

Golden Research Thoughts

Abstract:-

Decentralization allows poor people a greater voice. Literature also suggests that different levels of government may need to be simultaneously involved in the same broad services delivery area but in different ways in urban development in India. The paper reviews the urban development and empowering the slums dwellers by taking strong and effective initiatives in policy implementation so as to eradicate poverty and provide basic amenities and services along with hygiene food security in urban areas. In conclusion it is may be say there is a



need for strong research and development in urban development so that the government may take actions in providing all the facilities for slums development in India.

Keywords:

Urban Development, Literature Reviews, Five Year Plans, Weaker Sections, Government.

EMPOWERING SLUMS DWELLERS IN URBAN INDIA: AN REVIEW OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The world's urban population as well as the population living in the slums shows an increasing trend and by 2020 the world's slum population is projected to be about 1.4 billion (UN-HABITAT, 2006). It has been argued that rapid slum formation is now unavoidable and will remain so in the future (Ooi&Phua, 2007; Davis, 2006; Majale, 2008). In effect, slums may be a "necessary" phase in the evolution of a city as they perform the function of housing for a section of the society that has not yet been "integrated in the city life" (Stokes, 1962). In recognition of this fact, a major policy shift took place in the 1970s and 1980s, when rehabilitation and community participation became an integral part of World Bank funded projects of slum improvement (O'Hare, Abbott, & Barke, 1998; Burra, 2005). It has been realised that effective planning for slum redevelopment has to be more participatory, involving cooperation from NGOs, private sector and the slum dwellers themselves, mostly represented by Community Based Organizations (CBOs). The concepts of "empowerment" and self-help" are the most significant attributes of participatory planning (Nijman, 2008).

Rajat Gupta; et. al. (2014) India's largest cities are included with large number of slums which lacks basic facilities. The juxtaposition of high-rises and slums is symptomatic of their unique challenges. Mumbai, for example, is a major business centre where 42 percent of the population resides in slums. Deprivation scores on services bought directly by households, such as drinking water, sanitation, electricity, and cooking fuel, are less than half the national average.

The Census of India defines slums as a "compact area of at least 300 persons or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities" (Registrar General and Census Commissioner; 2001). The Five Year Plans of the earlier period viewed slums as manifestations of urban poverty. The Plans did not specifically refer to the term "urban poor". In addition, slums also comprise all those settlements that are notified as slums under the Slum Acts and those recognized as slums by the State governments. This definition understates the slum population considerably.

ACTS AND POLICIES INITIATIVES FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Schedule 12 is a key provision accompanying the 74 Constitutional Amendment. It envisages the urban local bodies (ULBs) to take on developmental and redistributive roles in addition to those that they have been responsible for historically, i.e., provision of local public and merit goods such as water supply, disposal of wastewater, solid waste management, intra-city roads and street lighting. Most states have incorporated the Schedule 12 functions into the municipal statutes without, however, specifying the role of the ULBs vis-à-vis those of the state and state-level agencies in functions such as planning for economic and social development, poverty alleviation, and slum improvement and upgrading. In a de facto sense, there is no change in the functional domain of the ULBs, following the 74 Constitutional Amendment. Many attribute the status quo to the reluctance on the part of state governments to transfer any powers or functions to the ULBs. Others put up operational difficulties in assigning redistributive roles to ULBs, taking defence from the traditional theories of fiscal federalism.

Om Prakash Mathur and Chandrima Sinha (2009) a review of the fiscal federalism literature undertaken to complement in his study reveals the allocated activities of the government into three parts: macroeconomic stabilization, income distribution, and resource allocation corresponding to the goals of stability, equity, and efficiency. Of these, the primary responsibility for macroeconomic stabilization and redistribution of income and wealth in the form of assistance to the poor, according to the theory, rests with the central government, while the sub-national governments have a primary role in resource allocation. The basic rationale for allocating income distribution functions to the central government is that the lower governmental tiers face serious limitations in their attempts to pursue redistributive policies. Given the potential mobility of both the poor and high-income residents, an aggressive local redistribution initiative in support of the poor could induce an influx of the poor and exodus of the rich who face the burden of such programmes. If poverty alleviation is a redistributive task, implementing policies should be the responsibility of the central government, because of the externalities involved. In many countries, local governments have responsibilities for reducing income poverty and improving food security because of the presumed lower information and transaction costs associated with identifying the poor. However, there is one factor that often goes neglected in most slum redevelopment plans, which is the involvement of women. It is women who largely bear the brunt of the sub-human living conditions in slums (Moser, 1987; Amis, 2001) as they are the ones fetching water from far distances, trying to maintain cleanliness to keep the family healthy, taking care of family's nutrition, running the house on a shoestring budget and so on.

