

Views of Parents and Students towards Impact of Urbanization on Environmental Sustainability - A Study

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Abstract

In this present study the Investigators have made an attempt to find out the impact of urbanization on sustainable development of the environment. This study is conducted in the Kamrup district of Assam with the objectives to know the views of parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability. The attempt is also be made to know the difference in views between parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability. The study is conduct by using descriptive survey method as well as the investigators select the population from two municipal areas of Kamrup Metro, Assam. It comprises of a total 1800 parents and 2680 students. For selecting the sample, the investigators used purposive sampling technique and as per it, 20% each from parents and students categories are selected, thus parents sample comprises of 360 and students sample 536. For collecting data for the present study, the investigators use a self-structured questionnaire. It comprises of 20 questions that could be answered either through 'Yes' or 'No'. For the questionnaire a manual scoring key is developed. For the convenience of calculation, the raw scores are converted into Z- scores. The views are divided into two categories namely, Positive and Negative. Data are trying to analyze by using simple frequency percentage (%) and chi-square. It is observed from the study that parents irrespective of various issues related to urbanization and environmental sustainability hold positive views except the question related to the matter that does urbanization keeps our environment stable or not, as the number of respondent giving negative views are more than those giving positive. And on the other hand, students irrespective of various issues related to urbanization and environmental sustainability hold positive views except the question related to the matter that does urbanization keeps our environment stable or not, as the number of respondent giving negative views are more than those giving positive.

Key terms – Parents, Students, Urbanization, Environmental sustainability.

Introduction:

Urbanization is the process where populations move from rural to urban area, enabling cities and towns to grow. It is also termed as the progressive increase of the number of people living in towns and cities. It is highly influenced by the notion that cities and towns have achieved better economic, political, and social mileages compared to the rural areas.

Urbanization is very common in developing and developed countries of the world as more and more people have the tendency of moving closer to towns and cities to acquire “privileged” social and economic services as well as benefits. These include social and economic advantages such as better education, health care, sanitation, housing, business opportunities, and transportation.

Majority of people move to cities and towns because they view rural areas as places with hardship and backward/primitive lifestyle. Therefore, as [populations move to more developed areas](#) (towns and cities) the immediate outcome is urbanization. This normally contributes to the development of land for use in commercial properties, social and economic support institutions, transportation, and residential buildings. Eventually, these activities raise several urbanization issues.

Causes of Urbanization

1. Industrialization

Industrialization is a trend representing a shift from the old agricultural economics to novel non-agricultural economy, which creates a modernized society. Through industrial revolution, more people have been attracted to move from rural to urban areas on the account of improved employment opportunities. Industrialization has increased employment opportunities by giving people the chance to work in modern sectors in job categories that aids to stir economic developments.

2. Commercialization

Commerce and trade play a major role in urbanization. The distribution of goods and services and commercial transactions in the modern era has developed modern marketing institutions

and exchange methods that have tremendously given rise to the growth of towns and cities. Commercialization and trade comes with the general perception that the towns and cities offer better commercial opportunities and returns compared to the rural areas.

3. Social benefits and services

There are numerous social benefits attributed to life in the cities and towns. Examples include better educational facilities, better living standards, and better sanitation and housing, better health care, better recreation facilities, and better social life in general. On this account, more and more people are prompted to migrate into cities and towns to obtain the wide variety of social benefits and services which are unavailable in the rural areas.

4. Employment opportunities

In cities and towns, there are ample job opportunities that continually draw people from the rural areas to seek better livelihood. Therefore, the majority of people frequently migrate into urban areas to access well paying jobs as urban areas have countless employment opportunities in all developmental sectors such as public health, education, transport, sports and recreation, industries, and business enterprises. Services and industries generate and increase higher value-added jobs, and this leads to more employment opportunities.

5. Modernization and changes in the mode of living

Modernization plays a very important role in the process of urbanization. As urban areas become more technology savvy together with highly sophisticated communication, infrastructure, medical facilities, dressing code, enlightenment, liberalization, and other social amenities availability, people believe they can lead a happy life in cities. In urban areas, people also embrace changes in the modes of living namely residential habits, attitudes, dressing, food, and beliefs. As a result, people migrate to cities and the cities grow by absorbing the growing number of people day after day.

