

Unit 18

Urban Influences on Rural Areas

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Learning Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- briefly describe some major studies on the urban influences on rural areas;
- the three situations of urban impact;
- discuss some of the influences of urban areas;
- explain the economic influences of urban areas on rural areas;
- describe the occupational changes that take place in rural areas; and
- outline the political, social and cultural influences of the urban areas on rural areas.

18.1 Introduction

In the common parlance, any big city or town or for that matter any metropolis is believed to be a melting pot, where people from several cultures come and converge to become one urban mass with distinct culture. If we analyse this within the framework of science and particularly physics, we might describe it as a centripetal force of urbanization. On the other hand, there is centrifugal forces of urbanization also, which influences rural areas. Often such forces become factors of social, cultural and economic change in the rural society. In urban sociology, the process of such changes has emerged as important with number of studies being focused on social and cultural changes in rural areas.

18.2 Some Major Studies

For past many decades, several authors, both from India and the West, have contributed to this branch of knowledge. A prominent scholar among them is M.N. Srinivas, who has analysed the impact of both industrialization and urbanization on rural system in great depth. He has highlighted how different areas of rural social life are being affected by urban centres. Mark Holmstrom has analysed the political network of leaders in the rural pocket within the Bangalore Corporation in the context of election. The influence of urban market on village economy has been the focus of study of D.N. Mazumdar. He has carried out this study in a village called 'Mohana' near Lucknow.

It is not necessary that the villages which are in the vicinity of the city are influenced. Often, villages which are far off from cities but has a significant proportion of its population as emigrant, exhibit high urban influences. This has been highlighted in the study of a village in U.P. by E. Eames. He notes

that since many emigrants in this village live in different cities and towns, they regularly send money back as remittances. The reason for this is that most have left their families back home. Such 'money-order' based economy has a spin-off effect in the sense that their dependents have cleared their debt and some are sending their children to schools. This implies that though this village is not in the vicinity of a city but is under the impact of urbanization. R.D. Lambart's study, too, highlights the fact of varying degree of influence of urban centres on the rural life and culture. Social changes are maximal in the area where displacement is sudden and maximum.

The most important contribution in this field has been made by M.S.A. Rao. He has argued that many villages all over India are becoming increasingly subject to the impact of urban influences. But the nature of urban impact varies according to the type of relation a village has with an urban area. This urban area could be a city or a town.

18.3 Urban Impact through Migration

It has been postulated that rural urban inequality in terms of economic and social wellbeing would accelerate rural urban migration. The pull factors operating through the highly productive sectors in urban centres would attract labour force from rural areas. Many among rural poor would move to urban areas in any case as a part of their survival strategy and supplement their family income in their villages. Rural economy often *plays an important role in ensuring balance between demand and supply of labour through circulation of population in different seasons of the year.*

Broadly, three different kinds of rural urban migration could be identified.

- i) First, there are villages in which a significant proportion of populations have sought employment in far off urban areas. In this situation they leave their families in villages of their birth. This situation is prevalent not only within the country but also in oversea cities. In either of the situation, such emigrants visit their village either during festivals or on family occasions. Most significantly majority of them send money regularly. In villages, because of constant flow of money to such families, the economic status is raised. In some cases, even the urban employment itself becomes the symbol of higher social status. In tangible terms, families of such emigrants have been found to build fashionable houses in their villages. They have also invested money on land and industry. Then it can be safely be inferred that whether the emigrants reside in Indian or overseas cities, the feedback effect of urbanization remains significant for such villages. In this situation, the urban impact is felt by villages despite the fact that physically they are neither situated within the cities nor are near them.
- ii) Second kind of impact is felt by villages which are situated near an industrial town. These villages are exposed to several kinds of influences. The reasons for this could be a) with the coming up of an industrial town some villages might be totally up-rooted, b) lands are partially acquired, c) influx of immigrant workers, d) demand of all kinds of amenities for new residents and e) finally ordering of relationship between immigrants and native residents.

In real terms this could mean that because industrial township is coming up, so there would be employment opportunities for villagers at their door step. In other words, this means that there would be a shift in the occupational structure among the villagers. Hence villagers instead of depending only upon agriculture, would send their adult members of the family to work in the factories as well. A considerable number of workers would commute from the city to the factories and eventually may shift their residence. However, it is important to remember that urbanization due to industrialization has general as well as specific influences on the

villages. The specific influence has more to do with the nature of industry. Hence, agro based industries will encourage farmers of surrounding villages to devote more agricultural lands for that particular crop. The best example in this case could be that of sugar mills. It has been observed that farmers in villages around sugar mills tend to cultivate sugarcane on larger portion of their land.

