

Unit 1

What is Urban Sociology?

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Learning Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the origin and development of urban sociology;
- describe its subject matter and scope;
- explain the different approaches to the study of urban sociology; and
- discuss the relationship between urban sociology and other social sciences.

1.1 Introduction

Urban and Urbane are both derived from the Latin word *Urbanus* meaning “belonging to a city” and these were once synonymous in meaning. Urbane was borrowed first, from the old French term *urbain*, and it preserves the French pattern of stress. Subsequently, Urban was borrowed directly from Latin word *urbanus*. Urbane conveys the meaning of being “specialized, refined, polite or elegant”. These desirable qualities were considered to be the characteristic of urban rather than country folk. Urban refers to a city or town, which is directly opposite to village or country. A resident of a village is known as a folk and of a city is known as an Urbanite. More details about the concept of urban will be discussed in the Unit 2 of this block.

1.2 Origin and Development

Cities, appeared some ten thousand years ago. The scientific interest in the city is, however, a few hundred years old and the science of urban sociology is still more recent. What probably was the first book about the city possibly was written by an Italian, Giovanni Botero, whose *Delle Cause della grandezza della citta* appeared as early as 1598. Its English version was published in 1806 under the title ‘*A Treatise Concerning the Causes of the Magnificence of and Greatness of Cities*’. This book, of course, is now hardly more than a scientific curiosity and it cannot be said that it created a new science. It is only since the seventeenth century that the city has become an object of scientific enquiry and research.

The founders of political arithmetic and their successors, the statisticians, the students of population problems, the economists, and the historians

became interested in it and were joined by administrators, architects, planners, and social reformers; producing enormous literature. Urban sociology is indebted to these scholars. A few of the basic problems have been first investigated by such pioneers as Graunt, Ravenstein, Mayr, Supan, Buecher, Adna Weber, Willcox, and Hurd, but none of their works is truly urban sociology. Even after sociology had established itself as a new branch of science, its students took rare notice of urban phenomena. The first monograph written on the city was by a sociologist, Rene Maurier's *L'Origine et la fonction economique des villes*, published as recently 1910. As indicated by the title, its author approached the subject largely as an economist. The three early sociological classics – G. Simmel's, *Die Grosstadte und das Geistesleben*, a (The Metropolis and Mental life) 1903; Max Weber's, *Die Stadt(The City)*, 1921; and R.Maurier's, *Le Village et la ville*, 1929- were only parts of larger works. According to Hausserman and Halia (2005) “ it is fair to say that George Simmel was the first scientist to deserve the title of an Urban Sociologist”. He provided a sociological definition of the term ‘Urban’ and analysed the interaction between spatial density, social behaviour and economic differentiation. Some notable studies of that time include: Jane Addams' *Hull House Maps and Papers* in 1893, and Robert Woods' *The City Wilderness* in 1899. These were explorative studies, which laid the ground for later studies. Edith Abbott and Sophonisba P. Breckinridge in ridge in 1908 studied Housing in Chicago after Charless Booth in 1888 had completed an epochymaking study of life and labour in London. Rowntree in 1901 wrote *Poverty: A Study of Town Life and a study of destitution in York, England*. Both these studies were on a grand scale and made precise general formulation about city life.

Box 1.1 City and the Urban Phenomenon

“Fascination with the city, with the urban phenomenon, has existed throughout history. It is probably as ancient as the origin of the city itself and can be found in the folk wisdom as well as the more sophisticated social and political speculations of the majority of civilizations.

This preoccupation with the city-with its singularity, its strengths and weaknesses, its distinction from the countryside and a strong predilection to moral evaluation of the city-can be found in civilizations as diverse as the Jewish, Hellenistic, Roman, Christian, Indian, Chinese and Islamic. In all of them a highly ambivalent attitude is also found: on one hand appreciation of all the power, wealth, and potential creativity stored up within the city, and on the other hand fear of its corrupting influence contrasting with the supposedly simple virtues of the countryside. In consequence, all these cultures searched for some formula of the ideal city that would compensate for the negative aspects of urban life.” (Eisenstedt, S.N. of Schachar A 1987).

The real impetus came from Robert E.Park. His article “ The City”, which heralded the coming of a new era, was first published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1915. Unfortunately it received little attention at that time. Sociology was still a general science without much specialization.

It was still fighting for recognition, which it gained only slowly. In the United States of America, Urban Sociology got recognition in 1925 when the American Sociological Society devoted an annual meeting to Urban Sociology. The papers from this meeting were published by E.W. Burgess under the title, *The Urban Community*. Prior to this volume Park, Burgess and McKenzie had published a volume, *The City* (1925), which contained essays they had published in the previous decade. Indeed, these two works laid the foundation of the subject and this was further enriched by the students of Park and Burgess at the University of Chicago, which became well-known as the Chicago School of Urban Sociology.

In contrast, sociology is a relatively young discipline in India. It was only in 1920 that the first department of sociology was established at the University of Bombay by Professor Patrick Geddes. Although, during the decade 1914 to 1924 he made diagnostic and treatment surveys of some 50 Indian urban centers and brought out two volumes of *Town Planning Towards City Development* for Indore in 1918 (Boardman, 1976). Yet unlike Park and Burgess, his works could not lay the foundation of the subject in India. One of the main reasons was that, the subject of sociology was itself in its nascent form in India. The field of urban sociology remained unheard in Indian universities till 1960 (Ganguli, 1965).

M.S.A. Rao (1974) considered two main reasons for this neglect: First, the predominant view among sociologists that the distinction between rural and urban sociology is not meaningful in India due to its lower level of urbanisation and, second, the argument that in the Indian context, there was no dichotomy between the traditional city and the village, as both were the elements of the same civilization. Satish Saberwal (1977) observed in his paper on "Indian Urbanism: A Socio-historical Perspective", appearing in a special issue of '*Contributions to Indian Sociology*'.

Over sixty years ago Patrick Geddes wrote his *Report on re-planning of six towns in Bombay Presidency* (1915), prior to his appointment as the first Professor of Sociology in the University of Bombay, Geddes occupied the Chair only briefly; and G.S. Ghurye, his successor, wrote on the '*Cities of India*' in the March 1953 issue of *Sociological Bulletin*. During the years in between and since, sociologists and others have off and on referred to urban phenomena in India; but this terrain has until recently remained singularly devoid of decisive intellectual landmarks: the key ideas which cutting through thickets of data, clearly show the road ahead.' (Saberwal, 1977:1).

1.3 Subject-matter and Scope

According to Erickson, urban sociology is a generalizing science. Its practical aim is to search out the determinants and consequences of diverse forms of social behaviour found in the city. To the extent that it succeeds in fulfilling this role, it clarifies the alternatives of organised social action in a given situation and of the probable outcome of each. In other words, Urban Sociology deals with the impact of city life on Social action, Social relationships, Social Institutions, and the types of civilizations derived from and based on urban modes of living. Louis Wirth has written extensively on urbanism and described the complexity of our subject-matter:

"The city is not merely the point at which great numbers are concentrated into limited space, but it is also a complex heterogeneity in almost every characteristic in which human beings can differ from one another. In this respect the city represents perhaps the most striking contrast to the social entities that we call primitive, folk, and peasant societies. Consequently, the methods adapted to the understanding of the population of the metropolis are strikingly different from those suited to simpler and more homogeneous societies. This accounts for the fact that in attempting to understand the city we have had to resort to extensive statistical inquiries to determine the human elements of which it is composed. They differ, as do all societies, in sex and age, but they show peculiar distribution of age and sex groups and great variations in these respects as we pass from area to area. They differ widely from one another in occupation, in view of the more extensive division of labour, which the growth of the market has made possible. They differ in wealth and in income, ranging from the extreme of affluence to the depths of the direst poverty and insecurity. The city, moreover, by virtue of its focal position in the complex of capitalistic civilization, has attracted within its confines the racial and ethnic stocks of all the world and has more or less amalgamated them and blended their traits into a new aggregate of hybrids, here mingling with one another and there segregating themselves from one another, here collaborating and there at war, but in any case building a complex of cultures unprecedented in human history. This heterogeneity of the human materials in the city is at once a source of ferment and stimulation and of the frictions and conflicts that characterize modern society" (Louis Wirth 1940).



A street in Delhi

Reflection and Action 1.1

Observe the society in which you live in the sense of its physical nature i.e. whether it is a village, town, city or a metropolis in terms of its physical infrastructure. Recollect about its culture, values of people, etc.

Now write a note of two pages on "My City/Town/Village" based on the features you have identified. Discuss your report with other students at your Study Centre and your Academic Counsellor.

