Urban Expansion And Population Explosion: A Critical Review

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Abstract

There is no better measure of societal and economic progress than the rate of urbanization. Rapid urbanisation in the last decade has put a strain on already-stretched infrastructure. Towns, cities, metropolitan regions, and urban agglomerations are some of the subcategories that urban areas are currently known by. An urban agglomeration consists of a town and its adjacent outgrowths (OGs), two or more physically adjacent towns with or without outgrowths, or a city with a population of one lakh or more. A metropolitan city has a population of one million or more. According to the 2001 Census, an Urban Agglomeration must have a minimum of one statutory town and a total population of at least 20,000. Other comparable combinations that meet the fundamental requirement of contiguity have been considered urban agglomerations in different local contexts. The data shows that by the year 2030, most of India would live in urban areas. Compared to 384 UAs with 962 OGs in the 2001 Census, 475 locations with 981 OGs were recognized as Urban Agglomerations in the 2011 Census. Although there were only 35 UA in 2001, there are now 53 UA with populations of one million or more. This data demonstrates that smaller towns are expanding at a faster rate in the twenty-first century, which is causing more and more urban agglomerations to form and driving the expansion of larger metropolitan areas. Using secondary data sourced from the Census, NFHS, and SRS, this research investigates the rise and development of urban agglomerations in the Indian state of Karnataka. In this critical study of urbanization's effects, we look closely at some of the new ways of living, such as the kitchen-less flat, DINKS, and the problems that are cropping up in live-in relationships.

Keywords: Kitchen-less apartment, Live-in relationship, sustainable development.

URBAN EXPANSION AND POPULATION EXPLOSION: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Urban expansion and population explosion are intertwined phenomena having a significant implication for societies and the environment. Urban growth in India is a complex phenomenon shaped by a combination of factors including population dynamics, economic development, migration patterns and government policies and this has often resulted hapzard, less resilient, less inclusive and thereby making cities more competitive and striving for sustainability.

Meaning of Urban expansion

When cities spread out into their surrounding rural regions, this phenomenon is called urban expansion. Population expansion, rural-to-urban migration, and economic development are the main forces behind it.

Shlomo Angel (2023) states that "urban expansion" is the process by which the physical footprints of towns, cities, and metropolitan regions are physically extended into the countryside, engulfing neighboring villages and towns.

Causes for urban expansion in India

According to the Census of India and various studies on urbanization trends, the causes for urban expansion in India can be attributed to several key factors:

1. Population Growth : The number of people living in urban areas has increased due to India's massive population boom in recent decades. The birth rate surpassing the mortality rate and rural-to-urban migration have both contributed to this change in demographics.

2. Rural to Urban Migration : People moving from the countryside to the city is one of the main reasons why cities are growing. Many people move in search of better job prospects, schools, hospitals, and overall quality of life. States with agricultural economies or areas impacted by environmental causes tend to have this tendency more noticeable.

3. Economic Opportunity : India's cities are known as economic powerhouses, providing a plethora of job prospects in fields including construction, manufacturing, services (including information technology and finance), and commerce. People move to cities from smaller towns and rural regions because of the greater job opportunities and higher incomes.

4. *Industrialization and Urbanization*: The growth of industries and urban-centric economic activities has led to the development of industrial clusters and urban agglomerations. Cities and towns serving as centers of industry and commerce tend to attract a growing population seeking employment in these sectors.

5. *Infrastructure Development:* Improved infrastructure in urban areas, including better transportation networks, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and access to amenities such as water supply and sanitation, contributes to urban expansion. Government investments in infrastructure development often prioritize urban areas, leading to their growth.

6. *Government Policies and Initiatives:* Various government policies and initiatives, such as the Smart Cities Mission, policies promoting industrial growth and urban development, housing schemes, and infrastructure projects, aim to foster urban expansion and development.

7. *Sustainable Development*: Changing social dynamics, including shifts in lifestyle preferences, aspirations for better education and healthcare, and exposure to urban culture and amenities, also contribute to the movement of people towards urban areas.

