

# URBANIZATION AND SLUM POPULATION IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

Rinku

Assistant Professor in Geography  
A.I.J.H.M College, Rohtak (HR.)

**Abstract:** *Urbanization is a long term process and an index of transformation from traditional rural economy to modern industrial products based economy. In this perspective, the pace of urbanization and urban development has been very slow in India. As per census of 2001, only 28 percent of total population was living in urban areas which increased to 31.8 percent in 2011. Furthermore, it may be stated that share of urban population in 2014 was 32.37 percent and 33.54 percent in 2017. Thus, the growth of urban population has been very slow in recent years, when compared to developed countries. In other words we can say that the urbanization as a process in India is quite different from the western countries. Nevertheless, the process of globalization has given a momentum to the economic growth and industrialization in the country. Most of the scholars assume the fact that Industrialization and urbanization are keenly inseparable in India. Therefore, due to the process of Industrialization, the concept of urbanization has come into full swing in the recent years. Consequently, unplanned process of urban development in India has badly impacted in different ways such as lack of basic facilities like infrastructure, drinking water, housing, transport, air pollution, slums, education, sewerage, garbage, health etc. in metropolitan cities like Delhi, Bombay, Chennai, Calcutta, and such other big cities. Today growth of slums in urban areas has become a major problem and challenge to urbanization in the country which is a debatable issue for social scientists.*

**Keywords:** *Urban Areas, Infrastructure, Industrialization, Slums, Slum Population, Urbanization.*

**Introduction:** Today we are living in the era of globalization. There is a great impact of globalization on the growing urbanized India in the wake of 21<sup>st</sup> century. Actually, urbanization is a progressive concentration of population in urban areas which may be explained as a process of switch from spread out pattern of human settlements to one of concentration in urban centers where urban agrarian society passes to industrial society. In this perspective, India shares the most crucial form of urbanization since 1991. But it has become a major issue for debate in the wake of this century which has almost affected all aspects of economic growth in the recent years. The degree of urbanization in India varies widely among all the states. Goa is the most urbanized state with 49.77 percent population followed by Mizoram, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Likewise, most of the Union Territories like Delhi, Chandigarh etc. are highly urbanized. According to the census of 2011, maximum concentration of India's urban population was found in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. Here it is noteworthy that urban population of Uttar Pradesh was a large accounting for 34.5 million as per census of 2001 and as per census of 2011, 22.27 percent people in Uttar Pradesh lived in urban areas. Today Ghaziabad, Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra, Meerut are the highly populated urban areas of Uttar Pradesh. If we discuss about slum population in Uttar Pradesh, it was 10.8 million in 2011 which has increased to 12.3 million in 2017. According to the report of the 'Working Group on Urban Poverty, Slums and Service Delivery System', total slum population in India is 104.668 millions and Maharashtra is at the top with 20.5 million slum population in 2017.

**Research Methodology:** The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. The source of primary data is statistical abstracts of various censuses of India particularly census of 2001 and 2011. Most of the secondary data has been collected from reference books, journals and official websites. The research is exploratory in nature and the researcher has tabulated and analyzed the data to pace the study.

**Research Objectives:** The present research paper has the following research objectives:

- To know about the concept of urbanization.
- To highlight the process of urbanization in India.
- To trace out the key aspects of slum population.
- To point out the problems and challenges of urbanization.

**Review of Literature:** The fact is that urbanization is a process of change from rural to urban areas which deals with the geographical mobility. **K.D. Sharma (2011)** in his study has discussed the process of urbanization in India and its future trends and structure of urbanization focusing on an urgent need to look into the growth behavior of small towns. Likewise, **R.B. Bhagat (2011)** in his study has traced out the emerging pattern of urbanization in India by establishing a cause - effect relationship which has been proved conducive to growth and development of urbanization in different regions of the country. **A. Kundu et.al. (2011)** in their study have pointed out about the urban agenda for urbanization in the country including various urban issues and problems with possible strategies to overcome. **R.S. Sangwan et. al. (2012)** in their study have highlighted the fact that the rapid urbanization through industrial development is responsible for unsystematic and unplanned growth of cities and this type of urban growth creates the tribulations like unhealthy slums, infected environment, industrial and commercial areas resulting in traffic bottle necks and such other problems.

