

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF SLUM DWELLERS : A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Slums are densely populated urban areas characterized by poor housing, inadequate basic services, and low living standards. Rapid urbanization and migration from rural areas have led to the growth of slums in many cities. This case study examines the socio-economic conditions of slum dwellers to understand their living conditions, income levels, education, and challenges.

Keywords : Introduction, objectives, area of the study, methodology, analyses of slum dwellers, findings, conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

Slums are an integral yet neglected part of urban society, characterized by overcrowding, poor housing, inadequate sanitation, and lack of basic civic amenities. Rapid urbanization, industrial growth, and migration from rural areas in search of employment have contributed significantly to the expansion of slum settlements in cities. Due to poverty and the inability to afford proper housing, a large section of the urban poor is forced to live in slums. The socio-economic conditions of slum dwellers are often marked by low income, unstable employment, limited access to education, and poor health facilities. These factors not only affect their quality of life but also hinder overall urban development. Despite various government initiatives and welfare schemes, many slum residents continue to face social exclusion and economic insecurity.

This case study aims to examine the socio-economic conditions of slum dwellers in a selected urban area, focusing on their living standards, income, education, health, and social challenges. Understanding these conditions is essential for planning effective policies and programs for slum improvement and sustainable urban development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the living conditions of slum dwellers
- To analyze their income and employment status
- To examine education and health facilities
- To identify major social and economic problems
- To suggest measures for improvement

AREA OF STUDY

Hassan is a city and district in south-central Karnataka, India, known as the "temple-architectural capital" for its rich Hoysala heritage, stunning temples like Belur and Halebid, and historical sites such as Shravanabelagola, making it a key tourism base with lush surroundings and agricultural significance. The name "Hassan" also refers to a popular male

given name of Arabic origin meaning "handsome" or "good". A hub for Hoysala architecture, featuring intricately carved statues and ancient monuments. Serves as a base for exploring nearby destinations like Belur, Halebid, Sakleshpur. Important trading center with industries like rice mills and engineering, surrounded by coffee, cardamom, and rice plantations. Part of ancient empires like the Mauryans, Jainism was introduced in the region during this time. A blend of traditional culture and modern development, with a focus on regional food like Ragi Mudde and Naati Koli Saambar.

METHODOLOGY

There isn't a specific "Hassan Slum" but rather slums within the broader Hassan district in Karnataka, India, which face typical challenges of substandard housing, sanitation, and poverty, though the region is also known for its history, culture diverse communities facing issues like water insecurity, poor sanitation lack of toilets, kitchens, and unemployment, with efforts often focused on integrated upgrading projects for better health and living conditions. 50 slum peoples select in using the simple random sampling method of collecting the data.

ANALYSES THE SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITIONS SLUM DWELLERS

Housing Problems of Slums

Most houses are semi-permanent or temporary, made of tin sheets, plastic, or mud. Overcrowding is common, with poor ventilation and sanitation. Slums face serious housing problems due to poverty, rapid urbanization, and lack of proper planning. The main housing problems of slum areas are as follows. Poor Quality of Housing Most houses in slums are built with temporary materials such as tin sheets, plastic, wood, or mud. These structures are weak and unsafe. Overcrowding, Many families live in small, single-room houses. Overcrowding leads to lack of privacy and increases the spread of diseases. Lack of Basic Amenities, Slum houses often do not have access to clean drinking water, toilets, electricity, or proper drainage systems. Unplanned Settlements, Slums develop without proper planning. Houses are built close together with narrow lanes, making movement difficult and unsafe. Poor Ventilation and Lighting, Most houses lack proper windows and ventilation, causing dark, damp living conditions that affect health. Health Hazards, Poor housing conditions lead to health problems such as respiratory diseases, skin infections, and water-borne illnesses. Insecurity of Tenure, Many slum dwellers do not have legal ownership of their houses or land, creating constant fear of eviction. Vulnerability to Disasters Slum houses are highly vulnerable to fire, floods, and other natural disasters due to weak construction. Housing problems in slums seriously affect the physical, social, and mental well-being of residents. Improving housing conditions through proper planning, affordable housing schemes, and basic infrastructure is essential for enhancing the quality of life of slum dwellers.

Income and Employment of Slum Dwellers

Majority work as daily wage laborers, street vendors, domestic workers, or construction workers Income is low and irregular, making savings difficult, Unemployment and job insecurity are major issues. Income and employment conditions in slums are generally poor and unstable. Most slum dwellers depend on low-paid and informal jobs for their livelihood.

Majority work in the informal sector, Common occupations include: Daily wage laborers, Construction workers, Street vendors and hawkers, Domestic helpers, Rickshaw pullers, Waste pickers, Jobs are mostly temporary and insecure. Income is generally low and irregular, Daily wages depend on availability of work, Most families earn just enough for basic survival, Very little or no savings.

Unemployment and Underemployment

Seasonal unemployment is common, Many workers are underemployed, meaning they work fewer hours than needed, Women often face limited job opportunities. Lack of Skills and Education, Low education and lack of skills restrict access to better-paying jobs, Limited access to vocational training programs. Impact on Living Conditions. Low income affects access to: Proper food and nutrition, Education for children, Healthcare services, Poverty continues from one generation to the next. Income and employment conditions of slum dwellers reflect economic insecurity and vulnerability. Creating stable employment, improving skills, and providing social security are essential to improve their socio-economic status.

