

Problems of Urbanization

Name

Course

Tutor

Institution

Date

Throughout the history of mankind, the majority of people have lived in rural areas. However, there has been a steady increase in the number of people who move from rural areas to cities. This process is often called “urbanization.” It is believed that in modern times, about half of the world’s population already live in cities, and by 2050, it is expected that two thirds will live in cities (National Geographic).

The growth of urban population depends on both internal and external factors. The former one has to do with the ever growing living conditions that lead to a longer life expectancy and a lower level of infant mortality. The external factor is that inhabitants of rural areas prefer to move to cities for various reasons. One reason is industrialization, which offers career opportunities. Typically, there are more educational opportunities, jobs, career choices, and higher salaries to be found in urban areas versus rural areas. The industrial revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries greatly influenced the increase of job opportunities, for example. Another reason for urban growth is the basic infrastructure for daily living. People are attracted by transportation systems, quality of healthcare, educational opportunities, and quality of housing even though they do not necessarily have access to all these benefits once they move to the city.

Even though urbanization may be regarded as a positive step towards the development of civilization, it also leads to many problems in both developing and developed countries. The first major problem is the rapid rate of urbanization. It is important to provide new city inhabitants with housing and proper infrastructure for transportation, health care, and education. However, it is not always possible to do that with a highly accelerated rate of urbanization. Fast growth leads to many serious issues, such as lack of decent housing or ability to address social needs, resulting in a growing number of slums and squatter settlements. The inability to provide all newcomers to the city with the necessary support leads to social problems. For instance, the life expectancy of those who live in slum areas is usually lower than in other areas. Such living conditions lack healthcare opportunities, as well as chances for better education, career, and entertainment opportunities.

Rapid urbanization and growth of population also have dire consequences for the environment. Large cities are susceptible to air pollution from automobiles and factories, which impacts our health. In reference to automobile transportation, the current width of roads in many cities was not designed for a large number of cars, which leads to traffic congestion. Also, there is a growing amount of garbage and litter, which is an important issue for environment as well. Moreover, people in urban environments are more prone to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases than those residing in rural areas due to the environmental issues in the modern cities, such as air pollution from factories.

There is no universal solution to these problems because all cities differ from one another, but certain policies can provide relief in most areas. First, a city government should plan in advance on how and where the city should be expanded or whether it is possible to expand it at all. There are certainly areas that should not be used for urban development. Next, in order to fight poverty, the city has to identify its strengths in regard to economics. In addition, traffic congestion issues can be addressed through ongoing improvement of the public transportation system. Lastly, city governments should provide all the necessary service and infrastructure for all residents to make the areas in which they live more attractive and functional.

Bibliography

- Mondal, P. (2015). The problems of urbanization in developed and developing Countries. *Your Article Library*. Retrieved from: <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/problems/the-problems-of-urbanization-in-developed-and-developing-countries/4676/>
- Omer, S. (2012). Urbanization: Problems and solutions. *Academia*. Retrieved from: [http://www.academia.edu/7264015/Urbanization\\_Problems\\_and\\_Solutions](http://www.academia.edu/7264015/Urbanization_Problems_and_Solutions)
- Urbanization and Global Change. (2006). *University of Michigan*. Retrieved from: [http://www.globalchange.umich.edu/globalchange2/current/lectures/urban\\_gc/](http://www.globalchange.umich.edu/globalchange2/current/lectures/urban_gc/)
- Urban Threats. (2015). *National Geographic*. Retrieved from: <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/habitats/urban-threats2/>