- iii) Finally, the third type of urban impact is felt by phenomenon of ever increasing size of metropolitan cities which many times convert into megalopolis. In the above situations, normally either village is sucked in to the city as it expands or land excluding the inhabited area is used for urban development. Such situations give rise to 'rural pockets' in the city area. In such villages the landless peasants get cash compensation, which they either invest in far-off places or in commerce or squander money. The villagers in general seek urban employment. In villages where land is partially acquired, there cultivation is still possible, but then farmers take up the emerging demand in consideration while deciding for the type of crop which they cultivate. Another effect of a metropolitan city on the surrounding villages is the outflow of urban residents who wish to move out of the congested areas in the city into the open countryside.

Rural areas in the immediate periphery of large cities often act as dormitories for poor migrants who commute on daily basis, as they are unable to find a foothold in the cities. The rural periphery, which absorbs these migrants has to deal with various socio economic problems, due to deficiency of basic amenities and social fragmentation. These often lead to outbreak of epidemics, social tensions as also group conflicts, as the local residents struggle and fight with the migrant groups to access or share the limited employment opportunities and basic amenities. Furthermore, the environmental lobby gaining strength in these cities often launches measures to push out the pollutant and obnoxious industries to these areas, thereby creating a process of degenerated Peripheralisation. Understandably, this process helps the cities in reducing their infrastructural costs and pass on the responsibility and costs of social transition to peripheral villages.

Beside economic impact such villages also change in terms of political features. One of the unique features is that the villagers participate directly in the city's or corporation's politics. The slum dwellers in the periphery often constitute the vote bank for political parties. They are, thus, affected by the political process at the city, state and the national levels. This is very unlike traditional villages where political landscape is governed by intermediary structure of 'Taluk' and district. These villages have direct administrative links with cities. It should, however, be noted that not all the villages may be said to have been exposed in the same way to urban influences, for the nature of the relations of the village with the cities, and the response of the village to this situation vary from village to village.

18.4 Influences of Urban Areas

Rural economy in general and agriculture in particular are noted to exhibit tremendous resilience and a high capacity of internal adjustment in response to challenges posed by the process of urban development, particularly in the era of globalisation. Rural areas shoulders the major responsibility of releasing material resources, necessary for meeting the capital and current expenditures of the modern sectors that generally provide the lead in the growth process. It is also supposed to sustain the process of urban industrial development by meeting the costs of shifting of workers (along with their family members) from rural to urban areas, finding a shelter and sustenance at least during the period of transition. Further, able-bodied male labour required in the upcoming activities in towns and cities are also made available through release of workforce from within the agrarian system. More

importantly, workforce displaced in industrial sector when it comes under slump due to fluctuations in global market, technological shifts or other socio-political disturbances, often seek absorption within agriculture in the short run.

Rural areas have also been a major provider of surpluses and investible funds. During the colonial regime, the rulers often succeed in operationalising a “suction mechanism” for expropriating resources from the colonies. The process often continued even after end of the colonial rule in many less developed countries. This has led to a high disparity between agriculture and non-agricultural sectors and between rural and urban areas in terms of per capita earnings as also in other dimensions of economic and social well-being.

In this context it is important, for the purpose of generalization, to classify the influences of urban centres on villages under some broad categories, such as economic, social, cultural and political. However it must be kept in mind that all these headings encompass several sub-categories. For example under category ‘economic’ sub-categories such as occupational roles, employment pattern and shift in profession is subsumed.

Reflection and Action 18.1

In your city/town/village find out at least five people who have recently (i.e. within the last one year) have come to stay. Ask them about the reasons of their arrival in this city/town/village. Why have they chosen to move to this place? How this movement has affected their life?

