

"Does Rapid Urbanization pose a Greater Threat than Climate Change?"

1. Introduction

1.1. Hook Statement

1.2. Definition of urbanization and climate change.

1.3. Thesis statement

"The process of rapid urbanization due to population explosion and desire for standardized living is causing increase in pollution, faulty infrastructure construction, social problems, psychological impact on individuals and serious damage to green cover; accelerating the already existing threat of climate change."

2. Reasons of mass migration to cities:

2.1. Health and educational facilities.

2.2. Job prospects and opportunities due to industrial sectors and business establishments.

3. Increased pollution due to population explosion and concentration in urban areas:

3.1. Negative impact on air quality and rising breathing problems

3.2. Noise pollution and water pollution

4. Poor planning and infrastructural problems

due to rapid urbanization:

- 4.1. Slums in outskirts of city and haphazard constructions.
- 4.2. Congested residential areas.
- 4.3. Narrow roads and lanes causing traffic problems.

5. Increase in crime rates:

- 5.1. Joblessness as a result of human resource concentration.
- 5.2. Theft and crime increase due to inflation.

6. Erosion of values and sympathy due to rushed life style:

- 6.1. Mechanization of human emotions
- 6.2. Loss of cultural values

7. ~~So~~ Psychological impact of urbanization:

- 7.1. Cultural displacement and identity crisis
- 7.2. Constant mental stress and anxiety
- 7.3. Changing trends and ~~the~~ imitating the crowds.

8. Contribution of rapid urbanization to climate change:

- 8.1. Exponential carbon emission from vehicles
- 8.2. High consumption of water resources leading to scarcity

8.3. Deforestation for concentration construction of residential areas

8.4. Loss of biodiversity due to reduction of forest cover

9. Urbanisation as the accelerating factor of climate change:

9.1. Rising global temperature and changing weather trends.

10. Conclusion:

10.1. Restatement of thesis statement

10.2. A way forward.

With more than 60% of the world population moving to urban areas, the world has seen diverse social, cultural and psychological issues emerging from this change. Human beings tend to move to areas providing them with facilities and means to earn a living. This causes the mass migration of people towards cities and industrial areas; increasing urban population. The demand for property and resources increases as a result which is called urbanization. The process of urbanization includes major environmental changes and developments that are harmful for the earth, causing contributing to the climate change where which is the change in global weather patterns and temperature. The process of rapid urbanization due to population explosion and desire for standardized living is causing increase in pollution, faulty infrastructure construction, social problems, psychological impact on individuals and serious damage to green cover; accelerating the already existing threat of climate change. A planned and structured process for the process of urbanization is required to mitigate the damage caused by rapid urbanization.

The process of rapid urbanization is triggered due to the rapid increase in demand for a stable income and better standard of living. In the

rural areas and villages, the infrastructure development and provision of basic facilities is extremely low. Hospitals, educated and skilful educationalists, teachers and instructors are not present. Schools are a luxury and there is no institution for the children to pursue higher education. In this scenario, the people of such areas face a dilemma; resorting to moving to urban areas in search of a better life, where jobs provide a means to earn and hospitals and universities give access to education on health and education respectively.

The means of earning and supporting a family are the primary requirements for a stable life. The urban areas have established industrial sectors and companies that provide job prospects to people. A vast range of job opportunities attract the masses and cause mass movements. Large cities like Karachi and Lahore in Pakistan, New York and Los Angeles in the United States of America and London in England act as hubs of work and centres of financial earnings. People from all over the country move to them in search of livelihood.

The process of urbanization has always been a fluid process. It has continued for centuries, from the hundreds of centuries from the Golden Age of Islam to Renaissance Age in Europe. However,

the process of rapid urbanisation is an issue of recent century. After the industrialisation era in eighteenth century, the people moved to industrial hubs in huge numbers to earn. This process was further accelerated due to the population explosion in recent times. The population is doubling at an exponential rate and causing issues due to the constant rate of job creation and resources.

When the population is concentrated in a limited area, the environment suffers changes and mostly in a decaying manner. The major impact is on the air quality due to high ~~rate~~ of transport use. The vehicles of all types release smoke and gases that pollute the air. The risen carbon emissions erode the air quality and further cause damage to human health. According to 2025 report, cities in Punjab, India and Lahore, Pakistan were on the top on the list of the most polluted cities. Smog and smoke cause threat to life due to reduced visibility on road and breathing problems. Asthma is one of the most rising issue in such urban cities. On the other hand, noise from the vehicles, industrial sectors and heavy machinery for construction work add to the problems of noise pollution. Constant noise causes mental problems and headaches increasing the health problems.

