REVIEW ARTICLE

TACKLING URBAN POVERTY THROUGH DECENTRALIZATION

*Ms. Ritwika Verma and Ms. Deshna Suryanarayan

Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University, Gandhinagar, India

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Urban Poverty is an essential issue of urban advancement and administration in developed as well as developing nations. However, it is more intense and disturbing in developing nations like India. The most challenging of the urban difficulties, undeniably, is the problem generated by urban poverty. Economically developed states keep incoming people from backward states, which leads to a rise in the quantity of individuals and families living in an urban focus, this causes demands for new housing and services. The urban zones have neglected to meet the requests of this expanding populace weight bringing about extensive holes in provisioning of essential civilities of lodging, drinking water, sewerage, transportation and so on. The paper tries to view how local governments have a particular preferred standpoint in distinguishing the poor because of their vicinity to the general population through the aid of a case study

INTRODUCTION

What is poverty?

Poverty is about not having enough money to address fundamental issues including nourishment, clothing and housing. Nonetheless, poverty is significantly more than just not having enough money. [1]The World Bank Organization describes poverty in this way:

"Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action -- for the poor and the wealthy alike -- a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities."

Corresponding author: Ms. Ritwika Verma,
Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University, Gandhinagar, India.

[1]*Source:* Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Government of India, Urban Poverty Report, 2009.

Urban Poverty: It has been estimated that the majority of the developing world's population will live in urban areas, and that the number of urban residents in developing countries will double. India is no exception. Some 50% of the population, or around 600 million people may be resident in urban areas by 2030. These figures suggest that we need to know more about the process of urban development and its effect on urban residents lives. Urban population increases are in part fuelled by rural-urban migration as people seek new employment and livelihood opportunities in urban centres. In India, these conditions are exacerbated by the division of the poor between those living in officially recognised slum settlements where service provision is permitted, and illegal non-recognised squatter settlements, where it is not. In the former, service provision, if it exists at all, is patchy, poorly maintained, and severely under-resourced. The status recognised officially permits poor people to make demands on the political system, but this does not mean that their voices are heard. People in the non-recognised, category however, are invariably the most vulnerable among the poor. They live on the most precarious sites and in untenable conditions along polluted canal banks, on pavements, and along railway lines, in constant fear of eviction or relocation.

Migration: The thought process of financial gain remains the major reason relocation among interstate migrants. Consequently when the migrant family lands in the city, they find that the lodging, occupations, salaries, and comforts that had 'pulled' them to the city are not accessible or is distant.

Thus, in urban areas of most developing nations, 30 to 75 percent of the populace work and live in squatter settlements bringing home the bare minimum resources they can afford. The Economic Survey of India 2017 assesses that the degree between state migration in India was close to 9 million yearly somewhere in the range of 2011 and 2016, while Census 2011 pegs the total number of internal drifters in the country at a precarious 139 million. Monetarily forward states continue getting individuals from backward states. Migration and Urbanisation have remained to be the major causes of rural to urban or inter-state by moving, causing the subsequent poverty in urban areas.

First urban poverty report, 2009[2]: India issued its first-since forever report to give an account of the nature and flow of urban destitution in the nation. Embraced with the help of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), India: Urban Poverty Report 2009 recognizes the issues looked at by poor people and spotlights on the foundational changes that are expected to address them. The report looks at different issues identified with urban poverty, for example, movement, work, the part of sexual orientation, access to fundamental administrations and the horrifying state of India's slums. Key messages of the report include:

- Poverty in India has become urbanised.
- Migration towards urban centres has increased.
- Urban poverty poses different problems.
- Slum populations are increasing.
- Slum dwellers lack access to basic services.

In slums, the report suggests sorting out slum networks, stretching out sewage frameworks and power to ghetto regions, and building open toilets that will be kept up by the network.
India: Urban Poverty Report 2009 is a piece of an UNDP-upheld government undertaking to build up a national system for urban neediness.

Section II: Problems and Challenges

The connection between financial advancement and urban destitution is unpredictable. In spite of the fact that huge urban areas have bring down levels of destitution the discharge impact of new advancement may turn out to be significantly harsher on the urban poor. Policy making and implementation for the urban poor is a mammoth task for the Government. When it comes to Policy making, it is a challenge for the government to know the number of people they are making policies for as most of the urban poor are undocumented migrants. Moreover, the Government is aloof from the ground level realities and challenges of these people, thus making it an insufficient tool of policy making. Policy implementation causes an issue as well due to various reasons like improper funds, red tapism, corruption, etc.

