



Socio-Economic Condition of Women in Slum Areas: A Study of Kalaburagi City

Dr. Kaveri P Sagar

Ph.D., Research Fellow, Dept. of Women's Studies, Gulbarga University,
Kalaburagi- 585106 Karnataka

Abstract

Slums and poverty are related and mutually reinforcing, but the relationship is not always straightforward. Slum dwellers are not a homogenous population. Some slum dwellers have incomes that exceed the earnings of formal sector employees, yet they choose to live in slum conditions. Almost all the workers working in unorganized sector in urban areas are forced to live in slum areas, as they are poor and having lack of income security. Though, a few of the slum women are employed in unorganized sector or in self-employment, still they show economic dependence as they don't have independent decision making in economic aspects. Hence, the present study proved its significance in exploring the socio-economic status, significance of income generating activities of slum women.

Key Words: Women, Slum, Socio-Economic

Introduction

Globally, slums have been recognized as neglected communities with limited access to services. They are often characterized by deteriorated or poorly structured houses crowded together, poor environmental managements such as deficient access to safe drinking water and sanitation, stagnation of water, and poor drainage with excessive open sewers, excessive amount of uncollected rubbish, severe overcrowding, flies, and poor lighting. These settings are compounded by inhabitation by migratory population living under stressful conditions.

The lives of hundreds of millions of slum dwellers are threatened by the lack of access to the most basic human requirements: water, sanitation, shelter, health, and education. The nature and extent of the daily challenges posed by existing slums are not just daunting, they are life threatening. Slums themselves are the physical manifestation of several overlapping forces. On the one hand, they are the manifestation of object poverty, unrealistic regulatory frameworks, ill-conceived policies, inadequate urban planning, weak institutional capacity, and larger macroeconomic factors. But on the other hand, slums are a manifestation of the ingenuity and resilience with which extremely disadvantaged populations have organized themselves in the face of these very challenges. To a greater extent, the backward class people including scheduled castes, tribes, minorities, etc are living in slum areas, as they are deprived sections of the society.

Almost two-thirds of the people employed in manufacturing trade, transportation and commerce sector are concentrated in the urban areas but because of the disparity between the size of the population and the available facilities and the resources, the expected economic progress is very slow. Moreover, the benefits of

this urban growth are not shared equally by all. In larger cities, one-third to one-half of the population lives in slums and about 15% of the male work-force and 25 % of the female work-force have no regular employment (Mulgaonkar, 1996).

Often, the only land available is located where the population with economic mobility has chosen not to live: dangerously polluted, high traffic regions, and other variants of undesirable land begin to house layers upon layers of provisional settlements, businesses and haphazard infrastructure. Space is further made scarce by the absorption of the overflow population from overloaded city carrying capacities and the incorporation of other slum populations as middleclass housing developments consume land. Slums often rise up on plots of vacant land nearby the construction site or wealthy housing development where workers seek out wages, visibly demonstrating the immense gaps in rights and services available to the wealthy and those who support them (Nangia and Thorat, 2000).

Aim and Objective

To look into the socio-economic profile of women living in slum areas

Sources of Data

It is essential to know about the problems of women in India in general and women living in slum areas in particular. For this purpose, the researcher was searched secondary literature published in books, research journals, journal articles, newspapers, magazines, web-based sources, etc. The present study is mainly based on primary data collected from the women living in slum areas of Gulbarga district. Hence, the interviews made with these slum women are the primary sources for the present study.

Review of literature

Samik Chowdhury (2011) stated that morbidity and its treatment can be potentially burdensome or even catastrophic for poor households. While public policy has shown some response to this phenomenon, there is scope for improvement of the coverage of the programmes. Health insurance schemes like the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana cover only conditional hospitalization expenses. This paper argues that treatment cost incurred on ailments not requiring hospitalization is also a substantial burden on the urban poor. Based on a case study of 150 slum households in south Delhi with a history of treated ailments within a specific recall period, the study estimates the degree and distribution of this burden across socio-economic and disease characteristics in the sample. The paper argues for a more holistic approach in social safety nets like the RSBY, and for explicitly including uncovered healthcare payments in measurement of the poverty lines for a more accurate estimation of the marginalized.

Goswami (2014) conducted a study; the aim of this study was to examine the factors that affect the health of women in the slums of Raipur city. This study involved a field-based empirical quantitative analysis. Information about different levels of socioeconomic development and various dimensions of the health conditions of women was collected from the participants of slums in Raipur city, from 300 families across four slums. This study was based on a microlevel survey, and

information was collected through a structured interview schedule. It is found that, social, economic, spatial, and cultural factors together determine the healthcare behavior of women in slum areas. In the surveyed area, 31.33% of women breastfed their children 1 day after delivery, 31% of women respondents purchased medicines from local unrecognized shops, 6.67% of infant mortality cases have been reported, and 32.33% of women used sterilization method to control reproductive health. It is suspected that there is an untapped demand for clean, habitable, and decent living conditions among the slum dwellers that can positively impact women’s health. Mentally and physically challenged girls are the worst victims of our social system; thus, their condition is miserable in the surroundings they live. Therefore, girls in slums need the urgent attention of their pathfinder.

Thimmanna and Sedamkar (2015) remarked that, the ageing population poses a series of problems to the society due to the changing demographic scenario in our country along with fundamental changes in the life style as well. The Socio-economic problems of the Elderly women in Slum area of Bellary city which is located in the North –Eastern part of Karnataka are overcrowded with poverty stricken areas having lack of amenities open spaces and poor sanitary condition, there are no proper roads, lack of sewerage and drainage facility, lack of Welfare schemes for socio-economic development and Municipal Corporation failed to implement for living conditions of the Elderly women in Slum areas of Bellary city. The paper assess to examine Socio-Economic conditions the of elderly women in slum areas of Bellary city, and hypothesized almost all elderly women in slum areas are living below poverty line, Illiterate, depends on others basic needs as they have no economic security, lack of social recognition, depression, loneliness, severe health problems, lack of care from the family members, Lack of basic sanitation services due to poor accessibility as well as Lack of legal status and supportive infrastructure. Many of the Socio-Economic Welfare schemes of the government formulated not popular to the Elderly women.

