Urban Renewal Stage in City's Life and Its Impact on Slums and Slum Dwellers - A Case Study of Noida City, Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

In preparing a scheme for the welfare of the slum dwellers, the State is expected to pay adequate heed to the fact that slums are inhabited by poor and vulnerable sections of society. NOIDA city's current scheme to rehabilitate the slum population of Noida has certainly ignored the socio-economic realities of the slum population. The government is expected to resort to appropriate manners if they would like to rehabilitate the slum dwellers to a new place. It is well understood that no government would want slums on their land. Nevertheless, realising this aspiration of no slums should be ethical and moral. Noida city misses several important points while formulating the slum rehabilitation scheme, like increasing education levels and skills among the slum dwellers, providing access to health services, and ensuring a living wage.

This paper tries to show why the current scheme is full of discrepancies and needs an immediate overhaul. Some of the significant observations of the study are –

a) Basic rights like the right to claim the right to property and the right to alternate residence of the slum dwellers are compromised by Noida city.

b) The whole rehabilitation scheme is formulated without considering the needs of the slum dwellers.

c) 98.4 percent of the respondents cannot pay the amount, i.e., the price of the flat.

d) 93.5 percent of the respondents said that a 31 sq. meters one-bedroom flat would not be adequate given their large family size.

e) All the respondents agreed that the material used in the building (allocated flat) is of the poorest quality.

f) 91.9 percent of the respondents are unhappy with Noida city's rehabilitation scheme.

This paper also suggests how the government may make this scheme pro-poor which will also benefit Noida as a progressive and Responsible/welfarist city. Several recommendations are also suggested on how the current scheme could be made transparent and justice could be provided to the slum dwellers.

Introduction

Slum settlements are widespread in developing countries. Slums and slum dwellers are considered the by-products of the urbanization process. In this era of Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation, urbanization is an inevitable reality, and so are the slums. There is a direct relationship between urbanization and slums in most developing countries like Bangladesh, China, India, and Pakistan. (UN-Habitat Report 2003). India is no exception, as it houses 2,613 slum settlements across different states (NSSO, 2014).

The slum population faces unique challenges within the slum settlement and outside the slum settlement as citizens. It is a well-known fact that slums are not fit for human living. Slum populations remain vulnerable to harsh modern realities like poor sanitation & hygiene, poor health, and socio-economic backwardness, apart from getting marginalized, ostracised, and getting discriminated against. The challenges of slum dwellers are very different from the normal citizens of the country. Like proper citizens, they do not have access to basic rights like the right to shelter, education, and health. The conditions of extreme social inequality make the articulation of citizenship impossible in any meaningful sense (Chatterjee, 1999). Following rights of the slum-dwellers are compromised while living in a slum settlement - rights to adequate housing, education, health, privacy and security, right to livelihood, right to a decent standard of life, and right to live with human dignity. In this context, the slum population needs sympathetic behavior from the State. Instead, as the city moves towards development, the State begins to consider shifting the slum population from high-valued slum land to some faraway cheaper land or matchbox-type flats. Many of the above rights are intensively compromised post-eviction. Post-eviction, many slum dwellers (especially elderly slum dwellers) are denied even the right to life as many become destitute due to the faulty resettlement scheme of the State.

The same is the story of Noida city and its slum population. Noida city is part of India's National Capital Region (NCR) and is less than 25 km from New Delhi, the national capital. Noida is emerging as one of the best metropolitan cities. ABP News even ranked it "Best City

for Housing" in 2015[1]. As per CITU and other people's groups, Noida's slums are home to nearly 30,000 households. These people migrated from states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand after 1976, when Noida city was established as a hub for small-scale industries. Noida city, as part of its rehabilitation scheme, shifting slum households to 31 sq. meters 1 BHK flats.

The paper discusses the relationship between the urban renewal stage in the city's life and the resultant gentrification. The resettlement scheme for removing slums mainly emerges during the city's urban renewal. Moreover, the paper tries to prove that Noida city's scheme is unjust to Noida's slum dwellers. Through the analysis of various literature, secondary data, and primary data (field data), the paper establishes that Noida city's rehabilitation scheme for shifting slum dwellers is unfair and unjust to the slum dwellers. The approach of Noida city is altogether an ignorant towards the socio-economic needs of the slum dwellers. Lastly, the paper suggests some measures on how the current scheme can become fair to the slum dwellers.

Why Noida City as the study area?

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[1] Noida city was ranked as the best city in Uttar Pradesh and the best city in housing in all of India in "Best City Awards" conducted by ABP News in 2015.

Image generated by Google Maps, 2022

The research will study the Noida slums of Uttar Pradesh. The socio-economic profile of Noida is interesting and unique, which makes this research worth researching. As per the local political parties and other peoples' groups working here, there are approximately 30,000 households. Many of these people are migrant workers from states around Delhi, like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand. Many came here as early as 1976 when Noida city was established. Originally, Noida was created as a planned industrial town housing small-scale industries. The city planners in Delhi hoped to outskirt these industries and direct migrant populations of workers away from Delhi. Today, many of these migrant workers are employed in food textiles, timber paper, chemicals, automotive, and metal industries in Noida.

Methodology

This empirical study is conducted to analyse the Noida city's resettlement scheme, which tends to relocate the slum dwellers in 31 sq. meters 1 BHK flats. Relevant literature was reviewed, and important secondary data, for example, data from Census 2011, is also used in the study. In selecting a subset from the entire population, the primary population, i.e., the

slum dwellers, were identified. The snowball sampling method, which comes under non-probability sampling, was adopted for all selections. The online questionnaire filled by enumerators is the method used for collecting primary data[2]. Apart from these, semi-structured interviews and participant observation methods were also used. The study is conducted in the Noida Sector 8 slum settlement, which is one of the slum settlements of Noida city. Primary data was collected from 62 respondents who are the owners of their slum dwellings.[3]. The questionnaire was designed with respect to the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study are the following -

1. Discussing the relationship between the urban renewal stage in the city's life and resultant gentrification.
2. Relationship between urban renewal and the removal of slums.
3. Analyzing whether the resettlement scheme improves the living standards of slum dwellers or not.