FACTS ABOUT SLUMS IN INDIA AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Rajat Gupta; et. al., (2014) It is a harsh reality that 680 million Indians lack the means to achieve minimum acceptable standards of living. If India's recent slowdown in economic growth continues, it is likely that some 470 million of them would remain below the Empowerment Line in 2022, and 12 percent of the population would remain trapped in extreme poverty. Beyond the economic and political implications of these numbers, they represent millions of lives spent in hardship. India can and must do better and today there is an opportunity to change those outcomes. Looking ahead to 2022, it is possible to create much better odds that the average Indian family can meet their essential economic needs. The path of inclusive reforms has the potential to bring the share of those below the Empowerment Line to 7 percent by 2022 and come close to eradicating extreme poverty by bringing it down to less than 1 percent of the population. Unleashing the level of productivity growth and job creation needed to raise living standards, however, will require deep

reforms that remove barriers to competitiveness and investment. Policy makers can set this process in motion by focusing on infrastructure, the administrative and regulatory burden facing businesses, tax and product market reforms, land market reform, labour market flexibility, and vocational education. These changes can set off a virtuous cycle of growth that generates more revenue, enabling India to meet its fiscal targets even as it ploughs additional funding back into social infrastructure.

The first step towards this goal is focusing political will on the four major priorities: creating jobs, raising farm yields, expanding access to basic services (especially health care, water, and sanitation) through moderate spending increases, and delivering basic services more efficiently. The central government can set an agenda that advances these national priorities, with funding commitments to match, and can put in place the enablers that will support broad economic growth: infrastructure for power and logistics, the right taxation structure, investment in job-creation engines, and measures that expand financial and digital inclusion. While action is needed at the central level, much of the innovation and leadership can come from India's states, which have the ability to start implementing various reforms and governance ideas almost immediately. State governments can, for example, select four to six high-priority initiatives based on their most urgent needs and then harness the energy and resources needed to see them through whether the goal is creating one million jobs in the tourism sector or improving the PDS efficiency rate by 20 percentage points.

Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee promised in his 2011 budget speech that India would become slum-free in five years; the United Progressive Alliance government has come up with legislation that might enable progress towards this goal. The model Property Rights to Slum Dwellers Act circulated recently by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation aims to improve the conditions of an estimated 93 million slum dwellers. The legislation would entitle every "eligible" slum dweller living in a slum to receive a dwelling place of 25 square metres of carpet area or its equivalent land area at "affordable" cost. It would confer property rights in the name of the female head of the household or in the joint name of the male head and his wife. This is a progressive course correction meant to check the prevalent male bias in determining housing rights. The proposed Act lays down a seven-year lock-in period to prevent the sale or lease of the allotted property but sensibly makes provision for mortgaging the dwelling units to raise loans for improving them. But there are some serious shortcomings in the model Act.

FIVE YEARS PLANS FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The plan of making urban India slum-free faced serious difficulties in the Eleventh Plan period and it looks like these will persist in the Twelfth Plan period as well. Amitabh Kundu (2013) points out that the schemes in operation lack a reliable framework for identifying non-tenable slums and legitimate slum households that are entitled to get dwelling units. Further, the design of the Rajiv Awas Yojana betrays a big-city bias to attract global capital, and there is no clear road map for its time-bound implementation. The Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) is a major flagship programme of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, designed to build on the groundwork carried out during the Eleventh Plan period and launched on a national scale during the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012-17). It projects the vision of a slum-free India, its primary objective being enabling poor urban families to realise their dream of owning a house that has a proper land title and access to basic amenities. The initial years of its operation have, however, created diverse expectations in different quarters. The real estate and builder's lobby, which apprehends that the housing bubble is about to burst, wants it to give a boost to construction activity. The banking-cum-financing sector, uncertain of the demand for housing loans and their recovery, believes there will be a substantial increase in interest subsidies and a streamlining of the mortgage market. The upper and middle classes hope that their cities will be "sanitised" when the programme is implemented, with slums disappearing either through up gradation or eviction.

There is a Large City Bias in urban development as the small and medium towns have been excluded from the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), launched during the Tenth Five-Year Plan for improving urban infrastructure, and now from the RAY, despite there being clear evidence of a high incidence of poverty and slum-like conditions, alongside serious service deficiencies in them. The focus is on large cities because the political economy of the country necessitates improving their environmental conditions to make them attractive to global business. In addition, reliable data on slums from the National Sample Survey are available only for cities with a population exceeding a million.

CONCLUSION

Lessons should be learnt from the failed government schemes to regulate urban street vendors. If the social objective is to create slum-free cities, an inclusive definition that maximises the number of beneficiaries is an imperative. Securing government property is a separate issue. Housing is a State subject and the success of the recommended legislation will depend on how well it is implemented by the various State governments. The delivery of basic services is uniquely challenging in a nation of 1.2 billion people with pressing needs. Limited budgets and a shortage of skilled human resources magnify the difficulties of extending vital services to city slums and remote villages alike. But a wave of innovation and a greater sense of accountability in the public sector can overcome these hurdles. India has the opportunity to achieve a 50 percent improvement in the efficiency of public spending on basic services, but a business-as-usual approach will not be enough to make rapid gains of this magnitude. Fresh solutions, from simple process improvements to the introduction of technology, can ensure that every rupee spent delivers more impact. Many of these ideas can be readily applied and if governments at all levels are willing to take bold action,

these reforms can have an immediate impact on India's human development.

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