



“Livelihood Problems Of The Urban Below Poverty Line Families In Imphal City, Manipur”

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Abstract:

Imphal the capital city of Manipur is a rapidly growing urban area and a bustling town. Imphal city is largely characterized by medium to low level of developments, which are reflected in low per capita income, poor economic base, limited industrial development. There are no any heavy manufacturing industries in Imphal city. Small cottage industries are the major sources of livelihood aside from these, other small scale industries like, wooden furniture saw mill, rice and flour mill, iron and steel works, etc, can be found. While weaving and pisci-culture are other important and traditional means of livelihood, logging, cultivation of a few cash crops, handloom and handicrafts are the traditional sources of additional income of the poverty line families.

A characteristic feature of this urban has been growing rapidly much faster than the medium and small towns and has left a huge backlog in basic service and infrastructure provision in poor area. Lack of food and clothing, inadequate and leaky shelters, insufficient financial assets and dependence on high-interest private debt characterize the conditions of below poverty line in Imphal city leads to livelihood vulnerability to insurmountable levels of income disparity, extreme and widespread poverty.

KEYWORDS:

Livelihood problems of the urban below poverty line families.

INTRODUCTION

In Manipur, Below Poverty Line families are identified to those who have the monthly income of below Rs. 3205.65. (Three thousand two hundred five and sixty five paises) of all sources of the families []. Livelihood opportunities of urban below poverty line families in Imphal city are very limited. Most of them are working poor, and form a major part of the informal sector of the economy. Their livelihoods remain illegal and illegitimate in many cases. The settlements they live in are either illegal or poorly served by the urban local bodies and the low income group population were unskilled labourers engaged in manual labour. Under nutrition had an adverse effect on work capacity and increased susceptibility to infections. Poor work output and absenteeism due to illness reduced their earning and purchasing power. Urbanization has also been both the consequence as well as the reason behind economic change and growth.

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Poverty and unemployment urban violence, insecure housing tenure, a high prevalence of HIV/AIDs, chronic diseases and food insecurity are some of the critical human development issues facing the residents of the city. The urban poor, residing in certain pockets of the city such as informal settlements and inner city areas, are particularly vulnerable and struggle to gain access to services and opportunities to improve their livelihoods.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has confined only to the Urban Local Body of Imphal city, which is the governance of the East and the West Districts of Imphal. Manipur falls under the jurisdiction of the Imphal Municipal Council. According to the census conducted in the year 2001,[] the total population of the urban below poverty line of the Imphal city is 61397, which denotes 12100 household from 27 ward of the Municipal council, which consists of 7 wards in Imphal East district and 20 wards in Imphal West district, out of which 1/3 (one third) wards from the total 27 wards, i.e., 9 wards were selected by using the random sampling method. And taking the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) models for determining the size of the simple, i.e. 10,000 to 20,000 is to 370 samples. So being 12100 household total populations, 370 household sample sizes has chosen for the universe of the study.

1.Social Factors

Poverty line has remained virtually unchanged over this period of 25 years ago by their own reckoning, in terms of the same criteria. Lack of food and clothing, inadequate and leaky shelters, insufficient financial assets to send their children even to primary school, and dependence on high-interest private debt characterize the conditions of poverty in this region.

There is inefficiency of government programmes for their economic and social development, Community infrastructure: provision of community centres to be used for pre-school education, non-formal education, adult education, recreational activities etc.

The below poverty line families has a community based groups but has no beneficial support from them, where the growth of the community institutions and structures, particularly community development societies and self-help groups is weak in the area compared to other cities in the country. The social organization and environmental planning are becoming unmanageable and there is no conversion and coordination among them, in which the government developmental approaches seems to be totally absents. Few of the below poverty line families reveals to have social problems of communal clashes, inter-caste marriages and social discrimination of dominating.

1.1.Family Disorder

Below poverty line family widows usually do not get enough time with their children and this cause parenting problems. They were not only facing the problems of daily financial struggle but also had the daily domestic tasks which drain them both physically and mentally ill.

Single parents were facing financial problems in meeting the basic needs, such as food, clothing, school fees and maintaining the previous standard of living and meet the personal expenses because of the lack a their supportive spouse.

Broken families has educational difficulties of their children and directly influence a wide range of child behaviors in their academic performance, including emotional and psychological distress, attention disorders, social misbehavior, substance abuse, sexual activity and teen pregnancy.