1. NOIDA CITY AND THE SLUM POPULATION OF NOIDA

1.1 Slums in Noida: A by-product of Urbanisation

Noida was established on 17th April 1976 as a hub of small-scale industries, which also stands for 'New Okhla Industrial Development Authority,' i.e., NOIDA. As such, the origin of the journey of the slum dwellers of Noida city goes back to the early 1980s. A decade after, India experienced structural changes in its economic system, i.e., India moved towards Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation.

Especially after the 1990s shift in the economic policies of India, more and more cities came into being to support industries whose number suddenly increased manifold to meet domestic and global demand. The proliferation of slums was generally tolerated throughout the 20th century, as slums provided a low-cost solution to the housing needs of the city's growing industrial workforce (Weinstein & Xuefei, 2009). As per Census 2011, India accounts for 2,613 slums. Ironically we see slums even though cities are planned. Roma Chatterji also highlighted this inevitability of slums by saying, "I wonder to what extent town planners can account for the combination of factors like land scarcity, urban inequality, population flow,

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[2] Google Forms were used to collect the data from the slum dwellers.
[3] The ownership of the slum dwelling was verified through ration cards.

and speculation that characterize the housing situation in Mumbai." Urbanization leads to the emergence of slum settlements in societies characterized by inequality and poverty. Big cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata have huge slum populations, which is a direct outcome of the poverty and inequality in the adjoining areas of these cities. Slums constitute a crucial ingredient of the recent urbanization explosion across the planet, especially in the south (UN-Habitat Report, 2003). India's major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and National Capital Region (NCR) constitute a significant share of total slums in the global south. Global cities of the South are equated with gigantic concentrations of poverty, and the slum is the formal manifestation of this claim (Davis, 2004). Davis also states that "slum is also a manifestation of the informal proletariat that has emerged from over a decade of structural adjustments. Thus it is both a demographic and territorial form". Further, as per Davis, "The slum - as a demographic and theoretical construct - straddles the conceptual and material forms of city-making that are challenging the imaginary of the modern city." This is why once the land prices of slum land rise and the State gather enough resources, the first thing they plan is to relocate the slum population to cheaper accommodation. Hence the slum dwellers are not entitled to the same property rights and other rights which normal citizens are entitled to.

1.2 Slum Population: A Group Having Compromised Citizenship

To be a citizen is to be a member of a political community with rights and responsibilities in respect of that community. While the nation-state ascribes citizenship status to the individuals, many of the rights and duties of citizenship are exercised at the local level. It is at the level of the town or city that people usually come into contact with politicians or public officials, receive services and benefits from the State, and organize together in communities (Vivien Lowndes, 1995). The 'triangle of relationship' between the individuals, community, and State helps in understanding citizenship in a city. The nature of the bond, which links individuals, communities, and states, determines the nature of citizenship in a city (Vivien Lowndes, 1995).

People living in India get entitled to a type of citizenship based on their housing environment. A person living in a slum locality will experience a different type of citizenship than a person not living in a slum locality. It is assumed that conditions of extreme social inequality make the articulation of citizenship impossible in any meaningful sense (Chatterjee, 1999). Chatterjee further mentions that citizens cannot be considered unitary and autonomous

subjects. Marginalized and poor communities in slums seek to make claims upon the State. However, these claims are fundamentally different from the claims of citizens - whose 'political fraternity' is constantly affirmed as 'one and indivisible' through the mediation of the nation. (Chatterjee 2006). Slum dwellers, due to extreme poverty and their image as the illegal occupant of state-owned land, make them un-liked citizens.

With the establishment of NOIDA city in 1976, hundreds of small-scale factories were established in Noida. Many big private companies also shifted to Noida as Noida was the upcoming metropolitan city on the outskirts of Delhi. Due to these developments, the demand for workers suddenly rose in Noida. Hence Noida, as a result of in-migration, saw an influx of migrants in the early 1990s from the various parts of Uttar Pradesh and other states, including Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal. Even a fraction of people from Nepal got settled here in these slum settlements. As a result, the slums of Noida have people from different regions, religions, and cultures. One will find Hindus, Muslims, and Christians in these slums. Hence slums of Noida comprise a population from different sections of Indian Society. **However, despite such diversity, the community or public (Chatterji, 2005) here in these slums have a 'common interest which is to have a right to decent living.** There common demand for decent living in terms of housing at the present space where the slum is located or at a different location.

The realization of rights available to slum dwellers depends on people's organizations or community in a slum settlement. Slum dwellers, unlike other citizens, are devoid of fundamental rights, as discussed above. As per Partha Chatterjee, India's people can be divided into two categories - those to whom the State relates as citizens and those who are thought of merely as a population to be constituted as an object of knowledge and bureaucratic intervention. Community, in this view of state-society relations, becomes an oppositional category, defined in terms of its resistance to the State (Partha Chatterjee, 2002). Roma Chatterji agrees with Partha Chatterjee that governmental intervention has recently intensified in everyday life. However, it does not always take the form of a one-to-one relationship between the State and the individual citizen. Organizing potential citizens into abstract categories also create the conditions in which new kinds of communities can emerge.

