

TRENDS OF URBANIZATION

- Urbanization is a dynamic process, which transforms the rural into urban areas and gives the impetus of growth to the other existing urban areas. Urbanization brings with it a whole gamut of social progress. It is a long term and continuous process. Urbanization is a complex phenomenon and nearly all the societies, nations, states and regions go through it. It is the process of becoming urban or to be making them urban. In real sense, the increase in the ratio of urban population is called urbanization.
- Urbanization occurs when the rural character of a settlement is gradually replaced by urban character in terms of physical, socio-economic and demographic features. *According to B. N. Ghose, “Urbanization is the process by which villages turn into towns and towns develop into cities.”* Essentially, it is an increase in the portion of people living in urban areas. This usually occurs when a country is still developing. It is both an indicator and a manifestation of economic development and social change. In the process of urbanization, the number of urban settlements and the size of population and area of an urban settlement increases with time to time. *According to Kingsley Davis, “Urbanization refers to the proportion of the total population concentrated in urban settlements or else to arise in this proportion.”* The speed of urbanization is affected by the economy of an area. It also develops structural and behavioural changes in population.

- Urbanization is a behavioural, structural and demographic process by which villages turn into towns and towns develop into cities. It is both an indicator and manifestation of economic development and social change. According to **Hauser and Duncan**, characterize urbanization as a change in the pattern of population distribution. It involves an increase in the size of urban population and growth in number and size of urban places with increasing concentration of population of such places. **Smails** considers urban places as a specific man-made landscape, which must have some specific characteristics like permanent fixed cluster, comparatively high level of living, with some division of labour i.e. specialization of task which include variety of secondary and tertiary services like serving, trading, manufacturing etc, rather than merely be engaged in primary sector like in agriculture, fishing, hunting, gathering etc.
- India is experiencing the rapid increase in its total population and as well as in its urban population. In 1901, total urban population was 25.7 million, which reached to the figure of 377.1 million in 2011.
- Thus, during the last 110 years, it recorded 14.7 times increase. This is unevenly distributed in 7935 towns of different size. The rate of growth in urban population was very high, 46.14% in 1971-81. Whereas this growth rate was reduced to 36.19% in 1981-91, 31.40% in 1991-2001 and with slight increase 31.80% in 2001-1011. After independence, the decades of 1951-61 and 1961-71 recorded the growth 25.9% and 37.8% respectively. As a whole, the growth in urban population has been more than the growth in total population.
- In 2001-2011, the growth rate of total population was recorded 17.64%. On the contrary, the growth rate of urban population was 31.80 percent. Thus, it is clear that India is proceeding towards urbanization at a faster rate. Through, the percentage of urban population has not shown much impressive change. It was 10.91% in 1901, and thus reached to 31.16% in 2011, just indicating that India has entered in the acceleration stage of urbanization. Table No. 1 shows the trends of Urbanization in India 1901-2011.

Table No. - 1

TRENDS OF URBANIZATION IN INDIA 1901-2011

Year	Total Population (in millions)	Decennial Growth (in percentage)	Urban Population (in millions)	Decennial Growth (in percentage)	% of total population
1901	236.30	-	25.70	-	10.01
1911	252.10	5.57	26.60	2.40	10.57
1921	251.40	-0.31	28.60	7.30	11.38
1931	279.00	11.1	33.80	18.40	12.13
1941	318.70	11.22	44.30	31.10	13.91
1951	361.10	13.31	62.60	41.10	17.34
1961	439.20	21.5	78.80	25.90	18.00
1971	548.20	24.66	108.80	37.80	19.91
1981	683.30	24.43	156.20	46.14	23.34
1991	844.30	23.56	217.20	36.19	25.72
2001	1027.10	21.34	285.50	31.40	27.78
2011	1210.57	17.70	377.11	31.80	31.20

Source: Census of India (1901-2011).

▪ **PHASES OF URBANIZATION: -**

(i) **Period of slow urbanization: 1901-1931** – During the period of 1901 to 1931, the urban population noted the slow growth due to spread of epidemics, famines and high mortality. Though in 1918, a part of rural population was migrated to the towns, but it didn't left much influence on

the growth of towns. After 1921, the nation remained free from the fear of natural calamities. But it couldn't leave much influence on the urban growth. The urban population noted an addition of 8.1 million in these decades and the percentage remained between 10.01 and 12.13.

(ii) Period of moderate urbanization: 1931-61- During these three decades, urban population has shown an addition of 45 million. The proportion in 1931 was 12.13, which reached to 18.00 in 1961. Thus, this percentage recorded one and half times increase, whereas during the period, urban population increased by two and half times. This was beginning of the era of planned development in the country. It led the economic development with a slow speed in the early stage.

Table No. – 2

Phases of Urbanization in India, 1901-2011

Sl. No.	Stage of Growth	Period	Growth In Urban Population (in millions)	Growth Rate	Change in % o of Urban Population	No. of towns increased in the period
I	Slow	1901-1931	8.10	31.51	10.01-12.13	215
II	Medium	1931-1961	45.00	133.14	12.13-18.00	281
III	High	1961-1991	183.40	175.63	18.00-25.72	1279
IV	Very High	1991-2011	159.90	73.62	25.72-31.16	4326
Total Change		1901-2011	+351.40	-	21.15	6101

Source: Census of India (1901- 2011).

(iii) Period of Rapid urbanization: 1961-1991 – After 1961 the urban population has shown very high exceptional increase. During these three decades, there is an addition of 183.4 million urban populations, against the total increase of 405.1 million in the years of 1901-1961. The growth rate is the highest in 1971-81 decade, i.e. 46.14 %. During this period, 1279, new towns were emerged out on the map of India.

(iv) Period of High Rapid Urbanization: 1991-2011 – During these decades, 159.9 million urban populations was added. This addition is just equivalent to the urban population was increased from 25.72 to 31.16 percent. This period noted an addition of 4326 new towns. It is clear that a number of villages are proceeding towards urbanization. It is also observed that metropolitan cities are making impressive increase in their population size. These were 23 in number in 1991, but this number touched the figure of 53 in 2011. This high growth is caused due to following factors:-

- i.** Establishment of industrial and commercial establishments in the country in a large number.
- ii.** The attraction of people especially of rural people towards the towns and cities.
- iii.** To obtain the status of urban settlements by a number of rural settlements.
- iv.** The emergence and development of a number of new urban centers.
- v.** The high increase in the population size of existing towns, especially by the large metropolitan cities.

- During the last one hundred ten years, the growth of urban population has four distinct phases. The growth rate in urban population has been very poor in first thirty years of 1901 to 1931. After 1931, it seems to grow with a great speed, up to 1961, but after that the growth rate recorded very slowly in 1951-61, because of the change in definition of urban areas. In the decade of 1961-71, the growth rate increased. This decade noted the growth rate of 37.8 percent. Whereas, the question arises about the ratio of urban population in total population, it is observed that this proportion has increased by more than three times in the last hundred ten years, and the urban population has increased by more than fourteen times during this period. It is also to be noted that in our country, urban population as well as rural population both have shown very high growth. Table no. 2 shows the phases of urbanization in India.

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Dr. Manisha Kumari
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Geography
S. B. College, Ara