1.2.Shelter problems

The below poverty line families live in a poor shanty dwellings and has a consumer durables of not more than radio, television and bicycle. Few of the below poverty line families were living in a rental house and they were paying their rental charges of Rs. 500 to 1000/- per month. These rental families were one of the migrant groups, where they still bear to make their unexpected expenditures from their minimal income and also they were reported to have excluded from any anti-poverty programmes and schemes provisions because of the rental positions.

1.3.Educational Problems

The below poverty line families were illiterate which increase the likelihoods of low family income and a very few families were found educated but has problem of low family income as same like illiterate families because of their improper education. Most of these poor families unaware about being poor by themselves and the developmental approaches of the community, government, etc. for example of family planning, drug addictions, indebtedness, crime, sexuality etc and also they were facing problems of forced labour, no high ambition in life, no participation in the social development, early marriage, prostitutions, misguiding and there is no social contact for the better development of the Society due to lack of education and educational opportunities.

1.4.Addiction

The below poverty line families were having addiction habits of using tobacco, pan, supari, cigarette and alcohol which causes a harmful health diseases like lung cancer, Tuberculosis, etc and also had given unnecessary expenditures on their addictions.

1.5.Domestic violence

Domestic violence were not much practice in below poverty line families and a very few families reveals to have alcoholic abuse from their husband which leads to constant fear, threat and humiliation as a consequence of an atrocious violence in their family.

1.6.Lack of Basic Facilities

Many of below poverty line families faces acute shortage of water supply both from surface and sub-surface. They use other owned private sources of water; ponds and underground water and also river, which is not access to safe drinking–water, so they were buying water of Rs. 50 to 200/- per month for their safe drinking water even then, sometime they took from the available sources of contaminated water from ponds, well, river because of limited income, where they were more exposed to water-borne diseases.

There is loadshedding of twenty hours in a day, not only in the poor areas but as the whole city Imphal. It is agonizing to think that in twenty four hours of a day, power availability for general public is four hours (6 p.m. to 10 p.m.) or two hours (from 10 p.m. to 12 midnight) on the alternate days. Due to this effect, the poor families faces severe problems of over-expenditure from candle, kerosene, etc expenditure for their power used at night and also many students from the poor families could not able study well, because of insufficient income.

1.7.Governance problems

The below poverty line's poor women and men value democracy as an ideal even when the practice of it is less than perfect. While local democratic structures are instrumental in promoting economic mobility. Democracy means equal rights for men and women. And empowerment and fairness are cited as two key principles of democracy. Democracy exists, where more importance is paid to the voice of the people. However, the local governments are imperfect vehicles for realizing freedom, equality, participation, empowerment, and fairness. In this context, democracy doesn't have availability of information about local government and individual empowerment.

1.8.Corruption

Corruption is one of the factors which affect the livelihoods of the poor in use of money to bribe and drawing benefits of the poor, Misuse and misappropriation of resources is creating stability of livelihood problems of the poverty.

Those who pay more can get their work done faster; since the poor don't have money to give bribes, their work is never done. So, below poverty line lost their privileges in the hand of the political party.

1.9.Terrorism

The state of misery and frustration due to high unemployment in this poor community has a risk of pushing people to join terrorist organization for decent and independent income. Poverty has seeds of this potential danger which directly effect in the terrorism due to in-consistent reaching out of government schemes and programs to real beneficiary, resulting militant's threat of extortion, violence, etc, in a state.

1.10.Migration Issues

Migrants of below poverty line families were mostly from rural areas of different districts of Manipur and among Indian state, Assam, Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Mizoram, etc, are the front-running states from where immigrants came from. Foreign countries like, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, etc, were also provided migrant people in the region. These migrants groups were migrated because of earning, jobs prospect, communal riots, petty business, education, etc. These migrant people were not only having the problems of their living but also given pressures to the whole poor communities and governmental issues, where, they face acute problem in their tenant position and this unplanned development identified peri-urban areas, outgrowths and urban corridors has leads to dispersed urbanization, and also the growth in population places severe strain on urban amenities and infrastructure such as housing stock, public transport system, water supply, rubbish collection (solid waste), sanitation and sewerage systems.

