustainability.

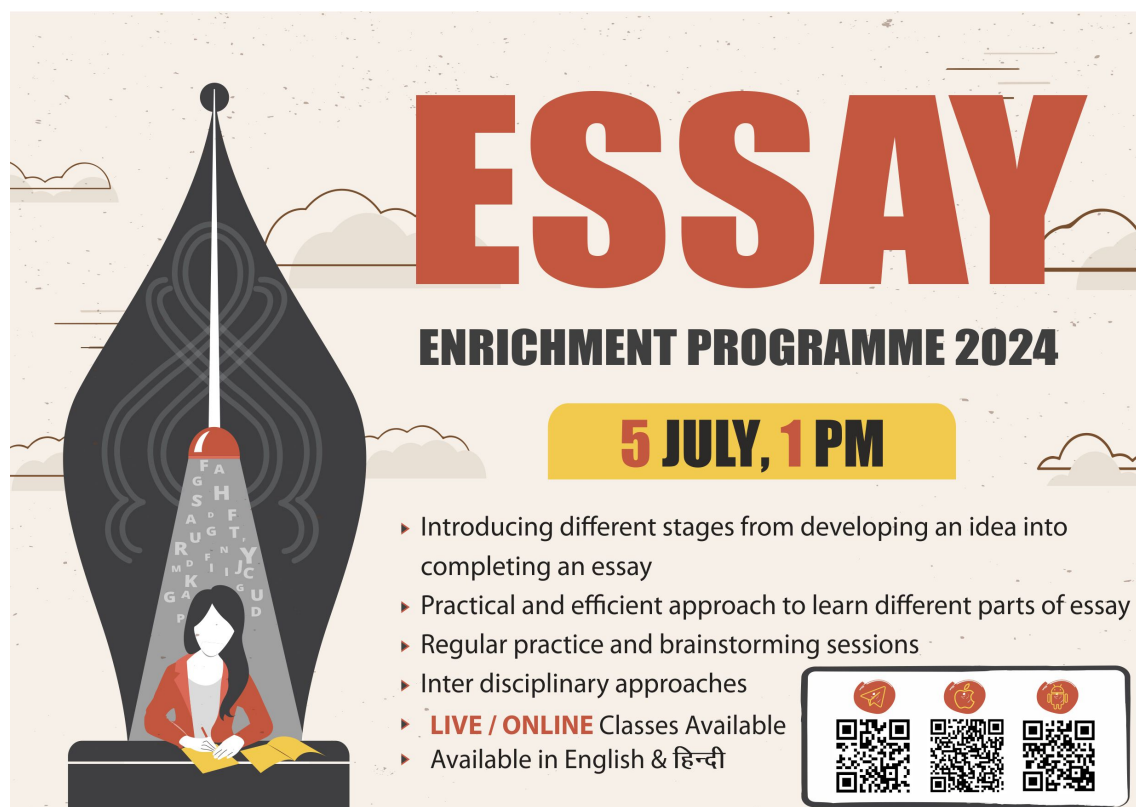
3. Smart Technology Solutions:

- **Smart Cities Mission:** Expand initiatives like the Smart Cities Mission to incorporate technology-driven solutions. Smart grids, for example, can optimize energy use and improve distribution.

The overarching goal is to create a future where Indian cities are:

- **Well-planned:** With infrastructure that can accommodate growth and provide essential services.
- **Inclusive:** Offering opportunities for all residents, regardless of background.
- **Sustainable:** Minimizing environmental impact and promoting resource efficiency.
- **Livable:** Providing a high quality of life with clean air, green spaces, and efficient transportation.

By implementing these strategies, India can navigate its urbanization challenges and create vibrant, thriving cities for the future.



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