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A STUDY OF SLUM LIFE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF INDIA

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Abstract:

A slum is a highly populated urban residential area consisting of densely packed housing units of weak build quality and often associated with poverty. The infrastructure in slums is often deteriorated or incomplete, and they are primarily inhabited by impoverished people. Due to increasing urbanization of the general populace, slums became common in the 19th to late 20th centuries in the United States and Europe. Slums are still predominantly found in urban regions of developing countries, but are also still found in developed economies.

Slum dwellers in India regularly deals with problems such as lack of clean water, constant migration at slums, no sewage or waste disposal facilities, pollution, and unsanitary living conditions. High levels of pollution, lack of basic needs, and room-crowding are some of the basic characteristics of slum housing.

India is a third largest country that suffers from poverty, malnutrition, diseases, unhealthy conditions, and more in Indian slums, which is alone responsible for more deaths of children than any other country in the world. Because of the dramatic rise of slums after independence, India's population has tripled. Most of the population is currently slum dwellers in India.

During the last two decades, migration from villages and small towns to metropolitan areas has increased tremendously in India. It leads to the degradation of urban environmental quality and sustainable development, especially in metropolitan cities. Every year, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children die worldwide, and India alone is responsible for 25% of the deaths. The present article reports the slum condition in Rajkot region.

Key words: Slum, Poverty, Risks

1. Introduction:

A slum is a highly populated urban residential area consisting of densely packed housing units of weak build quality and often associated with poverty. The infrastructure in slums is often deteriorated or incomplete, and they are primarily inhabited by impoverished people. Although slums are usually located in urban areas, in some countries they can be located in suburban areas where housing quality is low and living conditions are poor (Caves 2004). While slums differ in size and other characteristics, most lack reliablesanitation services, supply of clean water, reliable electricity, law enforcement, and other basic services. Slum residences vary fromshantyhousesto professionally built dwellings which, because of poor-quality construction or lack of basic maintenance, have deteriorated(Eckstein 1990).

Due to increasing urbanization of the general populace, slums became common in the 19th to late 20th centuries in the United States and Europe (Lawrence 2007). Slums are still predominantly found in urban regions of developing countries, but are also still found in developed economies (Ashton 2006). The world's largest slum city is found inOrangiin Karachi, Pakistan (Craig 1988 and Davis 2006).

Slums form and grow in different parts of the world for many different reasons. Causes include rapid rural-to-urban migration, economic stagnation and depression, high unemployment, poverty, informal economy, forced or manipulated ghettoization, poor planning, politics, natural disasters, and social conflicts (Killemsetty2022). Strategies tried to reduce and transform slums in different countries, with varying degrees of success, include a combination of slum removal, slum relocation, slum upgrading, urban planning with citywide infrastructure development, and public housing (Sharma 2022).

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Before the 19th century, rich and poor people lived in the same districts, with the wealthy living on the high streets, and the poor in the service streets behind them (Tjiptoherijanto*et al. 2005*). But in the 19th century, wealthy and upper-middle-class people began to move out of the central part of rapidly growing cities, leaving poorer residents behind (Flecha *et. al.* 2013).

1.1 Slums in Rajkot:

The basic problem of the city is severe encroachment on municipal land by the urban poor, inadequate water supply, frequent power cuts, and illiteracy. Concerted efforts are being made by Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC) to tackle these problems.

Regarding the management of solid waste, the RMC has introduced privatisation in the transportation of garbage. To keep the environment, clean the RMC has implemented a project with financial assistance from HUDCO as well as the World Bank. The solid waste is being disposed near Sokhda village where no scientific treatment is being given. However, the RMC is negotiating with some leading companies for implementing a scheme for scientific disposal of city solid waste.

