

Urban Dynamics and Environmental Change in Metropolitan Hyderabad Nerdistization of Economic and Ecological Space

Kalpana Markandey and Mr. V. Vijay Kumar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

Abstract

Hyderabad, which is located at the confluence of north and south India, is well connected to all parts of the country. It has witnessed Globalization and the attendant consequences after 1990. There have been tides of migrants as a result of which the social ecology of the city has changed. These migrants are mostly IT employees and are just (among them a greater degree are) interested in their work and an environment that is conducive for work. They occupy areas close to their work places in the northern and western parts of Hyderabad. Even though the city has expanded in all direction the IT employees seek to live in places close to their work place in a majority of the cases. The emergence of service apartments and world class (cosmopolitan kind of) culture which is so specific to these parts of the city, stands out in contradistinction to other parts of the city.

Introduction

Hyderabad has witnessed an unprecedented explosion in the Information Technology sector in the late 1980s and early 1990s that catapulted this city to the status of an internationally renowned outsourcing hub and a leading cyber city alongside Bengaluru, Chennai and Delhi. Inordinate predominance of the IT sector has been a phenomenon of the post globalization and liberalization era. As a result of this Hyderabad was transformed from a predominantly industrial and research institution - based city to an information technology center. The location of this city at the foci of routes connecting various parts of the country has further facilitated the inflow of skilled workers. Apart from this, the people of the state of Andhra Pradesh where Hyderabad is located have a penchant to train their children in technical skills. The concentration of a skilled workforce has been seen as a positive factor by the countries that outsource their

business processes to this city. This has further attracted quite a sizeable number of international migrants to the city who work in various managerial positions. These economic factors have been responsible for changing the demographic profile of this city, which though otherwise had a fair sprinkling of people from all parts of the country, had a further spell of diversification. This made the city cosmopolitan and changed the social profile as well and concomitantly the value systems of people as well. The impact is felt on social institutions, social relations and the very social fabric of the city. Also a new form of segregation is engendered in relation to income, class and gender which is definitely a cause for concern. A shift in the economic, demographic and social structure of the city apart from the implied physical, functional and morphological has made for a change in a whole horde of processes and this has led to a marked transformation in the ecology of the city.

Heretofore undeveloped and rugged areas of the city have now become the cradle of the functional niche that defines the new era Hyderabad. The stage where a society that is devoid of passions whether religious or linguistic or regional and wants to live in peace, without any modicum of strife is that which is sought after by these people who are associated with the IT sector. This phenomenon is witnessed in certain quarters of the city. These IT workers occupy such of those areas that are devoid of social pathology in whatsoever form and seek serenity in their residential space as they have heavy work pressure and deadlines to meet and may work from the home at times. Many of them stay close to their workplace, though it is not always so. These people who are defined as Nerds in this study are those who work in the IT units.

Objectives

The present study seeks to look into the ecological changes in close vicinity of IT units and the nerdization of economic spaces.

Methodology

Vector maps of the city were obtained from the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and digitized and these were overlaid on the Hyderabad city image to see the direction of growth of the city outside and away from the municipal limits. A comparison of this was also made with the Census of India map showing the growth of the city at various periods in time.

An evaluation of the number of IT units in Hyderabad in August 2008 was made by

resorting to web based sources and those collected from the IT and Registration Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh. These were mapped and the areas of economic nerdization- with an inordinate presence of IT units and implicitly the Nerd Population- were marked out.