Write report on “Nature of Migration in My City/Town/Village” in about two pages. Share your report with other students at your study centre.

i) Economic influence

The urban areas are synonymous with market economy. If this seems harsh, then it can be said that economy of urban areas are very different than rural areas, though to a large extent it is based on supplies from rural areas. In the order of influence it can be inferred that in return rural areas gradually gets into market economy. Bohannan and Dalton while discussing the markets in African society characterized entry into the market economy by three criteria: a) marketing of produce with direct repercussion on production, b) selling labour and, c) buying for resale as contrasted to marketing one’s own product.

ii) Commercialization of agriculture

Marketing of agricultural produce has significant social implications. This is in the sense of several roles which a villager takes up. In villages which are yet relatively untouched by the urban influences, though in today’s scenario this is very unlikely, a villager as an economic being is mostly a cultivator. However, when s/he comes under the urban influence, they are likely to take up the role of farmer as well as that of a businessman. This means s/he not only has to grow those crops which has relatively higher and faster cash returns but also market them. Marketing entails arranging for quick transportation so that right price is procured. Further, there is a change in the cropping pattern i.e., a shift from growing food crop to growing vegetable, fruits, horticulture, poultry and dairy farming. In other words, market economy of urban places offers large scope of choice in terms of farming. The best example of this is when one is traveling from village to any urban area. It is apparent that as one nears any town there is more of vegetables, fruits, flowers grown than any staple food items like rice, wheat or pulses. This is not only the case for those villages which are in the vicinity of a metropolis or a city, but also with those villages which are away from urban areas but has relatively good transport and communication linkages.

Most of the time this offers good economic returns to villagers but sometime this also results in huge economic loss for a farmer in far off villages. The best example of this was apparent a few years back when there was glut of

potato in the market. Many of the farmers were neither able to sell their produce to any market nor were able to keep the produce in any storage facility. The reason for this is that a farmer makes choice of crop in a field on the basis of last year's market price. However, they do not take into consideration the fact that others are also farming the same crop and hence there is crash of market prices. In this regard it is important that farmers are provided with information on cropping pattern and adequate storage facility.

Sociologically, this shift in roles and also in cropping pattern has a significant bearing on the rural society. That is, going by certain theoretical premise, traditionally in caste system, specific castes have been associated with certain occupations with minor deviations. So an 'Ahir' was associated with diary farming and a 'Mali' was associated with 'horticulture' though at a very nascent level. The flip side of this association of occupation with caste was that other castes considered taking up any other occupation, with which they have not been associated, less prestigious. This role of caste was in addition to its role as identity marker. Now when villagers take part in the market economy of urban areas, they after some resistance tend to cross those caste boundaries and accept new occupations. Hence the traditional cultivators i.e. growers of main food crop take growing of vegetables, fruits, flowers and tend to go into poultry and dairy farming. In this context it is important to remember that it's not that those farmers were not at all growing vegetables, fruits and flowers. They have been doing so but only for own consumption and not as a main farming or for purpose of selling. Analytically this meant that occupational stratification on the basis of caste got gradually blurred. This in other words meant that the so-called lower castes who were also positioned lower in traditional economy, came to be at par with other castes. Hence they, as equals in new economy, had more bargaining powers which in a way was due to the new set of constraints.

The shift in occupational roles also meant that farmers have to learn new tasks, skills and purpose oriented activities such as raising vegetables, transporting and selling them. Further they were brought into relationships with the brokers at the auction market (subzimandi), and carters and the contract-gardeners in the village. At this juncture it is also important to remember that pursuit of new role was not in contradistinction but in conjunction with activities as cultivators. However, this certainly meant reorganization of resources both material and human, involving choices. Therefore, the large and medium-size farmers, who do not have adequate labour resources within household tend to go for partial mechanization of agricultural operation, hire labour and sell their crop before harvesting. Those farmers who have adequate supply of household labour but little land try to go for lease in land, concentrate on raising more short-term vegetables and cultivate their land intensively.

18.5 Occupational changes Particularly in Periods of Globalisation

In the context of economic influence, one must recognise that urban areas not only provide opportunity to villagers to sell their agricultural produce, but also supply labour, as noted above. The supply or availability of labour for farm activities is often affected by the employment opportunities offered by urban areas. If possession of land and adequate resources determines the entry of a villager into urban market place, education and contacts with people in influential positions in cities and towns helps them in getting the quality jobs. This however does not mean that when a villager gets a job in the urban areas, s/he gives up agricultural activities. Migrants to urban centres often get their land cultivated either by their kinsman or by employing farm laborers. But more commonly, while one member of the family takes charge of cultivation, others are encouraged taking up jobs in cities and towns.

Other than urban employment, growth of trade and commerce between cities and rural areas are also of great significance in changing the occupational structure. This category includes contract-farmers, brokers and shopkeepers. The development of such commercial activity in a rural area means entering in market economy of cities and towns through the third category mentioned by Bohannan and Dalton, i.e. buying for resale.