Mostof the slums within the city limit are still in need of improvement in their basic services provision namely: water supply, sewerage, health facilities, primaryeducation etc. To improve infrastructure facilities, RMC has introduced the UBC and ICDS programmes in two slums. Under the UDC Programme, RMC has constructed Community Development Centres in which various activities like sewing classes, cooking classes, embroidery and handicraft classes etc. are arranged by the Project Officer. Under the same programme, the poor are being provided loans for small business and other self-employment activities.

Slums have become the very integral part of the rapid industrialization and the urbanization in any city of India. The Census of 2001 has made an attempt to present the slum demography by the actual count of the individual households. For the purpose of Census of India, 2001, the slum areas broadly constitute of:-

- All specified areas in a town or city notified as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act including a 'Slum Act'.

- All areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration, Housing and Slum Boards, which may have not been formally notified as slum under any act;

- A compact area of at least 300 populations 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."

1.2 Characteristics of the slum development:

The substantial increase in the city's population after independence made the city stretch in every direction without a planned layout. The city started experiencing ribbon development along the transportation corridors with poor quality dwellings. Many of the public open spaces and river banks were occupied by migrants/ squatters. A large number of huts were erected without any supporting infrastructural facilities. Establishment of industries in some areas fostered the growth of many more slums and squatter houses in their vicinity. In spite of many physical developmental schemes undertaken by the government, the slums became an unavoidable part of the city. Thus, the layout of Rajkot, which was well planned in the grid-iron pattern with some open spaces as lungs and a river bank water-front, started decaying with the emergence of slums. Presence of squatter settlements made the city areas over-crowded, polluted the environment and deteriorated the standards of living of the people. The slums in Rajkot are experiencing a faster growth rate than that of the city and many times that of the provision of facilities. There were 24 slums with 4927 households with population of 3,210 persons in Rajkot in 1972-73. At present, there are 118 slums with approximately 45,562 households as identified by all detailed Socio-Economic Survey.

The population has grown by leaps and bounds and the corresponding provision of housing facilities have not kept abreast. Shortage of housing facilities has contributed to the emergence of slums. Religion and caste play an important role in the social structure of the Rajkot slums. This is normal from the nomenclature itself. Certain slum pockets are known by the caste of its inhabitants. The majority (almost 90 %) of the slum dwellers are Hindus, the remaining being Muslims & Christians.

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Ward wise distribution of Slums and their area*

Ward No.	Total slums	Toal slum found	No of households	Total slum population	Total area in Sq. Mts
1	5	4	2771	11629	524868
2	4	3	653	2924	64934
3	10	9	1451	6947	149877
4	2	2	1434	5730	176412
5	14	13	5371	22031	682507
6	10	10	3631	15402	446794
7	3	3	704	2807	42508
8	3	3	633	2474	63384
9	5	5	1145	4815	58494
10	3	3	762	3000	57213
11	2	2	213	835	150689
12	1	1	444	2049	48638
13	3	2	808	3367	111365
14	2	1	159	839	67541
15	1	2	719	2932	53749
16	20	20	7586	30796	636814

17	19	18	8210	34294	709219
18	1	1	2637	10908	285385
19	1	1	282	1333	31421
20	0	0	0	0	0
21	2	2	3482	13998	375325
22	3	3	869	3245	78123
23	4	3	1595	6110	178453
Total	**118**	**111**	**45,562**	**1,88,465.**	**49,93,713**

*Source: Draft of comprehensive development plan 2031 (second revised) government under section 16 of the Gujarat town planning and urban development act, 1976 Submitted by Rajkot Urban Development Authority (RUDA) submitted to the state.

1. What is a slum: facts and risks:

To better understand the living conditions in slums, it's essential to look at the health hazards that people are faced with. Life in the slums is far from glamorous as families are cut off from the most basic services and often have to deal with violence.Slums manifest deprivation that transcends income poverty. Slum dwellers in India are characterized by acute over-crowding, insanitary, unhealthy and dehumanizing living conditions. They are subject to insecure land tenure, lack of access to basic minimum civic services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, storm drainage, solid waste management, internal and approach roads, street lighting, education and health care, and poor quality of shelter.

