Urban Poverty in India: With Reference to Slums of Nainital City

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Abstract

The growth of slums is a manifestation of the urban poverty as the majority of the urban poor lives in the slums. Poverty is one of the disturbing features of the slums. It cannot be separated from the slum life. Besides, urbanization, industrialization, higher productivity in the secondary/tertiary sector against primary sector makes cities and towns centres of economic growth and jobs etc are the main reasons for the development of the slum areas. According to the Census of India 2001, slum population in the country is of the order of 40.3 million out of the total urban population in 607 towns/cities. This population constituted about 23% of the total population. Slum dwellers have to live in adverse conditions due to poor social, economic and health facilities. Lower socio-economic conditions lead them to ailing life. The slum dwellers have no assured income. Most of them are casual labourers and unemployed. The main objective of this research paper is to examine the position of urban poor with reference to Slums of Nainital city. This study is based on secondary data and secondary information.

Key Words: urban poor, poverty, slums, slum dwellers, Nainital city,

Introduction

The growth of slum is a worldwide phenomenon, effecting more adversely in developing countries like India.Urbanisation brings about a rapid change in the social systems of urban society. This rapid urbanization is due to large scale rural migration to the urban centres. Majority of slum dwellers are migrants from different places within the country and are unskilled workers with low occupational status and low income. The growth of slums is a manifestation of the urban poverty as the majority of the urban poor lives in the slums. Poverty is one of the disturbing features of the slums. It cannot be separated from the slum life. Besides, urbanization, industrialization, higher productivity in the secondary/tertiary sector against primary sector makes cities and towns centres of economic growth and jobs etc are the main reasons for the development of the slum areas. According to the Census of India 2001, slum population in the country is of the order of 40.3 million out of the total urban population in 607 towns/cities.This population constituted about 23% of the total population. Slum dwellers have to live in adverse conditions due to poor social, economic and health facilities. Lower socio-economic conditions lead them to ailing life. The slum dwellers have no assured income. Most of them are casual labourers and unemployed.The main objective of this research paper is to examine the position of urban poor with reference to Slums of Nainital city.This study is based on secondary data and secondaryinformation.

According to Gillin and Gillin et al (1969) poverty is that condition in which a person, either because of inadequate income or unwise expenditure, does not maintain a scale of living high enough to provide for his physical and mental efficiency and to enable him and his natural dependents to function usefully according to the standards of the society, of which he is a member.

The problem of poverty is severe in the slums of India. The extent of poverty in India calculated by Dandekar V.M. and Rath N. (1971) is as follows: Approximately 40% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population live below the poverty line i.e. with diets inadequate even with respect of calories, people not familiar with these sections of the populations........have wondered how men at all subsist at these levels.

According to the reports of the United Nations on the urban land policy 'a slum is a building, group of buildings or area characterized by overcrowding, deterioration, insanitary conditions or absence of facilities or

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amenities which because of these conditions or any of them, endanger the health, safety or morals of its inhabitants or the community' (Rao and Rao, 1984).

For the purpose of implementation of the environment improvement of urban slums, the government of India adopted the following definition for the slum areas, 'a slum means any area where such dwellers predominate which by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement of design of building, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, inadequacy of open space and community facilities or any combination of these factors are detrimental to safety, health or morals. Any slum area selected for improvement under the scheme should have at least 2/3rd of the slum families with an income of less than Rs. 250/ per month and also there should be no likelihood of any slum clearance for redevelopment programme to be taken up in that area for a period of at least 15 years in case pucca built slums and 10 years for hutment type slums, so that adequate benefit is secured from the money spent on improvement (Government of India, 1985)'.

For the purpose of the survey in 1976-77, NSSO adopted the definition of slums as declared and undeclared slums. The declared slums were areas which have been formally declared as slum by the respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or the development authorities. The undeclared slums were defined as 'an aerial unit having twenty five or more katcha structures mostly of temporary nature or inhabited by persons with practically no private latrine and inadequate public latrine and water'.

For the purpose of the survey in 1993 and 2002, NSSO adopted the definition of slums as 'a slum is a compact settlement with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions. Such an area, for the purpose of this survey, was considered as "non notified slums" if at least 20 households lived in that area. Areas notified as slums by the respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities are treated as 'notified slums'.

Review of literature

The slum dwellers have no assured income. Most of them are casual labourers and unemployed. A slum is a by product of poverty; and poverty leads to the rise of slums. According to David R. Hunter (1964) a slum is the locus of poverty and poverty is one of the potent forces that maintain the vicious circle and make it so difficult for people to breakout.

