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CHAPTER-I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Amongst the various fields of geography, urban phenomenon which has developed within human geography in recent decades marks the disciplines as 'catching-up with reality'. So it has become more pronounced probably because of multi-disciplinary approach. The sprawling urban growth, the problems of urbanization and regional development are basic issues of investigation in the developed and developing countries of the world.

1.1 IMPORTANCE OF INVESTIGATION :-

The rapid growth of urban population is a global experience. Urbanization is both a consequence and a casual factor in socio-economic development. The uncontrolled and haphazard massive urbanization disturbs the qualities of urban way of life and emerges several urban problems which call for policies and plans for regulating urban development specially with regard to town and regional planning. Now-a-days, the urban areas are facing many problems as a result of greater degree of urbanization. So, a systematic study of problems created by rapid urbanization becomes the order of day for many scholars from various disciplines.

From the earliest times, urban places have occupied a

predominant position in the system of settlements. They have been considered as focal points of economic, cultural, administrative and other activities of society and play a leading part in social and economic progress. Urban places are always at the centre of the diffusion of ideas and social change. Therefore, they become the mainspring of modernization. Urbanization is a component of regional development because urban centres provide new economic opportunities, a variety of centralized services and infra-structure facilities for the surrounding areas. Hence, urbanization and regional development are closely correlated. So that, the problems of urbanization and regional development are basic issues of investigation all over the world.

India is presently passing through a phase of relatively faster urban growth. An enormous increase and rapidly growing urban population in the developing countries in general and to India in particular, is because of its high natural growth and mounting scale of internal migration flows from countryside to towns and cities especially big and the biggest centres. The present day urban scene of India is mostly created by a haphazard growth of urban population due to migration from the rural areas. The dynamics of post-independence urban growth in India tends to favour the large cities at the expense of the languishing medium and small towns. As a result, the towns of small size have suffered most as their share in the urban population tends to decline. While at the other end of the

scale, the large size cities have gigantic proportion of population and are emerging as problematic areas. The distribution of differential growth among size-classes of towns over eight decades has produced very substantial variations in the rates and scales of growth among towns.

Since independence the growth of urbanization in Maharashtra is faster than any other states. It is still most urbanized state in the country. The latest phase of urbanization in Maharashtra is deeply rooted in industrialization of the State. It has accelerated the process of urbanization and the creation of the new towns as well as expansion of existing urban centres. A study of urbanization in Maharashtra reveals the fact that the state is under a great influence of Greater Bombay. Towns in Maharashtra have grown at a much slower pace than the big cities due to the preponderance of services and retail trade characters. A heavy concentration of both people and economic activities in big cities and towns in the State is underlined by one of the characteristic features of urbanization marked by regional imbalances and disparities in development.

FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM :-

1.2 SELECTION OF PROBLEM AND REGION :-

There are many factors drive the researcher to select the topic for his investigation. First, the studies in urbanization at regional level with special emphasis on regional imbalances are relatively few. This type of search in

the State of Maharashtra particularly on its part is found independently and hence it is perhaps the first attempt in this field. Secondly, many scholars have attempted the problems created by rapid urbanization but there are a few attempts to study the correlation between urbanization and regional development. Therefore, such type of investigation creates a curiosity in the solution of the problem. Thirdly, a study of urbanization requires multi-disciplinary approach. Keeping this in mind, the impact of urban growth and urbanization on both human and physical landscape, the researcher is motivated to make an humble opinion about the existing urban scene of the study region. Lastly, the researcher has chosen this problem with purpose and he has taken a great care of its resources, scope and limitations.

The choice of the area under study is a result of many consideration. The followings are some of those which motivated the researcher to undertake this region under study :

- 1) It is the author's region of home state located in the western uplands of Maharashtra with which the author is familiar.
- 2) The selected region has larger proportion in both areas and urban places of the State.
- 3) It is comparatively the fast developing region of the State. However, it is little bit neglected by such studies.
- 4) It is having relatively higher level of urbanization in the State.

5) This region occupies a transitional zone between Maharashtra plateau to the east and the Sahyadris to the west with varied physiographic and socio-economic conditions.

1.3 STUDY REGION :-

In the present work, the Western Maharashtra Plateau is selected for the study of dynamics of urbanization. The region under study extends between $15^{\circ}44'$ and $21^{\circ}15'$ north latitudes and $73^{\circ}16'$ and $76^{\circ}15'$ east longitudes. It encompasses the major part of the State with its own identity and typical set of characteristics.