**N. Jaysawal and S. Saha (2014)** in their article, "Urbanization in India: An Impact Assessment" have pointed out that urbanization is not merely a modern phenomenon, but a rapid and historic transformation of human social roots on a global scale, whereby predominantly rural culture is being rapidly replaced by predominantly urban culture. It is an index of transformation from traditional rural economies to modern industrial one. Today modern cities have grown in a haphazard and unplanned manner due to fast industrialization. Cities using capital intensive technologies are unable to generate employment for rural migrants and mega - cities are subject to extreme filthy slums and very cruel mega cities denying drinking water, shelter, electricity, sanitation, transport etc. facilities. Therefore, urban areas are suffering from urban poverty, unemployment, housing shortage, infrastructure, pollution, traffic jams and degradation in the quality of urban life.

**T. Sadashivam and S. Tabassue (2016)** in their article, "Trends of Urbanization in India: Issues and Challenges in 21<sup>st</sup> Century" have highlighted the facts that due to impact of globalization, we are seeing a growing urbanized India. By the middle of 21<sup>st</sup> century India, the urbanization in India will be engulfing more than half of its population. Today the growth of urbanization in India is basically through two ways, one is through increase in the urban population, which will be natural and the second one is through migration which is result of

people migrating from rural to urban areas and also from small cities to big cities. Consequently, we will find new problems and challenges emerging out of the process of urbanization in future. Therefore, India needs to be sustainable in the process of urbanization.

### What is Urbanization?

Urbanization is a long term process of transformation from rural economies to modern economies. India is one of the countries that have experienced a low level of urbanization. Most of the scholars have assumed that India's urbanization may be termed as over-urbanization and pseudo-urbanization. The most of the big cities in India have attained inordinately large population size leading to virtual collapse in urban services and followed by basic problems particularly in the field of housing, electricity, water, infrastructure and quality of life. Therefore, urbanization is a product of demographic explosion and poverty induced rural-urban migration. Urbanization is not occurring not due to urban pull, but due to rural push. Moreover, it is a progressive concentration of population in urban areas. **Kingsley Davis (1962)** has explained urbanization as process of switch from spread out pattern of human settlement to one of concentration in urban centre. Thus, the term urbanization means the increasing share of a nation's population living in urban areas.

In Census of India, 2001 towns were classified into two categories:-

- a) **Statutory Towns:** All places with municipality, corporation, and cantonment based or notified town area committee etc. so declared by the state law.
- b) **Census Towns:** Places which have a minimum population of 5000 with at least 75 percent of male working population engaged in non-agriculture pursuits and a density of population for at least 400 persons per sq. km.

In this census, it was also decided that core town or at least one of the constituent towns of an urban agglomeration should necessarily be a statutory town and the total population of all the constituents should not be less than 20,000.

**Urbanization in India:** Industrialization has been a major cause of urbanization in India because it has provided job opportunities to migrant people. The attraction of city life, better standard of living, better educational facilities, better infrastructure, better medical facilities etc. have also made speedy process of urbanization and people from rural areas have migrated to big cities. For example, Delhi is known as migrant city due to a large number of people migrated from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana etc. Consequently Delhi's growing urbanization has a regional as well as national wide impact on basic amenities.

The number of total population increased from 23.84 crores in 1901 to 102.86 crores in 2001, whereas number of population residing in urban areas increased 2.58 crores in 1901 to 28.53 crore in 2001. According to 2001 census, in India out of total population of 1027 million about 285 million lived in urban areas. Meanwhile, Goa was the most urbanized state with 49.77 percent urban population followed by Mizoram, Tamilnadu and Maharashtra. The degree of urbanization was found very high in southern, western and north eastern states. Maximum concentration of urban population was found in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamilnadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. During this period urban population of Uttar Pradesh was accounted 34.5 million. Now it was observed that India was at acceleration stage of the process of urbanization.

According to the census data of 2011, there were 53 cities with the population of more than one million. Now it is estimated that these cities will be 70 by 2031 with more than one million population. Meanwhile, there were only three cities having more than ten million population and there will be six cities by 2031 having 10 million population in the country. According to an estimate, total urban population by the year 2030 will be 600 million, which will account for the 40 percent of the total population of the country.

**Table 1. Decadal Urban Population Growth in India**

Sr. No.	Year	Urban Total Urban Population (In Crores)	No. of Towns	Share of Urban Population in Total Population (%)	Growth of Urban Population (%)
1	1951	6.24	2,843	17.3	41.4
2	1961	7.89	2,365	18.0	26.4
3	1971	10.91	2,590	19.9	38.2
4	1981	15.95	3,378	23.3	46.1
5	1991	21.76	3,768	25.7	36.1
6	2001	28.61	5,161	27.8	31.3
7	2011	37.71	7,935	31.16	31.8

(Source: Census of 2011)

The data given in table 1 indicate that there were 2,843 towns or urban agglomeration in 1951 which increased to 5,161 in 2001 and 7,935 in 2011. Urban population in 2001 was 28.61 crore which increased to 37.71 crores in 2011. The share of urban population in total population was 17.3 in 1951 which increased to 27.8 in 2001 and 31.16 in 2011. If we talk about the decadal growth of urban population, the data shows that it was 41.4 percent in 1951 and highest in 1984 with 46.1 percent growth. In 2001, it was 31.3 which increased to 31.8 percent in 2011.