Table-1 Age of the Respondents

Particulars	Frequency	%
Young Age	32	34.0
Middle Age	52	48.0
Old Age	20	18.0
Total	100	100

It is noted from the above table that, of the slum women surveyed in Gulbarga city, 32 (32.0%) belonged to young age, 52 (52.0%) belonged to middle age and only 20 (20.0%) belonged to old age

Table- 2 Educational Level

Particulars	Frequency	%
Illiterate	10	10.0
Primary	22	22.0
Secondary	33	33.0
PUC	26	26.0
Degree/ Diploma	09	09.0
PG/ Professional	--	--
Others	--	--
Total	100	100

As stated by the slum women living in Gulbarga city, 10 (10.0%) have mentioned that they are illiterates, 22 (22.0%) have remarked that they have completed only primary education, 33 (33.0%) have stated that they have completed secondary education, 26 (26.0%) have expressed that they have completed pre-university education and 09 (09.0%) have opined that they were completed degree or diploma.

Table-3 Marital Status

Particulars	Frequency	%
Married	88	88.0
Unmarried	00	00
Widow	05	5.0
Separated/ Divorcee	07	7.0
Total	100	100

As stated by the respondents living in slum areas of Gulbarga city, 88 (88.0%) are married, 05 (5.0%) are widows and 07 (7.0%) are separated or divorcees.

Table-4 Housing Pattern

Particulars	Frequency	%
Own	83	83.0
Rental	17	17.0
Total	100	100

The housing pattern of the slum women living in Gulbarga city revealed that, 83 (83.0%) are living in their own houses, whereas 17 (17.0%) are living in rented houses.

Table- 5 Nature of Houses

Particulars	Frequency	%
Pucca	22	22.0
Kachcha	51	51.0
Thatched Huts	27	27.0
Total	100	100

Among the slum women living in Gulbarga city, 22 (22.0%) are living in Pucca houses, 51 (51.0%) are living in Kachcha houses and 27 (27.0%) are living in thatched huts.

Table-6 Family Occupation

Particulars	Frequency	%
Agriculture/ Farm Labour	09	9.0
Domestic Labour	31	31.0
Construction Labour	09	9.0
Hospital/ Municipal Worker	04	4.0
Kirana Shop	03	3.0
Business/ Vendor	05	5.0
Vegetable/ Fruit Seller	07	7.0
Rag Picking	25	25.0
Any Other	07	07.0
Total	100	100

The family occupations of the slum women living in Gulbarga city revealed that, families of 09 (9.0%) were engaged in agriculture or farm labour, that of 31 (31.0%) of the respondents is domestic labour, families of 09 (9.0%) are engaged in construction works, family occupation of 04 (4.0%) of the respondents is work in hospitals or municipality, family occupation of 03 (3.0%) of the respondents is Kirana shop, family occupation of 05 (5.0%) of the respondents is business or vendor, family occupation of 07 (7.0%) of the respondents is selling of vegetables and fruits, family occupation of 25 (25.0%) of the respondents is rag picking and family occupations of 07 (07.0%) of the respondents is other than above.

Table-7 Annual Income of Family

Particulars	Frequency	%
Lower	17	17.0
Moderate	62	62.0
Higher	21	21.0
Total	100	100

Of the slum women living in Gulbarga city, family income of 17 (17.0%) of the respondents is lower, that of 62 (62.0%) of the respondents is moderate and family incomes of 21 (21.0%) of the respondents is higher

Conclusion

When the age of the women in slum areas is analyzed, it is found that, majority of them are of middle age or young age. Further, women slum areas are illiterates or low-educated. Though many of the slum women were migrated to slum areas after their marriage and a few of them were also migrated to slum areas due to employment, education and such other reasons. Though almost slum women are married and living with their husbands, still a few of the respondents are widows and divorcees.

It is observed from the family occupations of almost all the respondents is unorganized sector of employment or self-employment or small business. As such, the annual income of the respondents and their family members is moderate or lower. It is noted that majority of the slum women were engaged in income generating activities and as such, they are getting moderate income for their families. The natures of such income generating activities include petty trade, artistic works, handicrafts, self-employment, labour, etc. As expressed by the respondents, income generating activities helped them to lead comfortable family life and even it helped to support the costly expenses of children’s education. In this way, to some extent there is alleviation of poverty among slum women and their families. Even as stated by many of the women living in slum areas, income generating activities changed their lives.

Reference

1. Goswami, Sribas (2014): A Study on Women’s Health Care Practice in Urban Slums: Indian Scenario. Evidence Based Women’s Health Journal. Vol. 4. 2014. P. 201-207.

2. Mulgaonkar, Veena B (1996): Reproductive Health of Women in Urban Slums of Bombay. **Social Change**. Vol. 26. No. 3 & 4. September-December 1996. P. 137-156.
3. Nangia, S and Thorat, S (2000): Slum in a Metropolis. Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2000.
4. Samik Chowdhury (2011): Financial Burden of Transient Morbidity: A Case Study of Slums in Delhi. **Economic & Political Weekly**. Vol. 46. No. 33. August 13 - August 19, 2011.
5. Thimmanna and Sedamkar, CB (2015): Socio-economic Problems of Elderly Women in Slum Areas of Bellary City. **Review of Research**. Vol. 4. No.4. January 2015. P. 6-12.