The word "slum" is used to describe informal settlements within cities with inadequate housing and miserable living conditions. They are often overcrowded, with many people crammed into very small living spaces. Slums are not a new phenomenon as they have been a part of almost all cities, particularly during a time of urbanization and industrialization. Slums are generally the only type of settlement affordable and accessible to the poor in cities, where

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competition for land and profits is intense. The main reason for slum proliferation is rapid and non-inclusive patterns of urbanizationcatalyzed by increasing rural migration to urban areas.

Many of these habitations are located in environmentally fragile and dangerous zones prone to landslides, floods and other disasters that make the poor residents highly vulnerable. A significant proportion of the slum dwellers also face social burdens and health problems worse than their non-slum and rural counterparts. Civic bodies do not provide the required municipal services in slums on the plea that these are located on 'illegal' space. Moreover, the problem's scale is so colossal that it is beyond the means of Municipalities that lack a buoyant fiscal base.

2. Problems Faced by the Slum Dwellers in India

There are good number of problems faced by slumdwellers. The problems faced by the people living as the slum dwellers in India have become significant concerns for the government. Slums are considered the major issue within many urban areas; particularly transportation, population, health, and safety. Considering present's poor urban environmental quality in India, most families affected by urban development projects are located in slum areas under consideration for resettlement or rehabilitation. There is a need to examine slum areas and their living conditions and determine the most critical and problematic zone of the slums. The Government of India has not been able to solve the problems that are strangling the entire population of Indian slums. The main problems faced by the slums dwellers are discussed below:

2.1. **Lack of Basic Necessities:** It is one of the most frequently mentioned characteristics of slum definitions worldwide. Lack of access to improved sanitation facilities and improved water sources is the most important feature, sometimes supplemented by the absence of waste collection systems, electricity supply, surfaced roads and footpaths, street lighting and rainwater drainage.

2.2. **Overcrowding and High Density:** Overcrowding has been associated with a low space per person living in an area, high occupancy rates, cohabitation by different families and a high number of single-room units. Mostly slum-dwelling units are

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overcrowded, with five to six and more persons sharing a one-room unit used for cooking, sleeping and living.

2.3. **Substandard Housing or Illegal and Inadequate Building Structures:** Many cities have building standards that set minimum requirements for residential buildings. Slum areas have been associated with a high number of substandard housing structures, often built with non-permanent materials unsuitable for housing given local conditions of climate and location. Factors contributing to the structure being considered substandard are, for example, earthen floors, mud-and-wattle walls or straw roofs. Various space and dwelling placement bylaws may also be extensively violated.

2.4. **Unhealthy Living Conditions and Hazardous Locations:** Unhealthy living conditions result from a lack of basic services, with visible, open sewers, lack of pathways, uncontrolled dumping of waste, polluted environments, etc. their houses can be built on hazardous locations or land unsuitable for settlement, such as floodplains, in proximity to industrial plants with toxic emissions or waste disposal sites, and on the areas subject to a landslip. The settlement layout may be hazardous because of a lack of access ways and high densities of dilapidated structures.

2.5. **Insecure Tenure, Irregular or Informal Settlements:** A number of slums have considered lack of security of tenure as a central characteristic of slums and regard lack of formal document entitling the occupant to occupy the land or structure as prima facie evidence of illegality and slum occupation. Informal or unplanned settlements are often regarded as synonymous with slums(Dyos*et al. 1982*). Mostly emphasise both informality of occupation and the non-compliance of settlements with land-use plans. The factors contributing to non-compliance are settlements built on land reserved for non-residential purposes or invasions of non-urban land.