1.11.Lack of Anti-Poverty Programme

The below poverty line families were not laid benefited any of the anti-poverty programmes, where numbers of Urban Poverty Alleviation Initiatives (UPAIs) has increased over the years, and so now, there are numbers of programmes and schemes being provided to uplift the poverty line, but these poor communities has no any provisions for their living, this previews the dishonesty of the governing body who get over roll in this programmes.[]

2.ECONOMIC FACTORS

In Imphal city, many people are working in unorganized sector, which is characterized by low earnings, poor working conditions and lack of social security protection and informal sector self-employment activities having very low productivity and absorbing unskilled workers with inadequate physical or human capital endowment. In the present study it revealed that incidence of below poverty line is the highest for casual labour, where the incidence of poverty for casual labourers and self employed was higher than the unemployed.

2.1.Informal Occupation

The below poverty line families were working in an unorganized sector, i.e., multi-type labourers, vegetable sellers, shop keeper, carpenter, rickshaw puller, weaving, bamon (cookers), meat butchery, blacksmith, tannery workers, non-worker, private school teacher, vehicles workshop workers, tailoring, jeweler, retails agent and private chowkidar. Workers in the unorganized sector are usually subject to indebtedness and bondage as their meager income cannot meet with their livelihood needs and are subject to exploitation significantly by the rest of the society. They receive poor working conditions especially wages much below that in the formal sector.

2.2.Income Scarcity

Through the statistical outcomes, 40 percent of the below poverty line families were having the minimum income of Rs. 1800/- per month and 60 percent of the respondents were having the maximum income of Rs. 3000/- per month. There economic is normally one of the most important asset groups and it is also one of the most problematic as features of poverty reinforce barriers blocking access to employment and credit. This is due to the lack of capabilities, lack of assets and lack of activities required for the means

of living.

Variations of Monthly Income and Expenditure of the Respondents.

Monthly Expenditure(₹)	Monthly Income (₹)				Total
	<2000	2001-2400	2401-2800	2801-3200	
<1600	<i>9</i> <i>(2.4)</i>	<i>6</i> <i>(1.6)</i>	<i>6</i> <i>(1.6)</i>	<i>2</i> <i>(.5)</i>	23 (6.2)
1601-2000	11 (3.0)	<i>3</i> <i>(.8)</i>	<i>5</i> <i>(1.4)</i>	<i>3</i> <i>(.8)</i>	22 (5.9)
2001-2400	<u>18</u> <u>(4.9)</u>	44 (11.9)	<i>3</i> <i>(.8)</i>	<i>1</i> <i>(.3)</i>	66 (17.8)
2401-2800	<u>4</u> <u>(1.1)</u>	<u>25</u> <u>(6.8)</u>	115 (31.1)	-	144 (38.9)
2801-3200	<u>2</u> <u>(.5)</u>	<u>16</u> <u>(4.3)</u>	<u>6</u> <u>(1.6)</u>	61 (16.5)	85 (23.0)
3201-3600	-	<u>9</u> <u>(2.4)</u>	<u>9</u> <u>(2.4)</u>	<u>12</u> <u>(3.2)</u>	30 (8.1)
Total	44 (11.9)	103 (27.8)	144 (38.9)	79 (21.4)	370 (100.0)

1. Italicize number indicates monthly expenditure is below the monthly income
2. Bold number indicates monthly expenditure and monthly income were exactly spent and
3. Underline number indicates monthly expenditure is more than the monthly income.

The distribution of the respondents according to their monthly income and expenditure is that, 62 percent were making exact expenditures from their monthly income, while, 28 percent were expending more than their monthly income and 10 percent were having their expenditure below of their monthly income.

Thus, those respondents who had spent more than their monthly income were those who generally got indebtedness, where they manage to live by owing money (indebted) from others and few respondents seek remittances to bear their livelihoods. And to those respondents who had spent less than their monthly income were those who manage wisely from their monthly income.

1.1.Indebtedness

The below poverty line families were borrowing Rs 20,000 to 40,000/- for their urgent requirement or identified as the consequence of lack of financial and skills and inability to fulfill their wants, but has not in a position to clear off their debts because their income is not large enough to pay off their debt. Therefore, the debt of the poor families goes on increasing which makes mostly unusual to the poverty line families.

2.Health and Sanitations Factors

The available health care facilities have remained beyond the reach of large part of the urban lower middle class population.

