

CHAPTER 10

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Meaning of settlement

A human settlement is defined as a place inhabited more or less permanently. It includes buildings in which they live or use and the paths and streets over which they travel. It also includes the temporary camps of the hunters and herders. It may consist of only a few dwelling units called hamlets or big cluster of buildings called urban cities.

SETTLEMENT TYPES

Human settlements classified on the basis of size and function?

Settlements are classified on the basis of size and function into URBAN and RURAL.

URBAN SETTLEMENTS

These types of settlement are nodal in character and have secondary and tertiary activities.

The chief occupation of the people of urban areas is non-agricultural i.e. Industry, trade and services.

The major function of an urban area are trades and commerce, transport and communication, mining and manufacturing, defence, administration, cultural and recreational activities.

Population density is high and the settlement size is large.

Rural settlements:

- i. These settlements are chiefly concerned with primary activities such as agriculture, mining, fishing, forestry etc.
- ii. Most of the people of rural settlement are engaged in agricultural work.
- iii. The major function of rural settlement is agriculture and each settlement specializes in various activities.
- iv. Population density is small and the settlement size is small.

Types of Settlements on the basis of shape.

Settlements can also be classified on the basis of shape and pattern into:

Compact settlements:-

In these settlement houses are built very close to each other. Such settlements are found in river valleys and fertile plains. The people are closely tied and share common occupations.

Dispersed settlements:-

In these settlements houses are built far apart from each other. These settlements consist of one or two houses and cultural feature such as a church or a temple binds the settlement together. Such settlements are found over hills, plateau and highlands.

RURAL SETTLEMENTS

Rural settlements are most closely and directly related to land. They are dominated by primary activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing etc. The settlements size is relatively small.

Factors Which Influence The Location Of Rural Settlements.

Rural settlements are influenced by following factors:

- i. **Water Supply:** Usually rural settlements are located near water bodies such as rivers, lakes, and springs where water can be easily obtained. The need for water drives people to settle in islands surrounded by swamps or low lying river banks. Water supply is main factor because water is used for drinking, cooking and washing, rivers and lakes can be used to irrigate farm land, water bodies also have fish which can be caught for diet and navigable rivers and lakes can be used for transportation.
- ii. **Land:** People choose to settle near fertile lands suitable for agriculture. Early settlers chose plain areas with fertile soils. In Europe villages are found near gently sloping land, in south East Asia villages are near low lying river valleys and coastal plains suited for wet rice cultivation.
- iii. **Upland:** Villages are located on uplands which is not prone to flooding. Thus, in low lying river basins people chose to settle on terraces and levees which are “dry points”. In tropical countries people build their houses on stilts near marshy lands to protect themselves from flood, insects and

animal pests.

- iv. **Building Material:** The availability of building materials- wood, stone near settlements is another factor. Early villages were built in forests where wood was plentiful. In African Savanna's mud bricks are used as building materials and the Eskimos, in Polar Regions, use ice blocks to construct igloos.
- v. **Defense:** During the times of political instability, war, aggression of neighboring groups villages were built on defensive hills and islands. In Nigeria, villages are built on upstanding rocks; in India most of the forts are located on hills.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS PATTERNS.

Patterns of rural settlements is influenced by the site of the village, the surrounding topography and terrain.

- i. **On the basis of setting :** The main types are
 - a. Plain villages,
 - b. Plateau villages,
 - c. Coastal villages,
 - d. Forest villages and
 - e. Desert villages.

- ii. **On the basis of functions:** There may be
 - a. Farming villages,
 - b. Fishermen's villages,
 - c. Lumberjack villages,
 - d. Pastoral villages etc.
- iii. **On the basis of forms or shapes of the settlements:** These may be a number of geometrical forms and shapes such as:
 - a. *Linear pattern:* In such settlements houses are located along a road, railway line, river, canal edge of a valley or along a levee.
 - b. *Rectangular pattern:* Such patterns of rural settlements are found in plain areas or wide inter-montane valleys. The roads are rectangular and cut each other at right angles.
 - c. *Circular pattern:* Circular villages develop around lakes, tanks and sometimes the village is planned in such a way that the central part remains open and is used for keeping the animals to protect them from wild animals.

- d. *Star like pattern:* Where several roads converge, star shaped settlements develop by the houses built along the roads.
- e. *T-shaped, Y-shaped, Cross-shaped or cruciform settlements :* T –shaped settlements develop at tri-junctions of the roads. Y–shaped settlements emerge as the places where two roads converge on the third one and houses are built along these roads. Cruciform settlements develop on the cross-roads and houses extend in all the four direction.
- f. *Double village:* These settlements extend on both sides of a river where there is a bridge or a ferry.

PROBLEMS OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

major problem of rural settlements are:

- i. Rural settlements in the developing countries have poor infrastructure facilities.
- ii. Supply of water to rural settlements in developing countries is not adequate. People in villages, particularly in mountainous and arid areas have to walk long distances to fetch drinking water.
- iii. Water borne diseases such as cholera and jaundice are common problem because of lack of safe drinking water and unhygienic conditions.
- iv. Villages are adversely affected by the conditions of drought and flood. This in turn affects the crop cultivation.

- v. The absence of toilet and garbage disposal facilities cause health related problems.
- vi. The houses made up of mud, wood and thatch get damaged during heavy rains and floods.
- vii. Most houses have no proper ventilation.
- viii. Unmetalled roads and lack of modern communication network causes difficulties in providing emergency services during floods.
- ix. It is also difficult to provide adequate health and educational infrastructure for large rural population. The problem is particularly serious where houses are scattered over a large area.

URBAN SETTLEMENTS

Urban settlements are classified on the basis of its size of the population, occupational structure and administration.