Education in Slum Areas

Literacy levels are low, especially among adults, Many children drop out of school due to poverty, Lack of awareness and access to quality education. Education levels in slum areas are generally low due to poverty, lack of awareness, and poor access to educational facilities. Many children in slums are unable to complete their schooling.

Adult literacy rate is low, especially among women, Many adults have never attended school, Schools are often far from slum areas, Poor transport facilities discourage regular attendance, Lack of nearby government schools, Children are forced to work to support family income, This leads to high dropout rates. Poor Learning Environment, Lack of study space at home, Overcrowded and noisy surroundings, No access to books, uniforms, or digital resources. Gender Inequality, Girl children are often denied education, Early marriage and household responsibilities affect girls' schooling. Lack of Awareness, Parents may not understand the importance of education, Education is seen as less important than earning income. Role of Government and NGOs, Government schools, mid-day meal schemes, and free textbooks help improve enrollment, NGOs run informal schools and bridge courses. Education in slums faces many challenges, but it is key to breaking the cycle of poverty. Improving access, awareness, and quality of education can help uplift slum communities.

Health and Sanitation in Slum Areas

Poor sanitation and lack of clean drinking water, Common diseases include diarrhea, malaria, and respiratory infections, Limited access to healthcare facilities, Health and sanitation conditions in slum areas are generally poor due to overcrowding, poverty, and lack of basic facilities. These conditions negatively affect the overall well-being of slum dwellers. Poor Sanitation Facilities, Lack of proper toilets; many people use community toilets or open spaces, Insufficient drainage systems causing water stagnation, Overflowing garbage and poor waste disposal. Unsafe Drinking Water, Limited access to clean and safe drinking water, Use of contaminated water leads to water-borne diseases Common Health Problems, Diarrhea, cholera, and typhoid, Malaria and dengue due to stagnant water, Respiratory diseases caused by pollution and poor ventilation, Skin infections and malnutrition. Limited Healthcare Facilities, Few government health centers nearby, Lack of money for private treatment, Dependence on unqualified medical practitioners. Poor Hygiene Practices, Lack of awareness about personal hygiene, Shortage of clean water for bathing and washing, Children are most affected by unhygienic conditions. Impact on Women and Children, Women face health issues related to poor sanitation and nutrition, Children suffer from frequent illnesses and poor growth. Poor health and sanitation in slums create a cycle of illness and poverty. Improving sanitation facilities, access to clean water, healthcare services, and health awareness is essential to improve the quality of life of slum dwellers.

Social Issues in Slum Areas

Poverty and malnutrition, Child labor, Poor safety and insecurity, Limited access to government welfare schemes. Slum areas face several social problems due to poverty, overcrowding, and lack of basic facilities. These issues affect the quality of life and social development of slum dwellers. Poverty, Most slum dwellers live below the poverty line, Low and irregular income leads to poor living conditions. Illiteracy, Low literacy rates, especially among adults, Lack of education limits employment opportunities. Child Labor, Children are forced to work to support family income, This affects their education and overall development Unemployment and Job Insecurity, Dependence on daily wage labor, Lack of stable employment opportunities. Health Problems, Poor sanitation and overcrowding lead to frequent illnesses, Limited access to healthcare facilities. Crime and Insecurity, Higher risk of theft, substance abuse, and violence, Lack of proper policing and security. Gender Inequality, Women face discrimination, low wages, and poor health care, Limited access to education and employment for women. Lack of Awareness, Poor knowledge about government welfare schemes, Social exclusion from mainstream society. Social issues in slums are interconnected and rooted in poverty and inequality. Addressing these problems requires education, employment opportunities, healthcare services, and inclusive social policies.

FINDINGS

- Slum dwellers live in poor socio-economic conditions
- Poverty and lack of education are the root causes of most problems
- Government facilities exist but are not fully utilized due to lack of awareness

SUGGESTIONS

- Improve access to education and healthcare
- Create employment opportunities and skill training programs
- Provide affordable housing and sanitation facilities
- Increase awareness of government welfare schemes

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that slum dwellers face multiple socio-economic challenges that affect their quality of life. Sustainable development, inclusive policies, and active participation from government and NGOs are essential to improve the living conditions of slum communities. Slums are a visible outcome of urban poverty, rapid migration, and unplanned city growth. The socio-economic conditions of slum dwellers are often poor, characterized by inadequate housing, low income, unstable employment, limited education, poor health, and social challenges. These problems are interconnected, creating a cycle of poverty and hardship that is difficult to break. Improving the living conditions in slums requires a multi-faceted approach, including. Providing affordable housing and proper sanitation, Ensuring access to education and healthcare, Creating employment opportunities and skill development programs, Promoting awareness of government welfare schemes, with effective government policies, NGO support, and community participation, slum dwellers can be empowered to improve their quality of life, contributing to sustainable urban development and social inclusion.

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