Various authors use the term Urban citizenship to describe the making of claims both inside the rule of law and outside of it. Chatterjee says that slum dwellers employ extra-legal

measures to ensure their housing security. Significant similarities in how citizenship is enacted at the urban scale are found in the slums of Mumbai and Shanghai (China). Liza Weinstein and Xuefei Ren analyze that Shanghai's and Mumbai's housing rights regimes distribute protections unevenly and inconsistently to all residents. Urban citizenship in these two cities is invariably fragmented and uneven. Despite this unevenness, however, citizenship is enacted in both cities through political contestations and housing activism (Weinstein & Xuefei, 2009). Finally, they also show that housing rights for the urban poor in slums are largely compromised in the process of urban renewal. In the case of slums in Mumbai, discrepancies between state policy and state action have led to fragmented forms of citizenship rights.

1.3 The Migrant Workers were the Vital Need of Noida in the 1990s

The Noida that we see today, one of the best cities in India to live in, could not have achieved this prosperity without the crucial inputs of workers in various forms. Noida houses almost all the big MNCs in India as it is an IT hub apart from being a huge market and a crucial manufacturing hub. Noida today is a rich city. It collects revenue of around 40-50 billion INR or 530 million USD, Every year[4]. It's considered one of the best cities to live in and ABP News even ranked it "Best City for Housing" in 2015[5].

But how does Noida come into so much wealth? A huge reason for this development has been the cheap labour provided by the slum dwellers that have helped industries here earn and maintain their high-profit margins. It is because the slum settlements are located near the factories, the labour prices are low. In other words, if Noida did not allow these slum localities to be established, then the labour would have been expensive for the factories. Labourers might have to travel from villages up to 25 km away every day to fill these roles. As a result, profits for the companies could have remained limited and subsequent taxes to the government could have also remained low. So the prosperity that Noida city earned in these 3-4 decades should be accrued to the cheap labour provided by the slum dwellers in the region.

Hence the migrant workers played an integral role in making Noida economically developed. Therefore, these migrant workers, mostly in slum localities, should be considered essential contributors to the development of Noida (Johny, 2022). Hence they are worthy of some

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[4] A piece in Hindustan Times published Noida city's approved budget for 2020-21
[5] ABP News ranking Noida as Best City for Housing.

returns, which could be provided to them regarding their welfare. Hence slum dwellers deserve better treatment and should not be seen as illegal occupiers as they were the essential need of the city in its initial years of origin.

2. SLUM SETTLEMENTS ARE NOT EXCLUSIVE TO NOIDA

2.1 Slum habitats are not exclusive to Noida

 "A slum is a compact settlement with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions" (NSSO, 2014). India is home to 1.3 billion people. According to the 2011 Census, 2613 slums reported from cities and towns account for 12.92 million slum households across the country. In total, 65.49 million people occupied these slum households (NSSO, 2014).

2.2 Vulnerability of the Slum Dwellers - Requiring a positive response from the State

Slums are inhabited by the poverty-stricken population of the country. They generally do not have access to quality education and affordable health services. It is because of the cheap housing option that people resort to slums. The income levels of slum dwellers are such which do not allow them to buy land elsewhere.[6]. Otherwise, nobody likes to continue living in slums. It is a fact that slums are not fit for human living. When they arrived in Noida, there were not enough authorized colonies to live in, and if there were some, these poor migrants were not in a position to afford the rent. So it was a natural step to live in a slum and survive.

Slum dwellers know that the state/government can anytime ask them to vacate the slum premises. However, we are living in a country that is a welfare state and socialistic. It would be more appropriate for the Government to provide some land property to these slum dwellers, which would give them some sense of security. In the words of John Locke, the great philosopher on whose principles the American Society is based, says, "Without property, life and liberty carry no meaning." Some kind of land property will add meaning to their lives, and they could exercise their liberty more reasonably, i.e., in a broader sense, as Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen suggested.

Noida is one of the most developed cities, generating a huge annual revenue (3,169 crores in 2020-21). They also have land at their disposal, which could be used to rehabilitate them.

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[6] The primary data collected shows that slum dwellers' income levels fall in the range of 98 USD to 150 USD per month.

Providing enough land to these slum dwellers will also benefit the government as the high-value slum land would be available to them.

3. NOIDA'S SLUM REHABILITATION SCHEME

In every city's life, there is a time when they plan 'urban renewal' (Weinstein & Xuefei, 2009). The time has come when Noida is also going in the same direction. It is a sign of a developed city where they could think along the lines of making some structural changes in the spatial features of the city. A beautiful city in terms of world-class infrastructure always attracts more money than a city that is relatively not beautiful enough. There is a notion that poverty, reflected through slum settlements, makes the city ugly and is not a good site to look at. However, due to the inherent structure of the modern-day world economy, slums are inevitable in cities of most developing countries. This phenomenon or relationship between urbanization and slums has become quite common in developing countries, for example - India (Mumbai - Dharavi, Delhi, Noida), China, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. (UN-Habitat Report 2003).

As mentioned, cities developing with impressive speed would always keep 'removal of slums' at the top of their priority list. As a result, slums are cleared to make way for infrastructural improvements and megaproject development. Sadly, at this time juncture where the city is planning the removal of a slum poses a socio-economic crisis for the slum dwellers. Slum dwellers who lack understanding about their citizenship rights and housing rights in the country fear losing their shelter and livelihoods. Hence, the housing rights of the urban poor, i.e., slum dwellers, are compromised in the process of urban renewal.

Henri Lefebvre gave us the concept of 'the right to the city.' The slum dwellers become an integral part of the city as they provide continuous labour in the city's development. As they are part of the city, they also have 'the right to the city.' David Harvey propounded that those who have the right to the city do not merely have a right of access to what already exists but a right to change it after our heart's desire (Harvey, 2003). Contrastingly, we will see in the paper that the slum dwellers of Noida have not been asked to be part of the 'urban renewal process of their slum area.' This shows that slum dwellers are not seen as stakeholders in the city's life. Moreover, it is utterly surprising that Noida is planning the removal of slums without asking the slum dwellers about their interests.