Observations

It can be inferred from Fig. 1 (see page 69) that by 1971 the city had expanded towards the north western part along the Mumbai highway more so as industrial areas of Balanagar and Kukatpally were located there. Areas in the east like Uppal Kalan, which was again an industrial area, also became part of the extended city. Thus the main propellers of economic and spatial growth and development were ensconced in the secondary sector of the economy. This was also so up to 1981 when the growth was focused in the north eastern part of the city which again had the industries in a large measure in industrial areas like Nacharam located within Kapra Municipality besides other industrial areas. 1991 saw the all-round spatial growth of the city, a deeper look at which would suggest that it was focused around recently expanded parts of the city. In other words it set the pace for future growth of the city. It included places in the west like Serilingampally which houses most of the cyber units and Patancheruvu and Ramachandrapuram which are industrial areas. On the south west it has enveloped Rajendranagar with a large number of research and training institutions and on the south west L.B. Nagar. In 2001, the expansions included places like Kuntloor, Injapur, Jilleleguda, Mirpet and Nadergul all of which have developed as the

hotbeds for the real estate investors. Thus different factors at different points in time were the driving forces for spatial growth and expansion of which the advent of the IT sector was a point of departure where urban areas expanded onto the otherwise forsaken western extremity of the city. The built up area within the precincts of the different peripheral municipalities of Hyderabad apart from the core city itself is shown in fig. 2. (see page 70) The sprawl of the city is amply brought out in this figure.

Fig. 3 further sheds light on the growth drivers in Hyderabad. It is evident from this figure that Rajendranagar and Uppal hold a portent to develop further at a faster pace and also have all that it takes these IT employees to locate their residences, the land value is moderate and there is an emerging presence of IT units in Uppal. It may also be mentioned that while land values are with reasonable limits in Malkajgiri and L B Nagar too, the commute may be longer for the IT employees.

Uppal is all set to become the next information technology hub after Madhapur. Major infrastructure companies are showing interest in developing IT parks and SEZ in Uppal where land is available at an affordable price compared to Gachibowli and Madhapur. These moves will boost economic and real estate activity in area and its surroundings in the next 2 years. Major firms like DSL Infrastructure and Space Developers Pvt Ltd, Bhagyanagar Infrastructure and Iconic Company have decided to develop IT parks in Uppal, which is 10 km away from Secunderabad. Meanwhile, Top Notch has proposed an exclusive SEZ for software companies in the area. Each firm is likely to invest around Rs 300 crore for the development of IT parks while the SEZ would need around Rs 1000 crore. The government is also encouraging infrastructure majors to set up IT parks and SEZs in Uppal

Growth & Growth Drivers in Hyderabad

| | | Nature of Growth | | | Growth Drivers | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| | | Industrial | Residential | Commercial | Cheaper Real Estate | Proximity to Employment | Infrastructure |
| 1 | Meerpet (CT) | | | | | | |
| 2 | Uppal Kalan | | | | | | |
| 3 | Rajendranagar | | | | | | |
| 4 | Outbullapur | | | | | | |
| 5 | Malkajgiri | | | | | | |
| 6 | L.B. Nagar | | | | | | |
| 7 | Alwal | | | | | | |
| 8 | Kapra | | | | | | |
| 9 | Serilingampally | | | | | | |
| 10 | Kukatpally | | | | | | |
| 11 | Gaddiannaram | | | | | | |
| 12 | MCH | | | | | | |
| 13 | Ramachandrapuram (CT) | | | | | | |

by providing facilities under Software Technology Parks of India scheme, which gives various benefits including a tax holiday. Chairman of DSLI says “Uppal is considered a strategic location to provide connectivity to all parts of the city including Secunderabad and Shamshabad.”¹

Table 1 also substantiates this point where specifically places in and around Serilingampally Municipality – Hitech City, Banjara Hills, Jubilee Hills, Ameerpet etc. have the largest concentration of IT units (Fig.4) (see page 71). Apart from being close to work place which most places are and other advantages which are omnipresent in most localities, these areas also have relatively competitive reality rates (Fig. 3) and are also placed in the upper middle income bracket which means lesser social and cultural besides environmental irritants. These are some of the ideal conditions which induce the ‘Nerd’ population to inhabit these areas. One already sees the location and relocation of some of the IT units in these areas considering their advantages and the demographic, social and spatial impacts are already beginning to be felt there.

