

Types of Rural Settlements

Types of the settlement are determined by the extent of the built-up area and inter-house distance. In India compact or clustered village of a few hundred houses is a rather universal feature, particularly in the northern plains. However, there are several areas, which have other forms of rural settlements. There are various factors and conditions responsible for having different types of rural settlements in India. These include:

(1) physical features – nature of terrain, altitude, climate and availability of water

(2) cultural and ethnic factors – social structure, caste and religion

(3) security factors – defence against thefts and robberies.

Rural settlements in India can broadly be put into four types:

- **Clustered, agglomerated or nucleated,**

- **Semi-clustered or fragmented,**
- **Hamleted, and**
- **Dispersed or isolated.**

->Clustered Settlements

CRS

The clustered rural settlement is a compact or closely built up area of houses. In this type of village the general living area is distinct and separated from the surrounding farms, barns and pastures. The closely built-up area and its intervening streets present some recognisable pattern or geometric shape, such as rectangular, radial, linear, etc. Such settlements are generally found in fertile alluvial plains and in the northeastern states. Sometimes, people live in compact village for security or defence reasons, such as in the Bundelkhand region of central India and in Nagaland. In Rajasthan, scarcity of water has necessitated compact settlement for maximum utilisation of available water resources.

->Semi-Clustered Settlements Semi-clustered

Semi-Clustered Settlements Semi-clustered or fragmented

settlements may result from tendency of clustering in a restricted area of dispersed settlement. More often such a pattern may also result from segregation or fragmentation of a large compact village. In this case, one or more sections of the village society choose or is forced to live a little away from the main cluster or village. In such cases, generally, the land-owning and dominant community occupies the central part of the main village, whereas people of lower strata of society and menial workers settle on the outer flanks of the village. Such settlements are widespread in the Gujarat plain and some parts of Rajasthan.

SCS

->Hamletted Settlements

Sometimes settlement is fragmented into several units physically separated from each other bearing a common name. These units are locally called panna, para, palli, nagla, dhani, etc.

In various parts of the country. This segmentation of a large village is often motivated by social and ethnic factors. Such villages are more frequently found in the middle and lower Ganga plain, Chhattisgarh and lower valleys of the Himalayas.

HS

->Dispersed Settlements

Dispersed or isolated settlement pattern in India appears in the form of isolated huts or hamlets of few huts in remote jungles, or on small hills with farms or pasture on the slopes. Extreme dispersion of settlement is often caused by extremely fragmented nature of the terrain and land resource base of habitable areas. Many areas of Meghalaya, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala have this type of settlement.