The increase in the population of an area demands expansion of residential areas and housing sectors. The lower income earning class tends to establish makeshift houses from tents and ~~to~~ flimsy material on the outskirts of the city to reduce the distance from their workplace and also keeping the spending on house to a minimum. The slums on the outskirts balloon to the larger areas which turn into mini cities outside of the main city. This problem causes reduction and stain on the beauty of the urban city.

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Another problem of rapid urbanization is the congested city plans and houses. They are built so close to each other that they cause congestion and erratic home plans, reducing the beauty and greenery in the area. Narrow lanes to increase the space in the residential buildings and to increase the apartments cause hindrances to the heavy flow of city traffic. Tall buildings with apartments of one room, congested areas, reduced green cover and non stop flow of traffic through the narrow lanes cause damage to the individual's health and mental state. The deterioration of health and quality of life neutralizes the very reason for which the people migrated to city areas.

People move to cities in search of better life and to meet their expenses in rising inflation. The cycle of joblessness in the rural and urban life triggers the violent tendencies of ^{people} to meet the financial needs through illegal means.

People, in need of money, turn to theft and snatching on gun point. The over crowded cities with high percentage of jobless people is prone to raised crimes. The cities like ~~Be~~ London, Karachi and Lahore have higher crime rates compared to other cities because the security forces are not enough to manage the large population. When the city is unable to provide the basic facilities and means of earnings to a large portion of population, the larger part turns to such illegal means.

The globalized world faces mechanization of already mechanized world. The media and fast paced mode of living extracts the human feelings out of the people. They are programmed to live a rushed life based on specific times and busy schedule. This removes the time for recreation and personal hobbies leading to a constrained life style disregarding the personal opinions of the individuals. When people belonging from different areas and belonging to various cultures concentrate in a life filled with work, they lose connection with other humans.

Loss of connection with humans proven to be harmful for human wellbeing and for the feelings of sympathy for other human beings. People work like machines to earn and forget about the familial and human connections.

Although the urbanization's proven provides a hub for the diverse cultures and ideas to combine, they also cause feelings of displacement among the humans. A man coming from a particular cultural background, when met with a person with a different cultural background, is faced with conflicting or at the very least ambivalent cultural aspects. People tend to ^{either} merge them or to completely adopt them. This imitation or rejection of cultural background causes identity crisis. The identity crisis further causes stress and anxiety. The feeling of being a wolf in sheep's skin, not being able to conform to a crowd and not being able to adjust in the life leads to stress and anxieties.

The fast paced life in cities and changing trends in fashion, life style and products is causing additional threat to the mental peace of human beings. The additional energy required to adopt and follow the new and novel concepts and trends

drain the useful energy out of human body. The rise in the mental illnesses and depression in youth of today's age is mainly due to the inability to cope with and follow the changing trends. Once they are unable to adopt and catch up to the trend, they are deemed a loser and triggers the mental weakness of youth.

Furthermore, the impact of rapid urbanization is not restricted to the domain of society, environment and psychology, rather it is also a major factor of climate change. The accelerating damage to the climate is further triggered due to the increased human activities that resultantly increase the average global temperature of the earth. High concentration of vehicles release huge amount of harmful gases that are damaging the ozone layer. Chlorofluorocarbons and higher carbon footprint are products of increased population and rise in such activities.

The population concentration in an area leads to the use of resources at a quick rate. The water level in underground reserves decreases quickly due to continuous extraction for human use and in the industrial sector. Recently, Islamabad has faced serious

water issue and crisis. The reserves of water are decreasing due to the changing global temperature and rainfall.

In addition to water scarcity, the process of deforestation for the construction of residential areas is also contributing to the climate change. Rapid urbanisation means rapid deforestation, which means reduced carbon dioxide absorption and increased carbon level in atmosphere ~~level~~. The rise in carbon level is harmful for the protective outer layers of gases. In this way, the rapid urbanisation is linked to climate change. The crucial issue of deforestation is further causing biodiversity loss; meaning a decrease in various species population. The harm to such species is not only a threat to them but also to human beings because it further opens a Pandora's box of existential issues to survive on this planet.

To sum up, the increase in population has multiplied the factors that influence and increase the damage to the normal cycle and process of climate change. The human desire to live a comfortable and facilitated life in cities is furthering causing problems in society, psyche and

environment that is in turn harming the same human beings on a large scale. The process of urbanisation is not that harmful, rather the unplanned and rapid urbanization is posing a great threat to human survival. If the process is carried out through a planned and structured ~~pro~~ technique, keeping in mind the importance of environment, the issues can be dealt with.