Construction of flats is also going on in full swing around the RGI Airport in Shamshabad. Presently, major construction work is going on in villages surrounding the international airport such as Bandlaguda, Gandhamguda, Peeram Cheruvu, Hydarsha Kota and Kismathpura. The government is launching the Outer Ring Road (ORR) project which has further fuelled real estate activity in these villages. Realty rates have nearly doubled since 2006 in these areas and more than 10 big

residential projects involving nearly 2000 flats are currently underway in Bandlaguda and Hydersha kota. Developers are taking up residential projects that suit all kinds of people in the villages between the airport and Gachibowli IT corridor. Overall flats range from 800 sq ft to 1250 sq ft. Giridhari Constructions named ‘Executive Park’ under which it is developing 518 flats ranging 1250 to 1800 sq ft. The Fortview Project undertaken by Theme Ambience has 285 flats ranging from 1170 – 1800 sq ft Star Construction and Symantic constructions are among others.²

The realty sector is banking on the IT/ITES/BPO sectors for its next boom in the city; after the Madhapur IT corridor it’s now Tellapur Techno-city in the Gachibowli IT corridor to give boost to the realty market. A consortium led by US Constructions Tishman Speyer and ICICI venture is developing India’s largest integrated township on a 400 acre site in Tellapur in partnership with Nagarjuna Construction Company. The project, include 30 million sq ft of stylish residential and office buildings apart from retail, civic, and cultural amenities, is expected to cost Rs 200 crore to develop. This would house 30,000 people and provide office space that will generate 35,000 jobs. It is the first township to be developed in public-private partnership and will be located strategically just 3 miles away from the CBD on the direct route to Shamshabad airport.

The CBD already has a cluster of companies (Microsoft, UBS, Franklin Templeton, Wipro, Polaris, Computer

Census of India

| S.No | Location | Number of Registered IT Companies | S.No | Location | Number of Registered IT Companies |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Hitech city | 152 | 11 | Gachibowli | 16 |
| 30 | Basheer bagh | 3 | 40 | Kamalapuri Colony | 2 |
| 58 | Jyothi nagar | 1 | 12 | Kharkhana | 14 |
| 2 | Banjara hills | 151 | 41 | Lakdikapul | 2 |
| 31 | Adarsh nagar | 3 | 13 | Serilingampally | 12 |
| 59 | Hubsiguda | 1 | 42 | Sikh village | 2 |
| 3 | Secunderabad | 125 | 14 | S R Nagar | 9 |
| 32 | Erramanzil | 3 | 43 | Balanagar | 2 |
| 60 | Ramnagar | 1 | 15 | Kondapur | 8 |
| 4 | Jubilee hills | 94 | 44 | Qutubullapur | 2 |
| 33 | Maredpally | 3 | 16 | Greenlands | 8 |
| 61 | Malkajgiri | 1 | 45 | Uppal | 2 |
| 5 | Ameerpet | 83 | 17 | Himayatnagar | 7 |
| 34 | Vengal rao nagar | 3 | 46 | Nacharam | 2 |
| 62 | Gunfoundry | 1 | 18 | Karkhana | 7 |
| 6 | Begumpet | 70 | 47 | Jeedimetla | 2 |
| 35 | Film nagar | 3 | 19 | Tarnaka | 6 |
| 63 | Chikkadpally | 1 | 48 | ECIL | 2 |
| 7 | Somajiguda | 64 | 20 | Secretariat | 6 |
| 36 | Vengalarao nagar | 2 | 49 | Bagh lingampally | 1 |
| 64 | Santosh Nagar | 1 | 21 | Yousufguda | 5 |
| 8 | Panajagutta | 49 | 50 | Yellarediguda | 1 |
| 37 | Barkatpura | 2 | 22 | RTC X Road | 4 |
| 65 | Other areas | 96 | 51 | Masab tank | 1 |
| 9 | Srinagar colony | 20 | 23 | Kphb colony | 4 |
| 38 | Kapra | 2 | 52 | Tirumalagiri | 1 |
| 10 | Kukatpally | 17 | 24 | Kushaiguda | 4 |
| 39 | Gagan mahal | 2 | 53 | Bowenpally | 1 |
| Total units of it in Hyderabad = approximately 1110 (source - data collected from IT and registration department) | | | 25 | Mehdipatnam | 4 |
| | | | 54 | Lothukunta | 1 |
| | | | 26 | Abids | 4 |
| | | | 55 | Gaganmahal | 1 |
| | | | 27 | A.C. Guards | 4 |
| | | | 56 | Kachiguda | 1 |
| | | | 28 | Liberty | 4 |
| | | | 57 | Khairatabad | 1 |
| | | | 29 | Domalguda | 3 |

