**URBAN- RUALCONDITIONS-CONCEPT, DISPARITY AND DISTRIBUTION**

Unit structure

16.0 Objectives
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16.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit you will be able

- To know the meaning of urbane, rural, semi urban and tribal area.
- To understand Disparities in the availability of services
- To know the meaning of urbanisation
- To understand the problems of urbanisation.
- To learn the concept of megacities

16.1 INTRODUCTION

The transformation of an economy from agricultural and mainly rural to industrial and predominantly urban is indicator of economic development. The urbanisation in taking place much faster rate than in the rest of the world. Rise in urbanisation has led to the urban–rural divide in India. The topic is often therefore discussed as how the country’s two economies—the rural (refer as Bharat) and the urban (refer as India) are increasingly growing apart. The topic aims to discuss some issues regarding the rural-urban disparities, the growth of megacities and related issues.
Indian society has been broadly divided into urban, rural and tribal societies on the basis of their geographical surroundings and socio-cultural characteristics.

Urban: (urban areas)- Cities and towns constitute urban areas. The urban area is spatial concentration of people who are working in non-agricultural activities i.e. urban society is based on non-agricultural occupations like the industries and service sector. Urban areas are equipped with all modern amenities. The modern day facilities are widely available in the urban areas. A majority of the households of urban areas are blessed with this technological advancement. People in urban areas lead an economically more stable and luxurious life due to availability of different and advanced carrier opportunities. Criteria used to define urban can include population size, space, density and economic organisations. For the Census of India 2011, the definition of urban area is as follows-

1. All places with a municipality, corporation, and cantonment board or notified town area committee.

2. All other places which satisfied the following criteria-
   i) A minimum population of 5000.
   ii) At least 75% of the population of the male (main working population) engaged in non-agricultural pursuits.
   iii) A density of population of at least 400 people per sq.km.

Rural area- A society or community can be classified as rural based on the criteria of lower population density, less social differentiation, less social and spatial mobility, slow rate of social change etc.

Rural is an area where the people are engaged in primary industry or sector namely agriculture. Rural areas can have an agricultural character though many rural areas are characterised by an economy based on mining, oil and gas exploration, tourism etc. These are sparsely settled places away from the influence of large cities and towns. Lifestyle in urban areas is different mainly because limited resources are available like public transport, electricity or higher educational institutions etc.

Semi-urban area: A large proportion of population in India lives in semi-urban areas. Semi-urban area means where mixed features of rural as well as urban area are found. Semi urban area is an area where not less than 25% of the working population is engaged in non-agricultural activities and where some amount of
industrialisation has taken place. Semi urban areas do have certain modern facilities like electricity and other infrastructural facilities to establish industries and at the same time there are bases of agriculture as well as rural industries managed by rural artisans. Semiurban area is considered to be a link between the rural and urban towns. Sometimes headquarters of talukas/districts develop as semi-urban areas.

Tribal area: It is that areas wherein Scheduled Tribes reside. A tribe can be defined as a community living in hilly forest or well demarcated areas having its own culture, religion, language and strong ethnic identity. Following are the features of tribal community or area-

Social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous in nature.

Different language or dialect

Social distance with other tribes or castes.

Follow tribal traditions, beliefs and customs conscious of their ethnic and territorial homogeneity.

Economically they are self-sufficient i.e. their economy is based on subsistence level where there is no concept of surplus.

Tribal communities live in about 15% of the country’s areas, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forest to hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development. While some tribal communities have adopted a mainstream way of life, at the other end of the spectrum, there are certain Scheduled Tribes, 75 in number known as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs), who are characterised by

a) Pre-agriculture level of technology

b) stagnant or declining population;

c) extremely low literacy; and

d) subsistence level of economy.

The total number of tribal population in India as per the 2011 census is 84,326,240 i.e. 8.2% of the total population.
RURAL URBAN DISAPRITY IN INDIA

Contemporary urbanisation in India is marked by what one may call rural-urban divide. It started some two centuries back. By the end of the nineteenth century, urban centres practically became centres of exploitation of rural resources both natural and human. The pattern not only continued during the 20th century but also intensified, so that the positive interdependence that existed among rural and urban settlements in the past took a negative form. While the urban areas became superheated, the rural areas were left as cold and dry.

Education Services:

Education plays a pivotal role in laying the proper foundation for the overall development of people in a given society. The following table will help us to understand the literacy and educational status of both urban and rural India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy rate in India (in %)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
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(Source: Census India 2011)

Literacy and education contribute in increasing productivity and standard of living of the people. In India only 68% of people are literate in rural areas, whereas this percentage is higher in urban areas which account for 85%. Literacy among women in rural areas is very low. This also contributed to the low development of socio-economic indicators in rural areas. Nearly 27% of village schools in India have electivity compared to 76% of schools in towns and cities. Irregular teachers, lack of books and other stationary for children, lack of toilet and drinking water are some of the problems which rural schools are common features of rural schooling in India.
Health:

Status of health shows the development of society. This health status is influenced by different indicators like employment, income, educational attainment, level awareness, accessibility to health care facilities etc. The overall health infrastructure in India faces serious challenges with significant shortage of doctors, nurses, equipment’s and facilities. Only 13% of the population has access to primary health centres and less than 10% has access to a hospitals.