**Slum Population in India:** A slum is highly populated urban residential area consisting mostly of closely packed decrepit housing units in a situation of deteriorated or incomplete infrastructure, inhabited primarily by impoverished persons. It is the one of a city where living conditions are very bad and housing is unplanned resulting lack of basic amenities. The rapid process of urbanization results to acute shortage of housing and compels the poor migrant people to live in slums. Today slums have developed in almost all the Indian cities. These are called 'Bustees' in Calcutta, 'Jhuggis' in Delhi, 'Chawl' in Mumbai and 'Cheri' in Chennai. The slums have been defined by the Government of India under '**Slum Area Act of 1954**' as per dominantly a residential area, where dwelling by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and lack of ventilation. It is estimated that 40 percent of people in mega - cities live in slums. According to an estimate, 48.88 percent people live in slums in Mumbai and 32.55 percent in Calcutta and 18.89 percent in Delhi.

**Table 2. State-wise Projected Slum Population from 2011 to 2017 (In Millions)**

State	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.034	0.035	0.037	0.038	0.040	0.041	0.043

Andhra Pradesh	8.188	8.273	8.357	8.440	8.522	8.603	8.681
Arunachal Pradesh	0.098	0.103	0.109	0.114	0.120	0.126	0.131
Assam	1.071	1.100	1.130	1.160	1.191	1.222	1.254
Bihar	1.684	1.707	1.730	1.753	1.774	1.796	1.817
Chandigarh	0.332	0.349	0.365	0.382	0.397	0.411	0.430
Chattisgarh	2.112	2.169	2.228	2.288	2.348	2.410	2.471
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.026	0.029	0.032	0.034	0.037	0.040	0.043
Daman and Diu	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.010	0.010
Delhi	3.163	3.261	3.361	3.464	3.571	3.682	3.793
Goa	0.155	0.161	0.168	0.175	0.181	0.186	0.192
Gujarat	4.663	4.760	4.857	4.954	5.052	5.150	5.246
Haryana	3.288	3.391	3.495	3.600	3.707	3.815	3.924
Himachal Pradesh	0.087	0.089	0.091	0.093	0.095	0.097	0.099
Jammu and Kashmir	0.494	0.504	0.514	0.524	0.534	0.544	0.554
Jharkhand	0.932	0.949	0.966	0.984	1.001	1.019	1.037
Karnataka	3.631	3.700	3.770	3.840	3.910	3.981	4.049
Kerala	0.533	0.536	0.539	0.541	0.544	0.546	0.548
Lakshadweep	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
Madhya Pradesh	6.393	6.523	6.654	6.786	6.918	7.051	7.181
Maharashtra	18.151	18.550	18.951	19.353	19.754	20.153	20.557
Manipur	0.075	0.076	0.077	0.077	0.078	0.078	0.079
Meghalaya	0.205	0.209	0.212	0.215	0.219	0.223	0.226
Mizoram	0.106	0.108	0.110	0.112	0.114	0.116	0.118
Nagaland	0.083	0.084	0.085	0.086	0.087	0.088	0.089
Orissa	1.736	1.771	1.805	1.841	1.876	1.912	1.948
Pondicherry	0.137	0.143	0.150	0.156	0.162	0.167	0.174
Punjab	2.798	2.864	2.930	2.996	3.063	3.128	3.194
Rajasthan	3.826	3.895	3.962	4.039	4.095	4.160	4.225
Sikkim	0.013	0.014	0.014	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.016
Tamil Nadu	8.645	8.863	9.081	9.299	9.515	9.730	9.940
Tripura	0.131	0.134	0.137	0.140	0.143	0.146	0.149
Uttar Pradesh	10.878	11.127	11.379	11.631	11.885	12.140	12.394
Uttarakhand	0.826	0.846	0.866	0.887	0.907	0.927	0.948
West Bengal	8.547	8.641	8.733	8.825	8.919	9.014	9.106
India	93.056	94.978	96.908	98.845	100.787	102.729	104.668

(Source: Report of the Working Group on Urban Poverty, Slums and Service Delivery System, Steering Committee on Urbanization of Planning Commission 03 Oct. 2011, New Delhi, p. 60 )

