SOCIAL NETWORK IN SLUM AND REHABILITATION

SITES : A STUDY IN MUMBAI(INDIA)

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Summary: This paper is a comparative analysis of the relative merits of densification in slums and rehabilitated sites in Mumbai. The objective of the paper was to examine the impact of voluntary and involuntary densification on the social networks of the urban poor in the context of 'caste-based' Indian society. The paper commence with role of caste as background in voluntary housing, role of social networks. The issues of rehabilitation due to developmental projects undertaken in Mumbai have been studied. Developmental projects in India are particularly World Bank funded projects have been engulfed with controversies since its inception for various reasons. These projects are directly affecting slums and their livelihood, issues of land and ownership, dislocation and its impact on social lives. This qualitative research was carried out in four slums and two resettlement sites. This research expounds on the relative merits of neighborhood and kinship networks in slums of Mumbai. The research shows the positive outcome of social networks enabling the poor to have safety nets that are vital to survive in cities. But these networks are segmented, closed and restrictive; and it operates to exclude others. Though, these segmented social networks now undergoing a substantial change at rehabilitation site due to involuntary densification and emerging circumstances.

Key Words: Slums, Rehabilitation, Housing, Caste, Dalits, Mumbai

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1.   INTRODUCTION

The emerging globalization processes, including liberalization, deregulation and privatization along with the social-economic deprivations in villages, have affected the livelihood and housing rights of marginalized in the urban settings. More than half the population of the city of Mumbai lives in these slums; the people who live in these slums are domestic workers, industrial workers, class III and IV employees of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (formerly *Bombay Municipal Corporation*), of Judiciary department, lower-level police personnel, taxi and auto-rickshaw drivers and so on. Considering the services slum dwellers provide to the city, without them Mumbai's existence would fall apart.

This paper is an attempt to examine the contemporary situation of urban poor in Mumbai. The microscopic analysis of slum dwellers and their day to day existence in dealing with poverty and vulnerability through social networks is examined. This paper further tries to understand and analyze the impact of development and role of state especially on the dalit and other marginalized communities that are living in Mumbai. Slum dwellers form an integral part of Mumbai city. Most of the slum dwellers belong to the lower socio-economic strata of Indian society. Dalits, the ex-untouchables form the major chunk of

slum population in Mumbai as they belong to the lowest social and economic hierarchy of Indian society.

1.1 Research Objectives

The rationale for the research is to understand the developmental phase in Mumbai that are affecting slum populations. The issues of livelihood, access to amenities, dislocation, and its impact on social lives were studied. The role of state and civil society in implementing the urban policies affecting the urban poor has been critically examined. The objective of the paper is to compare the social networks of urban poor in slums and rehabilitation sites. These social networks are studied to understand the possible segmentation that is based on caste, religion, gender and language.

1.2 Research Methodology

This paper is based on qualitative research. The data was collected through socio-anthropological method such as observation, focused group discussions, and interviews. This study was conducted in the slums which are located in the major parts of Mumbai's suburbs. The slums that were studied are Milind Nagar (Santa Cruz), Buddha colony (Kurla), Ambedkar Nagar (Matunga Road) and Anna Bhau Sathe Nagar (Mankhurd-Chembur link road). And two rehabilitated sites that have Project Affected Persons (PAPs) were randomly selected. They are located at Mankhurd and Vashi Naka(Chembur) in Mumbai. Six focused groups discussions were conducted at these mentioned slums and rehabilitated colonies. These focused group discussion broadly consisted of discussion points on the issues of socio- historical background of slum dwellers, issues of infrastructure-communication and livelihood at resettlement sites,

impact of development on families and role of gender in building coping mechanism. The role of the state and civil society in dealing with participatory development process was discussed. Eight personal interviews were conducted amongst women from the above slums and rehabilitated colonies. The interviews were focused on open ended questions on their life experiences and day to day struggles. The research paper also highlights the important details through the field observations and field notes.

2.   URBANISATION, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND EVOLUTION OF SLUMS:

The urban government sponsored housing in the western world has served to integrate the workers into the values and ethos of capitalism. But in India, the majority of population which comprised of lower social economic status has been profitably used for production purposes. This population is largely neglected from access to housing to the urban poor. The social order created by this system is contrary to the modernization theory. This theory argues that progressive society can be achieved by urbanization, industrialization, migration from enclosed worlds of rural societies, marked by ascriptive privileges and codes of conduct. These social economic aspects are crucial determinants in urban mobility of deprived population from rural regions (Chandhoke, 1993; Schenk, 1986).

It is pertinent to understand the role of caste system in grading the human beings on the basis of birth. This shows that the social networks in slums are largely developed on the basis of the caste. Caste is the basic foundation for the social networks of slum dwellers.

Hindu caste system has created a section of sub-human beings in this country in the form of Dalits[1], whose human rights have been trampled systematically for ages. According to Ambedkar[2](Jeffrelot,2005, pp.34) *Purusha Sukta* establishes a unique system because, 'No other society has an official gradation laid down, fixed and permanent, with an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt'. According to Hindu religious philosophy Bramha is a Hindu god from whom human evolution started. *Purusha Sukta* explains this evolution, 'his mouth became the priest *(Brahmin)*/the warrior *(Kshatriya)* was the product of his arms/his thighs were the Artisan *(Vaishya)*/from his feet were born the Servant *(Shudra)* (Jeffrelot, 2005, pp.34 ; see Figure 1). Dalits or 'Untouchables' is the fifth lowest social category under this system.