3.1 Slum Rehabilitation, by its name, is a Noble task

Slum dwellers are marred by the integral and structural problems of slums. Slum dwellers face poor sanitation & hygiene, poor health, and socio-economic backwardness, apart from getting marginalized, ostracised, and discriminated against. The Census of India categorizes slum households into three categories - Good, Livable, and Dilapidated in terms of the availability of basic amenities like safe drinking water, electricity, and toilet facilities (Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Report, 2013)
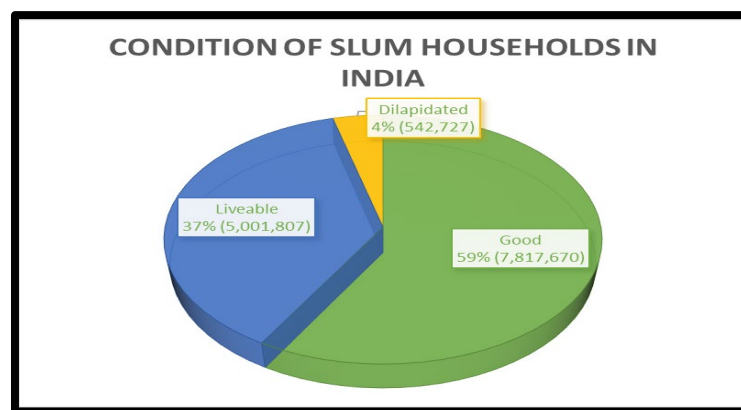
Source: Census of India 2011 – HH-1: Slum households by the condition of Census Houses occupied by them

Slum settlements are not fit for human living, and at the same time, in most cases, slum land is also highly valued land. Thus every urban government aims to eliminate slums. Apart from representing a reflection of poverty & inequality, slums are also not a good site to look at. Hence every ruling regime aims to remove slums. The Noida Administration is no different in planning to eliminate the slums in Noida. However, the elimination of slums should not turn into the elimination of hopes for having a good life or fear of getting happiness snatched.

3.2 Current Rehabilitation Program of Noida is Unjust and Unfair

The government should be responsible for resorting to an appropriate manner if they would like to rehabilitate the slum dwellers to a new place. It is well understood that no government would want slums on their land. However, realising that aspiration of no slums should be ethical and moral. Slum dwellers are stakeholders of the land and have a right to know what will happen to their land. They should be the stakeholders in the discussions and decisions on

what they will get if they give land to the government on which they have been living for 3-4 decades.

- **Paying 5 to 7 Lakh Rupees (7000 USD to 8500 USD) for their displacement** - The country is going through economic turbulence, where the unemployment levels are very high due to the failure of the economic policies and COVID-19. To add to the problem of the poor, the current wage levels are as low as 7000 Rs/month (90 USD). The wages are significantly less given the expenses on food, health, education, and other basic needs. With such income levels, a person could survive in a slum locality. As part of the scheme, the person has to pay around Rs 1,10,000 as the initial amount to do the registration formalities and fulfill other conditions. The rest amount is required to be paid in installments. In addition to this amount, at least Rs 30000 to 40000 would be required to renovate the flats. The renovation is required because these flats were built around 10-12 years ago and are in extremely poor condition.

- **Poor Building quality** - The wear and tear have already started as the material used in the construction of the building are of inferior quality. In other words, to reduce the cost, cheap material has been used to construct the 4-storey flats. Therefore, under this unfair deal, slum dwellers give up their ownership of the slum land without getting any compensation. Moreover, mandatorily have to buy poorly built flats.

- **One BHK Flat is not the desired exchange**.

  Sunil, a slum dweller who has been "rehabilitated," quoted with pain, " Adjusting in a 31 sq. meter 1 bedroom flat is difficult for a family of around ten members. In these 3-4 decades of stay, many slum dwellers have extended their families to 2-3 generations. Hence, the majority of households in slums have more than ten family members and are adjusting on their small patches of slum land.[7]. On the plot of land in a slum locality, they could build 2-3 storey accommodation. Thus they could adjust on a small patch of land, which could be as small as 20-25 sq. meters. The Government is giving them 31.37 sq. meters 1 BHK flat in exchange for their slum land. Now it is unfair to expect that these 10-15 member families can adjust in 2 small rooms. They will not have an option to build multiple-storey rooms as they are not being given a plot of land. In Indian culture, the Father-in-law is not expected to sleep near the daughter-in-law. It would be difficult for them to adjust in 2 small rooms where people from all three generations will live. The elderly slum dwellers will not

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[7] The primary data collected shows that more than 49 percent of the families have more than nine members in their households.

have any other option but to live on rent or the streets. This may increase the number of elderly destitute. India, which has around 10 percent of the senior citizen population, already lacks enough senior citizens' homes. So, the current scheme may increase beggary and the destitution of the elderly and women.

Children will also find it very difficult to study as there would be many members in the 2-room flat as most of the slum dwellers' households consist of 2-3 generations of family members. Hence the appropriate environment for the children's education will also be compromised.

4. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE: THE VOICE OF SLUM DWELLERS, WHICH THE STATE DID NOT BOTHER TO HEAR

Primary data is collected from 62 slum dwellers of the Noida Sector 8 Slum settlement. All 62 respondents are owners of their slum dwellings.[8]. The analysis shows that slum dwellers are highly disaffected by the current slum rehabilitation scheme and termed the whole scheme unfair and unjust to the slum dwellers. The figure below also shows that majority of the slum dwellers are not happy with the current rehabilitation scheme.


Whether Slum Dweller's are happy with the current rehabilitation scheme?