Source: HUDA

Associates, Infotech, ICICI, SBI, Infosys) and several IT companies have come forward to set up shop in Gachibowli IT corridor and consequently demand for residential and commercial property expected to raise. Developers are taking-up extensive construction of residential and commercial buildings to cater to this demand. Most buyers are IT professionals as several global and national firms set up operations in Gachibowli IT corridor apart from this, the government has set up a Skyscraper zone in Telloapur where buildings should have at least 30 floors. At least 30 construction companies, including builders from other states are keen on taking-up projects in this area.

The first to get approval for construction of high-rise buildings is Aliens Space Station coming in 20 acres out of which 4 acres are earmarked for commercial buildings and for residential purposes. The project is estimated to cost Rs 1200 crore and has 13 stations with 28 floors will have nearly 2000 flats. DLF is also constructing a huge commercial complex. Other major projects on stream are NCC Urban and Ramky Tower.³

The builders are also now concentrating on affordable housing to cater to middle-income groups. Earlier the realtors used to construct big flats ranging from 1500 to 2000 sqft as IT professionals preferred spacious homes. But with the slowdown in IT and aviation sectors, they have now started constructing smaller flats.⁴

The structural, spatial, demographic and attendant social and economic impacts

of the location of IT industry are all too evident. The population in these units being diverse in nature owing to the large number of migrants, on whom they depend, has its own social and cultural nuances. While the IT employees seek locations that are devoid of botheration or any social pathology, they also look for elegant, world class residences. The concept of Service Apartments has caught on in a big way in areas close to the IT centres.⁵ Therefore, the spaces that they occupy have a tinge of the Global culture and lifestyle and impart a distinct ecology to the cityscape. They also have long - chain impacts on the rest of the city so far as construction, lifestyle and direction of change are concerned.

Impacts of IT industry

The IT industry has positive as well as negative impacts in the vicinity of its location. IT industry pollutes the environment by the generation of E Waste i.e. electronic items which have become outmoded or archaic. These products have a large quantity of contaminants in them and if not properly disposed they may be a cause for concern. They may lead to ground water contamination by the process of leaching in turn. Residents are exposed to severe health hazards due to elementary methods of disposal like land filling, incineration etc.

The social and economic impacts are also equally notable as the employment opportunities and satisfaction may be more short-lived than long lasting. The IT industry strengthens social chasms, estranging people from their traditions, without offering them any position in the values they have to imbibe. The gender divide is more evidenced as the females are relegated to non managerial routine jobs.

Family lives and social relations also go for a toss due to work pressures. Another menace of permeation of IT industry has been the rise of cyber crimes in Hyderabad. This is like any other city of its ilk in any part of the world.

References

- K.Srinivasa Rao, Deccan Chronicle, May 9, 2008
L.V. Reddy, Deccan Chronicle, July 11, 2008)
L.V. Reddy, Deccan Chronicle, July 18, 2008
K.Srinivasa Rao, Deccan Chronicle, December 5, 2008

Kalpana Markandey and B. Srinagesh, 'Inclusive Cities in an Era of Globali-zation: A Case for a Shelter Program for Hyderabad'. Final Report of Major Research Project funded by University Grants Commission, 2011

Prof. Kalpana Markandey
Mr. V. Vijay Kumar
Department of Geography
Osmania University
Hyderabad