6. Rural urban transformation

As localities become more fruitful and prosperous due to the discovery of minerals, resource exploitation, or agricultural activities, cities start emerging as the rural areas transform to urbanism. The increase in productivity leads to economic growth and higher value-added employment opportunities.

This brings about the need to develop better infrastructure, better education institutions, better health facilities, better transportation networks, establishment of banking institutions, better governance, and better housing. As this takes place, rural communities start to adopt the urban culture and ultimately become urban centers that continue to grow as more people move to such locations in search of a better life.

Impact of Urbanization on Sustainable Development:

Sustainable development is the overarching paradigm of the United Nations. The concept of sustainable development was described by the 1987 Brunt land Commission Report as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

There are four dimensions to sustainable development – society, environment, culture and economy – which are intertwined, not separate. Sustainability is a paradigm for thinking about the future in which environmental, societal and economic considerations are balanced in the pursuit of an improved quality of life. For example, a prosperous society relies on a healthy environment to provide food and resources, safe drinking water and clean air for its citizens.

The urban population has increased from 2.3 billion to 3.9 billion from 1994 to 2014, indicating that more than half of the world’s population currently dwells in urban areas. At the same time, urban ecosystems and landscapes have become increasingly domesticated and vulnerable though urbanization. A series of eco-environmental problems such as resource consumption, biodiversity, climate change, and environmental degradation have emerged and sprawled. In the context of rapid urbanization, cities have become the engines of socio-economic development, and resolving such problems in these highly dense urban areas requires further investigation. The relationship between urbanization and sustainability has long been the focus of numerous studies. In the recent surge of interest in sustainability,

some scholars believe that urbanization is the key to regional and global sustainability, whereas others regard urban sustainability as an oxymoron. For a long time, the interaction between urbanization and sustainability is embodied in ecological sustainability, which is closely linked to ubiquitous urban sprawl and social sustainability correlated with continuous urban population growth. In an ecological sense, the past several decades have seen a widespread urban expansion in developing countries such as China and India. Such expansion has put enormous strain on its supporting ecological systems. Impervious lands such as settlements and highways have sprawled rapidly with the cost of cropland, forest, wetland, and other lands with high ecological values in urban areas. In this case, although the urban landscape has been transformed into a manageable pattern in terms of its connectivity and compactness, the ecological habitat is greatly challenged because the urbanized landscape profoundly affects the related ecological processes and services. In a socio-economic sense, sustainability revolves around two core themes (i.e., “social equity” and “economic balance”) all the way through. Social inequality is associated with issues such as social welfare for rural migrants, separation of peasants from their land leading to the deterritorialization of the peasantry, weak social ties in the urban setting with increasing rural–urban migration, and increasing health risks from air pollution, occupational hazards, and traffic injury. In its initial stage, urbanization positively affects the social aspects, including social mobilization, literacy, political participation, education, income, and health. However, these effects become negative when urbanization goes beyond the carrying capacity of the city. Economic balance mainly refers to a holistic framework for industrial development in different sectors. A number of developing countries have experienced rapid industrialization and urbanization. In recent years, the service sector, which requires a variety of manual labor, has rapidly become the leading sector in the industrial structure of many countries. Under this industrial transformation, the requirements for natural resources and energy use have expanded, thereby threatening the carrying capacity in certain areas. Consequently, economic balance is vital to achieving the harmonious development between human activities and the natural environment.

Need and Significance of the Study:

Sustainable development encourages us to conserve and enhance our resource base, by gradually changing the ways in which we develop and use technologies. Countries must be allowed to meet their basic needs of employment, food, energy, water and sanitation.

If this is to be done in a sustainable manner, then there is a definite need for a sustainable level of population. Economic growth should be supported and developing nations should be allowed a growth of equal quality to the developed nations. There are four objectives of sustainable development:

These include social progress and equality, environmental protection, conservation of natural resources and stable economic growth. Everybody has the right to a healthy, clean and safe environment. Everybody has the right to a healthy, clean and safe environment.