Urban sociology is one of the broadest and most eclectic of all sociological fields. It tends to overlap geography with its emphasis on spatial distribution of social institutions and social groups within the city; political science, with its emphasis on political behaviour, power and with decision making; economics, with its perspective on public policy, taxation, and public expenditures; and anthropology with respect to culture of groups. In many ways the interests of urbanologist (A specialist in urban sociology) and ecologist also overlaps with those of town and city planners, social workers, various other specialists in education, race relations, housing, and urban development and rehabilitation (Gist, 1957). Perhaps as a result of its eclectic nature, there is need to clarify and refine many of the basic concepts in the field: community, ecology, city, urban, urbanism, urban society, urbanisation, industrialization, modernization and so on. Currently, a major problem is that these concepts are loosely defined and used indiscriminately by the students of urban phenomena (Sjoberg, 1959). In order to define any of the above-mentioned concepts, we encounter a difficulty familiar to sociologists. There are very few sociological terms on whose definitions experts agree. The above mentioned concepts are no exceptions. Now let us discuss the concept of community and ecology.

Community: The term has many meanings. Sometimes it is used to denote a common habitat or the totality of all persons living in the same area. But frequently the term indicates more than merely a locality or its residents. Davis, for instance, stresses what he calls "social completeness". Accordingly, he defines a community as "the smallest territorial group that can embrace all aspects of social life....It is the smallest social local group that can be, and often is, a complete society". McIver and Page approach the problem from a somewhat different angle, emphasizing relationships rather than social organisation: "The basic criterion of community... is that all of one's social relationships may be found within it.". We can indeed speak of a community if common habitat creates positive emotional ties between all residents or at least all groups of residents. It is characterised by feeling of belongingness and friendly feeling towards each other, cooperation is promoted and community can fulfil all its functions. In this instance we speak of complete integration of a community.

Ecology: In simple words, ecology is the science which studies the relationship between living things and the environment. The city like any other environment, is a conditioning rather than a determining factor. Habitat shows its influence in areas other than human life. Long before sociologists began their research in this field, botanists became conscious of the influence which physical environment exerts on the life of plants. The science studying the relationship between plants and their environment is known as plant ecology. Sociology, thus seems to have borrowed the term from botanists. Park "the father of human ecology", was the first to use the word, which soon gained currency.

The concept of ecology, as subsequently developed by McKenzie and others, has yielded very valuable results. Some writers have gone too far in their attempts to establish close analogies between plant and human ecology. The difference between the two areas are much marked than superficial. We should be clear that human beings live on the soil while the plants in

the soil. This alone makes close comparison impossible, for mobility is a striking feature of human beings. As in other fields of sociology, it would be a fallacy to depend on biological analogies.

There is no consensus about the scope of ecology. As usual, there are a variety of definitions which do not exactly coincide. Hawley, for instance regards human ecology as a science which deals with the development and organisation of the community; Gist and Halbert call it the study of the spatial distribution of persons and institutions in the city, and the processes involved in the formation of patterns of distribution". We can define ecology as the theory of the interrelations between habitat and human beings.

All other concepts mentioned above will be clarified in other units because those units are exclusively dealing with these concepts.

1.4 Approaches to the Study of Urban Sociology

Due to the complex nature of the problem, there is need to approach it from several directions. First, we are concerned with the relationship between the *city and civilization*, with the fact that the modern literate man is integrally wound up with urbanism and all that it implies. The task here is twofold: (1) meaningfully to identify the city and (2) to trace the origins of modern city life back to their antecedents. Cities have been seen in the wider context of the history of civilization by many scholars such as G. Botero, A.F. Weber, Spengler, Toynbee, Geddes, Ghurye, Mumford and Wirth. While Botero and Weber sought more specific causes and conditions for the growth of cities in different civilizations, Spengler and Toynbee generally considered world history in terms of city history. Geddes viewed the city as a mirror of civilization. Mumford and Ghurye have elaborated this idea in different historical contexts. Wirth also maintained that the history of civilization should be written in terms of the history of cities and that the city was the symbol of civilization.

While these ideas remained general, more specific insights into urbanism and urbanisation in the context of civilization were provided by the set of concepts worked out by Redfield and his colleagues. They developed a different perspective in the study of cities, by constructing a typology of city and working out its organisational and functional aspects. Distinguishing between orthogenetic and heterogenetic process, they argued that primary organisation consists in the transformation of the Little Tradition into the Great Tradition, and that secondary urbanisation introduced the elements of freedom from tradition.

Second, the *physical mechanism* as a preconditioning force requires deliberation. This is the ecology of urbanism, a concern with the city as a physical object composed of streets, buildings, facilities for communication and transportation, and a complex of technical devices through which an area is transformed into a human community. This ecological dimension, a necessary approach, embraces those physical, spatial, and material aspects of urban life distinguishable from will, consensus, and deliberate action of a social psychological nature. The key question here is: Why do certain human types, groups, races, professions, and physical utilities tend to

move to certain areas in the city, and how does the configuration of settlement enter into social life? In case of Indian cities, especially in old cities like Delhi, Agra and Amritsar. The inner parts of the cities can be divided into Mohallas or traditional neighbourhoods which are exclusively inhabited by a particular occupational or caste group. All Indian cities have this pattern. The new or more recent parts of cities may be called as colonial and post colonial parts of the city. Usually these parts of the city are on the other side of the railway line, these are entirely different from old ones, here, people are grouped on the basis of income rather than caste or occupation. They are grouped on the basis of plot size also. The socio-economic status of an area can be determined on the basis of more number of bigger plots in that area and wider roads and available infrastructure. A poor residential area can be easily distinguished from such rich/posh residential areas due to its appearance and available infrastructure.

Third is the form of *social organisation*. This perspective deals with the basic forms of urban life that have evolved as a direct result of urbanisation. Sociology as a discipline has probably made its largest contribution to this dimension of the urbanisation process. The social organisation of the modern urban community can be said to include a huge and complex network of individuals, groups, bureaucratic structures, and social institutions, which is further differentiated into a complex division of labour. The unit of analysis can be ranked from the smallest and most simple to the largest and most elaborate, as follows:

The Individuals: The urban individuals can best be described in terms of patterns of personality organisation and individual life styles that are believed to have evolved in response to the conditions of urban life. Much of the early writings on the urban individual was based on the idea that the city produces distinct personality and behavioural characteristics that set urbanites apart from their rural counterparts. But recent writing on urban personality and life style has been more dynamic and has described mechanism for coping with or adjusting to the urban complex, or the techniques of urban survival (Lofland, 1973). The concern with the individual also brings into focus many socio-cultural dimensions, such as the positive or negative attitudes, values, beliefs, perceptions and symbolic attachments that have come to be associated with urban life.

Reflection and Action 1.2

Do you think you are an urban person or rural? List the attributes on the basis of which you have decided your personality.

Compare your answer with those of other learners at your Study Centre.

Primary Groups: These are small and intimate face-to-face groups, such as the family, couples, or intimate friendship groups. Some scholars feel that in large urban centres these groups would be swallowed up or destroyed, and that all that would remain would be segmented., impersonal, relationships thought to be characteristics of large

bureaucratic structures (Popenoe, 1973). Yet primary groups have remained a viable part of urban social organisation. While they appear to be necessary carry-overs from rural societies, their form and functions have changed in response to modern urban conditions. Such changes remain a focal point of much contemporary urban sociological research. Urban neighbourhoods fall in the middle range of urban social organisation, in the terms of size and complexity. They are larger and more complex than primary groups, but are more informal and less complex than large scale bureaucratic organisations. Sociologists do not entirely agree on the significance of local neighbourhoods for providing social bonds, arenas of social participation, meaning, or order to urban life at the local level, and there is a great deal of research and speculation on this topic.

The same can be said of social networks, which are much more amorphous patterns of interaction than neighbourhoods, as they are not necessarily tied to specific geographic location, and they remain at a somewhat more primitive stage of classification and explanation in sociological literature.

Voluntary Associations: Much has been said about the very high rates of participation in voluntary association in contemporary urban America. Much has also been theorized about their structural characteristics and functions. For now, it is enough to say that voluntary associations are also at the middle or intermediate range of social organisation, they are somewhat more formal and internally differentiated than neighbourhoods or networks, and that they serve both instrumental and expressive function that are not adequately met by any other level of social organisation. They fill a gap in urban social organisation by creating new blends of both primary group and bureaucratic form of social organisation.

Bureaucracy: Most large-scale and complex government and industrial organisations in the modern world can be characterized as bureaucratic in structure. Typically, bureaucratic organisations consist of an elaborate network of specialized roles or positions organised into a hierarchical division of labour. Each position has a definite sphere of competence, with specified tasks obligations, and a specified degree of authority or power. The table of organisation of bureaucracies defines the scope and limits of their function and such organisations are usually bound by a written body of rules that governs the behaviour of its members.

Social institutions: These are the largest and most abstract modes of social organisation within the urban community. In the most general sense, social institutions consist of widely accepted patterns of behaviour and expectations that evolve or are created as long-term solutions to the recognised needs of a community or society. Such basic institutions as the family or religion are pre urban in their origins. Although their forms and functions may have changed drastically as a result of rapid urbanisation, they continue to serve at least some of the recognised needs of modern communities. According to Boskoff, major urban social institutions recently have been acquiring a greatly extended radius of influence and control in terms of geography and population. Since they tend to be the practical

source of both stability and social change in modern urban communities, they are central to our understanding of current urban problems and of the many efforts to solve them.