Yes 4.8%   Maybe 3.2%

No 91.9%
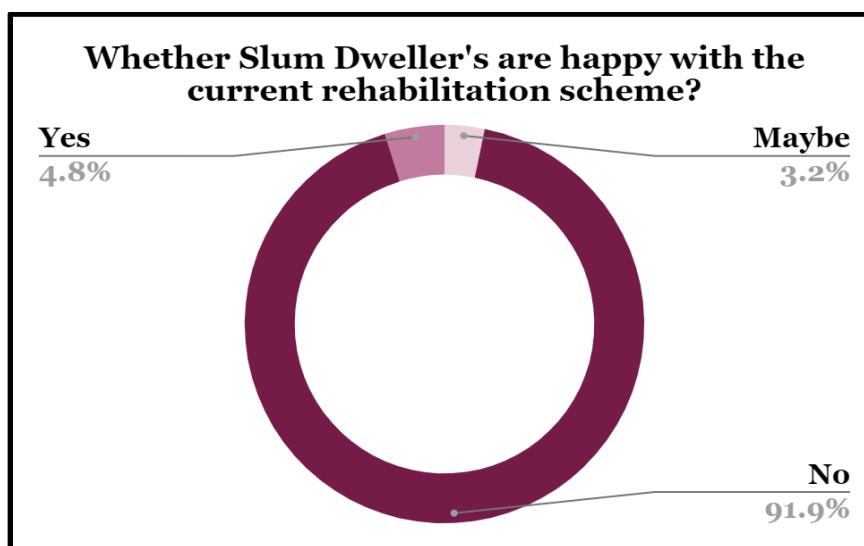
4.1 Age distribution and its implication on the size of family

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[8] The ownership of the slum dwelling was verified through ration cards.

Age of Respondents

- 25 to 35: 4.8%
- 36 to 50: 41.9%
- 51 to 65: 37.1%
- Above 65: 16.1%
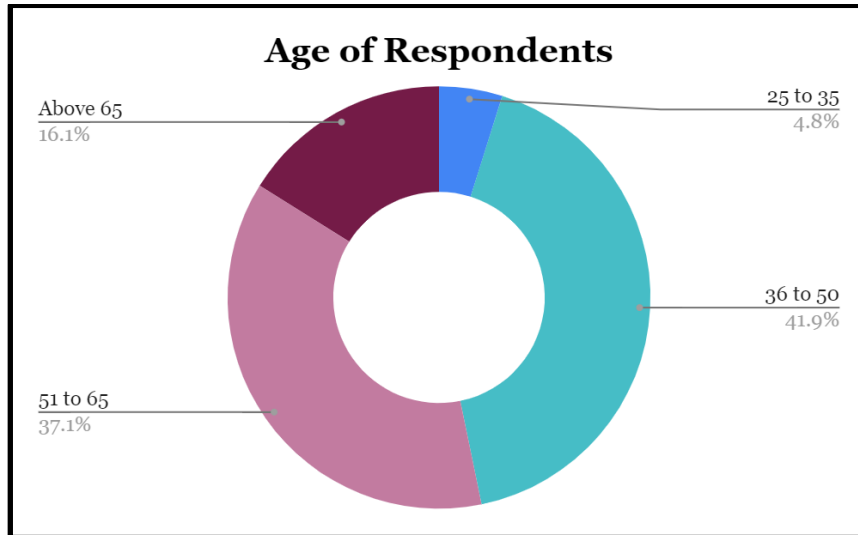
The above figure shows that around 53 percent of respondents are above 51 years old. It implies that households living in the slum dwelling include respondents' own families and probably the family of their sons and daughters who got married. This proves that slum dwellers who have accommodated themselves well in their slum dwellings have a serious fear of 'how they can accommodate all the family members in a 31.37 sq. meter 1 bedroom flat.

4.2 Slum Dwellers are Settlers in Noida Slums for Three - Four decades

Year of Respondents settled in slum locality
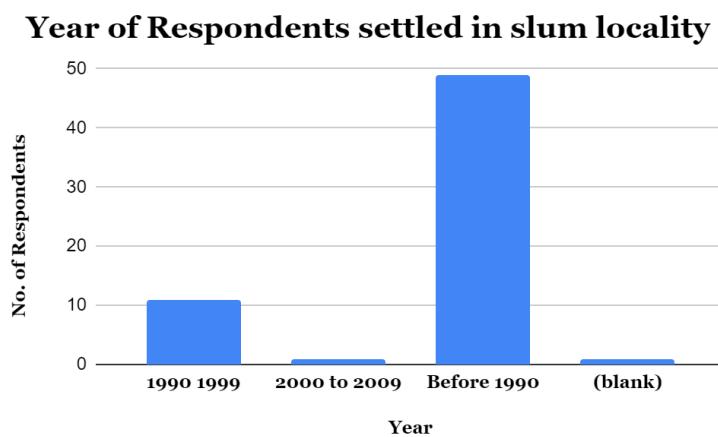
In the total sample size, around 80 percent of the respondents are settlers of this slum settlement before 1990, and around 20 percent settled here between 1990 and 1999. This means many of the slum dwellers are settled here for more than three decades. Hence they could be emotionally connected to this place. Furthermore, they feel disaffected that after contributing labour for more than three decades to Noida city, they are dislocated from their

place in such an unfair manner.[9]. Chatterji and various other authors show that slum dwellers have the right to claim the right to property which entitles them to fair compensation if they are dislocated from the slum. However, in this scheme, State, in a highly objectionable way, relocating the slum dwellers to cheaply built flats and taking the price (5 to 6 lakh rupees) from the slum dwellers that they could not afford. **Moreover, it is difficult to understand why the State is snatching the ownership of the slum dwelling when the State is taking money for flats.**

