

## Redefining Quality of Life Through Provision of Basic Services for Slum Inhabitants

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### Abstract

Urbanization has fuelled the growth of cities and town, at the same time it has created tremendous pressure on civic infrastructure and exploitation of resources. On one hand it has alarmingly improved the life style and trends, but on the other hand its creation of potential for livelihood opportunities has forced people to live in vulnerable conditions. This vulnerable section of society present a poor picture of quality of life earmarked as slums. The slum inhabitants severely lack basic services and amenities. An attempt has been made to focus on paradigm shifts for benchmarking of services in different policies and programmes right from the beginning to the present scenario and to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the definition of quality of life for slum Inhabitants. "A slum will still be a slum if replaced with overcrowded, unsanitary high-rises, but will no longer be a slum if it has access to safe water, sanitation, and other basic quality of life requirements". - Dennis Zhou

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### INTRODUCTION

Urban areas will be the epicentre of almost all of the world's population growth in the next 30 years. In addition to this growth, planners and governments in developing countries face the challenge of high growth rate of poverty. There is growth but question arise whether there is development at the same pace as one of the major reason of slow pace of development is poverty.[1-3] Urban poverty is manifested most conspicuously in the proliferation and expansion of slums, which are home to a growing proportion of urban dwellers. Poverty is an unacceptable human condition, and its eradication is one of the major objectives of the national policies in India.[4] In the past, planning commission and other institutions of national and international

organizations relied heavily on income levels as the key indicator to assess the poverty.[5] In recent years however, there in a common agreement between various experts and organizations that poverty cannot be assessed by using the traditional method of income alone, but it require a multidimensional approach which includes social backwardness, gender in-equalities and the most important among them is the access to basic services.[6]

All the cities especially in developing nations are struggling to cope with the infrastructure and environmental problems arising due to population explosion, social imbalances, traffic and pollution. Urban poor faces serious problems in terms of, diversity of livelihood opportunities, and access to infrastructure services.

Increasing population pressure resulting in deterioration of physical environment and quality of life further aggravates the problem. Slum dwellers are mostly the underprivileged, weakest section of our society.[7–9] they are deprived of the minimum basic amenities like housing, water supply, drainage and sanitation. These migrated populations who were never on the streets had to sleep on pavements, without proper security of their lives. However, there is steady deterioration in the quality of life of citizen. Poor quality of life and poverty go hand in hand, one perpetuating the other.[10] Slums in the city present a picture of poverty. Ninth five year plan clearly states that high income growth is not the only criteria or benchmark for improved quality of life especially for the urban poor unless all citizens of the country have certain basic minimum services. It is felt that infrastructure bottlenecks are the challenges which affect urban productivity and quality of life.

The World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL) is a broad ranging concept that incorporates physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, personal beliefs and the relationships of these to salient environmental features''.[9] This definition reflects the view that quality of life (QOL) describes a subjective evaluation, which is embedded in a cultural, social, and environmental context. Accordingly, QOL cannot be simply equated with the terms health, life satisfaction, mental state, or well-being. Instead, QOL is a multidimensional concept incorporating individual perceptions of these and other aspects of life. QOL is organized into six broad domains: physical domain, psychological domain, level of independence, social relationships, environment, and spiritual domain.[3]

For improving the QOL of slum dwellers many upgradation programmes and strategies of slum redevelopment are adopted till now which aims at substantive upgrading in the environment inhabited by the slum. The goal of slum redevelopment is to improve urban appearances and inhabitant's environment.[4] Slum redevelopment involves not only the physical development, but also social development associated with economic recovery, community rebuilding and cultural value.