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[1] Dalits are called by various names, such as "untouchables or ex-untouchables", "Depressed Classes" (used by British officials)", "Harijan" (which means children of God, popularized by Mahatma Gandhi. This term is derogatory so it is rejected), "Chandala" (Used in Manusrmiti, a Hindu religious law on untouchablity and patriarchy), "Avarna" (i.e., outside the four varna/castes system. Four major castes are also called as Savarna). Constitution of India has listed specified certain castes, race, and tribes as "Scheduled Castes" (Michael, 1999, pp.2). "Brokenmen" was used by Dr. Ambedkar in explaining the genesis of untouchablity. The term "Dalit" gained popularity during the Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra during 1970s. Dalit means broken people. It is largely been popularized by the academicians and Indian media. On various forums (Bhalesain, 2006) Scheduled Castes themselves are contesting against this identity and prefer to be called as "Buddhist" (those who have embarrassed Buddhism), other religious identity if they have left the Hindu religious identity. They also prefer to be called as Ambedkarite to show their faith in the humanist teaching of Dr.Ambedkar.

[2] Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1981-1956) was born in 'untouchable' Mahar caste and regarded as an ardent advocate for rights of Dalits. When there was meager percentage of literate amongst his caste, he earned PhD from Columbia University, New York and DSC from London School of Economics. His strived his whole life for the rights of oppressed castes, some of his earliest efforts involved founding newspapers, holding conferences, forming political parties, opening educational institutions. He also led a campaign for access to common pond water in *Mahad* village. He also fought for religious rights by leading a campaign against prohibition of on allowing Scheduled castes to enter in temples. As a last resort for dignity and social emancipation he embraced Buddhism in 1956 with his followers. He served as a first law minister in Independent India and was chairman of the drafting committee for Indian Constitution.
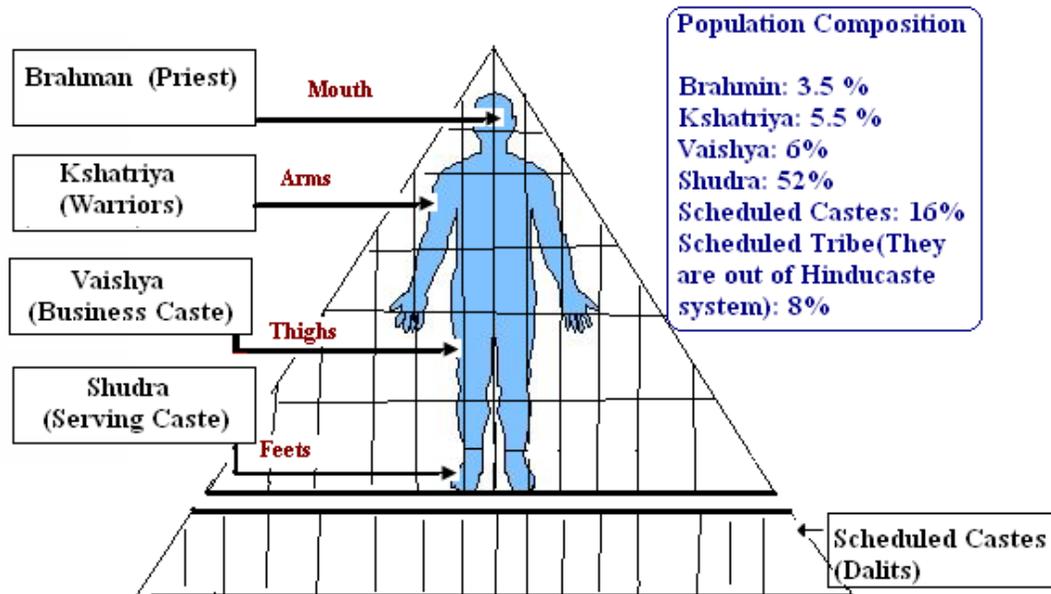
Figure 1 : Caste Diagram

Mahatma Gandhi's supported the Hindu caste system. He said in 1920, "I consider the four divisions to be fundamental, natural and essential". Weekly journal started by Mr. Gandhi on October, 1921, he states, 'Hinduism does most emphatically discourage interdining and intermarriage between divisions… Prohibition against intermarriage and interdining is essential for the rapid evolution of the soul'. He emphasized on the rural caste based economy (Bose, 1948).

After analyzing these social- cultural environment in India, Architect of Indian Constitution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on 21st February 1939 in the constituent assembly debates argued that "the salvation of the whole of India lies in greater urbanization: in reviving our towns, in building our industries, in removing as much population as we possibly can from our villages to the towns. What is there in villages? After all, our village folks have no capital to run their agriculture in the best way in which agriculture

ought to be run. Population is increasing every decade, and land is being fragmented every time a man and heirs come on the spot" (Ambedkar, n.d.).

Ambedkar was skeptical of Gandhi's concept of each village becoming a republic. He was afraid of the despotism of upper castes and moneyed men. He said village is a 'cesspool, a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness, and communalism.' Dr.Ambedkar's visualised greater independence and freedom for oppressed Dalits in urban settlements (Ghosh, 2002). The continued untouchablity practice against 250 millions Dalits is observed in the extensive ActionAid research in 565 villages of 11 states of India (Shah, Mander, Thorat, Deshpande and Baviskar, 2006). Adding to the severity of the dalit conditions in rural India after India's Independence is being observed increasing urban migration which gave them more space for opportunities and freedom to improve social-economic status. The economic development in the cities was also one of the major sources of livelihood opportunity to the deprived rural populations. Dalits and backward castes communities along with some religious minority group have remained most vulnerable to access adequate housing in urban region. Historical oppression, lack of opportunities in villages and caste based atrocities has motivated dalits to migrate to cities.