Isolated into three prime classes the difficulties confronted by the urban poor are:

- **Residential:** Firstly, it is an exceptionally troublesome errand for the poor to discover houses in the city. The couple of reasonable lodging they discover go under this domain, numerous times wind up in regions of

urban slums and shanties. The living zone isn't greater than ten square meters, which is used for the limit of nuclear family things, however cooking, washing and snoozing are done basically in the open. There are regular water taps and open comforts. In addition, slums are every now and again slanted to floods, water-logging, fire etc. There is no genuine waste and sewerage framework and this prompts return of water-borne diseases like cholera, gastroenteritis and jaundice. Numerous inhabitants live in risk of a climb in the sea level. Storms, tremors, and other diverse disasters impact city slums more really than various zones, as substandard houses break down or poor drainage structures propel flooding. It is energetically populated and is depicted by substandard lodging and a non-appearance of tidiness.

- **Social:** Social and cultural hindrances deny kids from slums the chance to get education because of absence of offices, mindfulness or assets. Various adolescents never get any formal education and few complete basic schooling. Girls and women are not considered much to give education, as they are stacked retrieving water from long distances, managing old relatives, young kids, and so forth. Likewise, in slums with poor (or nonexistent) sanitation workplaces, embarking to the lavatory around night time builds the chances of sexual attack on them.

- **Occupational:** There is non-accessibility of general beneficial employment, shrinking spaces for work and independent work. The urban poor are compelled to take part in a numerous assortment of easy going work to maintain their families. Work isn't accessible for the whole month, once in a while notwithstanding for 15 days with the beginning of progression and globalization, their officially restricted space for work has shrunk further.

A needy individual can fall into desperation if administration frameworks and foundations neglect to address individuals' social, financial, social, metro and political rights.

SECTION III: Solution

Decentralization: Decentralization has been considered by numerous as a standout amongst the most essential methodologies in bringing about necessary societal and governmental changes. This is on account of benefactors and governments have considered decentralization as a procedure that will convey benefit conveyance closer to customers, enhance the responsiveness of the local government to open requests and consequently decrease neediness, enhance the effectiveness and nature of open administrations and engage bring down units to feel more included and in charge. In this association, decentralization is connected to the idea of subsidiarity, that is, settling on choices at the most minimal possible level. The limit of decentralized governments in view of their closeness both institutionally and spatially to subjects in the country territories who are more receptive to the requirements of the poor than the focal government and consequently will probably define and execute genius poor arrangements and projects. Centralized governments are typically less stable, thus, the ideals of decentralization, for example, vote based system, famous investment, responsiveness, responsibility and value have prompted the conviction that decentralization will prompt more prominent