Fourth is the social problem *perspective*. In one way or another, almost all contemporary social problems have been associated with the process of urbanisation. Thus, a diverse set of problems such as those relating to crime, mental illness, broken family life, poor housing, poverty, unemployment, class conflict, racial and ethnic conflict, drug addiction, pollution, and a host of others are often grouped together under the ominous title of “the urban crisis”. This tendency has been so pronounced in recent times that the temptation often arises to treat such problems as synonymous with the city itself. But to do so is misleading, because the city is much more than a simple compilation of its recognised social problems. To describe cities in terms of their problems is akin to trying to describe human being in terms of their diseases! Neither it is accurate to suggest that urbanisation is the main cause of most contemporary social problems. The relationship between a very broad and general social process such as urbanisation and the much more concrete examples of social problems such as just listed is very difficult to observe directly, and the chain of events by which these two levels of social behaviour can be said to be even remotely connected is complex and indirect. Nevertheless, the city and the metropolis are the settings in which many social problems have developed or intensified, and to understand these problems in their urban context is important.

In these four areas the sociologist enters into the picture of urbanism with the fundamental, all-pervasive question: *How can men obtain consent in the city without consensus being involved?* The heterogeneity of city life arising from great population density and division of labour allows for the concern of sociology since it gives rise to a diversity of individual types and collective behaviour.

1.5 Urban Sociology and Other Social Sciences

In Urban Sociology the focus is on human beings rather than on spatial patterns, on non-material culture rather than on physical objects, on groups rather than on areas, on social institutions rather than on infrastructure and on social techniques rather than on technology. This also shows that how urban sociology is different from geography, political science, economics and other subjects. The field of urban studies has been subjected to multidisciplinary research involving all the disciplines mentioned above besides history, demography and social anthropology and of course, sociology. Urban sociology is a specialised field which forms a part of urban studies. The urban sociologists of the 1960s and 1970s stressed on interdisciplinary approach and comparisons, accompanied by debate and discussion about the appropriate objects of analysis and core methodological issues (Milicevic, 2001). They mixed political activism with studies on the city and an emphasis on social conflict, power access to and control of resources and the systems of production, consumption, exchange and distribution. In doing so, they remained faithful to what have been

identified as core sociological issues (Park, 1972). If geographers and historians had 'space' and 'time' the sociologists had 'structure' and 'culture' in the unfolding history of urban studies.

1.6 Conclusion

The urban sociology refers to city or town, which is directly opposite to village or country. Urban sociology deals with the impact of city life on social actions, social relationships, social institutions, and types of civilization derived from and based on urban modes of living. In the early part of the 20th century, the subject was fighting to gain foothold. In 1925 it got recognition when American Sociological Society devoted an annual meeting to Urban Sociology. Afterwards it developed as an important branch of sociology. The first department of sociology was established in India at the University of Bombay by Professor Patrick Geddes in 1920. He had done substantial work on Indian towns from 1914 to 1924 but the field of urban sociology remained unheard of in Indian universities till 1960. It is one of the broadest and most eclectic of all sociological fields. Due to its complex nature, it needs to be approached from several directions such as; city and civilization', ecological, social organisation and social problem approaches. It differs from other social sciences because its main focus remains on social structure and culture.

1.7 Further Reading

Rao, M.S.A.(Eds), (1974). *Urban Sociology in India: Reader and Source Book*, Orient Longman, New Delhi.

Sandhu R.S., (2003). *Urbanisation in India: Sociological Contributions*, Sage, New Delhi.

Unit 2

Urban Centre, Urbanisation and Urban Growth

Contents

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Concept of Urban
- 2.3 Defining “Urban” in the Indian Context
- 2.4 Some Categories of Towns According to the Indian Census
- 2.5 Concept of Urbanisation and Urban Growth : Historical Background
- 2.6 Conclusion
- 2.7 Further Reading

Learning Objectives

After studying this unit you should be able to:

- define the concept of urban;
- provide a definition of urban in the Indian context;
- describe some categories of towns according to the Census; and
- discuss the concept of urbanisation and urban growth.

2.1 Introduction

The previous unit, unit 1 “What is Urban Sociology?” gave you some idea about this branch of sociology. In the present unit our main purpose is to learn the concepts of urban centre, urbanisation and urban growth. It is a well-known fact that it is extremely difficult to create a complete sociological definition of above mentioned concepts. Here, our attempt would be to review various definitions related to these concepts and find out some common characteristics to understand these concepts.

2.2 Concept of Urban

The word ‘urban’ was hardly used in the English language before the nineteenth century. It is briefly defined by the Shorter Oxford Dictionary as ‘pertaining to town or city life’. It is derived from the Latin ‘urbs’ a term applied by the Romans to a city—more especially the city of Rome. Urban refers to a city or town, which is directly opposite to village or country. Resident of a village is known as Folk and the city is known as Urban.

Review of Definitions

It is not possible to have a study of urbanisation unless adequate note is taken of the definition of an “urban area” or “urban centre” or city or town, which varies from country to country and from one census year to another. In Greenland, for example, a place with 300 or more inhabitants is called an urban area while in the Republic of Korea; an urban area must

have at least 40,000 inhabitants. Most European countries follow the example set by France in 1846, requiring a population minimum of 2000. Even in the same country, there are frequent modifications of the definition of "urban" which call for numerous adjustments to attain comparability over time. This, for example, was the case in the U.S.A. where a new definition of "urban" was adopted in 1950. These criteria for defining an urban area show how shaky international comparisons of the level of urbanisation based on national definitions can be in the absence of definitional adjustments (Bose, 1974).

Although urban population is widely understood to include the population resident in cities and towns, the definition of urban is, nevertheless, a complex matter. Population classified as "urban" varies greatly from one country to another. The delineation of areas as "urban" or "rural" is often related to administrative, political, historical, or cultural considerations as well as demographic criteria. As the United Nation Demographic Yearbook has indicated, definitions of "urban" fall into three major types: "(1) Classification of minor civil division on a chosen criterion which may include: (a) type of local government, (b) number of inhabitants, (c) proportion of population engaged in agriculture; (2) classification of administrative centres of minor rural division as urban and the remainder of the division as rural; and (3) classification of certain size localities (agglomerations) as urban, irrespective of administrative boundaries." Even for census purposes, then, the definition of urban involves a multidimensional approach and the setting of arbitrary cutting points in differentiating "urban" from "rural". (Hauser, 1965).

2.3 Defining "Urban" in the Indian Context

In the Indian context the census definition of "town" remained more or less the same for the period 1901-51. It was only in 1961 that an attempt was made to formalise and standardize the definition by stipulating certain statistical criteria for their identification. But an interesting feature of the Indian census has been the latitude given to Census Superintendents in regard to the classification of places that fall on or around the borderline of "rural" and "urban". (Bose, 1974).

According to Census of India, 1901:

Town includes

- 1) Every municipality of whatever size;
- 2) All civil lines not included within municipal limits;
- 3) Every other continuous collection of houses, permanently inhabited by not less than 5,000 persons, which the Provincial Superintendent may decide to treat as town for census purposes.

Thus, the primary consideration for deciding whether a particular place is a town or not is the administrative set-up and not the size of its population. Not all municipalities, civil lines areas and cantonments have a population of over 5,000 and yet these were classified as towns. At the same time, all places with a population of 5,000 and over are not necessarily towns. There are several overgrown villages with populations of over 5,000.

Further, the Census Superintendents also had the discretion to treat any place as a “town”, irrespective of its administrative set-up or population size, for “special reason”. This is not quite evident from the definition of “town” just quoted, for clause (3) of the definition refers to places with less than 5,000 persons as not being part of urbanfold. But it has been the census practice right from 1901 onwards to allow the discretionary power to Census Superintendents even with reference to places with population below 5,000.

The definition of “town” was thus not totally objective in as much as it was not based on a rigid statistical test. The census authorities were aware of these limitations but they preferred administrative expediency to statistical precision. (*Ibid*). However, after Independence an attempt was made to provide a very strict definition of an urban area at the 1961 Census, which is as under:

- a) All places with municipality, corporation, cantonment board, or notified town area committee, etc.
- b) All other places which satisfied the following criteria;
 - i) a minimum population of 5,000.
 - ii) At least 75 per cent of male working population in non-agricultural pursuits; and
 - iii) a density of population of at least 400 persons per sq. km.

The above definition underwent a slight change during 1981 and 1991. The urban criteria of the 1981 and 1991 Censuses varied somewhat from those of 1961 and 1971. The workers in occupations of forestry, fishing, livestock, hunting, logging, plantations and orchards, etc. (falling under Industrial Category III) were treated under non-agricultural activities in 1961 and 1971 Censuses, whereas in 1981 and 1991 Censuses these activities were treated as agricultural activities for the purpose of determining the male working population in non-agricultural pursuits. Besides, the discretion of Directors of Census in consultation with the State Government to treat some places having distinct urban characteristics as urban even if such places did not strictly satisfy all the criteria mentioned under category (b) above was discontinued at the 1991 Census and it has been followed in the 2001 Census also.