Access to basic services to population living in slums is one of the key indicators of quality of life in slums. This paper focuses on basic services and its contribution to QOL. The study identifies the paradigm shifts for benchmarking of services in different policies and programme in last few decades, addressing the most vulnerable section of the urban society. The study is supported by taking a case example of slums of Jabalpur city to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the achievement in QOL for slum.[11]

## **BACKGROUND AND NOTEWORTHY CONTRIBUTION**

Cities have been the centres of economic growth, but the excessive demand for basic amenities in all cities is resulting in deterioration of the physical environment. The QOL has thus suffered due to continuing influx of migrants and, consequently, widening of the gap between demand and supply of essential services and other infrastructure in these areas. The government policies and programmes on urban poverty reduction have moved from a stage where it was seen primarily in terms of social and economic inequities in the First Plan and later as distortion in the income distribution in the Fourth Plan and now as a problem of access to productive employment, shelter and services.[8]

Researchers have focussed on parameters affecting QOL and importance of benchmarking of services.[7] in his study explained “how land tenure affects the quality of life”. In his project he distinguished between issues of tenure security and property rights and provided an opportunity to explore the ways in which they can help reduce poverty and improve the QOL for the urban poor. There is an apparent general improvement in various shelter and QOL conditions, such as durable structures, access to safe piped water connection, access to improved sanitation[5] and connection to sewers. The perception of tenure security has a significant bearing on investments in housing, basic amenities and QOL.[12] Study suggests that the poor are both willing and able to invest their limited savings in housing and basic amenities when they get some kind of assurance, formal or informal, against eviction.

Sundari,(2003) explains the QOL of Migrant Households in Urban Slums.[10] The study examines the QOL of the migrant households in slums of Coimbatore city, Tirupur town and Chennai city of Tamil Nadu State, in terms of selected parameters like structure of the dwelling place, source of drinking water, electrification, water logging during monsoon, latrine facility, sewerage system, drainage system, garbage disposal system, access to health care services and health conditions. The findings of the study suggests improvement in urban environment of slums for parameters like sanitation and living conditions leads to overall improvement in health and wellbeing. The researcher concludes commenting on attempts by Municipal Corporation and slum clearance boards as they lack the resources to solve the urban problems wholly. Further Slum Improvement has not been attempted in a comprehensive manner by the Slum Clearance Board and its activities are

largely confined only to recognised slums. Hence a methodology has to be evolved to address the problems of slums on a massive scale to improve the quality of life of slum population.

Mathur, (2007) concludes in his study that a fresh study may be undertaken to suggest new norms and standards for municipal basic services in India keeping in view the prevailing financial, legal and institutional constraints of the municipalities.[6] In Asian Development Bank (ADB)’s view, poverty is a deprivation of essential assets and opportunities to which human in entitled. “Everybody should have access to basic services. Poverty is thus better measured in terms of basic education, health care, nutrition, water and sanitation, as well as income, employment and wages” (ADB 1999).

The shift in focus of improvement of QOL of slum inhabitants can be easily traced by reviewing the policies and programmes of slum upgradation. Many projects and program have come up with proposals for upgradation in living standards amongst urban poor. Few projects and programmes like Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums, Jawaharlal urban renewal mission, and Rajiv Awas Yojna has laid certain physical standards of basic services to improve quality of life of urban poor. The projects funded by Asian development bank and World Bank have also emphasized on level of services in their specific slum upgradation projects.

### **THE SHIFTING FOCUS IN PROVISION OF SERVICES FOR URBAN POOR**

The earlier policies focused on upgradation and improvement of conditions of slum whereas the current policies equally give importance to overall development. Slum Area Improvement & Clearance 1956 Act stated the improvement and clearance of slum areas

in certain Union Territories and also mentions for the protection of tenants in such areas from eviction, main focus of this act was improvement in city image. A series of programs had been launched to raise living standards among the urban poor, it was only EIUS, which has laid down certain physical standards of basic services to improve the QOL of the urban poor. This scheme began in 1972 as Integrated Urban Development Program (IUDP) in cities with a population of three lakh.

Madhya Pradesh was the first state to implement patta act in year 1984 which gives right to tenureship to the slum inhabitants on government land. With this act the landless residents were now owners of their *patta's* which gives them guarantee legal household rights as well as right to avail all basic services. This was the major platform for improvement in their QOL. The programs and policies in last two decades have focused on improving civic infrastructure and overall development of society. The national housing policy 1994 talked of rural and urban poor population. Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) suggested large scale urban reforms to improve QOL and infrastructure in cities. The major upcoming programme in 2009 was Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) which aims at developing and upgrading the life of slum

inhabitants through various interest subsidies, housing loans and property rights.