Generally the living standard of the slum dwellers is very low. They belong to poor build up households, lack of basic amenities like fresh drinking water, electricity, latrine facility, sewerage facility etc. Their social status, economic condition and livelihood profile is very poor. Chandramouli's (2003) study of slum dwellers of Chennai reveals the poor social status and living conditions of slum dwellers. According to Gangadharan K. (2005), slum area are effected with poor household conditions, educationally backward, high level of diseases occur, lack of available health services exist in slums.

Generally most of the slum dwellers live below poverty line (BPL). They do not have good source of income. Most of them are engaged in low level of economic activities as labours, rickshawpullers, auto drivers, house maids, domestic workers, street vendor etc. Maximum number of slum dwellers work in informal/unorganized sectors. According to Sajjad H. (2014), the male slum dwellers are engaged as daily wage earners. They are rickshaw pullers, Tonga pullers, industry workers and construction workers. The female slum dwellers work as domestic workers in nearby localities. Street vending, small shop keeping, selling handicrafts and hawking are the main occupations of these slum dwellers..According to the Oscar Lewis the slums have given rise to a distinct culture because of continuous poverty and unemployment in the slum areas, and he calls this culture of slums as 'culture of poverty'. He writes that the 'culture of poverty' emerges in a society with the following set of conditions: a cash economy, wage labour and production of profit, a persistent high rate of unemployment and under-employment, low wages, failure to provide social, economic and political organisation, either on voluntary basis or by government imposition for the low income population, existence of bilateral kinship systems, existence of a dominant class of a set of values that stress the accumulation of wealth and property, the possibility of upper mobility and shift and that explains low economic

status as a result of personal inadequacy and personal inferiority. The way of life that develops among some of the poor under these conditions is the culture of poverty.According to him the culture of poverty would apply only to those who are at the very bottom of the socio-economic scale, the poorest workers, the poorest peasants, plantation labourers and that large heterogeneous men like artisans and tradesmen. The culture of poverty has the following characteristics: lack of effective participation and integration of the poor in major institutions of the larger society, low wages and chronic un-employment and under-employment, poor housing conditions crowding, gregariousness and above all, a minimum of organisation, beyond the family. The characteristics of the culture of poverty are generally found in urban slums of India.

Slum dwellers generally do not have any formal education facilities. It is generally observed in India that low income families, especially the lower caste families live on the outskirts of villages. Slums are generally educationally backward areas. Mostly slum dwellers are illiterate and they do not realise the importance of education. Therefore they do not spend their income on education. All changes and progress in society comes from literacy and education. Among the slum population literacy level is very low. According to Dhadave (1989) more than two third of the slum dwellers were illiterate.The study of Indian slums of Bombay by A.R. Desai and S.D. Pillai (1979) reveals that in families where both parents work, grownup children are kept at home to look after younger siblings. In families where such a situation does not exist, the child's lack of interest in schooling is quoted and often to such an extent that it would seem that it is the children themselves who decide whether they need education or not. Distance from school, danger of crossing the road, no school of a particular medium of instruction and so on, were also frequently quoted as reasons along with other reasons.

During 2010-2011, Government of India Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (national building organisations), JNNURM has conducted a survey on the conditions of slums of Nainital city in Central Himalayan region. As per 2001 census town population was 39,911 and number of total households was 8,647. In Nainital city there are 14 slums identified spread in around 2219 sq. mts. Total population in slums is estimated around 4758 of which 657 (14%) is BPL population. Total number of households are 909 of which 131 (14%) are BPL households. Nainital city is a popular hill station in the Indian state of Uttrakhand and headquarters of Nainital district in the Kumaun foothills of the outer Himalayas. All 14 slums covered under the survey are listed by Nainital Nagar Palika Parishad, and are located in core city area/town of which some slums are concentrated along the Naini Lake. These slums have come up past 90 year and have been growing, average age of slum being 49 years.All 14 slums have come up on area that belongs to the state government. Following table reveals that all 14 slums have come up on area that belongs to the state government.

Table 1

Urban population living in slums

S.no.	Name of slum	Ownership of land where slum located	Area in sq. mts.	Slum population	No. of slum households	BPL population	No. of BPL households
1.	Bakery compound	State govt.	343.8	87	17	10	02
2.	Breysite	State govt.	1893.8	284	61	15	03
3.	Dhobighat	State govt.	3700.0	468	100	31	11

4.	Hari nagar	State govt.	6225.0	854	186	165	36
5.	Jubli hall	State govt.	887.5	183	32	143	27
6.	Kameti line	State govt.	1200.0	149	28	03	01
7.	Kathbas	State govt.	825.0	112	20	0	0
8.	Langham/dsb	State govt.	2487.5	298	62	04	01
9.	Mangawali	State govt.	3212.5	404	80	76	13
10.	Narayan nagar	State govt.	5156.3	854	145	165	28
11.	Rajpura	State govt.	2131.3	347	65	19	04
12.	Sadar line	State govt.	981.3	331	45	04	01
13.	Sherwood compound	State govt.	606.3	107	19	0	0
14.	Sukhataal	State govt.	1418.8	276	49	22	04
	Average /Total		2219.2	4758	909	657	131