2.4 Some Categories of Towns According to the Indian Census

- a) **City:** Any urban area with a population of 100,000 or more is treated as city in the Indian Census.
- b) **Census Town:** Any area which satisfies the following criteria is classified as Census Town (CT) for the purpose of Census:—
 - i) a minimum population of 5,000.
 - ii) at least 75 per cent of male working population in non-agricultural pursuits; and
 - iii) a density of population of at least 400 persons per sq. km.

● Urban Agglomeration (UA) and Outgrowth (OG)

For the 1971 Census, the definition of “town” was the same as in 1961. However, the term “town group” was abandoned and instead, the expression “urban agglomeration” (UA) was used in the 1971 Census, which has been followed in the successive Censuses of 1981, 1991 and 2001 also. The UA is defined as a continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining urban outgrowths or two or more physically contiguous towns together with continuous well recognised urban outgrowths, if any, of such towns. Quite often, in several areas, fairly large and well-recognised localities such as railway colonies, university campuses, port areas, military campuses, etc. come up around a city or a statutory town. Though, location of all these areas falls within the revenue limits of a village or the villages, which are contiguous to the core towns, yet they deserve to be reckoned along with the town. Such localities in themselves do not qualify to be treated as individual towns in their own right and are hence treated as urban appendages of the urban centre to which they are contiguous. These are termed as outgrowths (OGs) for the purposes of the Census.

Reflection and Action 2.1

Select an area of the town/village/city with a minimum population of 5000 people. By random sampling, select every 100th person in this area. Get their names, addresses from the local post-office or telephone directory.

Find out from these 50 people (i) the nature of their occupation – agricultural or non-agricultural; (ii) level of their education; and (ii) number of members in their family and their occupations.

From the results you obtain, make a table with the above indicators. Write a report based on the analysis of this table on “My Village/ Town/City”. Discuss your report with other students at your Study Centre.

2.5 Concept of Urbanisation and Urban Growth: Historical Background

The most striking feature of India’s urbanisation is its long tradition. The emergence of early urban life here is associated with the evolution of the Indus Valley civilisation around 2500 B.C. (Dunbar 1951:2). Some temporal and spatial discontinuities in urban growth and spread notwithstanding, the urbanisation process diffused to other parts of the country under the impact of varied forces operating during the ancient (from early times to 1206 A.D.), medieval (1206 to 1757 A.D.) and modern (1757 A.D. till date) periods of Indian history. For that reason, India’s urban pattern is a mosaic of segments belonging to the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods (Rajbala 1986; King 1976).

Despite its long urban history spanning over nearly five millennia, India remains one of the less urbanized countries of the world. When it entered the twentieth century, it was one-tenth urban; it was around one-sixth

urban at the time of Independence (Krishan and Singh 1993). During the first half of the twentieth century, the process of urbanisation was slow, registering an increase in the level of urbanisation from 10.84 to 17.29 per cent. On the other hand, the urban population increased two-and-a-half times, i.e., it increased from 25 millions to 62 millions. The latter half of the twentieth century has been the era of urbanisation in the developing countries in general, and India in particular. During this period, although the level of urbanisation in India increased from 17.29 per cent to 27.78 per cent, the total increase in urban population is about four-and-a-half times, i.e., from 62 millions to 285 millions during 1951-2001 (Singh 2001). India has the second largest urban population among the countries of the world. Although there are 285 million urbanites and 35 metropolises in India as per the Census of 2001, the urban phenomena have not received due attention from sociologists. It has mainly attracted demographers, economists and geographers.

Box 2.1: Urbanisation in India

“Three-fourths of Tamil Nadu’s population will live in urban areas by the end of the next two decades. So will 61% of Maharashtra, while a majority of the population in Gujarat and Punjab will be in urban areas by then. As the world gets increasingly urban-according to Newsweek more than half of its population will be in towns and cities within a year for the first time in human history India too will be catching up with the trend, turning on its head the cliché that India lives in the villages.

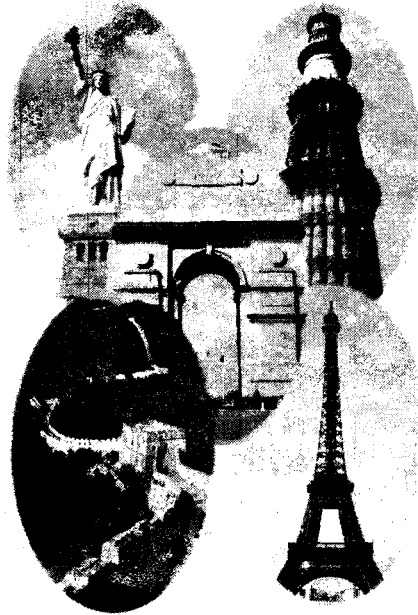
According to a projection of India’s population in 2026 by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner’s Office, large swathes of the country will become urban.....”

Town Tale		
(% of urban population to total 2001-2006)		
India	27.8	38.2
CTTY SLICKERS		
Tamil Nadu	44.0	74.8
Maharashtra	42.4	61.0
Gujarat	37.4	53.0
Punjab	33.9	52.5
Karnataka	34.0	49.3
Haryana	28.9	46.3
Uttaranchal	25.7	37.3
TRULY RURAL		
Bihar	10.5	11.6
Himanchal	9.8	13.6
Assam	12.9	19.4
Orissa	15.0	21.2
Uttar Pradesh	20.8	27.2
Jharkhand	22.2	28.8
Rajasthan	23.4	29.3

(Raghuraman, Shankar “75% of T.N. will be urban in 20 years” 8th Aug., 2006, Times of India)

Review of Definitions

Many scholars have defined urbanisation according to their own orientation and understanding. But there is a general agreement that that urbanisation is a complex socio-economic process closely connected with the scientific-technological revolution, and that it exercises a growing influence on all aspects of society's life affecting the nature of economic development, the demographic, ethnic and many social processes. As a complex many-sided process, its study requires a comprehensive approach involving many disciplines.



Some famous symbols of World Cities: New York, USA, Delhi, India, Greatwall of China, China, Eiffel Tower of Paris, France.

In the extensive literature devoted to the problem of urbanisation numerous urbanisation definition are used ranging from the terse definition determining urbanisation as a mere growth of the share of the urban population in the world, or in a particular country or region, to an overall definition according to which urbanisation is a world-historic process involving increasing concentration and intensification of human interaction and the integration of the forms of human beings activity which are becoming evermore varied. Urbanisation is understood as a stage, as a result and at the same time a pre-requisite of the progress of human interaction, all socially vital activities, and society's creative potential.

The same term is used to denote the gigantic concentration of the productive forces and social and informative activity reaching its apex in the megalopolises, and the emergence of individual urban settlements sparsely located in the vast newly-developed areas which are often distinguished by the extremely varied living conditions of the population.

Dividing the urbanisation concept in two, as proposed by Yu. L. Pivovarov, into urbanisation in the narrow sense of the word (urban growth and the increased importance of towns and cities in the life of society) and urbanisation in the broad sense of the word (a many-sided socio-economic process), does not solve the problem, although it helps to distinguish the quantitative and the qualitative sides of the process.

Let us consider some of the definitions used in literature. Part of them reflect the initial stage in the development of urban civilization: a mere

increase in the number of towns and in the urban population size. "Urbanisation, in the demographic sense, may be seen to indicate an increase in the proportion of urban population (U) to the total population (T) over a period of time (Bose 1974). As long as U/T increases, one would say there is urbanisation. However, theoretically it is possible that this proportion remains constant over time in situation where there is absolutely no rural to urban migration and both the rural and urban population grow at the same rate. B.S. Khorev takes the term urbanisation, as the first approximation, to mean the growing number of towns, especially large and super large cities, the increase in the share of the urban population in the country, that or in the population of the world. It is important to note here that in determining the level of the social and economic development of regions, the stress is often placed on the share of urban in the total population. Also, comparison of countries and regions using this indicator is highly conventional.

The threshold limits for classifying population in the "urban" category ranges from 200 town dwellers (Denmark, Sweden, Finland) to scores of thousands (according to the criterion of an urban community in Japan) according to censuses taken in 1960 or thereabouts. The criteria used in counts of the urban population often changes, which detracts from the reliability; of conclusion relating to its dynamics. In the former USSR in placing settlements in the town category, account was taken of both the number of its dwellers and the prevalence of non-agricultural activities among them, towns with a population of over 100,000 were usually placed in the category of cities. Towns with populations of over 500,000 fell into the category of big cities, Besides that, there is a special category of "million-plus" cities.