**Problems and Challenges:** The process of urbanization in India has impacted both positive and negative. It has changed the land use pattern and engulfed the nearly fringe villages and converted the agricultural lands. There is mushrooming growth of apartments and in busy centers; the apartments are given permission without checking the way of sewage facilities. To sum up, we can say that the urbanization has created so many problems and challenges to human development that today we are facing the problem of pure drinking water and air in big cities like Delhi, Calcutta and Mumbai. There are some negative impacts or problems and challenges of urbanization as under:

- It has changed the land use pattern in the whole country.
- It has resulted in accommodation problem in urban areas.
- Pollution has become a major problem in mega cities.
- Today urban areas are known for high rates of crimes.
- It has strained family relations and disintegrated joint families.
- It has created slums and associated problems.
- Today huge traffic jams have become a major problem in mega cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai.
- The problem of garbage and solid waste treatment has become a major challenge to urban development.
- The sewerage problem in big cities like Delhi is a great challenge and Delhi's Yamuna has turned into a giant sewer river.



- Floods in rainy season have become a major problem due to improper drainage system in big cities like Delhi and Mumbai.
- It has badly impacted the basic amenities like drinking water, education and health facilities.
- It has created the problem of environmental pollution and degradation in quality of life.

**Conclusion:** Thus, the process of urbanization in India has created many problems and challenges to quality life in urban areas. Today slums are very common problem in mega cities and it is estimated that by 2031, forty percent people will be living in slums in urban areas of the country. In the current scenario, the whole situation is not satisfactory and there are many challenges to urbanization. Therefore, it is an urgent need that development planning should be emphasized on development of newly annexed urban areas. Policies for urban development should be well - planned consisting optional development and restorative planning. Moreover, there should be balanced regional and urban planning. However, Modi Government has declared that a proper accommodation and housing facilities will be provided to the people living in slums. But it is a big challenge and we need to work out on the concept of sustainable development and environmental friendly techniques of urban development.

#### References:

- [1] A. Kundu, (ed.), **Inequality, Mobility and Urbanization**, Manak Publications, New Delhi, 2000.
- [2] A. Kundu, et.al., "Redefining the Inclusive Urban Agenda in India", **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol. 46 (5), 29 January 2011, pp. 54-63.
- [3] **Census of India- 2001**, New Delhi.
- [4] **Census of India- 2011**, New Delhi.
- [5] G.K. Chadha, **Sectoral Issues in the Indian Economy**, Har - Anand Publication, New Delhi, 1994.
- [6] K. Davis, "The Urbanization of Human Population", **Scientific American**, Vol. 213(3), 1965, pp. 41-53.
- [7] K.D. Sharma, **Urban Development in the Metropolitan Shadow: A Case Study from Haryana**, Inter - India Publication, New Delhi, 1985.
- [8] Kingsley Davis, "Urbanization in India- Past and Future", in R. Turner, (ed.), **India's Urban Future**, University of California Press, Berkley, 1962.
- [9] M.Brockehoff, "Urban Growth in Developing Countries: A Review of Projections and Predictions", **Population and Development Review**, Vol. 25(4), pp. 772-778.
- [10] N. Jaysawal and S. Saha, "Urbanization in India: An Impact Assessment", **International Journal of Applied Sociology**, Vol. 4(2), 2014, pp. 60-65.
- [11] Nina Singh and Jitendra Kumar, "Urban Growth and Its Impact on City Space: A Geospatial Analysis of Rohtak City", **Journal of Geographic Information System**, Vol. 4, Vol. 4, 2012, pp. 12-19.
- [12] R.B. Bhagat, "Urbanization and Access to Basic Amenities in India", **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol. 46 (34) 20 August, 2011, pp. 10-12.
- [13] R.S. Sangwan et.al., "Urban Growth, Land Use Changes and Its impact on Cityscape in Sonapat City", **International Journal of Advanced Remote Sensing and GIS**, Vol. 2 (1), 2013, pp. 326-332.
- [14] R.S.Sangwan et.al., "Impact of Urban Sprawl on City Environment: A GIS Based Study of Karnal City", **Journal of Water and Land Use Mangement**, Vol. 2(2), 2012, pp. 1-6.
- [15] S. Graham and S. Marvin, **Splintering Urbanism**, Routledge, London, 2011.
- [16] S. Mukherjee, "Nature of Migration and Urbanization in India", in K. Srinivasan and K.B. Pathak, (ed.), **Dynamics of Population and Family Welfare**, Himalaya Publishing, Bombay, 2001, pp. 230-238.
- [17] T. Sadashivam and S. Tassu, "Trends of Urbanization in India: Issues and Challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", **International Journal of Information Research and Review**, Vol. 3(5), May 2016, pp. 2375-2384.