## METHODS

The review literature suggest the parameters like condition of house, condition of roads, condition of in house connection, condition of in house toilet, and QOL indicators like tenureship, poverty, employment, literacy and crime are the basic and for most parameters for any study on slum improvement and QOL. For this study the correlation between the physical parameters and some basic parameters of QOL specific to slums has been worked for the Jabalpur city.

There is project based benchmarking of municipal services for this particular section of society. Although lot of consideration is now given on maintaining the minimum level of services still it is not in standards. In many redevelopment projects attempt has been made to benchmark the norms and standards and the Table 1 presents the physical norms and standards adopted for the EIUS programme, World Bank funded slum upgradation projects in Mumbai and Madras, and also the norms as suggested under the Kerala Urban Development Project (KUDP), Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), Utthan and also the norms as suggested under Rajeev Awas Yojna (RAY).

**Table 1.** Norms and Standards for Infrastructure Development Adopted in Slum Projects and Programmes

Services	EIUS Programme (1972)	World Bank Funded Project (1993)		KUDP (1993)	JNNURM (2005)	Utthan (2006-11) (Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior)	RAY
		Bombay	Madras				
Water supply	One tap for 150 persons	1 for 15 hhs (75 person) @ 45 lpcd	1 for 10 hhs (50 persons)	1 tap for (75 persons)	Community stand-posts where in-house connections are not possible to Provide. stand-posts to large group/small group	1 tap 20/Each household (according to space available)	water supply to each household

					metered Connections to private connections.		
Sewerage	Sewer open drains with normal outflow avoiding accumulation of stagnant waste water	-	-	-	Underground sewerage	Underground sewerage	Underground sewerage
Storm water drains	To drain out storm water quickly	For every plot	For every plot	660m length for 1 ha. ( for every plot subject to overall nature of slum ( land position and gradient)	Drains concrete and covered with proper gradients/connected with city Networks/underground drainage systems for wastewater disposal.	Drains concrete	Drains Along roads and emphasis main water collection
Community baths	One bathroom for 20-50 persons	-	-	-	Community toilets where private toilets cannot be provided.	Public toilet / Each household (according to space available )	Each household
Community latrines	One latrines for 20-50 persons	1 for 10 hhs(50 persons)	1 for 10 hhs(50 persons)	1 for 50 persons	Community toilets where private toilets cannot be provided.	Public toilet / Each household (according to space available )	Each household
Footpaths/lanes	Widening and paving of existing lanes to make room for easy flow of pedestrian ,bicycles and handcarts, lane on paved paths to avoid mud and slush	Pathway access to every plot	Pathway access to every plot		Roads (RCC) connected to city roads	Concrete roads	Concrete roads
Street lighting	Poles 30 meters apart	On major roads	-	20 posts for 1 ha.	Legal/metered power supply with affordable lifeline tariffs and easy Payment plans for connection/user costs.	On major road	Poles 20 meters
Additional activities	Community facilities	-	-	-		Community facilities	Community facilities

It is evident from the above data that benchmarking of services has changed its definition. It is noticeable that there is