### 4.3 Slum Dwellers are too poor to pay the price
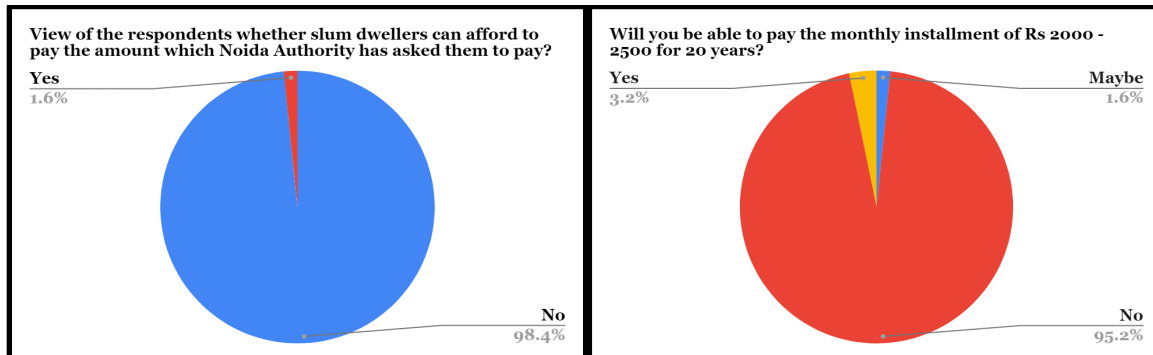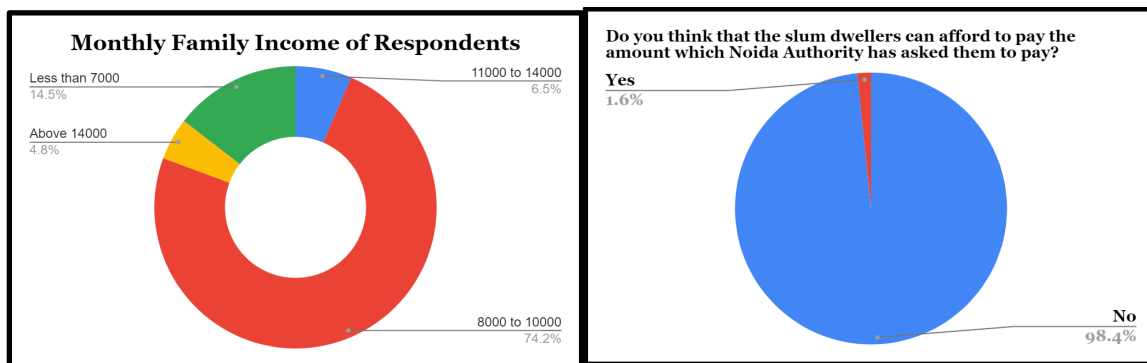
74.2 percent of the respondents have a family income of less than Rs. 10,000. We have also seen that more than 80 percent of the respondents have more than 5-6 members in their family. The low family income and large family size of the slum dwellers imply that slum dwellers are not equipped to pay the amount (between 5 to 7 lakh rupees) that the government is asking as the price of the flat. 98.4 percent of the slum dwellers have claimed that they cannot pay the amount which Noida Authority has asked them to pay. Ninety-five percent of the respondents also claimed that they would be unable to pay monthly installments between Rs. 2000 to 2500, given their low level of family income. All the respondents said that

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[9] During personal interviews, many slum dwellers show their disaffection and sadness towards the resettlement scheme.

monthly installment for 20 years undoubtedly creates anxiety in them as they have low-income levels and meagre or no savings. Apart from this, all the respondents believe that they should not pay the money to get the flat. The slum dwellers believe that government should take either slum land or the amount they have fixed as the price of the flat.

Due to the disruption caused by the Covid 19, slum dwellers' savings have vanished, and sources of income have also been affected. The government did not provide any relief in paying the allotment money and charging penalties for the late payment. This shows the insensitivity of the government towards the slum dwellers. The urban policy of the government here needs to be more considerate towards the needs and rights of the urban poor.

## 4.4 1 BHK in exchange for a plot of land - a disastrous deal for most slum dwellers
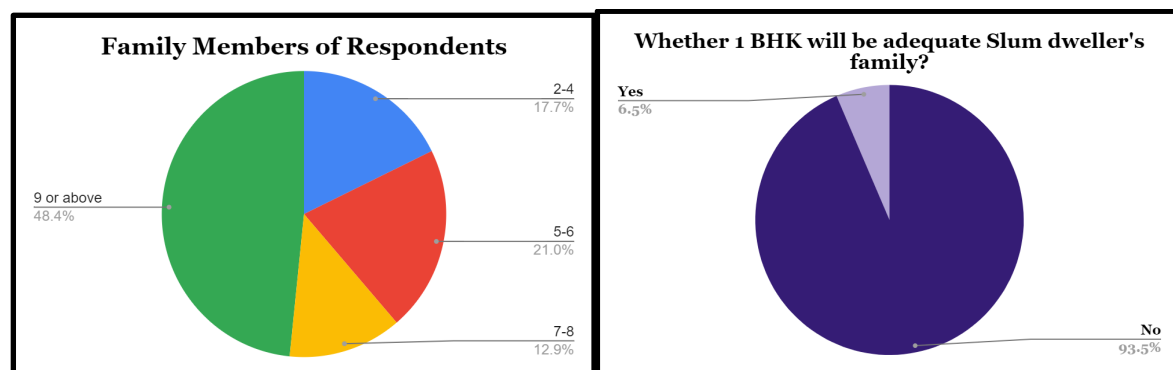
The slum population mainly comprises the illiterate population. In India, various studies show that illiteracy is directly related to the fertility rate, i.e., slum populations generally have more children than the national average. Apart from this, many slum dwellers have joint families. These factors are also reflected in the results of the survey, where it is found that 49 percent of respondents have nine or above family members, 13 percent have 7-8 family members, 21 percent have 5-6 family members, and 16 percent of respondents have 2-4 family members. So, at least 65 percent of the slum population. Those who have more than six family members will find it extremely difficult to accommodate themselves in the two small rooms, i.e., 1 BHK flat.

Sixty-two percent of the respondents already got their children married, which means it will create problems for the family as there would be more than one married couple in the 1 BHK flat.