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[2] *Source:* Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Government of India, Urban Poverty Report, 2009.
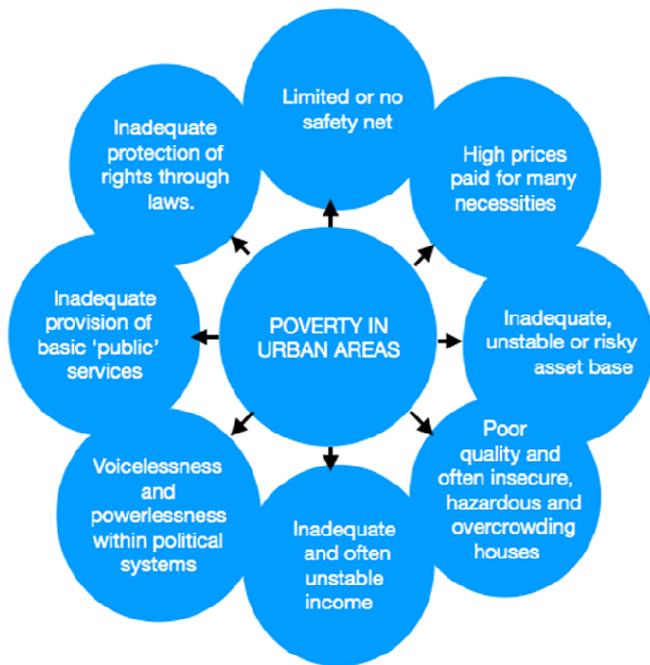
responsiveness to poor people. Since poor people have been barred from governmental issues and consequently difficult to reach to open products and ventures, decentralization is viewed as offering more noteworthy political support to customary residents whose "voice" is more likely to increase with associative pertinence and viability of government's strategies and projects, particularly in poverty reduction. Decentralisation brings about increased opportunities for people to participate in public decision-making, from which they are generally excluded in a highly centralised government system . This in itself represents a form of poverty alleviation as poor people are given voice and thus power. At the same time, participation can increase the supervisory power of local (poor) people and this in turn can lead to higher accountability of public officials: Due to the greater proximity, citizens can easier monitor and thus influence government actions at the local level and this can again affect the political, and possibly this in turn the sociocultural, dimension of poverty. Among several possible accountability mechanisms, officials are assumed to be held accountable through local elections, which serve as a means to evaluate officials' past performance. Only if local citizens have the opportunity to observe officials' performance and reward or punish them at upcoming elections, these can be assumed to have an incentive to act in their electorate's interest. In this sense, decentralisation can be thought of as a means to bring about good governance.

Decentralization In India: 74th Amendment of the Indian Constitution: Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 has displayed another Part IXA in the Constitution, which oversees Municipalities in an article 243 P to 243 ZG. This amendment, generally called Nagarpalika Act. It has given built up status to regions and brought them under the constitution. States were put under established duty to get districts as per system revered in the constitution. Indian political decentralization emerged with the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992. It is a historic point activity of the Government of India to fortify local self-government in urban communities and towns which manages the issues identifying with districts. Keeping in mind the end goal to give time to enable changes to be made in the then existing laws which were conflicting with the arrangements of the Constitution

(74th Amendment) Act, a progress time of one year was accommodated. Quickly after the Act came into drive on first June, 1993, the Ministry of Urban Development found a way to guarantee that the arrangements of the State Municipal Laws are in accordance with the arrangements of the above Act. The order of the Municipalities is to attempt the undertakings of making arrangements for 'monetary advancement and social equity' and actualize city/town improvement designs. With the urban population increasing everyday, the issue of urban decentralization is presently taking the spotlight.

Section-III

Ahmedabad case study: Ahmedabad is a modern and business-oriented city in the state of Gujarat. It is the center of exchange and trade in Gujarat. The assessed populace of Ahmedabad in 2016 was more than 7 million individuals in the city and roughly 8 million in the urban areas. This makes Ahmedabad the fifth biggest city in India. [3]Forbes magazine positioned Ahmedabad as the third quickest developing city of the decade. It the masses of 8 million in the urban regions, around 1,76,754 families lived in slums and under-balanced zones. By far most of the urban poor who lived in slums had none or constrained access to essential administrations and in steady risk of sudden expulsion. Despite the fact that it is the obligation of the municipality to supply essential administrations to all networks in the city, in absence of land and housing, the citizenry was unwilling to add to such administrations, prompting non-upkeep of framework introduced for these networks. All the more particularly, the issues commonly experienced inside slums are as per the following:

- Aggregate or fractional non appearance of foundation for water supply, seepage, toilets and strong waste administration
- Absence of support of services and administration
- Absence of mindfulness on cleanliness and wellbeing
- Danger of ousting
- Absence of income for the administrations given by the city partnership
- Low salary and poor way of life
- Absence of essential least training and lacking abilities
- Danger of physical security and wellbeing
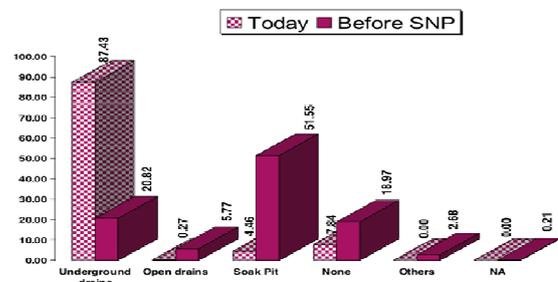
Ahmedabad Parivartan generally called the Slum Networking Program (SNP), was started in September 1995. The SNP also known as Parivartan was started to furnish slum occupants with foundation, including singular water supply, underground sewerage, singular toilets, strong waste accumulation, stormwater channels, inner streets and clearing, road lighting,