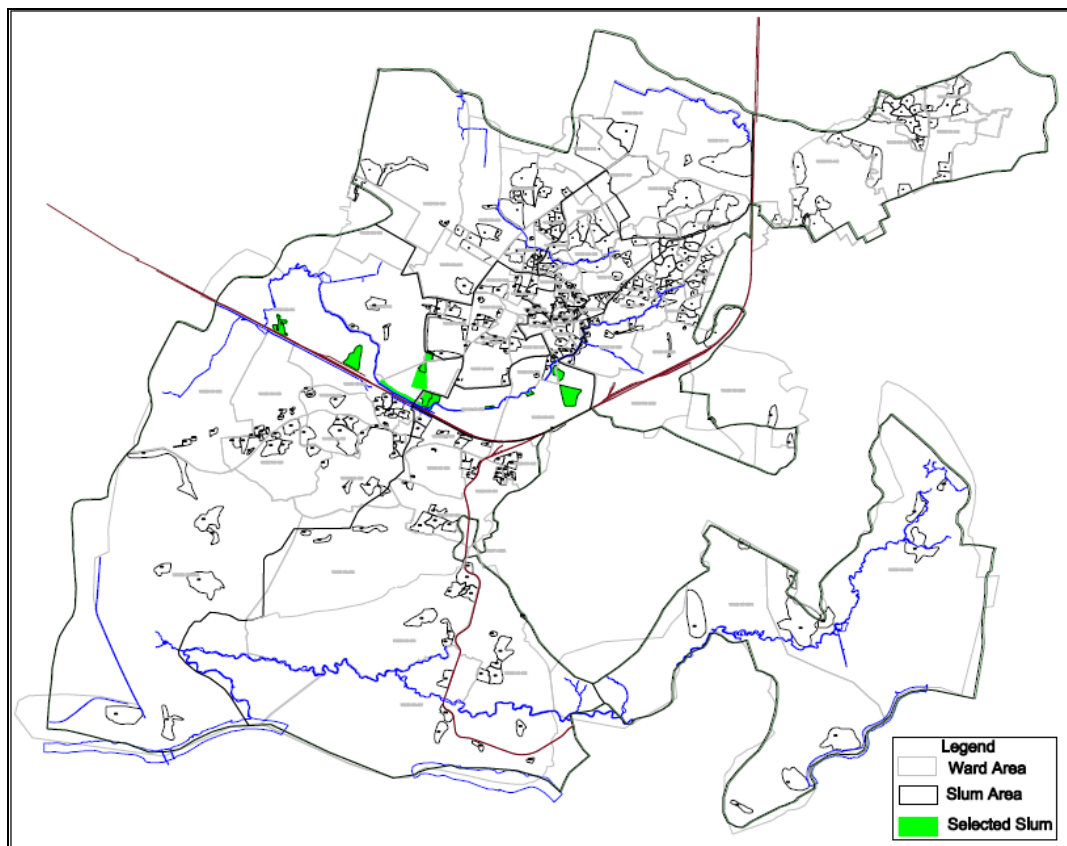
improvement in quantity and quality of basic services for example in case of public water supply which was for one

standpipe for 50 people has now been replaced by individual toilets & water supply connections. This shift indicates the level of improvement being thought at the city scale so that the slums no longer remain the grey spots but a neighbourhood as any other part of the city. The QOL is expected by setting not minimum standards of services but required and desired quality and quantity of services.

## METHODOLOGY

As indicated in many slums up gradation programs and schemes it was found that

large scale improvement has been observed in case of slums having tenureship rights. This tool has enabled the dwellers to maintain the desired quality of life by having land on their names, thus providing them social security and freedom from eviction. To support this literature the authors has done a case study of Jabalpur slums by identifying a sample of 11 slums from 366 slums on the basis of their nature of tenureship (Table 2). (Refer Figure 1 Slum Location in Jabalpur City).



Source: Jabalpur Municipal Co-operation

**Fig. 1.** Location of identified slum in Jabalpur City.

**Table 2.** Identified Slums

Sl. No.	Slum Name	Population	Tenureship
1	Bhulan Basti near Railway Line	383	Patta (30 Years)
2	Khinna Basti near Kachpura Railway Station	673	Other Legal Rights
3	Behind Chetram Madia	756	Patta (20 Years)
4	Agrawal Colony Hani behind Pan Bhandar	441	Other Legal Rights
5	Kumhar Mohalla P & T	1031	Patta (15 Years)
6	Garha marg near Omti Nala	626	No legal document
7	Patel Mohalla	213	Other Legal Rights
8	In front of Gate No. 4	420	Other Legal Rights
9	Behind MLB girls School	334	No legal document

10	Peer Baksh Line behind Jyoti Talkies	163	Other Legal Rights
11	In front of Dr. Batalia	163	Other Legal Rights

**Source:** Jabalpur Municipal Cooperation

Data was collected on the parameters of physical redevelopment like condition of house, condition of roads, condition of In house Connection, condition of In house toilet, and quality of life indicator like tenureship, poverty, employment, literacy

and crime. The data was scaled on 5 pointer likert scale and the correlation matrix was worked out to find the type of relationship between the variables and prominently to identify the strongest relation (Table 3).