Urban influences also result in a household in village adopting different combinations of occupations and occupational mobility. Under the impact of modernization and globalization, many of the villagers tend to combine both traditional and modern occupations. In a household a husband may be working in urban area as clerk, peon or as call centre worker on casual or regular basis while his wife may be working as farm labour. The other trend has been that many a times a villager begins with traditional occupation and midway changes to modern occupation but is forced back to traditional occupation due to uncertain global or national market. One of the reasons offered by scholars are that traditional occupations becomes a life support system in case of job loss in urban areas. Final type of urban influence on occupational structure can be seen is situations in which traditional occupations are pursued with low earnings in modern settings of an urban area. Caste based occupations such as barber, sweepers and others, are often pursued even in towns and cities. But the only difference is that it is not governed by traditional social and economic constraints.

One important consequence of the exposure of rural economy to regional and national market through the neighbouring urban centres and resultant changes in occupational structure is sharpening of agrarian inequalities. Launching of the programmes of globalisation and structural reform in a country often leads to rapid growth of a few large cities and their peripheries. Entrepreneurs from the national and global market invest in industries, most of these coming up in and around large cities. Globalisation, unfortunately, brings little relief to agrarian economy, as the latter has no capacity to provide incentive to attract the global players. Instead, the import of agriculture and related products from international market impacts negatively the rural economy by lowering down the prices of the products. Sluggish growth in production, near stagnation in productivity often results in rise in rural unemployment. Thus, the negative impact of liberalisation becomes much more significant and visible in the rural than in urban economy.

The growing disparity between rural and urban areas during the period of globalization is expected to accelerate mobility of labour. Scholars and policy makers have often envisaged major shifts of workforce from agriculture to non-agricultural activities and from rural to urban areas. It is argued that the process would result in substantial decline in agricultural employment and corresponding increase in the high profit industrial and tertiary activities. Unfortunately, structural constraints and imperfections of labour market have inhibited or slowed down the process of this shift. Often, collapse of certain industries/activities due to slump in global market has pushed the migrants back to their rural occupations. Low productive farm and non-farm activities in rural areas have thus come under serious stress as these have become a sink for the surplus labour, sharing the limited income among larger number of households members. *These households have, thus, been forced to bear the cost of unstable growth process in globalising world of today.* A part of the surplus labour have, however, sought absorption in informal manufacturing and tertiary activities that have emerged in cities and towns as the "residual sector", at a low productivity level.

18.6 Political Influences

Political changes in the villages have close relationship with the processes of change taking place due to economic activities under urban influences.

However, these changes are also affected by wider social and political forces, administrative changes and democratic political institutions impinged upon the traditional political organization. If we analyse historically, during Mughal and British rules, the traditional authority relation i.e., leading men from dominant caste as custodians, were given due recognition. This was done keeping in mind maintaining of law and order. Till the decades of thirties this system prevailed, where dominant caste exercised political control over other castes which many times was also based upon the jajmani or patron and client relationship.

During the National freedom movements and during the post-independence period (1947 onwards) a lot of changes took place in the political structure of the villages. Part of this was due to awareness generated among various caste groups. Due to social movements such as 'Arya Samaj' and 'Brahmo Samaj' and partly because of administrative and political changes introduced after independence. The major changes came in the relationship between dominant and subordinate caste when latter had opportunity to become politically independent. As has been described above, this opportunity came with their participation not in traditional economy but outside of it. Further, this led them to become partners in the new economy instead of remaining economically subservient to the dominant castes. The change in economic status gave them more bargaining power, this includes political domain as well. The change was further influenced by privileges and benefits given to the so-called backward castes as entitlements. Also this led to the emergence of a rural middle class who had more bargaining power politically.

Similarly, the introduction of Panchayati Raj and associated regulations gave villagers belonging to lower caste and class a voice along with voting rights. This also provided opportunity to these castes to compete for positions of power in the village set up. This was also because control of panchayat meant access to the most important local resources such as land and other economic benefits that flow from development and welfare schemes; the ruling caste tries to derive the maximum benefits for its members.

In the new political era, especially after the sixties, the new developments at village political level was that new political organization parties were formed on the basis of alliances between groups or to be more precise on 'interest' groups. This was a new development when one compares this with pre-independence era, where it was based upon patron-client relationship between castes. Formation of interest groups across various caste groups meant that factionalisation of caste took place. At least in case of dominant caste this implied that chances of settlement of disputes within traditional panchayat system becomes minimal i.e. urban courts are approached for dispute settlement. This in the long run affects the so-called 'moral order' of traditional social structure.

