

CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Definition and Characteristics of ‘Slum’
- 1.2 The Origin of Slum
- 1.3 Industrialization and Urbanization
- 1.4 Migration
- 1.5 Causes Responsible for the Growth of Slums
in India

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

The present study is confined to the slums in Solapur city, a district place in Maharashtra. Before dealing with these slums, a brief introduction of the nature and problems of this modern phenomena of industrialised society, namely the slum, will be useful.

Slums punctuate almost every city of the world. This has become a universally accepted reality and an inevitable phenomena accompanying urban growth in all countries of the world. In every major city in the highly industrial or under developed world, one fifth to one half population live in slums or slum-like conditions today. It is pointed out that affluent countries like the U.S.A., West Germany, England and others are still plagued with herlems and dark ghettos inspite of many attempts to clear the slums and renew the cities. In developing countries, like India, the problem of increasing slums is still more acute.

As far as India is concerned, in the last three decades, there is appreciable population rise in cities. In 1971 Census of India, there were only 9 cities with more than 10 lakhs population. They are Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Kanpur and Pune. During 1981, the census indicated that the number rose to 12 in 1991 to 23 and in 2001 it went to 35. In two cities i.e. Mumbai and Kolkata the population increased by about 10 lakhs during the decade of 1991-2001, Delhi's growth was 52% and the average growth of all metro cities, was around 30%. The four metro cities together had 372 lakhs population in 1991 and this rose to 488 lakhs population in 2001, which is much higher than hundred of nations in the world.⁽¹⁾ This unprecedented population

'slum' was improved during 1950s. It was described as a thickly populated street or alley marked by squalor or wretched living condition.⁽²⁾ Although, we see the use of word 'slum' very frequently and it refers to the phenomena visible in big cities very easily. So, for the scientific study of the same we have some definitions for gaining more insight.

The dictionary meaning of the 'Slum' is **"A populous area characterised by poverty, poor housing etc."**⁽³⁾

According to Bergel, "Slums may be characterised as area of sub-standard housing condition within a city. A slum is always an area. A single, neglected building, even in the worst stage of deterioration, does not make a slum".⁽⁴⁾

Gist and Helbert have defined the slum as "an area of poor houses and poor people. It is an area of transition and decadence, a disorganised area occupied by human derelicts, a catch all for the criminal for the defective, the down-and-out."⁽⁵⁾

According to UNESCO documents, "slum is building, a group of buildings, or area characterized by over crowding, deterioration, unsanitary conditions, or absence of facilities or amenities which, because of these conditions or any of them, endanger of health, safety or morals of its inhabitants or the community."⁽⁶⁾

There is no general agreement on the unanimous definition of slum. Some writers regarded it is special type of disorganised area. Some, however, do not employ the area concept in their studies of slum. Others treat the term the 'slum' and 'blighted area' as synonymous. Slum vary from one type to another, but certain general patterns of slum life are universal. Opinions defer about the definition, nature and characteristic of the slum. But it is agreed by

1.2 THE ORIGIN OF SLUM

It is very difficult to trace the origin of the slums. However, it is pointed out that the slums are mainly an outcome of the modern industrialized, too much crowded and rapidly developed cities. Of course, there are examples of the ancient cities wherein slum-like locations were present. For instance, Bergal has pointed out that the residential areas of the poor, of the Roman Empire at times approximated slum conditions.⁽⁷⁾ As such, it becomes obvious that, the slums are not solely a product of industrial revolution. They existed even earlier. But the industrial revolution, accentuated the growth of existing cities and created a number of new ones.

In modern cities the slums appear more distinctively. The industrial revolution accentuated the growth of existing cities and created new industrial centers. These offered good employment prospectus. Large scale migrations to the cities has become a continuous feature of changing modern societies. The poor workers were an insignificant factor in the industrial production system. They were mostly accommodated in left over spaces.

The population of the cities become increasing, partly due to increase in the births and partly due to immigration from the rural areas in order to get employment in the cities. Cities in India have been growing haphazardly with no provision to accommodate the ever growing volume of immigrants. If by the housing problem we mean cramped in sanitary dwellings where people forced to leave, then the housing problem is perhaps as old as human history.