Through, their "personal ties" rural dalits move into the slums where their point of contact usually lives. These ties grow into strong bonds and getting more number of community members to the city. It is also noticed that in slums there are homogenous clusters and dense spatial neighborhoods that belong to communities that have same place of origin, region, caste, language and livelihood. These homogenous clusters hardly

allow 'outsiders' to be part of their intimate spaces in slums. Crow (2004) states the strongest bonds are found where there is clear demarcation between insiders and outsiders and where this demarcation line can be policed effectively to restrict admittance to the group. He stresses that the insider group that is bonded together have clear understanding of what sets them apart from the outsiders. They have shared strong identities to demarcate themselves from others. Similarly, in the slums of Mumbai, slum dwellers have their sense of communities, they possess strong identities that usually come from same caste, religion, region, language backgrounds and they also restrict an outsider's entry into their spaces.

3.   CONCEPT OF SLUMS - HOUSING CHALLENGES IN MUMBAI

3.1   Defining slums and rehabilitation sites of Mumbai

The survey of the Bombay Municipal Corporation in late fifties (cited in Desai and Pillai: 1972) adopted a three –fold classification of slums, which have been adopted by the state government for its policy decisions till now:

1.   *Chawls*: Areas with permanent multi-storey buildings built long ago according to the standards prevailing then, but are today in a deteriorated condition.

2.   *Partrachawls*: Areas with semi permanent structures both authorized and unauthorized often built of corrugated iron-sheets and commonly known as 'patra-chawls', patra meaning tin sheets or some such materials.

3.   *Zopadpattis*: Areas commonly referred to as squatter settlements, shanty towns or hutment colonies, consisting of hovels made of variety of hard and soft materials like pieces of wood, rag, tin – sheets, mud, brick and any such thing that comes in handy.

In 1990, the Law Commission of India took it upon itself to "examine the problem pertaining to the plight of slums and pavement dwellers facing eviction at the hands of local authorities." "The magnitude of the problem", the chairperson wrote to the minister of law and justice, "can be gauged from the fact that nearly 350 millions citizen of India lives in slums and pavements of metropolitan cities…..Quite often their huts are razed to the ground and they are evicted by the local authorities without offering them any alternative facilities. The plight of these unfortunate evictees comprising women and children is indescribable. Some legislation needs to be provided to them to ensure that they are not evicted without offering them an alternative facility unless it is virtually impossible to do so." (Law Commission Report, 1990)

There were further continuing efforts to describe slums by Planning Commission of India. Ramanathan (2004) discussed the observation of the Working group on Slums which submitted its report to the Planning Commission in May 1998, are known by different names in different cities, but the characteristics remain the same i. e. dilapidated and informal housing structures, acute overcrowding, faulty alignment of streets, poor ventilation, inadequate lighting, paucity of drinking water, water- logging during rains, absence of toilet facilities and non-availability of basic physical and social services."

There are, in effect, three kinds of 'Slums' that may be identified:

- Declared Slums- where a competent authority under the 1956 Act has notified an area to be a slum.

- Undeclared slums- where they are de facto recognized as slums, but, not having been notified, the benign provisions of the 1956 Act, particularly those that relate to provision of services may not be extended to them.

- Planned slums- the replicating of high density and poor, or non- existent, services at the resettlement site, and the impoverishment that results from demolition and de-housing most often makes slums, within the definition, of resettlement sites. These may, with reason, be seen as 'planned slums'.

Resettlement and rehabilitation sites consist of medium rise building constructed for the project affected families. These sites offer a permanent housing structure (a tenement of 225 sq.ft) to the project affected families (IBRD and IDA, 2006).

3.2 Role of the state and housing crisis of Mumbai

The twenty first century poses greatest challenge to human society through rapid and unplanned urbanization. Cities as in the past are the engines of growth and opportunity. Like New York, London, Mumbai, fostered economic opportunities to everyone, there have been success stories of many communities that have been lived in segregation and poverty. Though one can understand the rapid urbanization brings growth in squalid settlements, cities still offer opportunity to the migrants. In India, Mumbai has been a known as magnet that attracts millions. Merely, a landmass of 437 square kilometer, More than half of the city's population of 13 million, that is, 6.3 million people, live in some 2,000 densely populated slum settlements (WSP/World Bank, 2005). Mumbai still boasts to house more than million-plus and is one of the world's popular mega-cities. The success stories in every city were possible then, today the situation has changed and the poor are becoming poorer and have remained at the bottom of the ladder. According to the United Nations settlement agency, UN Habitat Urbanization is one of the defining phenomena of our age, and is happening at astonishing speed - almost 180,000 people arrive in towns or cities around the globe every single day (UN-Habitat, 2003). With such masses migrating to the city, the civic infrastructure is under tremendous stress.

However, the greatest threat is to the migrants that live without any basic necessities like water and sanitation. In cities like Mumbai, there is no mass housing or low-income housing for the migrants that could seek affordable housing.

The resultant threat is to the cities that are witnessing to the uncontrolled growth of slums. Slums are known to exist and grown on hazardous and abandoned areas that are precarious to its habitants. It is argued (Ramanathan, 2005) by organizations like Bombay Environmental Action Group (BEAG) that environmental degradation will bring apathy not only to its dwellers but to cities and to the entire global community. And these groups constantly threatened the existence of the urban poor.