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET;Year 2010/2011

Total population in the slums of Nainital city is 4758 of which 2502 are male members and 2256 are female members. Slums of Nainital city constitute of all castes categories of which 65% population belongs to SC category, followed by general category that constitute around one-fourth (24%) of the slum population. OBC population is 10%, and there is very small number of ST population i.e. 1%. The slums are dominated by Hindu households constituting around 84% followed by Muslim community that are around 15.5%. Low representation is by other communities like Sikh, Christian and others. The percentage of women headed households is 16. Muslim and Hindu migrants of Uttar Pradesh and Uttrakhand (especially remote hill areas of Uttrakhand) are the main residents of these slums. They migrated to Nainital in search of livelihood. Around 15.8% slum households are on rent, while 24.5% have encroached public land. Around 16.5% reported that they possess 'patta' of the land they reside on, and some 16.6% of slum dwellers possesses occupancy certificate. They are mainly engaged in daily wage labour, private jobs and some are employed in nearby hotels and shops. They are poor, sick, illiterate and below the poverty line(ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011).

Discussion and analysis:

Table 2

Literacy in slums

S.no.	Slum name	Illiterate adult male	Illiterate adult female	Illiterate adult total
1	Bakery compound	28	28	56
2	Breysite	11	15	26
3	Dhobighat	165	154	319
4	Hari nagar	139	157	296
5	Jubli hall	17	47	64
6	Kameti line	65	72	137
7	Kathbas	40	42	82
8	Langham/dsb	52	60	112
9	Mangawali	11	14	25
10	Narayan nagar	146	153	299
11	Rajpura	67	66	133
12	Sadar line	60	56	116
13	Sherwood compound	05	10	15
14	Sukhataal	36	39	75
Total		842	913	1755
Percent of total population		17.7	19.2	36.9

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

Above table shows that of total number of illiterate adult population in slums is 1755 i.e. 36.9 % of total population of which 842 (17.7%) are adult male population and 913 (19.2%) are female population.It shows that slum dwellers do not spent money on the education.

Table 3

Dropout school children in slums

Slum name	Dropout children male (6-14 years)	Dropout children females (6-14 years)	Dropout total (6-14 years)
Bakery compound	05	06	11
Breysite	02	01	03
Dhobighat	11	10	21
Hari nagar	0	01	01
Jubli hall	13	14	27
Kameti line	0	0	0
Kathbas	01	02	03
Langham/dsb	0	0	0
Mangawali	10	09	19
Narayan nagar	15	16	31
Rajpura	31	21	52
Sadar line	02	01	03
Sherwood compound	0	01	01
Sukhataal	0	0	0
Total	90		172
Percent of total	52.3	47.7	100.00

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

Above table reveals that 172 children between ages 6-14 years are not attending /dropout from school of which 52.3% are boys and 47.7% are girls. It shows that slum dwellers do not spent money on the education of their children. Due to the low level of income slum dwellers do not send their children to the school.

Table 4

Type of houses

Slum name	Pucca	Semi-pucca	Katcha	Total
Bakery compound	01	0	16	17
Breysite	01	58	02	61
Dhobighat	51	44	05	100
Hari nagar	50	119	17	186
Jubli hall	05	13	14	32
Kameti line	26	02	0	28
Kathbas	16	04	0	20
Langham/dsb	46	14	02	62
Mangawali	66	05	09	80
Narayan nagar	82	31	32	145
Rajpura	25	23	17	65
Sadar line	05	01	39	45
Sherwood compound	01	18	0	19
Sukhataal	07	26	16	49
Total	382	358	169	909
Percent	42.0	39.4	18.6	100.00

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

The above reveals that out of the total 909 households maximum population i.e. 42% live in pucca houses, 39.4% live in semi-pucca houses and 18.6% live in katcha houses. 25% houses have cement roof and 11.2% roofs are of asbestos. 12.3% houses have roof made of wood while 16% are made of tarpaulin. Flooring in 69% houses is of cement and 9.9% are still done with mud.