18.7 Social Influences

In any society, whether be it rural or urban, various aspects are interlinked with each other. Hence, changes in one aspect has its repercussions on the others as well. Similarly, even in case of rural areas, as has been described above, economic area is the first one where change is noticed, but has its repercussions on traditional social structure as well. Moreover, a change in one area of economic organization tends to affect another economic activity. For example, an analysis of 'Jajmani system' of urban influenced village reveals that certain service relations are no longer bound by traditional constraints. In this regard it is important to note that service relationships in rural areas could be classified in three broad categories: (a) regular service relations arising out of occupational roles, (b) independent occupational roles and (c) the customary occupational roles. Same individual might be performing these roles but the set of rules governing each of the above

categories is different. Thus a barber might have ceased to shave his 'Jajmans' when village got integrated with urban economy and he became a daily commuter, but he still might be rendering customary service of messenger on ceremonial occasions.

The much fabled 'joint family system' of rural areas, is argued to have gone through tremendous changes under urban influences. It has been a general belief that with the changes in cropping pattern and occupational diversification there will be a breakup of joint family system into nuclear ones. However, evidence suggests contrary, as you learnt in unit 16: Marriage, Family and Kinship. The economic compulsion has rather forced people to continue with the joint family system, albeit a reorganization of wider kinship obligations. Sometimes it is in the economic interest of the villagers to continue living in joint family. This is also because of complementary economic interests of common landholding and job in urban market. As Aird has concluded in his study of two Muslim villages on the outskirts of Dacca, 'family structure has shown considerable resistance to the forces of social change brought about by urban contact. Only those facets which are closely tied to the economic aspects of urbanization seem to have undergone any change, and even this is slight'.

The urban influence on rural areas has also been a factor in bringing about changes in traditional status based differentiation. In rural areas, traditionally status has been based on ownership of land, however under new set this has lost much of its edge. Now status markers are income, occupation and education. Modern occupation based in urban areas brings with it prestige and even there some are more prestigious than others. That is, white collar workers are on higher pedestal than blue collar workers. Hence the caste identity which earlier defined the level of interaction between villagers seems to have realigned itself. Rather now the new status markers are bringing out new rules of interaction. In a sense this has created a sort of egalitarian grounds for the people to interact, but at the same time created new types of social differentiation.

In this context, it must also be noted that though there has been changes in the occupation, association and at broader level changes in the life style of people but certain basic principles of caste differentiation still remains intact. Those premises are endogamy, rules of inter-dining i.e. commensality and ritual hierarchy at local level. The recent developments in rural-urban relationships however has highlighted the fact that same villagers who have settled in urban areas are not very sensitive to rules of inter-dining and ritual hierarchy. Moreover, the endogamy is still very much prevalent and in some communities where it was relaxed slightly earlier are trying to reinforce with higher zeal. All these changes in some institutions and continuing with traditional values in other institutions bring out the point that people in rural areas differentiate among several spheres of social system. That is, in some respects they accept changes easily whereas in some others there is quite a big resistance. But the fact of the matter is that as soon as changes are accepted in one domain it has its rippling effect in other domains as well, only the pace varies.

18.8 Cultural Influences

The urban common man's understanding of rural people and their lives is often an imagined one rather than based on the reality. They believe that in rural areas people are rooted in soil, not very rational, are superstitious and always live in joint family system. Moreover, it is believed that most of the things are 'clean' and are nearer to 'nature' as compared to the life in the cities or urban areas. In other words, rural areas are always portrayed as opposed to cities or towns. In the same vein, urban areas are viewed as den of corruption, where people lead immoral, artificial and amorphous life. If we closely analyse, such portrayals, it tells us a lot about perceived cultural differences

between an urban and a rural area. Further, this also hints towards almost complete isolation of rural from urban areas and vice-versa. In the above section we have discussed economic influence of urban areas and also social influences. This in our understanding is a tangible influence upon rural areas. In this section, we will discuss cultural influences which are to some extent tangible but mostly intangible.

In the category of tangible cultural influences comes that aspect of social life which is visible to the world outside. This category obviously is based on apparent cultural symbols, which people use to distinguish themselves from others. This includes linguistic usage, dress, eating habits, forms of salutation and others. Similarly, within the category of intangible cultural forms are those which can be felt and described but not seen. Both forms of cultural expressions are not mutually exclusive. Rather many a times each becomes the means of expressing the other.