Data on the world growth rates of the urban population attest to an increasing intensity of urbanisation. Between 1880 and 1960 the share of the total urban population in the world rose from 3 to 33 per cent while the share of the population in big cities increased from 1.7 to 20 per cent. Now more than one of half the world population is urban. In case of India, the level of urbanisation has increased from 10.7 per cent to 27.8 per cent in last ten decades i.e. 1901 to 2001. But increase in urban population is more than 11 times i.e. 25 million to 285 million. In other words, level of urbanisation has been slow but urban growth has been fast which is clear from the increase in urban population. The second half of the 20th century has been marked by a spectacular increase in the share of large cities. During the past quarter of a century one notes significant deacceleration in urban growth, most of the developing countries including India, reporting share of urban population much below that predicted by UN Agencies.

Concentrating the more dynamic part of the population and more progressive kind of human activity, all big cities are now acting as engines of growth and development. The global cities have emerged and are dominating in the region and the world over with the economic power. "Urbanisation is characterised by movement of people from small communities concerned chiefly or solely with agriculture to other communities, generally larger, where activities are primarily centered in management, trade, manufacture or allied interests (Dudley Stamb, 1961).

Reflection and Action 2.2

Take any big city in India, such as, Delhi, Bombay, Chennai or Jaipur and collect as much as possible literature about its history, culture and society. Write an essay of five pages on this city and discuss it with your peers and Academic Counsellor at your Study Centre.

This characteristic feature of urbanisation gives rise to the definition of urbanisation as growth of importance of towns and cities in the life of a country or a region conditioned by social and economic progress, as the concentration of economic and cultural activities in large urban centres. A large, dense and heterogeneous population gives birth to a new socio-economic phenomenon—the urban way of life or “urbanism”. It is precisely this phenomenon and its wide spread that are becoming the basic and inherent attributes of urbanisation. In the words of Berezin (1972) “Urbanisation is a complex social process accompanied by the emergence of a specific way of life, which turns the cities into the prevalent form of organisation of social activity in our century and the centuries to come”.

Thus, the concept “urbanisation” implies changes:

- in the nature of people’s activities;
- in the ratio between the population engaged in agricultural activities and the rest of the population;
- in the population distribution according to types of settlements;
- in the population concentration levels and the levels of concentration of human activities;
- in the shaping of the urban way of life and its growing influence on the other sections of the population.

2.6 Conclusion

Urban refers to city or town. Urban growth pertains to increase in urban population as well as increase in number of towns/cities/urban areas. Urbanisation, however, is a broader concept which encompasses urban growth also. Further, it also includes changes: in the nature of peoples activities; in the ratio between the urban and rural population; in the population distribution according to different types of towns or cities; in population concentration and levels of concentration of human activities and in modifying the urban way of life and its further impact on the other sections of society.

2.7 Further Reading

Sandhu R.S. (2003). *Urbanisation in India Sociological Contributions*, Sage, New Delhi.

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Urbanisation in India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Unit 3

City and Metropolis

Contents

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Concept of City
- 3.3 Definition of Legal Basis
- 3.4 Statistical Basis
- 3.5 Basis of Density of Population
- 3.6 Basis of Occupation
- 3.7 Town/City According to Indian Census
- 3.8 Sociological Definition
- 3.9 Multiple Criteria
- 3.10 Basis of Market
- 3.11 Concept of Metropolis
- 3.12 Conclusion
- 3.13 Further Reading

Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- define the concept of city;
- describe the legal basis of city;
- describe the statistical basis of city;
- discuss the differences between cities on the basis of occupation;
- discuss how the Census of India defines town/city;
- provide the sociological definition of city;
- explain the multiple criteria of defining a city;
- outline the definition of city on the basis of market, and finally
- discuss the meaning and nature of metropolis.

3.1 Introduction

In the previous two units—What is Urban Sociology? and Urban Centre, Urbanisation and Urban Growth—you learnt about the origin and development of urban sociology as a branch of the discipline of sociology. You also became familiar with its subject matter, socio historical background and other concepts which form the body of this branch of sociology.

The present unit explains the concept of city and the concept of metropolis. It will provide the general as well as sociological understanding of what constitutes a city and a metropolis.

3.2 Concept of City

There are very few sociological terms on whose definition experts agree. The concept of the city is no exception. In defining the city we encounter

numerous problems which are known to all sociologists. Mumford (1968) also mentions this fact in his article on *City: Forms and Functions* in International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, he writes "Although the city as a form of human settlement dates back to the beginnings of civilisation, it long escaped scholarly scrutiny; and its very definition is still under debate. Levi - Strauss's attack on the ambiguities of "totemism" would apply equally to the term "city" but with less justification, since the city has undergone many changes without losing its architectural and institutional continuity." Everybody seems to know what a city is but no one has given a satisfactory definition. Since English lacks a neat vocabulary to distinguish the succession of urban forms from embryo to adult, their purely quantitative aspect is best rendered in German: Dorf, Kleinstadt, Mittelstadt, Grosstade, Millionenstadt. In English, eopolis, polis, metropolis, megalopolis, and conurbation have been proposed as equivalent series, with regional city and regional urban grid as possible emergent forms (Mumford *ibid.*).

Like many other sociological categories, the city is an abstraction, but the elements of which it consists—residents, structures, means of transportation, installations, and so on — are concrete entities of varying nature. What makes a city is the functional integration of its elements into a whole (Bergel, 955). Yet a city has not merely a single function but rather an assortment of many functions and not all of them are present in every city. These may vary from city to city and time to time. There are different ways to define city such as legal, statistical, density, occupation, sociological and economical. Let us discuss all of them in detail one by one.

3.3 Definition on Legal Basis

The city in many countries has been defined in legal terms. A place is legally made a city by a declaration, called a charter, which is granted by a higher authority. In India the State Government has the responsibility of granting municipal/civic status to a settlement or notifying it as a town. Such towns are known as statutory towns. The procedure is very clear but the bases of identification are not uniform across the states and extremely unsatisfactory. It is an explanation *ex post facto*. A place is not a city because it has received a charter; the grant of the charter is recognition that it has become a city. The definition disregards the fact that many eastern cities have never had a charter and that in the West the legal distinction between cities and rural places evolved at a rather late date.

3.4 Statistical Basis

Another equally simple approach is provided through statistical indicators. The U.S. Bureau of Census considers as cities all "incorporated places" of 2,500 or more inhabitants. This method meets the needs of statisticians but offers little sociological insight. The arbitrariness of this kind of definition is revealed by the fact that the United States census has had to alter its criterion from 8,000 inhabitants to 4,000 and finally to the present figure. To meet other difficulties, the census has had to include additional

urban developments, such as “unincorporated towns or townships or political subdivisions.” There are also substantial international variations. Most European countries follow the example set by France in 1846, requiring a minimum population of 2,000. This figure was approved by the International Bureau of Statistics in 1887. It has not been universally accepted, however, since Korea, for example, still sets the minimum limits as high as 44,000. In India the cut off point for non-statutory towns is 5000.

According to the statistical definition noted above, a place having a certain number of persons will be known as a city. It is obvious that a place does not become a city by merely reaching that figure. It is equally obvious that a place with that minimum number of persons and another one with over one million persons must have something in common, besides having a certain number of inhabitants if we have to justify our calling them both cities, as distinct from rural settlements.

3.5 Basis of Density of Population

Another quantitative criterion for defining the city on is the basis of population density. Like the definition based on the number of persons, the definitions based on the density of population have also been questioned for similar reasons. It is impossible to state at what density a settlement changes from the rural to the urban type. Some villages are rather thickly settled while some urban sections represent a residential vacuum. In Mumbai more than 55 per cent of slum population occupies only 6 per cent of residential areas. These are the areas which are densely populated in Mumbai, where as many sections of the city may have a density of less than 50 persons per acre. Same is the case in New Delhi. The “City” of London has practically no inhabitants and the borough of Richmond, which is a part of New York City, has a much lower density than the Neolithic European pile dwellings which possibly housed as many as 1,300 persons on less than 30,000 square yards. The density of cities varies from 10 (Australia and New Zealand) to 33 (Paris) per square hectare.

For these reasons attempts to arrive at an exact minimum figure of density which signifies the urban character of a settlement are rarely made. Walter F. Willcox tried to arrive at a numerical definition by investigating the density of Tompkins County, New York. He proposes the following figures: density of less than 100 per square mile constitutes “country,” density; from 100 to 1000 constitutes “villages,” and density above 1,000 “cities.” His proposition was only tentative since he had analysed only one American county. A Willcox himself realised, conditions in other counties might be different. But if the density varies from area to area while the cities maintain their character, the validity of the measurement would collapse, since a yardstick must not vary.

3.6 Basis of Occupation

Not satisfied by the density criterion, Willcox added the criterion of occupational structure in defining an urban centre. According to his own

definition, he regarded a district as rural only if “presumably agriculture is the only occupation,” while cities are places “in which there is practically no agriculture.” He remarked, “the fundamental difference between country and city is the difference between agriculture and the group of other occupations.”