1. **Population size** - in India a settlement having population more than 5000 persons is called urban. In Japan it is 30000 persons whereas in Sweden it is 250 persons. The cut off figure depends on the density of population in the country.
2. **Occupational structure**: - besides population size, occupation is also taken as the criteria. In India, if more than 75 percent of workforce is engaged in non-agricultural activities then the settlement is called as urban.

Other countries have their own criteria for e.g. in Italy it is 50 percent.

3. **Administrative structure:** - in India a settlement is classified as urban if it has a municipality, cantonment board or a notified area. In Brazil any administrative centre is termed as urban.

SITE AND SITUATION

Location of urban centres is influenced by their function. Site refers to the actual piece of ground on which the settlement is built. Situation refers to the location of the settlement in relation to the surrounding areas.

- i. Strategic towns require sites offering natural defence;
- ii. Mining towns require the presence of economically valuable minerals;
- iii. Industrial towns generally need local energy supplies or raw materials;
- iv. Tourist centres require attractive scenery, or a marine beach, a spring with medicinal water or historical relics
- v. Ports require a harbor.
- vi. Availability of water, building materials and fertile land also plays an important role in locating urban settlements.
- vii. The urban centres which are located close to an important trade route have experienced rapid development

IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF URBAN CENTRES.

. Dominant functions of urban areas are:

- i. The earlier functions of towns were related to administration, trade, industry, defence and religious.
- ii. Today, towns perform multiple functions such as, recreational, residential, transport, mining, manufacturing and most recently activities related to information technology.
- iii. Some towns are known for their functions for example, Sheffield as an industrial city, London as a port city, Chandigarh as an administrative city.
- iv. Large cities have a rather greater diversity of functions.
- v.

Five Functional Classifications Of Towns In The World.

1. **Administrative Towns:** - National capitals, which have headquarters of the administrative offices of Central Government, are called administrative towns, such as new Delhi, Canberra, Moscow, and Washington.
2. **Defence Towns:** - Centres of military activities are known as defence towns. They are of three types: Fort towns, Garrison towns and Naval bases. Jodhpur is a fort town; Mhow is a garrison town; and Kochi is a naval base.
3. **Cultural Towns:** - towns famous for religious, educational or recreational functions are called cultural towns. Places of pilgrimage, such as Jerusalem, Mecca, Jagannath Puri and Varanasi etc. are considered as religious towns. There are also recreational towns such as Las Vegas in the USA.
4. **Industrial Towns:** - Mining and manufacturing regions. Dhanbad and Khetri are examples of mining towns. Towns which have developed due to

setting up of industries such as Jamshedpur are called industrial towns.

5. **Trading and Commercial Towns:** - Many old towns were famous as trade centres such as Lahore in Pakistan, Baghdad in Iraq and Agra in India. Some towns have developed as transport towns such as Rotterdam in the Netherlands, Aden in Yemen and Mumbai in India are port towns.

TYPES OF URBAN SETTLEMENT ON THE BASIS OF ITS SIZE, SERVICE AND FUNCTION.

Depending on the size and the services available and functions rendered, urban centers are designated as town, city, million city, conurbation, and megalopolis.

- i. **Town:** Population size in town is higher than the village. Functions such as, manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade, and professional services exist in towns.
- ii. **City:** A city may be regarded as a leading town. Cities are much larger than towns and have a greater number of economic functions. They tend to have transport terminals, major financial institutions and regional administrative offices. When the population crosses the one million mark it is designated as a million city.
- iii. **Conurbation:** The term conurbation was coined by Patrick Geddes in 1915 and applied to a large area of urban development that resulted from the merging of originally separate towns or cities. Greater London, Greater Mumbai, Manchester, Chicago and Tokyo are examples.
- iv. **Megalopolis:** This Greek word meaning “great city”, was popularised by Jean Gottman (1957) and signifies ‘super- metropolitan’ region extending, as union of conurbations. The urban landscape stretching from Boston in the

north to south of Washington in U.S.A. is the best known example of a megalopolis.

PROBLEMS OF URBANISATION

Urbanization: - is the process of change from rural to urban population. Most cities in developing countries are unplanned.

Major problems of urban areas in developing countries are:

1. ***Economic Problems:***

- a. Over urbanization or the uncontrolled urbanization in developing countries is due to large-scale in-migration of rural people.
- b. Decreasing employment opportunities in the rural as well as smaller urban areas has caused large scale rural to urban migration.
- c. The huge migrant population in urban areas creates stagnation and generates a pool of unskilled and semi-skilled labour force.
- d. Urban areas suffer from shortage of housing, transport, health and civic amenities.
- e. A large number of people live in substandard housing i.e. slums and squatter settlements or on the streets.
- f. Illegal settlements called squatter settlement are growing as fast as the city.

2. ***Socio-cultural Problems:*** Cities in the developing countries suffer from several social ills.

- a. Inadequate social infrastructure and basic facilities is due

to lack of financial resources and over-population in the cities.

- b. The available educational and health facilities remain beyond the reach of the urban poor.
- c. Cities suffer from poor health conditions.
- d. Lack of employment and education tends to aggravate the crime rates.
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- e. Male selective migration to the urban areas distorts the sex ratio in these cities.

4. ***Environmental Problems:***

- a. The large urban population in developing countries uses

and disposes off a huge quantity of water and all types of waste materials.

- b. Many cities of the developing countries do not provide the minimum required quantity of drinkable water and water for domestic and industrial uses.
- c. An improper sewerage system creates unhealthy conditions.
- d. Massive use of traditional fuel in the domestic as well as the industrial sector severely pollutes the air.
- e. The domestic and industrial wastes are either let into the general sewerages or dumped without treatment at unspecified locations.
- f. Huge concrete structures of buildings create heat in the city environment.
- g.

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