

URBANIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – A STUDY**-SHREYA JAIN¹****Abstract**

This article explains the link between two different sectors that are urbanization and sustainable development. The relationship between urbanization and sustainability has focus on numerous studies since long time. Sustainable development plays a major role in urbanization by satisfying the needs of present without compromising the needs of future generations. In 2007, the world's population living in towns and cities surpassed with the rate of 50% for the first time in history and the proportion is growing with faster rate. This article also represents the various other aspects which are hampering environment drastically.

Keywords: urbanization, sustainable development, governance, environment.

Introduction

During the last few decades we have been witnessing an increasing rate in the statistics of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development. This is due to increase in the urbanization in countries. Urbanization is defined as an “increase in the proportion of a population living in urban areas.” This phenomenon has come into existence with a rapidly growing force over the period of the past century, as an increasing number of population have begun to move to towns and cities. Due to same process, urban ecosystems and landscapes have become increasingly domesticated and vulnerable. A series of environmental problems such as resource consumption, biodiversity, climate change, and environmental degradation have emerged. It guarantees balance between social well beings and environment. The Rapid, unplanned and undeveloped patterns of urban development are making developing countries its focal points for many emerging environment and health hazards².

The increasing role that has been played by urbanization in sustainable development has been recognized by many recent documents, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

¹ Student of b.a. Ll.b(hons), 5th year from manipal university Jaipur

² WHO, Urbanisation and Health, (May, 03 2020, 7:00 P.M.),
<https://www.who.int/globalchange/ecosystems/urbanization/en/>

(2030 Agenda) (2015) and the New Urban Agenda (2016). While numerous Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) relate to urbanization came into existence. The SDG 11 and its targets are very crucial aspect of achieving sustainable development, the reaches of the role of urbanization in sustainable development are very far greater.³ To overcome the problem of unsustainable development, the intelligent strategy of sustainable development should be made and various framework has already been made by the government of various countries to achieve the goal for sustainable development in the era of urbanization.

Need for sustainable development and urbanization

As India's current population is 1.39 billion (2020) and is rising with each passing year, there would be more urbanization in the country. This will lead to more globalization, liberalization and privatization which will lead to scarcity of resources for future generation. Moreover, there will be hazards to the social as well as economical aspects of the country.

Due to huge population and their increasing demand to fulfill the needs of the current and future generations it's necessary to espouse sustainability path in this growing urbanization. Also issues like poverty, health, education, expanding economy and diversity needs to be addressed. Indigenous practices in many countries like India are sustainable, but due to the rapid economic development the urge to continue or to preserve these systems is declining. In the long run these developing countries too may end up being consumptive society like the developed nations. Thus there is a need to adopt sustainability measures at this initial stage of development that can make urbanization easier.

Reasons of Failure of Sustainable development in Urbanization

The fact that developing cities create wealth, enable global economic functions and offer greater life opportunities for their inhabitants do negate the challenges they pose for sustainable development. Though Urbanization works for the betterment for the economic and social factors of ever developing countries but it lacks in sustainable development. The rate of growth of the world's urban population estimated at 2.24% is roughly equal to the rate of growth of slums

³ NMUN NY, The Role of Urbanization in Sustainable (May, 03 2020, 7:09 P.M.), Development http://hs.umt.edu/mun/documents/topicGuides/NY2018_BGG_GA2-sec3-urbanization.pdf

estimated at 2.22%. The same figures for Sub-Saharan Africa are 4.58 and 4.53%. In sum, we are witnessing what Nicholas You (2007) described as the urbanization of poverty where the urban population is just as likely suffering from malnutrition, disease and hunger as their rural counterparts.⁴ The major problems associated with urbanization are:

1. HIGH POPULATION DENSITY

The problem of high population density is caused because of heavy rate of migration from rural areas. The rapid population growth has led to an acute shortage of dwelling units which resulted in; overcrowding, traffic congestion, pollution, housing shortages, high rents, poor urban living conditions, low infrastructure services, poverty, unemployment, etc. All of these have a major effect on the high population density in developing countries.

2. INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURES

One of the major serious aspects of the urban problem is the poor state of the infrastructures provided in the countries. Some developing countries are still facing bad road network, lack of power supply, inadequate water supply and some other basic amenities.

3. LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Lack of affordable housing has led organized squatters, who took over unoccupied buildings to live rent free. That has brought about lack of housing vacancy rate, due to the rapid job growth and increase in housing rents and costs. Problems such as insufficient housing, especially particular for low – income families, are being faced, which resulted in overcrowding of already congested areas.

4. CREATION OF SLUM

The increasing of slums in cities is one of the serious problems created by the rapid industrialization and urbanization.

5. CRIME

⁴ Ramin kevini, A review of the main challenges to urban sustainability, International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development (May 03, 2020, 7:20pm),<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19463131003704213>

The increasing population in urban area is leading to an increase in crime rate. Due to the high level of unemployment, and joblessness, this has brought a increase in crime rates suffered by the majority of the people in such areas.

6. POOR GOVERNANCE

Due to increase in population in a place over years, government is unable to make a proper framework for settling the policies. There is lack of proper governance resulting in low standards of living of the population in urban areas.

Role of urbanization in sustainable development

As discussed above, sustainable Development Goals relates to urbanization, goal 11 addresses the topic directly, as it aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”⁵ Through SDG 11, urbanization is considered as an important factor in sustainable development. Even though there are positive effects linked to urbanization, it also poses some major threats and challenges to certain aspects of sustainable development, as the quality of life can decrease through poorly managed urban migration. The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, on the role of urbanization, promote sustainable development while recognizing the influence and impact of urbanization, especially in developing countries, where the rate of urbanization is greatest to make availability of resources and development of mankind for future. To harness the positive effects of urbanization in achieving sustainable development, it is imperative to balance the growth and development of the rising population.

Conclusion

Aforementioned, we are leading towards an unsustainable future. Social, economic and environment well-being is an obligatory parameter for the sustenance of any country. And if the efforts and approaches for the development are not evident then it will lead to failure. Rapid urbanization is happening in all the developing countries but the challenges like vast population, shortage of resources, stakeholder’s non-participation, etc. has put up a pressure on the government. The magnitude of such type of problems needs solution which is people centric and

⁵ NMUN NY, The Role of Urbanization in Sustainable (May 04, 2020, 10:50 A.M.), Development http://hs.umt.edu/mun/documents/topicGuides/NY2018_BGG_GA2-sec3-urbanization.pdf

practical to implement. Population including citizen, policy-maker, designer, planner, activist, administrator, politician, etc. should know that their share of responsibility towards safeguarding our future is in their hands. They should understand the constraints that prevent success in development and take a value based action. To cope up with the challenges, and to improve the quality of urban life, it is essential to prioritize the sustainability issue. Appropriate authorities are evolving a strong framework of policies and programs, legal provisioning, structured institutional arrangement, technological advancement and measurability measures for sustainable development. But this is the only stepping stone and there is a need to evolve research methodology, generate comprehensive and cohesive database, bring more transparency and technological inputs and put effort for good governance.