2.6. **Poverty and Social Exclusion:** Income or capability poverty is considered, with some exceptions, as a central characteristic of slum areas. It is not seen as an inherent characteristic of slums, but as a cause (and, to a large extent, a consequence) of slum conditions. Slum conditions are physical and statutory manifestations that create

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barriers to human and social development (Ward *et al. 2008*). Furthermore, slums are social exclusion areas that are often perceived to have high levels of crime and other social dislocation measures. In some definitions, such areas are associated with certain vulnerable groups of the population, such as recent immigrants, internally displaced persons or ethnic minorities.

2.7. Minimum Settlement Size: Many slums also require some minimum settlement size for an area to be considered a slum, so that the slum constitutes a distinct precinct and is not a single dwelling. Examples are the municipal slum definition of Delhi that requires a minimum of 700 square meters to be occupied by huts, or the Indian census definition, which requires at least 300 population or 60 households living in a settlement cluster.

2.8. Urbanization: The formation of slums is closely linked to urbanization (Davis 2006). In 2008, more than 50% of the world's population lived in urban areas. In China, for example, it is estimated that the population living in urban areas will increase by 10% within a decade according to its current rates of urbanization (Ali *et al. 2004*). The UN-Habitat reports that 43% of urban population in developing countries and 78% of those in the least developed countries are slum dwellers (Davis 2006).

Some scholars suggest that urbanization creates slums because local governments are unable to manage urbanization, and migrant workers without an affordable place to live in, dwell in slums (Hammel 1964). Rapid urbanization drives economic growth and causes people to seek working and investment opportunities in urban areas (Patel *et al. 2009*).However, as evidenced by poor urban infrastructure and insufficient housing, the local governments sometimes are unable to manage this transition (Clonts 1970 and Firdaus *et al. 2012*). This incapacity can be attributed to insufficient funds and inexperience to handle and organize problems brought by migration and urbanization (Bolay *et al. 2006*).

2.9. Poverty: Urban poverty encourages the formation and demand for slums (Caves 2004). With rapid shift from rural to urban life, poverty migrates to urban areas. The urban poor arrives with hope, and very little of anything else. They typically have no

access to shelter, basic urban services and social amenities. Slums are often the only option for the urban poor (Minnery*et al. 2013*).

2.10. **Social conflicts:** Millions of Lebanese people formed slums during the Lebanese Civil War from 1975 to 1990 (Suttles 1970). Similarly, in recent years, numerous slums have sprung around Kabul to accommodate rural Afghans escaping Taliban violence (Fleeing 2018).

2.11. **Natural disasters:** Major natural disasters in poor nations often lead to migration of disaster-affected families from areas crippled by the disaster to unaffected areas, the creation of temporary tent city and slums, or expansion of existing slums (Fleeing 2018).

3. Slum Redevelopment Project:

The government of Gujarat had launched Slum Rehabilitation Policy under Public Private Partnership Model in 2013 with the primary objective of In Situ Slum Redevelopment and subsequently to make the cities Slum Free though PPP Mode. In view of the same, 'Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojna – Housing For All 2022' initiated by the respected Prime Minister, Bharatnagar 7B slum area situated at ward number 11 has been rehabilitated under the vertical of slum redevelopment on PPP mode under slum rehabilitation policy by RajkotMunicipalCorporation. (Source: ahm.gujarat.gov.in/slum-redevelopment-project-for-bharatnagar-7b-slum-area-in-rajkot-city-under-pmay-ppp-issr-scheme).

a. **Development Ideology and Decisive Points:** Owing to the ideology of developing Rajkot under Slum Free City Plan of Action, Bharatnagar 7B slum area was considered due to its pivotal location in ward number 11 situated at West Zone and it's manifold underdevelopment. There were deprecatory impediments pertaining to sanitation, security, living conditions along with intrinsic infrastructure. Hence, it was decided by the authorities involved to develop this encroached land be developed under PPP mode for future resilient evolution (Source: ahm.gujarat.gov.in/slum-redevelopment-project-for-bharatnagar-7b-slum-area-in-rajkot-city-under-pmay-ppp-issr-scheme).

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