Table 1: Distribution of Slums by Land Ownership

Land Ownership	Percentage to Total Slums
Private	48.0%
State government	21.0%
Municipal	17.6%
Central government	4.7%
Indian Railways	0.7%
Municipal and private	2.5%
State government and private	2.2%
Other mixed ownership	3.0%
Grand total	**100%**

Source: WSP/World Bank TARU and WEDC Study. 2005. Adapted from Slum Sanitation Survey by

Montgomery Watson/YUVA (1,792 cases).

Housing provision unlike any other welfare policy is typically dominated by market processes in both construction use and exchange. Housing policy is pivotal to social status, processes of social and spatial segregation, daily social interaction as well as key sector in capitalist economy (Forrest, 2004). Table 1 shows the greater slum land ownership with the private sector and partial ownership with public sector.

With rapid increase in rate of urbanization as experienced in third world nations, the housing crisis has already experienced in Mumbai where the sanitation and other infrastructure facilities are stretched to the limit. Considering the rapid rate of urban world, first global assessment of explosive growth in housing demand and financing has been conducted by the Global Report on Human Settlements 2005, spanning quarter of a century. The report especially examines financing urban shelter development and focusing on the shelter needs for the poor. It also examines the status of slum dwellers in the context of the United Nations Millennium target. The report further explains lack of credit facilities for the poor considering their credit worthiness, low income and lack of state expenditure on public housing, as the significant factors leading to this 'urban malady" (Srivatsan, 2006).

According to Chandhoke(1993) urban settlements are not only characterized by the caste and community networks, but also by patronage networks, and clientalism. Slum population is helpless before the whims of political patron and the entrepreneur who are desires to capture the land to transform it into commodity. The vulnerable status of slum dwellers and promises of betterment has largely remained reason for mobilization for corrupt and status quoits political leadership. The entrepreneurship that gives rise to these settlements also promotes captive vote banks, lumpen activity, illegal brewing and criminal activities. The herding together of people into dense and inhospitable spaces, created the centers of social tensions instead of utopias which can create community networks and self help organizations.

3.3   Issues of resettlement and rehabilitation

The growth of urban economy is the foci of the nation's policy, hence recently the Government of India (GOI) approved a National Urban Renewal Mission that recognizes the importance of these issues and plans to allocate about USD 10 billion equivalent over a 7-year period to support investments in urban development and slum improvement by municipal and state governments, along with commitments to undertake reforms aimed at improving urban management and efficient development of urban centers(IBRD and IDA, 2006)

Mumbai being commercial capital of the nation has received exceptional consideration for infrastructure up gradation for its urban development. As a part of its massive up gradation of infrastructure , Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) set its ambitious plan for effective transportation and communication. The total project cost of Mumbai Urban Transport Project alone is USD 945.0 million, of which USD 463.0 million is financed by an IBRD loan, USD 79 million by an IDA credit, and additional financing of USD 403.0 million from the GoI (IBRD and IDA, 2006).This financial capital of India has a complex urban milieu of diverse population, economic activities, high population density, high land costs and sprawling slums (IBRD and IDA, 2006). As a result, most of the infrastructure projects have affected slums widely.

4.   RESEARCH SETTING

According to the Municipal Corporation of Mumbai, more than half of the Mumbai's population resides in slums. The social composition of slums consists of various groups

consisting dalits, other backward class and Muslims. The national sample survey of 2000 substantiate that Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Class(OBC) and Muslims together account for 91 per cent of the urban below poverty line population who comprises the majority of slum population(NSSO, 2000).

Milind Nagar, a slum in Santa Cruz has a mixed population though Mahars, Chamars and Matangs (all of them belonging to the lower caste also known as Dalits) form the majority of this slum population. There are few pockets of slum that has new migrants and most of them belong to the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

Buddha Colony is a multi-ethnic slum, as it has Mahars, Charmkars, Wadar, Kunchi-Korwe, Maratha, Muslims and Dhors. The slum has clear segregation and different neighborhood that are divided by physical segregation such as walls, temples, and mosques.

Ambedkar Nagar, this slum sprawls across the railway track with not more than 225 households. This slum has Dalits of Tamil Nadu, Yadavs and Muslims of Uttar Pradesh, and Mahars of Nagpur. The slum is hazardously located along the rail lines with all the household are below poverty line. This slum has existed for more than twenty years now, without proper access to water, electricity and road. Children and women fetch water from Dadar station that is nearest which is about 2. Km and risk their lives by commuting on this busy central suburb. In the heart of the city, these poor households reside without basic amenities.

Sathe Nagar, one of the largest and known slums in Mumbai situated on the Mankhurd-Chembur link road. The population comprises of Matang caste and they originally belong

to Jalna, Aurangabad and Buldhana of Maharashtra. They have been residing here for more than thirty years. Most of them are engaged in the traditional occupation of collecting plastic and exchanging garlic. They have been doing this work since their arrival in the city. Some of them are working in the government as class IV employees at low grades. Some of the household earn their livelihood by playing music at funerals and functions. The most of the work carried out does not require any skill and traditionally being acquainted with this work, children, young men and women enter this sector. The rest of the population that are not engaged in this work, due to lack of financial resources that is needed to buy garlic in bulk every two- three months, they work as casual workers, which is called as '*Bigaari*' in the local language. They earn about 70 to 80 rupees($1.5) as a daily wage. There are quite a number of household those of Muslims from Bihar, who are engaged in making fine embroidery work.