The Western Maharashtra Plateau has a total geographical area of 96,988.9 sq.kms., with 9968 rural, 95 urban settlements and a total population of 19.97 million according to the census of 1981. The region under study shares 31.81 percent of total population and 25.36 per cent of urban population of the State. Eleven Class I cities and eighty-four towns have emerged in the study region which constitutes 86 tehsils of nine districts of the State of Maharashtra.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM :-

The present work deals with the study of dynamics of urbanization in Western Maharashtra Plateau and includes the trends of urbanization, patterns of urban growth, spatial distribution of urban centres, growth characteristics of urban places and levels of urbanization and regional imbalances of development. The study period (1901-1981) of the present work begins with the dawn of the current century and terminates at the last census count. This study attempts to highlight the

pre-independence and post-independence trends of urbanization focussing on the existing regional imbalances of development in the study region. Here, a geographical treatment has been given to the present investigation.

A systematic study of urbanization is a recent phenomenon even in the developed countries. Urban growth and urbanization take place in two ways. First, the proportion of urban population may increase when the rate of natural increase in population in urban areas is higher than in rural areas. But it has been found in many countries that the rate of natural increase in population in the urban sector is lower than in the rural sector. Secondly, the most important way in which urbanization may take place is by a shift of population from rural areas to urban areas. Hence, the urban population grows as fast as the total population mainly due to rural-urban migration and partially through natural increase in population. Thus, rural-urban migration is by far the major component of urbanization and is the chief mechanism by which all of the world's great urbanization trends have been accomplished (Bogue and Zacharia, 1962).

A tremendous urban growth and fast urbanization is resulted mainly due to economic dynamis in which push and pull are the leading factors. Today, industry is the most dominant factor of urbanization. It has accelerated the processes of rural-urban migration and the creation of new and enlargement of existing urban centres (Dikshit, 1970). The major problem of urban areas is tremendous growth in their population. This

problem is common to developed and developing nations.

Urbanization is a process of concentration of non-agricultural occupations and landuses around a single nucleus or multi nuclei(Prakasa Rao and Tewari, 1986). It exercises a growing influence on all aspects of life of society and constantly changing the urban landscape of any region. Most of the urbanized countries of the world have achieved a tremendous progress in many fields. Urbanization is a component of regional development and it serves a polarization technique which has been adopted for regional development. A study of urbanization signifies a link of rural-urban flows and its causes and effects.

Rapid urbanization creates demographic, economical, social, geographical and planning problems which in turn, draw attention of many scholars. Urban problems arised out of massive urban growth and development as well as their effects may be reduced through rational policies and programmes. An understanding of urban problems is essential for comprehensive regional planning and development. In this respect a study of the growth of towns and urban systems is an essential element of scientific motivation for regional planning.

1.5 DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM :-

No statistical study of urbanization is possible unless an adequate note is taken of the definition of an urban area or town which varies from country to country and from one census year to another. In the present study, the definition of town adopted for the 1981 census has been used.

It is clear that the phenomenon of urban growth gave rise to the definition of urbanization as a growth of towns and an increase in the proportion of the urban population. Urbanization is very complex and four dimensional process - demographic, ecological, social and economic processes. The concept of urbanization has been over-emphasised in the fields of sociology, geography, demography, economics, planning and administration. Therefore, its study requires multi-disciplinary approach. It has defined from many angles and hence, there is not universally accepted definition of urbanization. Many geographers have attempted the definition of urbanization.

In the present work the simplest and the most commonly accepted definition of urbanization refers to an increase in the proportion of the urban population(U) to the total population(T) over a period of time will be referred for the proceeding discussion in the text.

1.6 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE :-

Rapid urbanization has been a world wide phenomenon in twentieth century. A systematic study of urbanization has been emerged recently in geographical literature. The geographical studies on urbanization has been plenty in India and abroad. But geographers' interest in the study of Indian urbanization was rather a late affair. The concept of urbanization has widely studied by sociologists, economists, geographers, demographers, planners, ecologists and administrators etc. In

geography, many Scholars like Lynch (1962), Brush (1962), Hauser (1965), Breeze (1969), Alam and Pokshishevsky (1976), Misra (1978), Bose (1980) and Prakasa Rao (1983) etc. have attempted urbanization process.

A synoptic picture of urbanization and a detailed account of the trends of urbanization and urban growth pattern in various countries and states have extensively presented by many scholars. But a detailed analysis of the trends of urbanization at regional level is comparatively few.