This can be achieved by reducing pollution, poverty, poor housing and unemployment. No one, in this age, or in the future should be treated unfairly. Global environmental threats, such as climate change and poor air quality must be reduced to protect human and environmental health. The use of non-renewable resources such as fossil fuels should not be stopped overnight, but they must be used efficiently and the development of alternatives should be encouraged to help phase them out.

Everybody has the right to a good standard of living, with better job opportunities. Economic prosperity is required if our country is to prosper and our businesses must therefore offer a high standard of products that consumers throughout the world want, at the prices they are prepared to pay. For this, we need a workforce equipped with suitable skills and education within a framework to support them.

But it has been observed that with the passage of time, along with the different activities of human beings, the urbanization has its negative impact on sustainability of the environment. If this process will continue, surely it will have the dangerous effect on our future generations. Therefore, through this study the Investigators have made an attempt to find out the impact of urbanization on sustainable development of the environment.

Statement of the Problems:

On the basis of the needs and significance of the study, the study is entitled with the “**Views of Parents and Students towards Impact of Urbanization on Environmental Sustainability - a Study**”

Objectives of the Study:

Objective-1 To know the views of parents towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Objective-2 To know the views of students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Objective-3 To know the difference in views between parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Hypotheses

Ho₁ There exists no difference in the views of parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Methodology of the study:

The study was conducted by using descriptive survey method.

Population and sample of the study:

For the present study, the investigators selected the population from two municipal areas of Kamrup Metro, Assam. It comprised of a total 1800 parents and 2680 students.

For selecting the sample, the investigators used purposive sampling technique and as per it, 20% each from parents and students categories were selected, thus parents sample comprised of 360 and students sample 536.

Tools used for data collection

For collecting data for the present study, the investigators used a self-structured questionnaire. It comprised of 20 questions that could be answered either through 'Yes' or 'No'.

For the questionnaire a manual scoring key was developed. For the convenience of calculation, the raw scores were converted into Z- scores. The views were divided into two categories namely, Positive and Negative.

The assignment of the views against Z-score range is shown below in table1.

Table-1

Sl. No	Z-score range	Level of views
1	+2.02 and above	Positive
2	-1.25 to +2.02	Negative

Statistical treatment of data:

Data were analyzed by using simple frequency percentage (%) and chi-square.

Findings and discussion:

Objective-1 To know the views of parents towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Table-2

Number and percentage of parents regarding views towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability

Sl.No	Questions	Yes		No	
		Number	%	Number	%
1	Is urbanization a blessing to us?	1000	55.55	800	44.44
2	Are urbanization and environment related to each other?	1800	100	0	-----
3	Do you know the impact of urbanization on environment?	1760	97.78	40	2.22
4	Does urbanization keeps environment stable?	500	27.78	1300	72.22
5	Does environmental quality change due to urbanization?	1000	55.55	800	44.44
6	Does urbanization bring environmental hazards?	1240	68.89	560	31.11
7	Does deforestation is the result of urbanization?	1760	97.78	40	2.22
8	Does industrial growth hamper environmental sustainability?	1720	95.55	80	4.45
9	Do health hazards increase due to urbanization?	1560	86.67	240	13.33
10	Does urbanization threaten the existence of species other than human beings?	1380	76.67	420	23.33

11	Do you think that leading a healthy life and environmental sustainability inter-related?	890	49.44	910	50.56
12	Does climatic change hamper leading sustainable life?	1200	66.67	600	33.33
13	Do increased economic activities hamper leading environmental sustainability?	1006	55.89	794	44.11
14	Does urbanization increase economic activities?	1450	80.55	350	19.45
15	Does urbanization increase environmental imbalance?	1008	56	792	44
16	Does urbanization increase health-risk?	1230	68.33	570	31.67
17	Does urbanization degrade our environmental values?	1090	60.55	710	39.45
18	Do increased economic activities threaten environmental sustainability?	1008	56	792	44
19	Does species endanger due to urbanization?	980	54.44	820	45.56
20	Does urbanization increase mortality rates?	1240	68.89	560	331.1 1

So, from table 2, it has been observed that parents irrespective of various issues related to urbanization and environmental sustainability hold positive views except the question related to the matter that does urbanization keeps our environment stable or not, as the number of respondent giving negative views are more than those giving positive.