Vashi Naka and Mankhurd sites are on the harbor railway line of Mumbai. The MUTP[3], MUIP project that had dismantled their earlier homes have now been resettled at these sites. There have been several critical issues with the implementation of resettlement and rehabilitation policy, under which the World Bank had suspended its funds to the implementation authority (WB suspends its loan to Mumbai Urban Transport Project on 03/08/2006[4]). Most of these issues had resulted out of lack of commitment on part of the implementing authority in adhering to the Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy. The

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[3] The Mumbai Urban Transportation Project (MUTP) and the Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Project (MUIP) involved the expansion of rail networks throughout the city. The MUTP and MUIP are different in terms of the criteria to determine   eligibility   of   slum   dwellers   as   well   as   the   financing   methods   involved.   (Ref: <http://www.sdinet.org/reports/r25.ht>)

[4] World Bank suspends loans to Mumbai Urban Transport Project, <
http://www.bicusa.org/en/Article.2663.aspx>

implication of numeral incompliance has caused several social and economic damages to the project affected households.

5. SOCIAL NETWORK PATTERNS IN THE STUDIED SLUMS

The focus group discussions (FGDs) were carried out on the themes of caste, migration, livelihood, and social networks. This part also highlights the comparative analysis of research finding of social networks in slums and the rehabilitated sites.

5.1 Migration and social-geographical details

The focused group discussion started with discussion point on socio – historical background: history of family, place of origin, reason for migration, caste, aspirations?

The group participants from across slums and rehabilitated sites attributed various reasons for migration ranging from caste based atrocities to dead end in social hierarchy, economic immobility due to lack of opportunities in their villages to rough terrain and harsh climatic conditions were some of grounds for migration.

Slum dwellers of Sathe Nagar and some of the pockets of Buddha colony belonged to the drought prone areas of Deccan Maharashtra of Jalna, Beed, Aurangabad, Solapur districts. Though, most of the dalit migrants of Buddha colony belong to Nasik region.

Milind Nagar participants migrated from the coastal areas of Konkan region of Maharashtra state. They belonged to Chiplun, Sawantwadi and some of them were from hill stations of Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani of Satara district. A popular industrial belt of Solapur has now shut down resulting in massive unemployment and in turn increased migration of the natives to cities, particularly to Mumbai and Pune. Muslim respondents expressed the reason for the migration was precisely the work prospects and the demand

for skilled workers especially in the garment industry for export motivated them to migrate to Mumbai. Yadav and Koyri both land holding communities were mainly engaged in monotonous agricultural work in their villages. They had strict traditions and less of freedom in their villages without any opportunities for upward mobility. Mumbai was an opportunity to loosen the strict traditions and code of conduct. As most of them have it and strong support system in the city, they migrated to explore city life.

Tamil Dalit migrants have been migrating in search of jobs to cities. Rural poverty and caste based atrocity were the major reasons for their migration.

It was observed the magnitude and degree of aspirations to migrate differed with castes and communities. This could be categorized as non-dalit communities had different aspiration to migrate to the city than a dalit migrant. A non-dalit migrant looked for employment opportunities, city life as a route to break stagnant tradition, enhancing skills and income, were considered as the main reason for migration. Whereas, a dalit migrant feared of caste based atrocities, had suffered caste based exploitation and had no chance of mobility to attain higher social and economic status. For dalit population their low caste was the most detrimental factor for their immobility in villages. Villages for them were kind of "den of devil" for them which was intended to perpetuate caste based discrimination, caste based marginalization, and caste based exclusion. Dalits have also been prone to exposed hostility and violence by the other higher castes and other backward class segments in villages as expressed by the dalit migrants. Dalits have articulated caste as a major factor for their migration. Hence, migration theory cannot be understood from one paradigm. Though, urban migration is largely a reflection of conditions in some parts of Maharashtra than demand for workers in cities (Desai, 1994).

In other words villagers migrate to cities not because of the industrial jobs but because they find no employment in villages. Thapan (2005) states that "Migration have earlier been explained in dual terms of push and pull factors i.e. voluntarist perspective. The second approach lay in the structural perspective, whereby migration was mapped in dichotomous terms of center-periphery, industrialized –peasant based north-east and south. However, both the perspective are limiting since the former has understood it in simplistic terms of individuals rationally calculated decisions while the latter ended in economic determinism." Large cities also offer migrants the greatest option for social mobility but the social aspect of rural setting is also partly responsible for the migration of dalit communities. In the recent times of the 19th and the 20th century migration began promptly due to the advent of industries and growing urbanization though Thapan and other feminist scholars of India emphasized any theory on migration should account for terms such as race, religion, gender and ethnicity, though caste has been missing in most of the sociological considerations inspite of its powerful implications in the Indian society.

Thus, there is variety of reasons for urban migration. There could be caste specific reasons as seen in dalit migrants of Maharashtra and Tamil There was a common factor across all the castes that migration process has always been initiated by men. It was common fact that only male migrants move to the city in the first phase. This could be due to economic, physical hardships and constraints that are faced in the initial phase by poor migrants. This situation rises due to patriarchal nature of Indian society and lack of state support for rural migrants resulting into separation of families especially of females.

This also puts the female under potential threats of increased vulnerabilities due to hostile and conflicting circumstances in villages due to caste and general practices of patriarchy.

5.2   Networks and Livelihood patterns

The focused group discussion further followed with the discussion on – what are the employment opportunities? What was the role of social networks? How are your neighbor networks, are they supportive? Do these networks belong to your community?