3.7 Town / City According to Indian Census

The census of India has defined urban /town by combining legal, population, occupation and density, which is clear from the definition given below:

- a) All places with municipality, corporation, cantonment board, or notified town area committee, etc.
- b) All other places which satisfied the following criteria;
 - i) a minimum population of 5,000.
 - ii) At least 75 per of male working population in non-agricultural pursuits; and (this criteria has been used in many other ways as well. The confusion arises as in some census updates the criterion is stated as (1) 75% of all working population (2) 75% of adult male population. (3) Also some use “non primary” rather than “non agriculture”.)
 - iii) a density of population of at least 400 persons per sq. km.

Reflection and Action 3.1

Visit the local municipality office or village Block Development Office. Interview an officer there about the village/town/city you are residing in about its legal basis or statistical basis.

Write a report of one page on your city/town/village regarding the above topic. Compare your answer with those of other learners at your Study Centre.

The above definition underwent a slight change during 1981 and 1991. The urban criteria of the 1981 and 1991 Censuses varied somewhat from that of 1961 and 1971. The workers in occupations of forestry, fishing, livestock, hunting, logging, plantations and orchards, etc. (falling under Industrial Category III) were treated under non-agricultural activities in 1961 and 1971 Censuses, whereas in 1981 and 1991 Censuses these activities were treated as agricultural activities for the purpose of determining the male working population in non-agricultural pursuits. Besides, the discretion of Directors Census in consultation with the State Government to treat some places having distinct urban characteristics as urban even if such places did not strictly satisfy all the criteria mentioned under category (b) above was discontinued at the 1991 Census and it has been followed in the 2001 Census also.

- a) **City** : Any urban area with a population of 100,000 or more is treated as city in the Indian Census.

Box 3.1 New York City

Officially the City of New York, is the most populous city in the United States and the most densely populated major city in North America. Located in the state of New York, New York City has a population of over 8.1 million^[2] within an areas of 321 square miles (approximately 830 Km²)^[3].

The city is a center for international finance, fashion, entertainment and culture, and is widely considered to be one of the world's major global cities with an extraordinary collection of museums, galleries, performance venues, media outlets, international corporations and financial markets. It is also home to the headquarters of the United Nations.

The New York metropolitan area has a population of about 22 million, which makes it one of the largest urban areas in the world.^[4] The city proper consists of five boroughs: The Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. With the exception of Staten Island, each of these boroughs is home to at least a million people and would be among the nation's largest cities if considered independently.

Nicknamed the 'Big Apple', the city attracts large numbers of immigrants (over a third of its population is foreign born) as well as people from all over the United States who come for its culture, energy, cosmopolitanism, and economic opportunity. The city is also the safest of the 25 largest American cities.

Source: The Encyclopedia of New York City, Kennath T. Jackson 1995)



3.8 Sociological Definition

Some scholars have defined a city as a place which has become so large that people no longer know each other. Sombart calls this a "sociological" definition. For very small cities the statement is patently incorrect. In big cities face-to-face contacts are more numerous than anywhere else in the country; for this reason Sorokin and Zimmerman correctly consider greater number of contacts as an urban, not as a rural characteristic. In India small towns are just like villages where such definition may not be applicable.

3.9 Multiple Criteria

Since the quest for a single criterion has met with no success, some authors—notably, Sorokin and Zimmerman, Maunier, and Sombart - hold that a proper definition must consist of a combination of factors: "multiple" or "compound" definitions. Maunier's own solution, however, is hardly satisfactory. According to him, a city is a "complete society whose

geographical base is particularly restrained for the size of its population or whose territorial elements is relatively meager in amount compared to that of its human element." This formula is only an elaborate way of defining a city as a habitat of great population density. Since it fails to explain at what degree of density a settlement changes from rural to urban, the definition loses its usefulness.

Sorokin and Zimmerman are much clearer. They assemble eight characteristics in which the urban world differs from the rural world. They are: (1) occupation, (2) environment, (3) size of community, (4) density of population, (5) heterogeneity or homogeneity of the population, (6) social differentiation and stratification, (7) mobility, and (8) "systems of interaction" (i.e., number and type of contacts). Some of these characteristics have been discussed above. All these characteristics are present in both cities and villages, the question here is at what stage a rural area turns into an urban?

Reflection and Action 3.2

Do you think that Indian Cities like, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow etc. are truly urban in the sociological sense?

Write your views in about ten lines. Share your opinion with your peers at your Study Centre.

3.9 Basis of Market

In some parts of the world we still find an unusual form of human settlement: "artisan villages" where all residents are engaged in the same craft. Another case: fishing villages are neither rural nor entirely urban in character but represent a special category. Fishing, as a specialised kind of food gathering, is much older than the domestication of plants and animals and is thus prerural in character. Fishing villages existed in Europe before the advent of Neolithic times, for instance, near Muge, Portugal. Some of our primitive contemporaries still live mostly on the sea yields. But their settlements cannot be placed in the same category as, for instance, Salem, Massachusetts, whose residents became millionaires by fishing. The difference is clear: one group literally lives on fish; for the other group fishing is a commercial enterprise. Therefore, we shall consider all communities non-urban if their activities are mainly consumption centered. On the other hand, if these activities are oriented towards a market, the settlement is urban in nature, for a market is one of the basic features of non-agricultural activities. Without organised exchange of goods and services the urban dweller would have nothing to eat.

In fact, Marx specified a different relation of the city to the society in each mode of production. It is this changing relation of city and society that Southhall (1998) takes as justification for the study of the city; and of urban anthropology.

The attempt to define the urban leads to contorted tautologies (Plotnicov, 1985). The unity lies in the wholeness of the total human experience of it, bounded at the beginning by the temporal immensities of the pre-urban

era and at the end by the still impenetrable mysteries of the post-urban age. Cities have never been seriously and comprehensively looked at as a whole, so the nature of their unity has never been fully explored or perceived.

Southall's approach to the city is on the idea of concentration, but, it extends beyond mere population to include its more profound social, cultural and politico-economic implications, since these are even more highly concentrated. He previously defined these on the basis of role relationships (1973:106), which are far more highly concentrated in cities than population as such, but the notion applies differentially to different general domains of role relationships, such as kinship, religious, political, economic (production) and recreation (consumption)—concentration applying in its most extreme form to the latter two. Concentration of social relationships in general defines the most fundamental characteristic common to cities in all time and space. The purpose of studying cities in this sense is to understand how the relationship of those concentrations to the rest of society has varied over time and space, and how these variations reflect the changing organisation of urban concentrations and the organisation of production and society as a whole.

At the end I would like to quote R.E. Dickinson (1951) he has been able to combine most of the characteristics of city. He writes, firstly, the city is an institutional center, the seat of the institution of the society which it represents it is a seat of religion, of culture and social contact, and of political and administrative organisation. Secondly it is a seat of production, agricultural and industrial, the latter being normally the more important....thirdly, it is a seat of commerce and transport. Fourthly, the city is a pleasurable seat of residence for the rulers, the wealthy, and the retired, where they can enjoy all the amenities of civilised life that the institutions of their society have to offer. Fifthly, it is the living place of the people who work in it.

3.11 Concept of Metropolis

Metropolis, a Greek word actually consisting of two words-meter (mother) and polis (city). Hence, metropolis can be translated into English as mother city.

Lewis Mumford classified cities on the basis of levels of technological development in Europe such as; Eopolis, Polis, Metropolis, Megalopolis, Tyrannopolis and Necropolis.

In ancient times, the term metropolis was reserved for a specific type of a city: the capital of an empire, state, kingdom and places from which "the rest of the world" (or at least some major territory) was ruled. Thus, a metropolis would rank considerably higher than a provincial city.

In modern days, any major city likes to be thought of as a metropolis, even if it is not the seat of the government. This is true particularly of the cities in the United States because a typical US state Capital is not a big city. By the same token, most US States have at least one big city, which is not the Capital of the State.