In this direction, attempts have been made by Singh R. for Umland of Banaras (1956), Singh U. for Ganga Plains (1965), Chauhan for Agra District (1966). Alam on Hyderabad metropolitan region (1972), Singh on North Bihar plain (1986), Misra on Allhabad city region (1988) Verma on Rohil Khand Plain (1989), Reddy for Krishna-Godavari Delta (1970), Muller for Middle Ohio Valley (1976), Singh for Chota Nagpur Plateau (1976), Sita for South Konkan (1980) and Mulik for South Maharashtra Plateau (1982) are noteworthy. Mukherjee in Uttar Pradesh (1973) and Lahiri in Bardhwan District (1984) have determined the levels of urbanization. Dikshit (1970) presented a detailed account of urbanization in Maharashtra through history. In Indian context, certain attempts have been made in the field of regional development. Among them Sharma (1972), Mitra (1967), Misra (1978), Singh K, (1984) Kakkar (1985) and Dutta and Chattopadhyaya (1983) attempted such type of studies.

The geographical investigation in dynamics of urbanization with special emphasis on regional imbalances, pertaining to this region is still untouched.

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :-

The present work proposes to study the trends of urbanization in the Western Maharashtra Plateau region, focussing on the regional imbalances of development and levels of urbanization in the study region. The specific objectives of the present study are :

1. To analyse the trends of urbanization and patterns of urban growth.
2. To examine the growth characteristics of urban places.
3. To study spatial distributional pattern of urban centres
4. To evaluate the regional imbalances of development and levels of urbanization in the study region.

1.8 HYPOTHESIS :-

The study is primarily concerned with analysis of urban growth and the trends of urbanization in the western Maharashtra Plateau region in which the following hypotheses are tested.

1. The small and medium size towns are losing their proportional share in urban population gradually.
2. Growth rate of a town is related positively to its size.
3. The imbalances and disparities in the degree of socio-economic development are expected to be related with the level of urbanization in the study region.

DATA BASE :-

The study deals mainly with the dynamics of urbanization

in the Western Maharashtra Plateau region. Most of its statistical analysis is based on census data, therefore, the data used in the present study are mostly collected from the secondary sources only.

The basic data regarding urban places, their areas and population, growth of urban population, urbanization, size categories of towns and their spatial distribution and socio-economic development etc. are collected through the published and unpublished records and reports. The census of India, Maharashtra Census Tables and Abstracts, Town Directory, Survey Reports on selected Towns, Census Atlas, District census Handbooks, Socio-economic Abstracts and District Gazetteers etc. remain the principal secondary sources of data.

The statistical data pertaining to cities and towns, decadal changes in population of different size-classes of towns are collected through above mentioned sources. While the basic information regarding various indicators selected for determining the levels of urbanization and regional development is obtained from the Report of the fact Finding Committee on Regional Imbalance in Maharashtra and planning and census atlases.

1.9 **METHODOLOGY :-**

The data collected through secondary sources are processed by researcher for the purpose of data analysis and cartographic representation. Various statistical methods and quantitative techniques are used in the present study for data analysis and then the results are represented by appropriate cartographic techniques. The details regarding various methods and techniques are discussed in detail at appropriate parts in

the text.

Analysis of growth trends of urban population is performed by using different types of rates, ratios and proportions. While various indices of distribution and concentration are also used in the study of distribution of urban places. For calculating the levels of urbanization and development, indices of various variables and indicators are calculated. The relationship of variables and association among indicators are tested through correlation, regression and multivariate analysis. Hypotheses formulated in the study are tested with suitable parametric and non-parametric tests.

A special feature of the present work is the use of the computer system. Relevant data used particularly for specific analysis are stored on TRS-80 floppy disket and some analysis are performed with the help of digital computer system.

1.10 LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE :-

The study has certain constraints. It focusses more on the growth dynamics of urban population. The entire study is based on secondary data and hence, collection of primary data and field work have a little scope. Analysis of the various aspects of the study is done mostly at district, tehsil and town levels. Case studies are not attempted in the present work.

This work will make a ground for projection of urban population to the thinkers to penetrate into the problems of rapid urbanization and to plan for urban growth and regional development. It will add to the existing knowledge in the field of urban studies.

1.11 ORGANISATION OF THE WORK :-

The entire work is organised into six chapters. The first chapter deals with an introduction to approach to the present study and introduces formulation of the present work and methodological issues. The second chapter identifies the geographic personality of the study region. The third chapter of the work includes the trends of urbanization and patterns of urban growth to identify the salient features of the dynamics of urbanization. The fourth chapter presents a detail account of growth characteristics of towns in the study region. The fifth chapter is devoted to spatial distribution of urban places. The sixth chapter provides the levels of urbanization and regional imbalances of development. The last chapter is the summary of the findings and conclusions.

In style of presentation the references are given at the end of each chapter. Footnotes are strictly avoided. Only relevant information is included in the form of tables in the text at proper places. The cartographic work in the form of maps, graphs and diagrams is done by the researcher in departmental cartographic laboratory.

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