4.5 Poor Quality material used in constructing flats
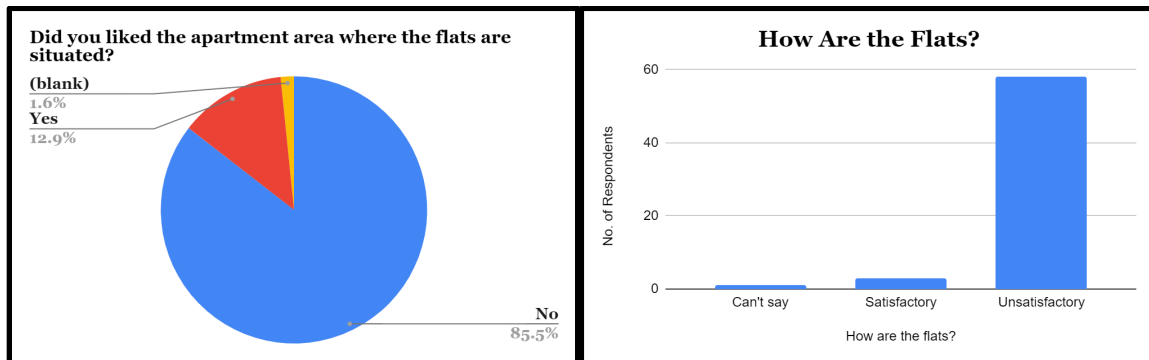
All the respondents mentioned that the material used in the construction of the flat is of poor quality. The building in which the flats are built has already started to break. The cement is coming out of the wall, and bricks are visible in the walls. The bricks used are of the poorest quality, not even pucca bricks. It seems like the government has built these flats keeping in mind that they are meant for slum dwellers. It is certain that the building will not last long and will wear and tear very fast in extreme climatic conditions like the rainy season and storms.

Lastly, all the respondents mentioned that they would prefer a plot of land on the same site where the slums are located. As per them, it is a valid demand, as they have been living on this land since the establishment of Noida city itself. Below we will see that various government projects allowed land allocation to the slum dwellers on the same site.

5. HOW NOIDA'S REHABILITATION SCHEME COULD BE MADE PRO-POOR

5.1 Ensuring 'Right of Profit Sharing' on their Land

We cannot call the current scheme of flat allocation a rehabilitation scheme, as the slum dwellers are not getting these 31 sq. meters flats in exchange for the house in the slum locality. However, the current scheme is a double whammy for slum dwellers. First, they have to pay around 5 to 7 lakh rupees (7,000 USD to 8,500 USD) for the flats, and second, they have to give up their high-value land (expensive land in monetary terms). Before coming up with this design, the administration should have paid heed to the fact that poor and vulnerable sections of society inhabit slums. Most people in this category put most of their earnings into fulfilling their food requirements, as wages are low in the unskilled sector. Therefore, this section of

people rarely has any savings. Ironically, the slum dweller is expected to spend more than 1 lakh rupees to get the allotment of the flat. Ironically a slum dweller who earns less than 1 lakh rupees is expected to have this amount to fulfill the allotment formalities.

Given the current labour market situation, we cannot expect workers to have better wages in the area where they are getting flats. As part of the scheme, the slum dweller will be required to pay around Rs 2000 to 2500 (25 USD to 30 USD) monthly for 20 years. Given the income levels of slum dwellers, we cannot expect them to give monthly maintenance amounts to keep the apartment area hygienic and properly maintained.

Hence, because the slum dwellers are giving up their high-valued land to the administration, some proportion of the revenue from this land should be used for the welfare of the new apartment society. The proportion of revenue to be spent on the welfare of these slum dwellers could be around 2 percent, which is equal to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) rates in the country. There is a high possibility that this land will be given to big companies, including multinational companies, as the current slum locality is situated in one of the city's best locations, which means that this land is highly expensive. While framing laws on the regulation of business on this highly valued land, the provision should be made that each firm/company/enterprise should pay 2 percent of their annual profits to the **Slum Welfare Fund** for the welfare of Noida slum dwellers.

The slum welfare fund could also be utilized to promote education and health well-being in the slum community as they are educationally backward and have poor health. **A Community-led Development approach could be adopted to convert these slum populations from marginalized to the population with adequate capacity.**

5.2 State should not behave like a businessman to the poor but as a facilitator.

> **Legitimate Status over the land in a slum area** - The State plays a very different role in the case of slums. 'Draft report of the Brihan Mumbai Regional Development Authority (BMRDA), 1991 - 2011' reflects three roles that a state plays vis-a-vis the slum population of Mumbai, i.e., roles of the controller, provider, and facilitator

(Chatterji, 2005). As the government of the region where the slum is situated, it has to administer various aspects of the slum settlement to fulfill the interest of its own and slum dwellers. It is to be highlighted that Slum dwellers are citizens of the country and hence are entitled to basic rights as supported by the constitution. The slum Improvement Programme (SIP) of 1972 in Maharashtra directed the government to provide basic civic amenities like water, electricity, latrines, and sewage disposal to slum areas. This supports the argument that the State is expected to facilitate the rehabilitation of the slum dwellers and convert slums into decent living spaces for the people. 'Maharashtra Slum Areas Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment Act of 1971' marks a radical change in the government's attitude to its slum population. As such Maharashtra government moved from the role of the controller to that of facilitator, providing facilities to slum colonies (Chatterjee, 2005). Hence it is very legitimate for the government to ensure a decent living for the slum dwellers. Chatterjee further mentioned that SIP was an essential step because it recognized, for the first time, that <u>the slum dweller had a legitimate status, i.e., the right to acquire land in slum areas.</u> The State is responsible for providing alternate residences if it has to displace the population residing on its land (Chatterji, 2005).