Box 3.2 Metropolitan Cities in India					
Urban Agglomerations/Cities having population of more than one million in 2001					
State Rural Urban Data/Definitions					
		Urban	Population 2001		
Rank in 2001	Agglomeration/ City 1,000,000 + population)	Civic Status	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	7	8	9
1	Greater Mumbai	VA	16,368,084	8,979,172	7,388,912
2	Kolkata	VA	13,216,546	7,072,114	6,144,432
3	Delhi	VA	12,791,458	7,021,896	5,769,562
4	Chennai	VA	6,424,624	3,294,328	3,130,296
5	Bangalore	VA	5,686,844	2,983,926	2,702,918
6	Hyderabad	VA	5,533,640	2,854,938	2,678,702
7	Ahmadabad	VA	4,519,278	2,397,728	2,121,550
8	Pune	VA	3,755,525	1,980,941	1,774,584
9	Surat	VA	2,811,466	1,597,093	1,214,373
10	Kanpur	VA	2,690,486	1,440,140	1,250,346
11	Jaipur	M.Corp.	2,324,319	1,239,711	1,084,608
12	Lucknow	VA	2,266,933	1,199,273	1,067,660
13	Nagpur	VA	2,122,965	1,097,723	1,025,242
14	Patna	VA	1,707,429	925,857	781,572
15	Indore	VA	1,639,044	861,758	777,286
16	Vadodara	VA	1,492,398	783,237	709,161
17	Bhopal	VA	1,454,830	766,602	688,228
18	Coimbatore	VA	1,446,034	743,161	702,873
19	Ludhiana	M.Corp.	1,395,053	789,868	605,185
20	Kochi	VA	1,355,406	670,462	684,944
21	Visakhapatnam	VA	1,329,472	674,080	655,392
22	Agra	VA	1,321,410	708,622	612,788
23	Varanasi	VA	1,211,749	644,922	566,827
24	Madurai	VA	1,194,665	604,728	589,937
25	Meerut	VA	1,167,399	624,904	542,495
26	Nashik	VA	1,152,048	619,962	532,086
27	Jabalpur	VA	1,117,200	588,556	528,644
28	Jamshedpur	VA	1,101,804	580,336	521,468
29	Asansol	VA	1,090,171	576,813	513,358
30	Dhanbad	VA	1,064,357	578,602	485,755
31	Faridabad	M.Corp.	1,054,981	580,548	474,433
32	Allahabad	VA	1,049,579	581,876	467,703
33	Amritsar	VA	1,011,327	543,638	467,689
34	Vijayawada	VA	1,011,152	531,084	480,068
35	Rajkot	VA	1,002,160	525,797	476,363
TOTAL			107,881,836	57,664,396	50,217,440
Office of the Registrar General, India 2A, Mansingh Road, New Delhi-110011 Created on 25th July 2001					

Furthermore, at least in the US, the population in the area surrounding a major city is typically much larger than the population of the city itself. The two populations are typically added up and published as the population of the greater metropolitan area.

Naturally, if we follow the ancient tradition, any State Capital still deserves the title of metropolis even if it is not the cultural and business center of that state.

So, a modern meaning of the word metropolis often is any place which is a political, cultural, or economic center, though not necessarily all of the above.

According to Indian census a city having more than 10 lac persons or a million plus city is known as a metropolis. According to the 2001 census, there are 35 million-plus cities having total population of 107.88 million which constitutes 37.8 percent of the total urban population of the country. In identifying metropolitan cities, Census uses the population of the entire urban agglomerations rather than the population of the central municipal corporation. Consequently, most of the million plus metropolises are multi-municipal agglomerations. Such agglomerations comprise a large city in the core with smaller urban areas on the periphery (Sivaramakrishnan, Kundu and Singh 2005). In India the smallest metropolis is Rajkot (1002,106 persons) in India and the largest one Greater Mumbai with a population of 16,368,084 persons. It is sixteen times bigger than Rajkot. Indian census has further divided these metropolises into four categories given below:

1,000,000–1,999,999

2,000,000–4,999,999

5,000,000 –9,999,999

10,000,000 and above

We may mention that this is a central govt. programme JNNURM (Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Revival Mission) that covers all metro cities (plus others) and mega city programme covered all mega cities noted below.

There are six mega cities in India, with a population of more than five million in each in 2001. These are Greater Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

Box 3.3 Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Reversal Mission (JNNURM)

"India is being seen as the place to be in - whether to invest or pick up a job assignment. But one thing that natives as well as foreigners, including investors, lament is the lack of decent infrastructure in the country. That's why, the UPA Government's mega scheme, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Reversal Mission (JNNURM) seems like a touch of new life. The centre is offering money to improve the lot of 63 metro, cities and towns - from Ahmedabad to Imphal and Srinagar to Thiruvananthapuram. Says Kavas Kapadia, Head, Department of Urban Planning and Architecture (SPA). "The government has suddenly recognised that cities are not to be ignored." Out of India's one-billion plus population an increasing number-about 30 per cent of people live in urban regions. "Pretty soon it will become very uncontrollable. In 20 years, 40-50 per cent will be in urban areas."

Launched in December 2005, the seven year Rs. 1,20,536 crore mission is being used to funnel money directly to nodal agencies. Under one sub-mission the money is supposed to be spent largely on road networks, transport, water supply and sanitation, solid waste management and old city redevelopment projects. This might also mean moving commercial and industrial units to designated areas. The second sub-mission has been drawn upto fund housing and create basic amenities for the urban poor..... "

(Bano, Rahat-Mission Possible reported in Hindustan Times, HT Estates, Saturday 08 July, 2006).

3.12 Conclusion

Like all sociological terms, the concept of city too has its own problems. It has been defined by various sociologists and other social scientists in many different ways based on the criteria which they find significant. City is an abstraction like any other sociological category but it is based on concrete elements like, residents, means of transport, etc. In this unit you have learnt about the city and the different ways it has been understood, such as legal basis, statistical basis, basis of density of population, and so on.

You also learnt about the metropolis. Metropolis, the very term means 'Mother City'. It has the distinct criteria of population and also it is a city where the political cultural and economic center is present. In India a city with the population exceeding a million is considered to be a metropolis according to the census. Rajkot is the smallest metropolis and Greater Bombay the largest in India.

3.13 Further Reading

Bergel, E.E. (1955). *Urban Sociology*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

Shivaramakrishnan, K.C., Amitabh Kundu and B.N. Singh, (2005). *Oxford Hand Book of Urbanisation in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Unit 4

Rural-Urban Continuum

Contents

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Approaches to the Study of Urban Phenomena
- 4.3 Explanation
- 4.4 Critique
- 4.5 Conclusion
- 4.6 Further Reading

Learning Objectives

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- outline the approaches to the study of urban phenomena ;
- explain the trait complex approach;
- discuss the non-polar approach;
- describe the rural-urban continuum approach or the polar approach to study urban phenomena;
- discuss the explanation given by Redfield regarding the 'ideal type' of folk society and its characteristics; and;
- analyse the critique of the rural-urban continuum approach.

4.1 Introduction

The world can be broadly divided into two types of human settlements, rural and urban. A variety of conceptual approaches has been applied to determine the essential social characteristics and dynamism of urban-industrialism. These approaches include the formulation of typologies and the presentation of evolutionary frameworks, approaches that are often related. The detailing of social complexity is a key feature of analyses and is dealt with in several major ways. Another important methodological problem is the separation conceptually and, if possible, empirically of the social effects of urbanism and industrialism (Gist and Fava 1974).

4.2 Approaches to the Study of Urban Phenomena

There are two three major approaches for the analysis of urban phenomena. These are:

1) Trait complex approach

In this approach empirical attributes generally quantitative traits are taken for analysing differences like, occupation, size, density, homogeneity and environment etc.

Box 4.1 Ideal Types

"Ideal types are constructed to facilitate the analysis of empirical questions. Most researchers are not fully aware of the concepts they use. As a result their formulations often tend to be imprecise and ambiguous, or as Weber himself says, 'the language which the historians talk contain hundreds of words which are ambiguous constructs created to meet the unconsciously conceived need for adequate expression and whose meaning is definitely felt, but not clearly thought out'. (Weber 1949 : 92-3).

We can therefore say that ideal types are a methodological device which not only help us in the analysis of empirical questions, but also in avoiding obscurity and ambiguity in the concepts used, and in increasing the accuracy of our analysis.

Ideal type, a key term in Weber's methodological essay has been used by him as a device in understanding historical configurations or specific historical problems." (IGNOU 1991, ESO-03 Sociological Thought, Block 4, Unit 14).

2) The Ideal Type

There are two types of ideal type approaches, i.e. non polar and polar.

a) **Non-Polar:** The concept of an "Ideal Type" has been applied to communities as it has been applied to the study of other social phenomena. This conceptual device is a constructed proposition, which designates the hypothetical characteristics of a "Pure" or "Ideal " type. As used in this sense the terms pure or ideal have nothing to do with subjective evaluations of phenomena being studied. The technique of ideal type analysis is a form of comparative method. Actual empirical instances are compared with the ideal type to see how closely they approximate the ideal type. This type of approach is known as non-polar ideal type approach.



b) **Polar or Rural Urban Continuum Approach:** This is also known as polar ideal type analysis, which compares empirical cases with the two logical extremes. It generally assumes that there is continuum between the two polar types along which empirical cases order themselves. Continuum is an uninterrupted series of gradual changes in the magnitude of a given characteristic forming a linear increase or decrease through a series of gradual degrees. Rural and urban communities cannot be placed in watertight compartments. There is continuity between the two. As a community moves from the folk to the urban end of the continuum, there occur shifts from:

- 1) cultural intimacy and organisation to disorganisation
- 2) collective or community orientation to individualisation; and the sacred to the secular.

Redfield's speculations about what he saw as the significant changes from the folk to the urban end of the continuum are based on studies conducted in the Yucatan during the early 1930s in the city of Mérida, the town of Dzitas, the Maya peasant village of Chan Kom, and the "tribal" hamlet of Tusik.