Objective-2 To know the views of students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Table-3

Number and percentage of students regarding views towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability

Sl.No	Questions	Yes		No	
		Number	%	Number	%
1	Is urbanization a blessing to us?	2100	78.36	580	21.64
2	Are urbanization and environment related to each other?	2400	89.55	280	10.45
3	Do you know the impact of urbanization on environment?	1890	70.52	790	29.48
4	Does urbanization keeps environment stable?	400	14.91	2280	85.09
5	Does environmental quality change due to urbanization?	1820	67.91	860	32.09
6	Does urbanization bring environmental hazards?	2140	79.85	540	20.15
7	Does deforestation is the result of urbanization?	1870	69.78	810	30.22
8	Does industrial growth hamper environmental sustainability?	1678	62.61	1002	37.39
9	Do health hazards increase due to urbanization?	1900	70.89	780	29.11
10	Does urbanization threaten the existence of species other than human beings?	1989	74.23	691	25.77
11	Do you think that leading a	1600	59.70	1080	40.30

	healthy life and environmental sustainability inter-related?				
12	Does climatic change hamper leading sustainable life?	1870	69.78	810	30.22
13	Do increased economic activities hamper leading environmental sustainability?	1900	70.89	780	29.11
14	Does urbanization increase economic activities?	2100	78.36	580	21.64
15	Does urbanization increase environmental imbalance?	2009	74.96	671	25.04
16	Does urbanization increase health-risk?	1890	73.88	790	26.12
17	Does urbanization degrade our environmental values?	2000	74.63	680	25.37
18	Do increased economic activities threaten environmental sustainability?	2100	78.36	580	21.64
19	Does species endanger due to urbanization?	1900	70.89	780	29.11
20	Does urbanization increase mortality rates?	2100	78.36	580	21.64

So, from table 3, it has been observed that students irrespective of various issues related to urbanization and environmental sustainability hold positive views except the question related to the matter that does urbanization keeps our environment stable or not, as the number of respondent giving negative views are more than those giving positive.

Objective-3 To know the difference in views between parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability.

Table-4

Chi-square value of difference in views between parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability

Variable	Chi-square value	df	Level of significance
Difference in views between parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability	21.12	6	Significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level

Calculated Chi-square value=21.12(df=6)

Chi-square Table value=16.812 (**0.01 level of sig) <21.12

Chi-square Table value=12.592 (**0.05 level of sig) <21.12

So, table 4 shows that the calculated chi-square value at 6 df level is 21.12 which is found significant both at 0.01 and 0.05 levels, as the calculated value is more than the table values at both levels. Hence, we can reject the null hypothesis, 'There exists no difference in the views of parents and students towards impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability'.

Conclusion and suggestions

Urbanization that is bliss for us regarding developments in the field of industry, roadways, house construction and improving the way of life. The present study is an attempt to know the parents' and students' views regarding the impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability. Environment and results of urbanization are somehow interconnected in so many ways, thus brings about many positive and negative impacts on environment and so the question of environmental sustainability cannot be ignored and the existence of entire human and other species depends to a great extent on such sustainability. The present study shows us that both the parents and students have positive views regarding the impact of urbanization on environmental sustainability and they hold no difference in the views regarding the same.

In order to maintain environmental sustainability the following suggestions are forwarded by the investigator,

1. In the name of urbanization, the unplanned growth of buildings should be checked and done with due care.
2. The rapid disappearance of forest should be the prime concern of Govt. and other non-Govt. bodies.

3. Engineers and companies in many fields should understand and reduce the environmental impacts of producing and distributing energy in a number of ways like analyzing pollutants at their source, studying how they are dispersed and developing new technologies that control and reduce the effects of these pollutants on both humans and environments.
4. Controlling and reducing all kinds of pollutions should be the prime focus of people of villages and urban areas.
5. Legislations to control environmental hazards should be strictly practiced.
6. We the individuals should develop and inculcate environmental values to save our environment from further disruption.

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