Residential structures on the same site - Why is it that, in most cases, the government tends to relocate the slum population to different locations and in cheap apartment societies? It seems that the government sees business in this whole rehabilitation process. It is observed that slum land, over the years, grows in monetary value and when slum land becomes highly valued land, it attracts the attention of the government and businesses. Slum settlements in Noida are no exception. The land in this area is costly. In the case of Noida's slum settlement, the slum dwellers have been living here for 3-4 decades and have provided cheap labour to the city for these many decades. The city, including the private enterprises and the government establishments, all prosper on the cheap labour of these migrants. Living in one place for such a long time makes the person socially and emotionally attached to that place. All the slum dwellers want the government to give equal land plots at the same site where the slum is situated.[10]. In this direction, Prime Minister's Grant Project (PMGP) 1985 was the first scheme that considered the construction of new residential

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[10] During the interviews, slum dwellers mentioned that they would prefer a land allocation on the same site where the slums are situated.

structures on the same site where they had squatted (Chatterji, 2005). Further, PMGP allowed housing societies of the slum communities to appoint their architects who would be accountable to them.

5.3 State should be the caretaker of the poor

Poverty and inequality are the results of the economic system which is followed in the country. Certain groups, like Socially and Economically Backward Groups, are left behind as they are not equipped to reap the benefits of the government policies, which the educated and wealthy can do. Hence the State is expected to collect taxes to spend the money on disadvantaged groups to ensure a decent living.

As per the socio-economic characteristics of a slum settlement, the slum population is the most economically and educationally backward section of the society. Government should be mindful of the socio-economic aspects of the slum settlement and the role it is supposed to play while formulating rehabilitation schemes for the slum population. Some essential points they should ensure are - 1) increasing educational levels and skills among the slum population, 2) providing access to health services, and 3) ensuring decent wages.

5.4 Guarantee of one job to each Slum household- would ensure decent living for thousands of households in a slum settlement

The apartment area is 8-9 kilometers away from the current slum settlements. After shifting there, many would lose their jobs, especially women and men who do not have motor vehicles. The Indian economy is moving towards contractualisation, and at the same time, the Indian economy is comprised of the unorganized sector. The slum population also tends to struggle in terms of getting formal jobs. As a result, most people in slums indulge in informal jobs and the unorganized sector.

Ensuring at least 50 percent of the jobs in the upcoming development projects at the site where slums are situated would ensure **decent living for thousands of households in slum settlements.** In 2007, the CM of Maharashtra announced that one member from each worker's family would be ensured employment in the new businesses opened on the site (Weinstein & Xuefei, 2009). Along the same lines, jobs can be ensured for each household in the slums of Noida.

5.5 Accountability and Transparency in the procedural implementation of the Scheme

- Registering a property requires some literacy and knowledge about registering a property. However, slum populations are handicapped in both. This gives the government clerks and officers an undue advantage for making money out of this handicappedness. Hence it is the government's responsibility to create a grievance and complaint-resolving committee to make the rehabilitation scheme process smooth for the slum dwellers.

- Another major concern is corruption in the allotment of shops in the new apartments, where the slum people are being allotted flats. The allotment process should be transparent because government officials may allot these shops to those who are willing to provide some benefits to the government officials. It would be more appropriate that these shops should be allotted to the disabled people of Noida's slum settlements.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT

1. Government should **make the slum dwellers of Noida a stakeholder** in preparing a rehabilitation scheme for the slum dwellers. This way, the government will get real insights into the needs of the slum dwellers.

2. **Formation of a Committee,** having members from Slum localities and Administration/government headed by the District Magistrate to regulate the Slum Welfare Fund, i.e., ensuring transparent and smooth collection of funds (equivalent to CSR) and its spending.

3. Refunding the whole amount that the slum dwellers have paid for the allotted flat except the registry amount. Moreover, the government should not take the monthly installment of ₹2000 to 2500 from slum dwellers, which the slum dwellers are required to pay for 20 years.

4. Ideally, a plot of land should be given to the slum dwellers on the same site. If due to valid reasons, a plot of land cannot be given on the slum settlement site, then the government should pay equivalent compensation to the slum dwellers. This will help them build decent houses for themselves and would be able to take care of their basic needs like food, housing, education, and health.

5. Ensuring access to education and health for the slum dwellers. This will make the slum dwellers potential human capital for the State. For this, Slum Welfare Fund can be used. The children of slum dwellers can be admitted to the government and private schools under the Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009.

Conclusion

Urban renewal is an inevitable stage in every city's life and is an integral element in the urbanization process. It ensures a developed picture of the city which also adds to the government's credibility. Nevertheless, above, we saw that urban renewal, in most cases, results in the removal of slums. The results of this study show that the current slum rehabilitation scheme is not improving the living standards of slum dwellers. Instead, in the process of urban renewal, the slum dwellers of Noida city are compromised on their basic rights of citizenship. However, such urban renewal should not be done by compromising the poor of the city. In the words of Henri Lefebvre, the slum dwellers, like other citizens, have a right to the city. However, such rights for the poor are hard to get. To ensure the rights of the poor, the poor need to exercise their inherent power. In a democracy, power emerges when people come together (Hannah Arendt). As such, whether the slum dwellers will get fair treatment from the government depends on the generation of the feeling of community among the slum dwellers. Slum dwellers have to come together to assert their demands on the government. Without voicing their needs and demands, the poor have significantly less scope for getting justice. Apart from this, the State has to realise its responsibility towards the poor. Our constitution directs the State to ensure certain minimum standards of living for the citizens. Hence, the State should always strive to fulfill its constitutional duties. In Noida's slum case, the State should take slum dwellers as stakeholders and consider their demands. The demands of the slum dwellers include basic essential needs like shelter, minimum wage, health, and education. Due consideration of such needs of the slum dwellers can ensure decent living for the slum dwellers, which every citizen should be provided.

Conflict of Interest
No conflict of interest.

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