Reflection and Action 4.1

Find out from the elderly members of your family about the number of people who have either migrated from your area (if you live in a village or semi-urban area) and for what reasons. If you are a city dweller, interview at least ten families in your neighbourhood about when they came to this city and how many members of their family are still in their native place.

Based on your findings, write a report on "Migration and Rural-Urban Continuum". Discuss your report with the Academic Counsellor and other students at your Study Center.

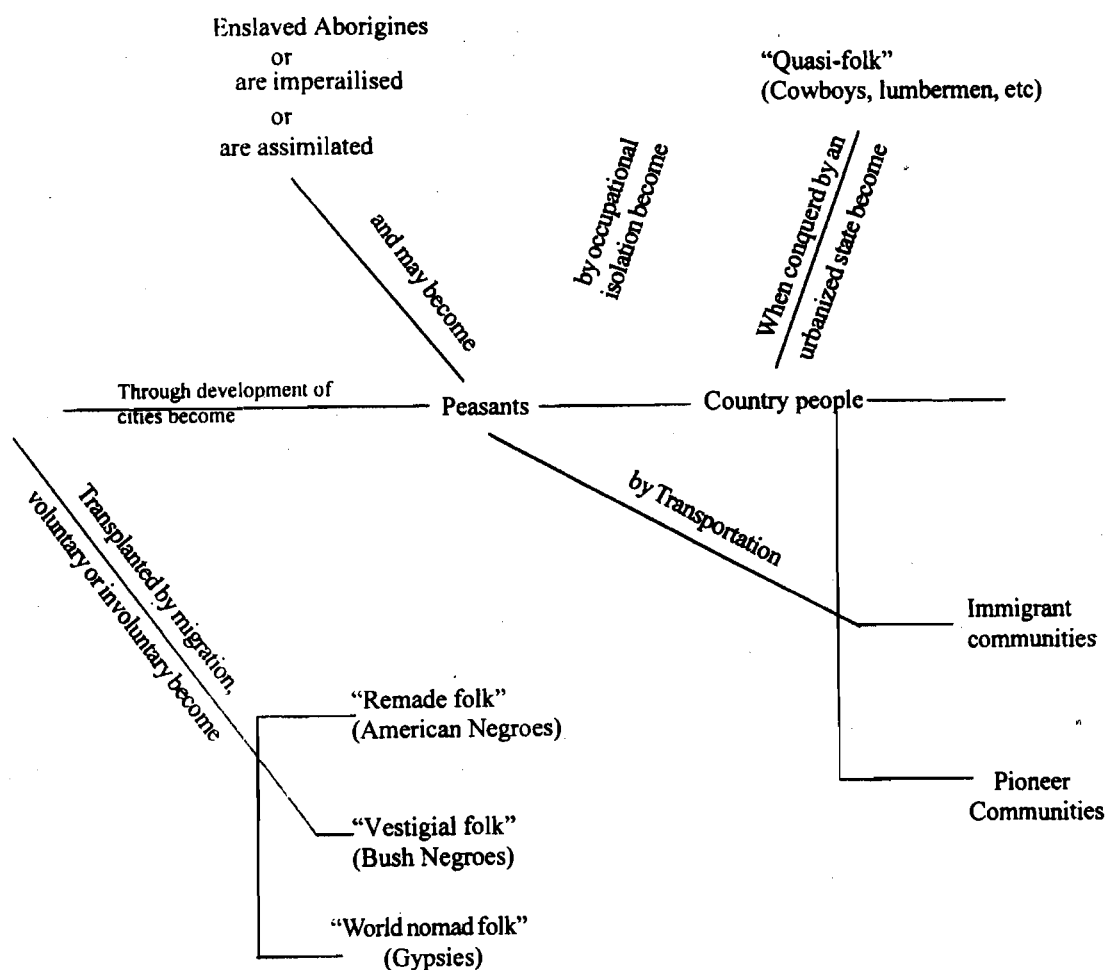
4.3 Explanation

Briefly stated, Redfield's scheme defines an ideal type, the folk society, which is the polar opposite of urban society. The ideal type is a mental construct and "No known society precisely corresponds to it" It is "created only because through it we may hope to understand reality. Its function is to suggest aspects of real societies which deserve study, and especially to suggest hypotheses as to what, under certain defined conditions, may be generally true about society (Redfield 1947)."

The folk society has the following characteristics

It is small, isolated, non-literate, and homogeneous, with a strong sense of group solidarity. The ways of living are conventionalized into that coherent system which we call "a culture." Behaviour is traditional, spontaneous, uncritical, and personal; there is no legislation or habit of experiment and reflection for intellectual ends. Kinship, its relationships and institutions, are the type categories of experience and the familial group is the unit of action. The sacred prevails over the secular; the economy is one of status rather than of the market.

Redfield concerns himself largely with the folk pole of the continuum. It is the characteristics of the folk society which receive his descriptive attention. These are derived by discovering the common traits of those societies which are not like our own. The definitive qualities of the urban type are then left as the logically opposite ones to those which characterise the folk. Urban society is never actually discussed here as an ideal type and is not explicitly named. Redfield usually refers to it as "modern urbanised society" or some variant of the phrase. Implicit in the use of this pole as an ideal type, however is the idea that it stands for urbanised society in general and that modern western society represents the specific case most closely approximating to the polar category. The term "urban society" would appear to represent the content of the ideal type more adequately.



The Tribal Urban Continuum

Redfield also prepared a diagram for his course, "The Folk Society" at University of Chicago(Fig. 4.1).He named this diagram **The Tribal-Urban Continuum**. In this figure those societies which are more characteristically "Folk" appear at the left. Reading from left to right one may trace some of the principal historic ways in which primitive societies have become converted into urbanized societies or into other and special types of societies. These types are diagramed as to their genetic relationship to one another (Erickson,1954).

Earlier conceptual schemes given by Maine, Tonnies, and Durkheim contributed important dichotomies of societal characteristics. Redfield's

formulation took elements of these characteristics and others which he saw to be related and put them together as the definitive traits of the polar types. A factor influencing the research work of Redfield was that of concern with empirical method. To this interest must be attributed the fact that he executed, in Yucatan, one of the rare field projects in which a series of communities were selected and studied to test a specific hypothesis. Consistent with the express purpose of the formulation of the ideal type, its characteristics suggest the hypothesis.

Reflection and Action 4.2

Read a novel like "The Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens or Khushwant Singh's "Delhi" or any other novel with a description of major city of the world.

Write an analysis of the way the city in this novel has been described with reference to the Study Material you have just read. Share your analysis with those of other learners at your Study Center.

4.4 Critique

Lewis points out that the folk concept is an ideal and hence a matter of definition. It is upon its heuristic value that is its value as a research tool, that the type and its related continuum must be judged. He criticised the conceptual framework with regard to its utility for the study of culture change and for cultural analysis (Miner, 1952):

- 1) The folk-urban conceptualisation of social change focuses attention primarily on the city as a source of change to the exclusion or neglect of other factors of an internal or external nature.
- 2) Culture change may not be a matter of folk-urban progression, but rather an increasing or decreasing heterogeneity of Spanish rural elements, such as the plow... did not make Tepoztlan more urban, but rather gave it a more varied rural culture...
- 3) Some of the criteria used in the definition of the folk society are treated by Redfield as linked or interdependent variables, but might better be treated as independent variables.
- 4) The typology involved in the folk-urban classification of societies tends to obscure.... The wide range in the ways of life and in the value systems among so-called primitive peoples.... The criteria used... are concerned with purely formal aspects of society....Focusing only on the formal aspects of urban society reduces all urban societies to a common denominator and treats them as if they all had the same culture.
- 5) The folk-urban classification has serious limitations in guiding the field research because of highly selective implications of categories themselves and rather narrow focus of the problem. The emphasis

upon essentially formal aspects of culture leads to a neglect of psychological data and, as a rule does not give an insight into the character of the people.

- 6) It is a system of value judgements which contains the old Rousseauan notion of primitive people as “noble savages”, and the corollary that with civilisation has come the downfall of mankind.

4.5 Conclusion

This unit presented you a clear and concise picture of the rural-urban continuum. This continuum is based on the notion that human settlements are broadly divided into two types: the rural and the urban. These two types are polar opposite to each other you have learnt in this unit about the two main approaches to the study of urban phenomena. One is the trait complex and the other the ideal type. The ideal type approach is further divided into the Non-polar and the Polar or Rural-Urban Continuum approach. You learnt about the contribution of Robert Redfield to the study of ‘folk’ society and the rural-urban continuum and finally, the critique of this approach is given for your complete understanding of this topic.

4.6 Further Reading

Erickson, E.Gordon, *Urban Behaviour*, The Macmillan company.

Gist, N.P. and Sylvia F. Fava, (1974). *Urban Society*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York.

Redfield, Robert. (1941). *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

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