Causes of Population Explosion:

1. *High Birth Rates*: In some regions, particularly in developing countries, high birth rates contribute significantly to population growth. Improved healthcare and sanitation have reduced mortality rates, leading to a higher proportion of the population surviving into adulthood and having children.

2. *Decline in Death Rates*: Advances in medicine, sanitation, and public health have led to a decline in death rates, particularly infant and child mortality. This demographic transition results in population growth as more individuals reach reproductive age.

3. *Migration:* Internal and international migration patterns can also contribute to population explosion in specific regions. Migration from rural to urban areas or between countries with contrasting birth and death rates can significantly impact population growth rates.

4. *Improved Healthcare*: Access to healthcare services, vaccinations, and disease control measures has increased life expectancy and overall population growth.

5. *Cultural and Social Factors*: Cultural norms and values regarding family size, gender roles, and fertility preferences can influence birth rates and contribute to population growth.

Impact of Urban expansion and population expansion

Overurbanization, which refers to the excessive growth of urban areas beyond their sustainable limits, can have several significant impacts on families:

1. ***Housing and Living Conditions***:
   - **Affordability**: Overurbanization often leads to soaring housing costs and rent prices, making it challenging for families, especially low-income households, to afford suitable housing.
   - **Crowded Living Spaces**: Rapid urban growth may result in overcrowded neighborhoods and informal settlements, where families live in cramped conditions with limited access to basic amenities like water, sanitation, and electricity.
   - **Congested and over crowded buildings**: urban expansion and population expansion has led to congested and over crowded buildings. Low density sprawl, inadequate open spaces, unaffordable houses, small compact houses are common factor.

2. ***Health and Well-being***:
   - **Health Risks**: Dense urban areas can be breeding grounds for diseases due to overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, and poor air quality. Families may face higher risks of respiratory illnesses, communicable diseases, and mental health issues.
   - **Access to Healthcare**: In overurbanized areas, access to quality healthcare services may be limited, particularly for marginalized communities, affecting family health outcomes.
   - **Rise in lifestyle related diseases**: Job related stress, anxiety, too much of technological dependency has led to various physical and psychological impact.

3. ***Education***:
   - **Quality of Schools**: Urban expansion can strain educational infrastructure, leading to overcrowded classrooms and inadequate resources in public schools. This impacts the quality of education available to children from urban families.
   - **Access to Education**: Despite being in urban areas, some families may still face barriers to accessing education due to distance, cost, or cultural factors.

4. ***Employment and Livelihoods***:
   - **Job Competition**: Overurbanization can result in intense competition for jobs, especially in informal sectors, affecting family income and economic stability.

- o **Informal Economy**: Many families in overurbanized areas rely on the informal economy for livelihoods, which often lacks job security, benefits, and legal protections.
5. *Social Dynamics*:
   - o **Community Fragmentation**: Rapid urban growth can lead to social fragmentation, weakening traditional community ties and support systems that families rely on.
   - o **Social Isolation**: In large, densely populated cities, families may experience social isolation and a lack of social cohesion, impacting their sense of belonging and well-being.
6. *Environmental Impact*:
   - o **Pollution and Safety**: Overurbanization contributes to environmental degradation, including air and water pollution, noise pollution, and lack of green spaces. These factors can directly affect family health and safety.
7. *Family Dynamics and Stress*:
   - o **Stress and Mental Health**: The pressures of urban life, including high living costs, long commutes, and social pressures, can lead to stress and mental health issues within families.
   - o **Family Relationships**: Urbanization may strain family relationships due to economic pressures, long working hours, and the challenges of balancing work and family life.
   - o **Rise in Kitchenless apartments**: the present apartments are constructed without any kitchens thereby the prospective partners being dependent on fastfood culture

Understanding these causes helps policymakers, urban planners, and researchers devise strategies to manage urban expansion effectively, ensuring sustainable development, equitable growth, and improved quality of life for urban residents in India.

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