The FGD participants from Sathe Nagar and Buddha colony slums stated they had 'a point of contact' an entry point to the city. These contacts are mostly embedded in their caste relations (sister, brother, first cousins, uncle, aunt, in-laws, spouse's relatives and so on). Though the foci of social networks is not only family, there are friends, neighbors and villagers of the same caste background is of great significance for an entry into the city. Access to opportunities in the local labour market, earning livelihood, accessing loans from moneylenders and so on is carried out through such caste based social networks. The accessibility to the city through these network influences positive decision for migration. These networks not only function to provide shelter and food on arrival but also contribute to setting up base in the same vicinity or the nearby areas. Hence, large number of slum pockets has neighborhoods that are formed through kinship networks and have similar kind of employment.

Network analysis involves much more than a simple mapping exercise, since it requires a collection and analysis of quite complex data (Degenne and Forse, 1999). Mitra (2004) analyses the role of formal and informal networks on slum dwellers decision on occupation and employment type. Formal networks are those with NGOs, private

companies and leaders and informal networks are those with relatives, friends, neighbors and villagers. He further goes on to explain the impact of formal and informal networks on having access to different occupations and employment types. He has concluded 'formal networks' have a much greater impact on attaining regular, salaried jobs than on attaining self employed jobs. Though, the focus group discussion shows that there are limited formal social networks in slums. These formal social networks get fewer with lower caste and gender. The caste hierarchies plays dominant role in strengthening and realizing the chances of upward mobility. Dalits being the lowest in socio-economically status remains deprived among the slum dweller population.

5.3 Women and livelihood

India adopted the New Economic Policy (NEP) which centered on liberalization, privatization, and globalization (Mungekar, 1999). The impact of NEP was experienced largely by dalit communities. The loss of jobs in small and big factories, acute opening for public jobs and lastly welfare role of the state affected the marginalized sections of Indian society. In such adversities like loss of jobs by the sole earners in a family, no employment in government service for the young graduates and rising prices on accessing basic amenities, women played an important role in countering these circumstances. (Bhowmik and More, 2003). Women carried out the dual responsibility of household work and labor work to cope up with the loss of family income.

On being asked about the role of neighborhood social networks during time of crisis, few FGD participants responded that specially after 1991, when most of the laborers lost their jobs, one of the Dalit women participant from Milind Nagar said,

"I had never stepped out of the house except for groceries and our community meeting with other women from our neighborhood. My husband lost his job in the early 90s; he was the only earning member. We had school going children to look after. Slowly, without jobs and income our family fell into debts. There was no money left and our savings got exhausted. There were no jobs that we could think of. One of our neighbors that worked at a five star hotel as a driver knew about our situation. Through his acquaintance he got these jobs for me and some other women; we started working in a five star hotel in the kitchen department. We were rolling *rotis* (Indian bread) and earned about two thousand rupees (US $45) which was a respectable salary for us in 1994. Hence, we could pull over difficult through our community help."

Another Dalit women participant from another Buddha colony who underwent similar experiences of her husband's job loss said that,

" I worked along with four other women for a catering services. I got this job through one of my neighbors from our community. We are distantly related, but have close relations. So I decided to take up this job as we had good transport from Kurla to my work place. Along with work I started contributing to the women saving groups. I used to get bonus and regular food hence I could manage the family expenses."

The women FGD participants are working in informal sector. Some of them carry two to three different kinds of jobs along with one main job. Mahar women are mainly working as domestic servants and sweeper in municipal hospital. Matang women are recycling plastic waste pickers. Tamil dalit women are working as construction workers, rag pickers or as domestic servants. Muslim women are involved in garment work or other home based work usually small entrepreneurial activities with their husband. Maratha women are mostly vegetable vendors.

Most of these women work in the nearby places as they avoid long distance work due to traveling cost and to save travel to manage their household duties. These women are working at low wages and the community women follows similar occupational patterns, which has been reflected through these focused group discussion. For example, Dalit Tamil migrants in Vakola (Madras wadi in Milind Nagar slum) women are working as domestic servants and most of them work in higher income families in nearby locality. Similarly, Matang neighborhood of Sathe Nagar is involved in collection of recyclable plastic in exchange of garlic. This trend confirms with Mitra (2003)'s analysis that the formal and informal networks of slum dwellers impact their occupation and employment type.

5.4 Social Exclusion

The most negative outcome of social networks is social exclusion. Migration and settlement process, livelihood and employment types are greatly influenced by this narrow caste based social networks. Caste has been an integral part of Indian society and it serves to include and bond with their group members giving rise to caste identities. Caste based social networks significantly operates to exclude and segregate others that are not part of their caste. Access to resources is routed through caste-social networks hence most of the vulnerable population gets excluded and have no access to such resources. Women that form their saving groups and work in groups are limited to their own caste. They have clear demarcations and they do not include any other member apart from their caste groups. A focus group participant (woman) of Milind Nagar stated that

> "We have our own saving groups that are of Maratha women, we are running the group for the past ten years. We are close knit group of fifteen

women, most of us are vegetable vendors, we need money and this saving group functions like a liberal bank where we can access money during   for health and educational needs. But, we have our own groups like other community groups".

5.5 Resettlement and its impact on women

The personal interviews and focused group discussion at the rehabilitated sites largely concentrated on women. Women also actively participated as they were concerned about the issues that had affected their social and economical lives post resettlement.

Mumtaz Khan , resident of Mankhurd site described her situation as worse life than in slum. She said

> "I could manage my household when we lived in a small room in Chembur in a slum. I worked as a maid in Bhakti park area, a walking distance to the upper middle class locality in Chembur in a slum."   Mumtaz was clearly furious with the kind of services that are provided at the site.