**Table 3. Correlations Matrix (Basic Services and Quality of Life)**

Correlations					
	Tenureship	Poverty	Employment	literacy	Crime
<b>Condition of house</b>	Very high degree (.91)	Moderate degree(.62)	Moderate degree(.65)	Moderate degree (.61)	Moderate degree (.69)
<b>Condition of roads</b>	Very high degree (.93)	Negative Low degree(-.33)	Low degree (.25)	Negative Low degree (-.34)	Absence of correlation(0)
<b>Inhouse_Connec-tion</b>	Absence of correlation(0)	Low degree(.31)	Negative Low degree(-.44)	Low degree(.32)	Very high degree (.92))
<b>Inhouse toilet</b>	Negative Low degree (-.30_	Negative Low degree(-.15)	Absence of correlation(0)	Negative Low degree(-.29)	Moderate degree(.63)

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

- Parameters like condition of housing and deficiency of pucca road had high correlation with land tenure. It has been found that the impact of tenure-ship rights has resulted in investment by the slum dwellers for improving their living conditions. The improvement is incremental in the form that housing condition like temporary walls & thatched or metal roof are now turned into permanent structure. It was found that the regular maintenance of permanent structure is also been closely done in certain time period
- Physical conditions of houses were found to be directly correlated with the percentage of below poverty line

population as well as with employment and literacy.

- Positive low degree correlation was found with poverty and absence of in house water supply Connection. Poverty is the cause of nonaffordability of even basic services. They afford to stand for hours for water but are unable to pay for connection.
- Slums with patta holders were in better conditions than slums with no legal rights. The overall quality of life in those slums are better than others as even the people residing who did not had jobs were self-employed as their land provided them security for taking financial loans. The average income of the family raised them above the poverty line.

5. Availability and quality of basic services can differ widely within a city, and affect different groups in a multitude of ways. Urban poor often only have poor access to water supply, sewage and solid waste disposal systems. The quality of life is suffering due to absence of minimum basic services and the impact is that the communities are exposed to crime and health problem. (relevance of putting the lines here).
6. Amongst the parameters of indicators of quality of life, tenureship has emerged as a tool to upgrade the life of slum dwellers. It was also found that tenureship with more than 15 years of patta were considerably upgraded better in case of community facilities like school and health facility and neighbourhood up cleaning as waste disposal and management.

## CONCLUSION

It may be suggested to examine the distribution of core municipal services amongst the various sections of the society so that the urban poor may get good QOL. It is important to keep a track on the Implementing agencies whether they are implementing the programme / scheme as per norms and standards or not. QOL has improved due to new policies like JNNURM. These are project based scheme. There should be some specific standard or benchmarking for basic services to slum inhabitant. The infrastructure development process does not aim to find solutions for the slum areas of the city alone but rather to integrate the low-income settlements and other high-middle income areas of the city, and provide a better infrastructure and quality of life for both. The ultimate objective of slum upgradation is the sustainable development, in order to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and give them a more secure future, and for this is necessary to be much more open in exploring development options.

The question remains unconcerned as why poor rural populations migrates to the city, even when there are apparently no jobs for them and they have to live in slums with what might appear to be a lower quality of life. The problems prevailing in slums give us the challenge to rebuild a society that is more equitable where equal opportunities could be provided to all for living with dignity. Many hurdles have to be overcome to achieve this objective. The despair of the underprivileged has to be replaced with hope, their fear with security, and their ignorance with knowledge. The national five year plan appeals about inclusiveness in development. This percentage of population should be empowered to enable them to improve the quality of life thus their own lives.

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