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Research Article

Promoting Basic Service to Urban Poor: An Community Social Work Perspective

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Abstract

In India needs effective policies and programmes to address the increasing number of slums in the urban areas particularly in big cities, inadequate basic infrastructure and facilities, inadequate availability of protected water supply to the urban poor, and underlines the significance of urban development programmes. The present research analysed theoutcome of basic service to urban poor, from the perspectives of the beneficiaries, socioeconomic background of the beneficiaries of basic service to urban poor housing, and to suggest suitable social work interventions to improve their conditions. By conducting a survey 271 JNNURM Phase-1 beneficiaries in Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu and proportionate in simple random strategy was adopted in selecting the samples from the population. This will help to evaluate the beneficiaries, whose housing condition was poorer before implementation of the basic service to urban poor, continue to experience lesser urban quality of life even after the implementation of the schemes. The independent samples t-tests were applied to tested hypothesis. The results revealed that there is statistically significant difference in the service to urban poor beneficiary respondents perceived lower levels of quality of life. However, point that is emphasised here is that the Social Work Intervention should at primary and secondary method of approach to improve the basic service to urban poor.

Key Word: Basic Service, Urban Poor, Social Work Perspective, Community Setting

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Introduction

The increasing concentration in urban population has led to various problems like lack of quality housing, drinking water supply, drainage facility, storm-water structure, bridges, insufficient transport facilities, lack of open spaces, inadequate power, etc. (**Joshi, 2013**). Standard indicators of the quality of life include not only wealth and employment but also the built environment which includes: housing, natural environment, public services such as water, sanitation and other basic services (**Sharma *et al*. 2010**).

Basic Services to Urban Poor is one of the sub-missions of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission is to provide seven basic entitlements Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) was conceptualized due to the ever-increasing slum population, which causes tremendous pressure on urban basic services and infrastructure.

Access to higher levels of service, that is, house-level connections have actually worsened in India from 52% of households in 1990 to 48% of households in 2008. For sanitation, access to safe basic sanitation continues to stagnate at 54% in 2008. Another 21% of households have access only to shared facilities. An estimated 18% of urban population resorts to open defecation" (Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, 2010), however, the living condition and the available infrastructure in urban areas are poor. In India needs effective policies and programmes to address the increasing number of slums in the urban areas particularly in big cities, inadequate basic infrastructure and facilities, inadequate availability of protected water supply to the urban poor, and underlines the significance of urban development programmes.

Overview of Literature

From the studies of **Shankar and Vasanthi (2015), Kamath and Zachariah (2015) and Desai *et al*. (2013)** it was observed that based on the available official data, the "impact of JNNURM and UIDSSMT/IHSDP programmes on infrastructure and governance outcomes in cities and towns in India". The findings revealed that variations in the claim by intra- and inter-state claims on completion of infrastructure and dwelling units, completion and allotment; targets are unrealistic and set without taking into consideration the starting time and capability of the ULBs. Other critical issues identified were: (i) low ULB resources and capacity to manage JNNURM projects and funds; (ii) political influences; (iii) ULBs become financially weak after JNNURM; (iv) ULBs' capacity need to be built; (v) absence of public participation in process and implementation stages.

Shankar and Vasanthi (2015) studied the planning and implementation of slum rehabilitation programme at Pantharapalya in Bangalore city under the BSUP submission of

JNNURM. The impact was analysed based on the satisfaction of carpet area; satisfaction of quality of dwelling, satisfaction in floor level, ownership/rental, mobility and difficulty of upper floors. The findings revealed that 90 percent were satisfied with carpet area; 19 percent satisfied with the quality of dwelling units; 56 percent satisfied with floor level; the owners themselves occupied 63 percent of the houses and 59 percent did not find any difficulty in upper floors.

Desai *et al*. (2013) examined the effectiveness of the approach towards implementation of Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) in Nanded, Waghala City Municipal Corporation by exploring the "progress of BSUP; public engagement and physical design and planning" by conducting a case study. The beneficiaries reported: construction quality was not good and will not last even for 20 years; construction was not completed in time; due to delay in completion, beneficiaries start to live in the unfinished houses; sewer lines were either absent or not functioning.

Methods & Materials

The present study seeks to examine the outcome of basic service to urban poor, from the perspectives of the beneficiaries, socioeconomic background of the beneficiaries of basic service to urban poor housing, and to suggest suitable social work interventions to improve their conditions. The research design of the present study is cross-sectional exploratory design.