Health treatment of the below poverty line families were mostly done at home, where they used to get prescribed their health sickness from the pharmacist of the nearby medicos shop and few still believes to have ritual treatments, because of insufficient amount to effort their treatments to the private hospital and even they couldn't able to get treatment from the government hospitals due to long distance. So the poverty health status goes indecisively critical because of home treatment which leads to sudden shock of dreaded



diseases stroke/death.

At present study, the family planning measurement were totally absents, where their family sizes denote to have very large at maximum 7 to 9 family members which enormously leads to economic dearth and has also the tribulations of population growth which directly impacted on the economic opportunities available and scarcity in basic infrastructural facilities leading to low quality of urban life.

Under-nutrition levels remain higher and have grown much more slowly, and have much higher levels of infant and child mortality. There is no tight link between incomes and calorie consumption, there is no tight link between the numbers of calories consumed and nutritional or status. Because of changes in these other factors, the fact that people are increasingly choosing away from a diet that is heavy in cereals does not imply that nutritional status will automatically get worse.

Having a household member fall ill can destroy a poor family's standard of living. According to the research study, Families facing a health problems were very often fall into substantial debt, from which they can only emerge with difficulty in possessing few of their liquid assets were they used for emergencies, either selling land or items central to sustained their livelihoods and even their children were also pull out of school and send them to work.

The poor are more likely to suffer serious illness during their lifetime. They tend to live in higher-risk areas, with greater exposures to pollution, disease agents, and natural hazards such as floods.

The below poverty line families used to suffer health-related disease of Typhoid, diarrhoeal diseases, cholera and intestinal worms from contaminated water and food as well as diseases associated with poor drainage and garbage collection such as malaria and inadequate sanitation, cancer, accidents, HIV/AIDs, etc. The below poverty line's health problems is a cumulative result of inadequate shelter, morbidity, malnutrition and the lack of sanitary waste and sewage disposal systems. Moreover, poor health is a major determinant of household vulnerability. Serious illness of the health demands of a sickly child or an aging family member can push poor households to insurmountable levels of poverty.

Many of these areas lack in infrastructure for water supply, sanitation, and solid waste disposal. The resulting environmental pollution creates a situation inimical to the maintenance of good health. Children living in these communities are most at risk. They suffer the highest rates of mortality and morbidity from diarrhea disease. Inadequate solid waste collection has also led to contamination of surface water and groundwater resources and of the ambient air from waste burning.

3.PERSONALAND PSYCHOLOGICALFACTORS

Livelihood vulnerability of the people living under below poverty line in Imphal city is the poorest of the poor. They are the outliers of the development scenario in the negative extreme. They live at the margins of the economy, society and polity. They do not have a voice or the power of choice. They face the worst forms of deprivation and lack of access to the minimum services. They are exposed to all forms of vulnerability and do not have any safety net against risks. Their income is below subsistence and they are dependent. These faceless, powerless people lack capabilities and are neither aware of their entitlements nor can they access them. They neither compete nor bargain. They drift pushed by circumstances. Severity of unfavorable physical gender or caste status. That is, disability being a disabled, being a widow, poor belonging to a scheduled caste or tribe can singly or in combination aggravate the suffering. They have to be invested with identity, personality and empowered to stand on their own.

Natural disaster like flood, earthquake was not much affected but like fire and accident were commonly being affected in this area.

CONCLUSIONS

There are four causative factors affecting the livelihoods of the urban below poverty line families, they are social factors, economic factors, health & sanitation factors and personal & psychological factors which causes the capital assets, i.e., Human capital: Low education, lack of skills, destitute, lack of information, lack of access to justice and poor health. Social capital: low social capital/cast status, lack of social services, inadequate access to food security programmes, lack of access to health services, exclusion from local institutions. Natural capital: Natural disaster like fire and accident, disability, society and polity. Physical capital: Lack of tenure, poor quality shelter, rental condition, no access to individual water connections, low community infrastructure, toilets, unhealthy and unsanitary living conditions. Financial

capital: Irregular/casual employment, lack of sources of employment, low paid work, lack of access to credit on reasonable terms, lack of access to formal safety net mechanisms, low productive assets, legal constraints to self – employment. Because of these, poor livelihoods remain to insurmountable levels of poverty in the state.

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