She further explains that,

> "There has been inadequate water supply for months. (April,2005) We could not store water as there is no space for storage. The rooms are constructed without loft or storage space, all our assets occupy our living space; there is no partition between the kitchen and living room. There is frequent drainage choke-up and no municipality or local bodies come to clean them. The bathroom has congested and low quality water pipes, most of them rusted and leaking affecting the quality and flow of water. There is water tax, electricity bills, maintenance charges, new additional charges for the housing cooperatives, increased travel cost for entire

family and so on. This middle class like life is just not affordable for people like us who are poor and earn about two thousand rupees a month."

These reflections of Mumtaz show the difficulties faced by the rehabilitated families. The similar experiences were expressed by Savita (resident of Mankhurd rehabilitated site) said that,

"I am struggling to go to workplace, as there is transportation. There is no direct route that connects to the site, we have to walk at least for 15 to 20 minutes or pay 20 rupees($ 0.50) for auto-rickshaw's fare, that too one way. Some of my friends from my neighborhood have lost jobs since they could not report at the workplaces on time. There is no water; we buy water from the nearby slum. Most of us pay at least 10 to 20 rupees ($0.50 per day)for water and on top of that we pay water tax for these dry taps! . People from SPARC(an NGO- Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centre) come to our site but they did not do much to solve our problems. They came to us before rehabilitation, but they are behaving like bureaucratic government. They don't allow us to continue selling vegetable at these sites which we use to do at earlier slums. Where can we go? What can we do now, when people have lost their jobs and customers? What can we do, no one is helping us?"

The FGD at Vashi Naka primarily discussed about loss of social networks, increased cost on maintenance, deficit income mainly due to increased living cost at the resettlement site and loss of supplementary income that was earned mainly by women, loss of social networks had lead to collapse of their social-economic lives. The participants had lived in the nearby areas of Chembur and Kurla.

Participants grieved about lack of apathy of the municipality for water supply, sewerage, sanitation and waste disposal. Without water and garbage disposal the environment has degraded and the authorities have been blaming the poor for being incapable to live in buildings.

One of the participants Mr. Sathe said that,

"The authorities did not consult us, they directly put us here, our relatives are living at different site, in emergency we cannot reach other as it used to be in slum."

Another participant Mr. Bhalerao said that,

"I have small children, my sister's in laws previously lived in the same vicinity, and hence they were of great help. My wife could leave children at their place before she left for work. Now due to relocation we are separated. Our lives in slums were better than living in this cage".

Leela Gavat of Mankhurd resettlement site mentioned, Her husband works as a temporary wireman in a company and earns about 2500 rupees a month. After coming here at Mankhurd , it was not possible to pay for water, electricity and maintenance with our limited income. Earlier she could save some money with *bishi*(local women's saving group) to make provision for emergency. She started spending more on travel and maintenance cost which exhausted her saving, discontinued the monthly saving, and also she lost her job.

Parvatibai, a resident of Mankhurd informed that, "SPARC (an Ngo that was involved with the project represent slum dwellers through civic participation) had stated to help

capacity building initiatives for those who lost their livelihood. But none of that has happened, it has been over four years now. We lived in transit camps for more than three years. We feel victimized and betrayed both by the government and by the SPARC. I used to save money with Mahila Milan, but now I have stopped my savings with them, it's been two years now, we never got loans and they are not trustworthy or helpful anymore."

Rani, a housing secretary of one of the societies at Mankhurd site said that, "We are placed in the same sinking boat. Women of our building want to start some activity (like making papad and pickles or tailoring,) group activity for food or garment production so that we can earn some income. Its is necessary to have group as it is we individually cannot raise the capital. But sometimes there are women that do not want to participate due to distinct backgrounds. But, some of as have come together, there is a lower caste woman, (Buddhist), I am Maratha, there is one Muslim, there are two women that are *Madrasi* (Tamilian) and there are some two to three *Bhaiyya* (UP migrants mainly Hindi speaking are referred as Bhaiyya) women who are willing to engage in group activity."

5.6   Analysis of interviews and findings

The importance of social networks among the urban poor across the caste and religion is increasing at the resettlement sites. This could have not been possible as settlement process in slums were generally based on factors such as caste, religion, region, language and so on. Due to involuntary settlement project affected families now have to share their spaces with a new neighborhood that has diverse social and religious backgrounds. The emerging circumstances, housing cooperatives have brought diverse communities

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together, but the circumstances that have brought them are largely due to apathy of the state and civil society in amplifying their grievances due to relocation. The implementing authority is particularly obligated to resettle and rehabilitate the project affected people throughout as clearly mandated by the World Bank policy. However, this is not a new for the government. Even previously they have failed to adhere to the conditions of Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (Patel, d'Cruz and Burra, 2002).

The low income and poor have been vulnerable to relocations due to potential breakage in their social networks in general and their livelihood in particular. The earlier social networks apparently were closed, restrictive, exclusive and polarized. Caste, region, religion, language, food habits helped building segregation in slums. These networks helped them for survival and making a sense of belongingness in a city through common identity. Ironically, these networks in slums appeared highly segregated. Slums had clear residential segregations manifested through physical and symbolic spaces occupied by members. There was a clear understanding about an 'insider' and 'outsider' in these segregated social networks. It produced safety nets through saving groups, helped them to build their capacities in isolation had immobilized their capacity to access other resources. There are powerful social networks and weak social networks in slums. Certain social networks (bridging) mainly that of men's network access resources that are shared by the powerful in the network. Often the poor and the most vulnerable like single mothers, physically handicapped members, women, widows, divorcee women are excluded from processes , that leading to increased vulnerabilities of the most vulnerable. Hence, social networks though critical for the poor and low income has also operated to exclude their own members and others from forming cohesive social network.