Table 5

Lighting source

Slum name	Electricity connection	Kerosene	Firewood	Other	Total
Bakery compound	02	0	0	15	17
Breysite	59	01	0	01	61
Dhobighat	94	03	0	03	100
Hari nagar	172	05	01	08	186
Jubli hall	26	03	01	02	32
Kameti line	27	0	0	01	28
Kathbas	20	0	0	0	20
Langham/dsb	61	01	0	0	62
Mangawali	78	0	0	02	80
Narayan nagar	125	10	10	0	145
Rajpura	39	01	0	25	65
Sadar line	19	0	0	26	45
Sherwood compound	19	0	0	0	19
Sukhataal	44	03	01	01	49
Total	785	27	13	84	909
Percent	86.4	3.0	1.4	9.2	100.00

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

It is clear from the above table that out of total 909 households maximum number i.e. 785 (86.4%) possess electricity connections, however when data analysed by type of dwelling around 10.6% of the kutcha dwellings have electricity connections. 3% slum dwellers use kerosene while other (9.2%) use paraffin, candles etc. According to ULB report around 80% households use Gas-stove for cooking purpose, while 5.6% still use kerosene for fuel followed by fire wood 2.4%.Some households are also using electricity (1.4%) as a source for cooking.

Table 6

Source of drinking water

Source of drinking water	Total	Percentage
Tap	339	37.3
Tube well/hand pump	09	1.0
Open well	-	-
Public tap	340	37.4
Borewell	04	0.4
Tank/pond	22	2.4
River/canal	28	3.1
Water tanker	155	17.1
Other	12	1.20

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

Above table reveals that 37.4 % slum dwellers use public taps for fetching drinking water and the same percentage of slum dwellers i.e. 37.3 % have their individual tap connections. 17% households depend on water tank supplies and 3.1% access tank/pond for drinking water. It is clear that there is no scarcity of drinking water in the slum area but the quality of water is not good and water supply is not adequate.

Table 7

Gender-wise distribution of earning members of the household

Gender	Total	Percentage
Male	1107	59.9
Female	740	40.1
Grand total	1847	100.00

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

The above table reveals that total number of earning members in slum dwellers is 1847 of which 59.9% are male members and 40.1% are female members. It is clear that the percentage of earning male member is high comparatively and they have the main responsibility for earning still the percentage of female earning member is satisfying.

Table 8

Skill training acquired by the earning members of the household

Skill training	Total	Percentage
Pre-employment Training	14	0.8
In-service Training	25	1.4
Apprenticeship	06	0.3
Soft skill/life skill programme	09	0.5
Entrepreneurship	41	2.2
Hereditary	05	0.3
Other	51	2.8
No skills training	1696	91.8

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

The above table shows that maximum number of slum dwellers have not received any kind of skills training and those who got some kind of training had received it from ITI.

Table 9

Employment status of earning members of the household

Employment status	Total	Percent
Self employed	569	30.8
Salaried	698	37.8
Regular wage	85	4.6
Casual labour	97	5.3
Others	398	21.5
Grand Total	1847	100.00

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

Above table reveals that most of the earning members of the slum household are salaried (37.8%). 30.8% slum dwellers are self employed and 21.5% slum dwellers livelihood is based on some other works. Around 5% and 4.6% slum dwellers livelihood is based on casual works and wages respectively.

Table 10

Monthly earnings of earning members

Monthly earning	Total	Percent
Below 500	55	3.0
500-1000	73	4.0
1100-1500	267	14.5
1600-2000	101	5.5
2100-3000	46	2.5
Above 3000	1305	70.7
No income	0	0
Grand total	1847	100.00

Source: ULB database/baseline survey by HIFEED/PrimeNET; Year 2010/2011

Above table shows that the monthly income of maximum slum dwellers (70.7%) is above Rs.3000 and the monthly income of 14.5% slum dwellers is between Rs.1100-1600.5.5% slum dwellers earn between Rs. 1600-2000 followed by Rs.4% households are earning Rs. 500-1000. Very small percentage of the earners has earning less than Rs. 500 a month i.e. 3%. Maximum slum dwellers feel that the main reason of unemployment in slum areas is lack of job opportunity. Some slum dwellers have expressed lack of vocation skills as main reason for un-employment of un-employed members. Average monthly earning of a household is estimated around Rs. 6210 whereas monthly expenditure is around Rs. 5682. On an average Rs. 1169 is outstanding debt on a household. Around 17% could find opportunities within the slum area, and rest have to move outside the slum areaof which most (39%) have to travel more than 5 Kms.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above discussion that urban poverty manifests itself in the proliferation of slums.Theslums of Nainital city also have poor infrastructure and living conditions in these slums are pathetic and unhealthy.14% of households have BPL status. Majority of slum dwellers live in pucca and semi pucca houses. Majority of them are living in houses with cement roofs. Maximum houses possess electricity connections. Majority of slum dwellers use public taps for fetching drinking water followed by households have individual tap connections. Quality of water is not good and water supply is not adequate. Slum dwellers do not spent money on the education of their children. Due to the low level of income slum dwellers do not send their children to the school.Most of the slum dwellers have not received any kind of skills training.

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