One of the things quite visible in villages are that when migrant workers come to their native place, they still continue to use the linguistic terms of places where they work. For example, in villages of eastern UP, from where people mostly migrate to Mumbai, they continue using terms and proverbs used in that region. Many a times it is picked by other villagers as well. Similarly, people in villages of Bihar, continue using Punjabi mixed Hindi, they pick it while working in Delhi and neighboring region, where they mostly migrate. Sometimes, these terms gets accepted in the dialect of the workers native place.

All the regions of India and specifically rural areas have specific ways of dressing and salutation. However, with migrant workers criss-crossing the length and breadth of country, there seems to have emerged a uniformity of dressing pattern. Even if we don't take into account the influence of western dresses among women, 'Salwar suit' has become a pan Indian dress. Similarly, different symbols are used to connote the marital status of a woman, but 'Mangal sutras' are again assuming the pan-Indian nature, which previously was confined to a few regions of south India. On a similar note, shirts and trousers are becoming a common dress for adolescents and adult men. What is being argued here is that at some level urban influences are having a homogenizing effect on villages. The result of this is that nuances of diverse cultures of villages are getting lost. To some extent this is due to the mass media, such as, television which portrays an array of images and life style which influence both urban, as well as, rural life.

Here arises a question, under urban influences, are villagers turning to consumerism? In other words, are they are they becoming consumers? Here we must distinguish between consumer of information and consumer of FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) and other consumables. As we all are aware, post 1990's there has been kind of media deluge in all the forms-print, IT developments and mass media. The reach and penetration of these media are increasing every day leaps and bounds. It is also a fact that content of most of these media forms are determined by people living in urban areas. This has a spatial constraint as well in the sense that most of the media houses are based in urban areas. In such a scenario, the messages sent across have larger urban context. For example, if we just take note of soap operas, except for 'Neem Ka Paed' and some others almost all of them are situated in urban context. Same is true for advertisements. Similarly, in the context of movies also, except handful movies such as 'Do Bigha Zameen', 'Mirch Masala', 'Nishant' or 'Upkar', most of the movies are urban based. The urban content of all these media forms informs people living in the villages about the life style and facilities available in the cities. These informations villagers consume and aspire to achieve. In this context, village study of Dipankar Gupta, becomes very important. Though in different context, he interestingly informs that one of the villages he was able to locate 'beauty parlor' run by

so-called lower caste people. In the same context it must be noted that in today's village that some form of consumerism is also taking place, which is indicated by proliferation of 'fake' branded articles which ranges from items like toothpaste to cosmetics. One of the important reasons for proliferation is that people are not able to afford 'original' items, but this does indicate towards the fact that people in rural areas do consume. Similar is the case with FMCG goods. Sensing these only FMCG giants like Hindustan Lever Limited (HLL) and Procter and Gamble (P&G) are drawing fresh marketing strategy to sell more goods. A bright example of this is villages of Punjab and Gujarat, where villagers almost possess all gadgets which any urban household has.

Reflection and Action 18.2

Watch a film or read a novel regarding the problem of rural migrants in urban cities; such as, Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai etc.

Write an analytical report of one page on the plight of rural migrants in cities based on this film or book. Share your report with other students and your Academic Counsellors at your study centre.

Within intangible cultural influences of urban areas upon rural populace also comes in the domain of education. The apparent sign of this is the proliferation or mushrooming of 'English medium schools' in the villages. Some people believe that this is exploitation of the aspirations of poor villagers. In this context, it should be recognized that villagers, in course of their contact with urban areas as emigrant workers, or for business or as resident of fringe villages, have witnessed the role of English education in getting jobs. Hence they aspire to send their children to English medium schools. However, given the availability of resources in villages both in terms of infrastructure and human resources, only some of the elite of the villages are able to send their children to schools. In this regard important thing to remember is that there seems to be developing a synergy of needs of urban areas and aspirations of the villagers.

18.9 Conclusion

In this unit you learnt about the influence of the urban cities on rural life and vice versa. As is clear, it is the urban which has far greater impact on the rural than the rural on the urban. However, some of the major studies described in this unit; such as, of Srinivas, Mark Holmstrom, D. N. Majumdar and others clearly point out that the exchange of ideas, values, style of life between the urban and rural is a continuous process where some changes are apparent and can be viewed while many others are subtle and cannot be observed. Here we have explained to you that how migration of people from villages to cities and contact of people from the cities with the villages leads to a series of changes in the economy, occupational structure; polity; society and culture of the rural areas under the impact of urbanization.

18.10 Further Reading

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