

URBAN GEOGRAPHY

RAVI KANT ANAND

Urban geography has been identified as a separate branch of Settlements geography which in turn, is a branch coming out of human geography. Urban geography is the study which deals with the study of compact non-agricultural settlements mainly towns and cities. It concerns with the spatial dimensions of urban centres. The origin, location, siting, growth, functions of urban centres and the relationship of one urban centre with the other make the subject matter of the study of urban geography. As a science of human settlement the Urban geography deals with the complex urban areas which has sharp internal differentiation.

Various definitions have been given related to Urban geography →

According to G. TYLOR,

Urban geography include the site evolution, pattern and classification of towns.

According to G.S. GOSAL,

Urban geography is the geographic study of urban places which evolve grow and exist as a service centres for their surrounding areas.

According to R.E. MURPHY,

Urban geography deals with spatial aspects of urban development.

According to L.D STAMP,

Urban geography is in fact the intensive study of towns and their developments in all their geographical aspects.

The scope of Urban geography has proliferated over the period of time. Under urban geography not only the actual town itself is studied but also the surrounding areas are studied in detail. The surrounding areas of towns and cities are greatly influence by these towns and cities. These influences can be in respect to economy, cultural and political makeup. On contrary, these surrounding areas also provide many of the facilities such as food etc. to the towns and cities thus the study of Urban geography is concern with following aspects →

- (a) The study of actual town itself
- (b) The spatial variation of population distribution in these towns.
- (c) The study of surrounding areas
- (d) The morphological patterning and spacing of urban settlements over the vast land surface.
- (e) The economic and functional characteristics of the populations residing towns and cities.
- (f) The urban landscape patterns of towns and cities.

Towns and Cities are the central points in the study of Urban geography. The term town refers to a compact settlement, larger than the village.

having prominent secondary and tertiary economic activities. They also have some kind of municipal administration. Towns have been defined by taking into account a fixed no. of inhabitants.

Differences between Rural and Urban Settlements

Rural settlement (farm, hamlet, village) Urban settlements (town and city)

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| • A predominant employment in agriculture or forestry. | • A predominant employment in commerce, service and manufacturing. |
| • Landuse character i.e. open land between settlements. | • A congested settlement particularly near the centre of the City where most commercial activities tend to locate. |
| • Social homogeneity, eg., common customs, preservation of religion, the idea of the extended family, eg - co-operation in farming activities. | • Social heterogeneity. |
| • Age structures i.e. a high share of the 5 to 24 age group and a high share of over 65. | • Age structures i.e., a high share of the 25 to 54 age group. |
| • Density of population is relatively low. | • A higher density of population, eg, UK aver 10 persons per acre. |

- A great proportion of old people and children because most young people migrate to the urban areas for employment.
- Mostly the village is the original place of people.
- A large proportion of young married couples with young children.
- A large proportion of people born outside the urban area.

Unlike rural settlements the urban settlements are generally compact and large in size. The basic differences between the rural and urban settlements are as follows:

- (1) The rural settlements derive their life support from land-based primary activities such as agriculture, animal rearing, forestry etc. whereas urban settlements depend on secondary, tertiary, quaternary activities for their livelihood/inhabitation.
- (2) Cities provide goods and services not only for themselves but for the people of rural countryside. On the other hand they receive food and raw material from the rural countryside. Such exchange between cities and villages take place through transport and communications network.

The rural settlements are generally less compact, they have large open fields between individual houses. On the other hand the urban settlements inherit a compact look. The houses are closely spaced without much open space between

them.

(3) Rural and urban Settlements also differ in their way of life, attitude, outlook. Rural people are less mobile and therefore the social relations among them are strong. They use simple technique and their pace of life is slow. On the other hand in urban areas the ways of life is complex, fast and the social relations are much formal.

Towns have been define differently in different Countries. In India, the census of India 2001, identified following criteria for the urban areas.

- (i) A minimum population of 5000 persons.
- (ii) At least 75% of the male working population should be engaged in non-agricultural activities.
- (iii) The population density should be at least 400 person/ Sq. Km.
- * (iv) The places which have municipality, municipal corporation, notified area committee, Cantonment (ESTD) Board also come under urban area population.

EVOLUTION OF TOWNS AND CITIES IN INDIA

Towns flourished in India since pre-historic time. The towns like Harappa and Mohenjodaro Civilization are worth to be mentioned. The development of these towns and cities continued until the arrival of Europeans in India in 18th Century. But in the period prior to the Commerce (अरम्भ कर्ता) of European the towns and cities in India developed very slowly with the efforts of European. The form of Towns and Cities completely changed in India. The historians identify the towns in India into following categories.

(1) Ancient Towns →

At least 45 towns in India have historical background and they have been existing for over 2000 years now. Most of these ancient cities developed as a religious or cultural centre. Varanasi is one of the important towns among these. Along with this Ayodhya, Prayag (Allahabad), Patna (Pataliputra), Mathura, Madurai are some of examples of ancient towns.

(2) Medieval Towns →

About 100 towns existing today have their roots in the medieval period. Most of these developed as the headquarter of various Kingdom. Most of these developed over the ruins (रासे) of earlier towns.

Most of these were developed by various invaders who came to India and ruled over various

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parts of the country. Delhi, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Agra etc. are some of these their examples.

(2) Modern City → The development of Modern City started after the coming of Europeans in India. British and other Europeans modified the Urban Scheme in India. Their efforts to develop towns were intended for making strong foothold in the Country.

First they develop towns in coastal locations mainly for trading purposes. Surat, Diu, Goa, Pondicherry are some of their examples.

Later the British people consolidated their hold in three nodal points of the Country. These are Mumbai, Calcutta, Madras. All of these towns have the British footprints in their structure. Rapidly with the growing political power of British, they develop various administrative centres throughout the Country. For relaxation they also developed several resort city in Himalayan region such as Simla; Mussoorie etc.

After independence again a large number of towns emerge as administrative headquarters. Many planned cities came into existence after independence such as Chandigarh, Bhubaneswar, Gandhinagar etc. The industrial development in the country paved the path for the development of several industrial centres such as Durgapur, Sindri,

Barauni with the further development in national economy. Several metropolitan cities and their satellite towns also flourished such as Delhi with satellite cities like Gurgaon, Faridabad, etc.

With the growth of industrial sector, there was a significant increase in the number of satellite towns.

Metabolic relationship between central city and its satellite towns is called as metropolitization.

Central city or core metropolitan area is the main economic and administrative center of the region.

It is characterized by high density of population and high concentration of economic activities.

Central city is surrounded by smaller and other areas which are less developed and less densely populated.

Central city is the economic and cultural hub of the region.

Central city is surrounded by satellite towns which are less developed and less densely populated.

Total	Central City	Satellite Towns	Rural Areas
100%	35%	45%	20%
2000	700	900	400