The only positive outcome of involuntary densification (which has occurred in form of resettlement and rehabilitation) in Mumbai is new emerging possibility of more diverse social networks that can be more open and democratic. But, these networks have developed under critical economic and social adversities. The role of the state could have been a positive one had it implemented the policy of resettlement and rehabilitation seriously. The negative role of state has affected families largely and in particular to Dalits and Muslims. Women that lost their livelihood need to be facilitated with utmost priority. Women and girl child have become the first victims due to the apathy of the state. Women have lost their livelihood and due to increased expenses on travel school going girls have been affected.

Women play a significant role in creating main and surplus income through their own networks. Women also have capabilities to manage inadequate income, create surplus income through saving groups and so on. These capabilities of women can be directly utilized for setting up resources for building the livelihood of these poor women at post resettlement sites. But generally, women networks are more oppressive and exclusive as they are based on caste and carry social hierarchies within the slum.

6.   CONCLUSION

The settlement processes in slums are based on homogenous factors such as caste, region, religion, and language mainly. Schenk (1986) articulated that residential immobility in India as a pattern in India has emerged out of India's social, economic and cultural factors. Thus, slums might have heterogeneous population but they live in homogenous clusters belonging to the neighborhood dominated by caste and kinship ties.

With a passage of time, the densification of neighborhood are webbed and fortified in the form of social networks. These networks are primarily kinship and neighborhood networks. These networks are helpful in numerous ways in negotiating with the civic authorities or accessing information on availability of jobs in the market and so on. Indeed these networks are not only support systems of the urban poor. Through, these networks the urban poor can survive in a hostile city life. But these networks are essentially limited as they are based on common factors such as caste, religion, language. There is an apparent exclusion in this inclusive based social mechanism in slums.

Project affected families that are placed at "Rehabilitated sites", is clearly a case of involuntary densification. Thousands of families of various castes, communities, languages, with varied food habits and various cultures are put together in the multi-storied buildings. Here, the settlement process is uncontrolled, randomly based and entirely a new neighborhood is created which is so diverse.

Strong caste affiliations and religious identities with hidden prejudices are witnessed in the new residential sites. Though this phase has changed over the period of time, the social relationships that were cold and formal in the initial phase later developed due to the "emerging circumstances". Emerging circumstances encompass challenges in adapting to the new residential sites, change in the way of living, increased expenses on water, electricity, travel, impact on livelihood and new social environ of diverse backgrounds. These circumstances have forced families to depend on each other for mutual help irrespective of their backgrounds, creating new networks across the caste and culture in a highly stratified and rigid society. But, this process passes through phases

leading to development in social networks or exclusion.

In this process, the first phase initiates with somewhat negative approaches and reinforcement of communal and caste tensions. This phase sometimes can extend and not develop into any cohesive relationships in stern neighborhoods. But in most of the cases, "space" works as an apparatus to bring people closer leading to social interactions. The second phase is that of mutual understanding and acceptance. This intrinsic quality of poor people bonding each other has reduced segregations. This ideally would have not been possible in a slum setting, as their settlement is a voluntary process and it does not include others who do not have common factors. The emerging hardships and circumstances at the rehabilitated sites have pushed people to form groups and new neighborhood networks that are diverse. This is a massive change that involuntary densification has brought and that aspect cannot be ignored.

The hardships emerged due to relocation are loss of livelihood, increased cost on basic necessities, extra expenditure on travel and maintenance and in some cases loss of social networks. Thus, ex-slum dwellers find living in a slum as economical and feasible than rehabilitated townships. The immediate victims of such policies who goes through economic hardships are women and children from lower social economic section of the society. Children have been affected heavily due to relocations, some of them even dropping out of schools during their stay in transits. The persistent negligence of the state, apathy of civil society, and non compliance with the policy standards have affected the vulnerable section adversely.

The initial phase that was the most important for the poor to the new socio-economic environ could have possibly been dealt sensitively. The new environment has been received well by some of the well-off families. For them the transitions in the life style have benefited to acquire new social status of residing in a dignified way.

With the impact resulting on to the hardships on poor, they try to negotiate and fight against these circumstances. Social interactions act as a relief. A careful analysis of these interactions exhibits the central role of women in creating new networks. Women create and nourish these networks. Traveling together, sharing food, helping each other by exchanging food items, day care for children of working women etc brings families closer. With time these families bond, though it is too early to predict its longevity. Today, over a period of three years, circumstances and impact have forced people to build their own new networks that are based on sympathetic understanding of their circumstances. This feature of new network is of great importance in the context of Indian society as for the first time there is less space for segregation based on caste, religion and region.

The critical issue that is emerged now is sustainability of networks in the midst of political games and religious fanaticisms. There have been instances of few inductions by various agencies trying to drive these networks to fragment; they have not yet been successful.

Now the challenge to policy makers is in this present context to develop a gender and caste sensitive policy to improve the disadvantages people's access to social networks that will empower them without determining the supportive character either of those networks that they seek to join or of the networks of which they are already members. The promotion of social network and social inclusion through the opening up of

opportunities to participate in empowering social networks is a complex project with a range of associated dilemmas and paradoxes.

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