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[3] Joel Kotkin, The World's Fastest Growing Cities, (Forbes, October 7, 2010).

and finishing. At first, the AMC built up associations with significant private associations and NGOs working in the city making a wide base of partners for the task. The NGOs were paid by the AMC to activate the slum network and energize their organization in the venture. Appealing to the network's proprietorship for the undertaking was significant to its prosperity. Along these lines, associations with common society had made the AMC a supplier of essential administrations, as well as a key facilitator for achieving social change. The cost of house associations added up to 6,300 Indian rupees (US$138) per family unit. In the slums where the program was directed, the recipients paid 33% of the expenses for water supply and sewerage framework. The rest of the expenses were shared amongst AMC and private financial specialists. In situations where the ghetto family unit was excessively poor, making it impossible to bear the cost of the required commitment (which came to around Rs. 2100 which is somewhat around 30 USD), financing was influenced accessible to slum tenants through advances from SEWA, which is a bank run by independently employed ladies. The Parivartan program has been perceived as a novel organization between the community, the organization and the private segment for the improvement of the city. The program has helped in the upliftment of various slums inside the city. Towards the end of November 2006, a sum of 32 slum networks covering 4940 families profiting 24,700 individuals had been effectively overhauled. The people have paid more than US $ 300,000 to AMC as their commitment towards administrations, until now incredible in slum improvement programs in India. In five years, Parivartan achieved 9,435 families with 56,610 individuals in more than 40 slums. It is being extended to incorporate 59 more slums coming to an extra 15,431 households. The venture not just aided in the arrangement of essential administrations to taking an interest slums, it additionally connected them to existing metro benefits subsequently advancing all encompassing and comprehensive improvement, instead of giving coincidental answers for a specific segment of society.

Conclusion

India has one of the largest quantities of poor living in urban areas. In an economy with critical intercommunity varieties, when there are no huge economies of scale and extension, decentralized arrangement of open administrations can improve effectiveness in the arrangement administration. Proper usage of poverty alleviation arrangements relies on the degree of inclusion and of nearby government establishments. Governments that are 'closer to the general population' should, on a basic level, have the capacity to give benefits more productively and viably than a remote, unified specialist. Decentralization is a procedure that conveys benefit conveyance closer to customers, enhance the responsiveness of the local government to open requests and accordingly diminish destitution, enhance the proficiency and nature of open administrations and enable lower units to feel more included and in charge. In the wake of having characterized both poverty and decentralization, the question of drawing a connection between the two emerges. Given the understanding of poverty as a complex, multidimensional concept, it must be clear that poverty eradication cannot be achieved by any single remedy like decentralisation but that it requires a blend of arrangements intended for country specific conditions. Attacking Poverty, should comprise of three reciprocal components: increasing chances, encourage strengthening, and

improving security. First, promoting opportunities refers to giving poor people the chance to improve their material situation of life, and this includes providing access to employment, markets, financial services, infrastructure (roads, electricity, telecommunication), social services (education, health care), and land. Second, facilitating empowerment implies the inclusion of all people in a society in decision-making processes in order to achieve responsive and accountable public actions and policies. Non-discrimination, good governance and the rule of law are in such manner. And third, enhancing security means reducing poor people's vulnerability to different threats, like economic shocks, natural disasters, ill health, disability and personal violence. This requires macroeconomic approaches to deal with the danger of economy-wide shocks, broadening of households exercises, an open welfare network and a scope of insurance components. Thus, with the use of decentralization many more successful programs like Parivartan can take off in different cities all over the world. Looking at urban poverty as a challenge for the local government rather than the central government will perhaps have a greater overall effect on its worldwide recession. Urban poverty alleviation is, along these lines not an issue of income growth. The new reasoning is that if the distribution of resources is supplemented by successful decentralization, it will have a supportable effect on urban poverty. Guaranteeing astounding local administrations for all urban communities and towns of India is an end in itself, will encourage the full acknowledgment of India's potential.

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