Coimbatore city was divided into four zones for administrative purposes. Respondents from the four zones participated in this study. Participation of respondents from the Eastern zone was highest (67.5%) followed by North (12.9%), West (11.1%) and South (8.5%) zones in the order. Total number of BSUP beneficiary participants was 2,707.

From the list of BSUP beneficiary participants it has been decided to each of the four zones, the same ratio of 10 percent (271) were selected using simple random sampling to conduct an in-depth study.

A structured interview schedule was used for collecting information and data. Four dichotomous variables were included to measure the basic services provided to the urban poor. Urban Quality of Life Scale (UQOL), developed and standardized by **SenlierNihal***et al.* **(2008)**, was employed. Prior permission was obtained from the author (s) to use this scale by writing a letter to them. The scale consisted of a set of 10 components was measured using five-point Likert scoring, ranging from 1 = very poor to 5 = very good. Based on the mean and standard deviations the satisfaction levels of the components are ranked from one to ten.

Rank 1 indicates highest level of satisfaction and rank 10 means lowest level of satisfaction. The many literatures to express gap of idea to tested, that is, to evaluate the beneficiaries, whose housing condition was poorer before implementation of the basic service to urban poor, continue to experience lesser urban quality of life even after the implementation of the schemes. The independent samples t-tests were applied to tested hypothesis.

Results & Discussion

Data obtained, for the Socioeconomic and Basic Services to the Urban Poor profile information, were analyzed through percentage and frequency tables.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage distributions on Socioeconomic Profile (n = 271)

Variable		Total	
		f	%
Age (In year)	25 - 35	43	15.9
	36 - 50	125	46.1
	Above 50	103	38.0
Gender	Male	180	66.4
	Female	91	33.6
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	100	36.9
	Primary	33	12.2
	Middle School	58	21.4
	High School	65	24.0
	Higher Secondary	4	1.5
	Diploma/ITI	3	1.1
	Graduate	8	3.0
Occupation	Self Employed	52	19.2
	Government	4	1.5
	Private Organization	184	67.9
	Unemployed	31	11.4
Monthly Income	Rs.3000 and below	83	30.6
	Rs.3001 - 5000	93	34.3
	Above Rs.5000	95	35.1

Possession of BPL Card	Yes	261	96.3
	Don't Know	10	3.7
Fuel for Cooking	Gas	239	88.2
	Kerosene	19	7.0
	Firewood	13	4.8
Total		271	100

Source: Primary data

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage distributions on Basic Services to the Urban Poor (n = 271)

Availability of Basic Amenities Variable		Total	
		f	%
Provision for Storm Water Drainage	Yes	271	100.0
	No	0	0.0
Underground Drainage Connection	Yes	0	0.0
	No	271	100.0
Solid Waste Management System	Yes	271	100.0
	No	0	0.0
Drinking water household connection	Yes	62	22.9
	No	209	77.1
Road Facility in front of the House	Motorable Pucca	51	18.8
	Motorable Katcha	122	45.0
	Non-motorable Pucca	89	32.8
	Non-motorable Katcha	9	3.3
Healthcare Facility	PHC	29	10.7
	GH	189	69.7
	Private Clinic	53	19.6
Urban Quality of Life	Low	76	28.0
	Moderate	150	55.4
	High	45	16.6
Total		271	100

Source: Primary data

Table 3. Independent Samples *t*-test: Type of House before JNNURM vs. UQOL

Type of House before JNNURM	N	UQOL Scores		t-test Statistics		
		Mean	SD	t	df	p
Semi-Pucca	98	35.63	4.445	5.450	217	.000
Katcha	121	32.15	4.904			

According to the data in Table 1, Respondents in the age group of 36-50 years participated in higher numbers (46.1%). Overall, the average age of the participants was 48.87 ± 12.154 years.Participation of male beneficiaries was higher (66.4%) than females.Most of the participants were illiterates (36.9%). Very few were educated up to Higher Secondary (1.5%) and 3.0 per cent were graduates.Regarding occupation, the majority of the beneficiary participants were working with private organizations (67.9%).Majority of the beneficiary participants' household income was not more than Rs.5000 per month (64.9%).All the participants were from below poverty line category and most of them had BPL cards (96.3%). There is a criticism about inequalities in the selection of beneficiaries. Liquid Petroleum Gas was the most common fuel for cooking among the participants (88.2%).