Around 80% of all hospitals (government and private) are located in urban areas even though it contains 31% of population. The availability of qualified physicians is 11.3 per 10,000 population in urban areas, while in rural it is 1.9 per 10,000 populations.

Only 35% have access to essential medicines. There are significant disparities in health care spending, infrastructure and outcome between rural-urban and interstate populations and by income status.

35% population living below poverty line and cannot afford any expenditure on medicine.

Due to the gender discrimination women in rural areas are deprived of their health rights and suffer due to many curable diseases.

Electricity:

Rural areas in India are electrified non-uniformly, with richer states being able to provide a majority of the villages with power while poorer states still struggling to do so.

The picture of electricity access in India is one of disparity. A clear disparity in access can be seen between rural and urban population, while in the urban areas 92.7% of the population has access to the electricity in rural areas only 55.3% of population has the access to electricity.
16.4 CHANGING LAND USE

Land is the prime resources of the vast majority of the poor in India deriving livelihood from agriculture. The basic environmental concern with the conversion of rural land to urban use is that urban growth often involves the appropriation of some of the best agricultural land in the country, and/or that it invades ecologically-fragile areas.

Apart from the known effects of urbanisation on global warming, acid rain and ozone depletion it is also claimed that urbanisation has serious impact on the availability of arable land use and subsequently leading to deforestation in many parts of India. With increasing urbanisation, the land under forest has declined over time and across States of India. Urbanisation is also associated with increased land utilisation for non-agricultural purposes and density of population with intensity of cropping pattern. According to India State of Forest Report 2011 the forest land and tree cover of the country is 78.29 million hectare which is 23.18% of the geographical areas of the country. In comparison to 2009 assessment there is decrease of 367 sq.km.in country’s forest cover. There has been significant loss in one district in Andhra Pradesh —Khammam[1].

Some of the causes of declining area under forest in India are-

- Prevailing practice of shifting cultivation in the given region.
- Timber smuggling in the states like Andhra Pradesh.
- Increasing demand for industrial products.
- Increasing demand for industrial wood.
- Construction of roads and dams in forest areas.
- Construction of residential areas.
- Nuclear disaster and natural calamities.

16.5 CHANGING LAND USE AND IMPACT ON RURAL LIFE.

Land use changes result from population growth and migration of poor rural people to urban areas for economic opportunities. Changes in land use directly influence the regional air quality, energy consumption and climate at global and regional, local scales.

Land uses change although essential for economic development it does not come without cost. Any change in land use reduces the amount of land available for cultivation and agricultural production. Soil erosion, desertification and soil degradation reduces the quality of land resource.
Urbanisation, industrialisation, mining and quarrying activities, and big medium irrigation projects have taken their toll of India's cultivable lands and forests.

Land and forests are the main sources of livelihood of rural people; they are perpetually threatened over their land rights, especially in urban fringes. Today this threat has become more alarming as the cities are growing fast than ever in India. The cities have begun to sweep over the rural areas. Wealthy people in urban areas have seeking for plots for their recreational activities and second homes all along the highways in different parts of India. This also led to change in employment pattern in rural areas. For example the employment in secondary and tertiary industry is on rise in many part of Maharashtra. (Especially in Konkan area).

Industrialisation near the rural area is polluting the water resources posing threat to the cultivable land as well as drinking water in many rural parts of India.

Environment disturbing developments taking place close to tribal habitats, forcing the tribal to move out, though there is no formal transfer and acquisition of land.

16.6 URBANISATION AND GROWTH OF MEGA CITIES

Urbanisation is one of the most striking human induced land transformations of the current era. Urbanisation is associated with increased land utilisation for non-agricultural purposes. It is very recent phenomenon and closely related with industrial revolution and associated with economic development. Urbanisation is a form of social transformation from traditional rural societies to modern urban communities. It is progressive concentration of population in urban unit. These changes manifests themselves in the increasing concentration of population in urban settlements larger than villages, in the increasing involvement of the people in the secondary and tertiary production and functions. Urbanisation not only accompanies to industrialisation, but also linked with modernisation. Urbanisation is an increase in a population in cities and town versus rural areas. Urbanisation can be defined as the rapid and massive growth of and migration to large cities. Urbanisation is the process by which large number of people becomes permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities. Natural increase of urbanisation occurs when natural population growth in cities is higher than in the rural areas.
The level of urbanisation is an index of transformation from traditional to modern one. It is an established generalisation that an increase in urbanisation which boosts the secondary sector and reduces the dependence on primary sector is considered as a symbol of economic growth and development. Economic growth influences the urbanisation and urbanisation in turn affects the rate of economic growth.

Causes of urbanisation-
1. Unbridled influx of rural population into urban areas.
2. Rural to urban migration due to population pressure and lack of resources in rural areas. This factor is known as push factor.
3. People living in rural areas are pulled to city for greater employment opportunities, well-paid jobs and better standard of living.
4. Natural increase caused by a decrease in death rate while birth rate remains high in cities.
5. Growth of modern industries, commerce and service occupation concentrated in the cities.
6. Availability of good health and infrastructural facilities in cities.
7. Advanced education and education facilities in cities.
8. Disintegration of joint family system.