Yet it is only since the beginning of the industrial revolution, that the housing problem or housing shortage become acute. This is because with the industrialization and the consequent migrations of

developing countries of Asia and Africa, such as Pakistan (32%), China (53%), Nigeria (35%) and Zambia (49%).⁽⁹⁾

There is, however, a great deal of variation in the level of urbanisation between the states is shown in Table-1. A high level of urbanisation of above the national average is observed in Mizoram, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. While low levels of urbanisation of less than 15 percent characterise Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa.⁽¹⁰⁾

Table – 1.1

India : Levels of Urbanisation, 1981 and 1991

India/State/Union/Territory	Urban population as percentage of total population	
	1981	1991
India	23.34	25.72
Andhra Pradesh	23.32	26.84
Arunachal Pradesh	6.56	12.21
Assam	9.88	11.08
Bihar	12.47	13.17
Goa	32.03	41.02
Gujarat	31.10	34.40
Haryana	21.88	24.79
Himachal Pradesh	7.61	8.70
Jammu and Kashmir	21.05	23.83
Karnataka	28.89	30.91
Kerala	18.74	26.44
Madhya Pradesh	20.29	23.21
Maharashtra	35.03	38.73
Manipur	26.42	27.69
Meghalay	18.07	18.69

Table – 1.2
Rising and Decreasing Rural and Urban Population in India

Year	Rural Area (%)	Urban Area (%)
1921	88.8	11.2
1931	88.0	12.0
1941	86.1	13.9
1951	82.7	17.3
1961	82.0	18.0
1971	80.1	19.9
1981	76.7	23.3
1991	74.3	25.7
2001	72.2	27.7

Source : Quoted from: चक्रदेव, शिंदे, हिरेमठ, भारताचा भूगोल, अक्षरलोण प्रकाशन, सोलापूर. २००५, पृ. २८३.

The above table shows since 1931 there has been a phenomenal increase in the percentage of urban population. In 1971, India's urban population rose to 109 millions. Even though India is predominantly rural country, it's urban population has been increasing from 11.2 percent in 1921 to 27.7 in 2001.

It also indicates that from 1921 to 2001, every 10 year the India's population is increasing, and never decreasing. Since the independence, the tempo of urban expansion has heightened and

1.4 MIGRATION

Migration is a common feature of the human society. It is said that the present slum dwellers are rural migrants to the city. After the evolution of factory system of production, agricultural activities became comparatively under paying. Mechanised agriculture has become too much costly and small farmers found it difficult to make use of their small landholdings without the aid of mechanics, and modern mechanical system was beyond their limit of finance. Hence, the transformation of agriculture to the commercial and a mechanised form and to establish their living on agricultural activities became a distant dream. Meanwhile the rise of factory system in the urban areas had offered an opportunity to earn at least one time bread for a man. This is how the migration of the rural poor and unemployed or underemployed population started. What is true of the agriculture class is also true of the small artisans and many other groups too, who trek to the cities in search of work. Besides, the absence of rigid social barriers in the city life also helped the ruralities to quit the native place.

Census statistics has revealed that since 1921 the trend of population in India appears to have inclined towards urbanization. The regime of British Empire shook the Indian rural and immobile socio-economic system. New trends in trade and commerce, mechanised production and such other things got full up in the British regime. Consequently the picture of rural India began to change. It is believed that immigration has been the major factor that caused urbanization in India.

According to Zakeria during the period of 1941-51 82 lakhs people have migrated to the cities in India.⁽¹¹⁾ The census survey of 1961-71 has recorded that the migration from rural to urban during

ruralities to urban centres in search of better living and employment is, of course, the dominant cause. However, the slum is a complex product of many factors, such as economic and social backwardness. We may envisage the major factors responsible for the growth of slums in India as given below :

1) Industrialization and migration of rural masses to the Urban areas :

After independence, the pace of industrialization has increased in our country, and large as well as medium sized industries have been established in several parts of the country. These have attracted rural masses to the cities for employment. When they come to the city, they have to accommodate themselves in congested slum areas only.

2) Absence of adequate housing facilities in the urban areas :

Most of our old cities are highly congested and over-crowded. They have sprung-up in an unplanned and haphazard manner. In such cities the problem of housing accommodation is acute since long. In such circumstances thousands of industrial workers, who have not adequate residential facilities, try to make some temporary arrangement near the place of their work. Thus, large number of unhealthy and unhygienic huts sprung-up near the factories. These naturally turn into slums.

3) Poor Wages :

Large number of industrial and commercial workers are earning poor wages. Many of them are employed on temporary basis. Some of these industrial labours have a migratory nature too. They can not afford to have pucca houses with proper facilities, and they choose the slums.

9) **Slum Mentality :**

There are people who continue to remain in slums, although they could easily live in better areas. They prefer to rent out their own well-built houses and live in slums, because they are habituated to live there.

Besides the above mentioned reasons, there are several other causes too, such as ecological processes of the city, cultural affinity of a particular community owing to regional, religious or linguistic affiliations, political exploitation etc. All these causes taken together are held responsible for the creation and growth of slums.

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