According to the data in Table 2, the admissible components of JNNURM, as per the guidelines is providing storm water drainage, underground drainage connection to houses, solid waste management system and water supply (including de-salination plants). Storm water drainage and solid waste management were available to all houses (271) but there was no solid waste management system provided (100.0%). Majority of the respondents said that drinking water was not available at the time of interview (77.1%). Only 62 (22.9%) households were able to have drinking water household connection through this scheme.

Roads were provided under the scheme. Only katcha but motorable roads were available in front of more number of participants' houses (45.0%). The participants' perceived urban quality of life was divided into three levels for qualitative interpretation, viz. *Low* (31 and below) *Moderate* (32 – 38) and *High* (above 38). Distribution indicated larger number of participants had Moderate level of urban quality of life (150, 55.4%) and 76 (28.0%) participants perceived Low level of urban quality of life and the remaining 45 (16.6%) perceived High level of urban quality of life. A tie was observed between *access to*

health services and *transportation* and priority was determined based on the standard deviations of the respective components.

According to table 3,alternate hypothesis of thebeneficiaries, whose housing condition was poorer before implementation of the Basic Service to Urban Poor, continue to experience lesser Urban Quality of Life even after the implementation of the scheme. The independent samples t-tests were applied to tested. Equal variances were assumed (Levene's statistic *p*> .05). Only those participants who had completed their house was taken as the N (*n* = 219). Independent samples *t*-test statistics shows statistically highly significant difference (MD = 3.48, 95% CI) in the mean urban quality of life scores between participants who were living in semi-pucca and katcha houses, before joining JNNURM (t(217) = 5.450, *p* = .000). By comparing the mean UQOL scores it can be inferred that those who were living in semi-pucca houses, before JNNURM, scored high on UQOL scores (M = 35.63 ± 4.445) than those who were living in katcha houses (M = 32.15 ± 4.904). To further examine the effectiveness of the difference, eta squared (η^2) method was used. The effect size for t = 5.450, N1 = 98 and N2 = 121, was 0.124. According to **Cohen's (1988)** guidelines, the difference effect was 'large'. About 12.04 percent of differences in the mean scores between the two groups compared were explained. This indicates that participants those who were living in poorer housing condition were experiencing lower level of urban quality of life. The result showed that, alternate hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Basic Service to Urban Poor and Social WorkPerspective

It is a critical to understand urban poor people and the issues face by them under social work levels such as micro, mezzo, macro and meta levels. Social workers have the responsibility to understand and appreciate the full range of differences that exist among urban poor.New houses built under BSUP mission were mostly not above 350 square feet floor area, single floor only and one bedroom, hall, kitchen, bathroom configuration. About 21.7 percent increase in number of households with own toilets and septic tanks. Only 17 percent decrease in open defecation was achieved, but still open defecation was not completely prevented. Family crisis was perceived to be the major barrier followed by financial problems, for the delay in completion of construction. Storm water drainage, underground drainage connection and solid waste management were reported available, but access to and adequate quantity of safe drinking water was not achieved completely, and

water supply was once in a week. Motorable *pucca* roads were not provided in most of the sites. Regarding quality of life considerations, beneficiaries were more satisfied with "access to healthcare services", "transport facilities" and "personal relationship". Moderately satisfied with "safety in daily life", "health condition" and "opportunity for leisure activities". Least satisfaction of quality was reported regarding "financial needs" "condition of living space" and "physical environment". Among the BSUP beneficiaries, Scheduled Caste group, illiterates, low-income group, beneficiaries having house with smaller floor area, and joint families reported lower level of quality of life. Overall, nearly less than one-fourth (16.6%) of the BSUP beneficiary respondents perceived lower levels of quality of life; about half (55.4%) of the beneficiaries reported moderate and little above one-fourth (28.0%) reported higher levels of quality of life.

Social Work Intervention

The social work primary method is playing and solving the following problems of urban poor. Social work is providing individual counseling/case work for respondent's spouse use alcohol and promoting the health condition. The group work provides the right way of together promoting financial development in form of Self help group activities. To build awareness programs on saving benefits, educational, and personal relationship importance for urban poor people is essential. The family crisis was perceived to be the major barrier followed by financial problems.

The social work secondary method is playing and solving the following problems of urban poor. Almost (97.8%) of the respondents did not avail any welfare benefits at all. The government has provided proper social welfare, security for urban poor people through social welfare administration. Majority of the BSUP beneficiaries in the four target zones in Coimbatore city most of belonged to Scheduled Caste group; educated at least primary level. Mostly employed in private concerns and belonged to low-income category. The social work research is provides evaluation and innovation of alleviate poverty of urban poor in form of employment, education, and income generation.

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