The role of social entrepreneurs in the development of cooperatives for catalyzing empowerment in the slum areas of India

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The theory of Motivation propounded by Maslow in 1959 states that one of the basic needs of human is shelter. Here, shelter needs does not mean mere occupation of a building only but also other amenities and hygiene which affect the mental and physical health of people. The people living in urban areas face challenges of proper housing, education, health, hygiene etc. The root cause of increase in the slums in the cities is mainly due to modern industrial civilisation and migration from rural to urban areas in search of livelihood, opportunities and growth. They also form a part of cheap labour in the units and a vote bank for the politicians. Hence, providing better housing or accommodation to all citizen irrespective of caste and creed is the integral part of economic development in India. With such increasing ratio it is estimated that slum dwellers will triple in the next 25 years and the cities like Delhi will have four and a half million slum dwellers and the cities like kolkata and Mumbai will have even big numbers deprived of congenial environment (Bane and Rawal, 2002). There has occurred a need to empower their skills, creativity and resources to make them independent and healthy citizens of India. Here, the study aims at empowerment of the people living in the slum areas through social entrepreneurs. There has arisen a need to develop them to meet with new competitive challenges to foster sustainable development. A model has been designed where the social entrepreneurs would work as facilitators to make the slum people independent and developed through the resources available with them. The study is based on secondary sources to identify the present challenges of the marginalised group especially children and women in metro cities to empower them by providing support and direction. Concluding, the cooperatives here can work on providing shelter, education, health, employment and financial services to the people to make them relatively independent by developing their skills.

Key words: Cooperatives, hygiene, social entrepreneurship, slum development, infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

The paper aims to look at the slums in metro cities of India with the purpose of proposing certain suggestions to improve the financial and social conditions of those living in the slum areas. There essential requirement includes proper shelter, safe drinking water, proper sanitation to run their life humanly and progressively. There are many examples of slums in India especially Dharavi, Anand where social entrepreneurs formerly social workers have worked for the socio-economic development of the community and uprooted them from the miserable and dependent life by solving the critical issues and increased self-employment and awareness about hygiene and health. The people having passion, skill and creativity can take self initiative and form a group of members within the society to solve the social evils prevailing in their lives as well as society.

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“Entrepreneurship is best thought of as an extended activity which may well be carried out by a team or a group of people” (Stewart, 1989). Many social entrepreneurs, activists, NGO’s are working for development in the slum areas. Nowadays, cooperatives can emerge as role players for these people in uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the people in the slum area through mutual help and division of work. There has occurred a need to come up with the best practice model that may not completely solve the issues of slum but would help in improving the current situation. “Social entrepreneurship is emerging as an innovative approach for dealing with complex social needs” (Jhonson, 2000).

Objectives

1. The paper aims to look at the slums in metro cities of India with the purpose of proposing certain suggestions to improve the financial and social conditions of those living in the slum areas.
2. To observe the critical issues faced by the slum dwellers of metro cities like Delhi and Mumbai etc.
3. The role of cooperatives on providing shelter, education, health, employment and financial services to the slum dwellers.
4. Suggesting a model on the basis of feasibility constraints for successful implementation in the slum area. The study is based on marginalized group specially women and children residing in the area.

Figure 1 explains the current situation and problems faced by the urban slum dwellers in metro cities related to socio-economic, legal and political which effects a major share of population in India. The figure is based on the case study of Jagdamba Camp slum in Delhi’s slum and as well as Dharavi redevelopment programme in Mumbai.

The National Sample Survey Organisation (2004) Housing condition in India defines a slum as a "compact settlement with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic condition" (NSSO, 2003). Also there are two types of slums: notified and non notified. Areas notified as slums by the respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities are treated as notified slums. A slum is considered as a non-notified slum if at least 20 households live in that area. A case study of Jagdamba Camp slum helped capture realistic picture of the situation in Delhi’s slum and as well as Dharavi redevelopment programme in Mumbai crystallised some policy recommendations by the government. The aim of the paper is to come up with a model that may not completely solve the issue of slums but help improve the current situation. The basic characteristics of every slum life in metro cities of India included shelter but lack a permanent residence and an average dwelling house include 6 to 8 people, measure between 6ft to 8ft. Many slums have no sanitation facility on an average of 1 outlet serving 20 to 25 households, 1 water pump is used by 700 people on average. There are illegal high rates of electricity, high transportation costs.

The economic characteristics include people moving from rural to urban areas to find employment and improve their lives. Poor health is associated with bad housing, overcrowding and people in slum areas suffer from diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and waterborne diseases etc and the children are routinely employed which is internationally condemned including bonded labour and drugs. There is a need for a model frame work for slum development to meet with upcoming challenges.
after the recommendation of policies like National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy (2007), JJ Clusters, rehabilitation at Prayag Vihar, Ekta Vihar, Shanti Vihar in New Delhi by the government authority etc.

Problems of slums in India

Slums have risen dramatically since 1950. India is urbanising very fast and along with this, the slum population is also increasing. India’s urban population is increasing at the faster rate than its total population. The slum population is constantly increasing; it has doubled in the past two decades. India’s slum dwelling population rose from 27.9 million in 1981 to over 40 million in 2001. As per the 2001 census of India, 640 towns spread over 26 states and Union territories have reported the existence of slums. The NSSO Survey (2002) has identified 51,668 slums in urban areas of which 50.6% of urban have been declared as slums.

Lack of sanitary conditions

People residing in slums face many problems like improper sanitation, unhygienic environmental conditions, social, economic, health, educational and cultural problems etc. The basic problems inherent in slums are health hazards, lack of basic amenities like safe drinking water, proper housing, drainage and excreta, disposal services in slum. It is being estimated that more than half of the Indian population will live in urban areas by 2020 and nearly one third of this urban population will be slum dwellers. The ongoing process of rapid urbanisation has great effect on health and nutrition especially for children. The major causes of child malnutrition in slum population are inappropriate awareness, infections, improper food security and inadequate utilisation of health care services. Poor sanitary conditions and poor quality water leads to diseases like jaundice, typhoid etc.

Social problems

High unemployment often causes men to stay around the home growing increasingly with poverty in the area with domestic violence and use of alcohol.

Child Labour: Many children in the slum start work below the age of 12 and make money by selling newspapers, picking garbage etc. child marriage still occurs in the area.

Corruption

Some men are able to achieve a high status within slums and establish themselves as slum lords. The slum lords often form links with the local politicians, government officials and become dependent on them for small amenities. The men do not like to see women more powerful forming groups and moving out for work other problems (Chandrasekhar, 2005).

Table 1 explains that the non notified slums and the rural areas seem similar in terms of availability of latrines and drainage. In the rural areas, 78% of household do not have any latrine while 51% of non notified slums do not have a latrine. Nearly 66% of rural households do not have any drainage facility while 44% of non notified slums do not have drainage facilities. Thus, there is the need to set up availability of water and sanitation services in rural and urban India.

The role of cooperatives

The essence of cooperation is that individuals come together to achieve collectively what they cannot achieve as individual. The aim is to promote a new community life for slum dwellers through various educational, cultural and social activities. The cooperatives roles can be multifold in such marginalised areas like restructuring housing, water supply and sanitation and on the other hand promotion of schools, health for children. The banking cooperatives raise institutional finance to encourage habit of thrift and make provision for the credit to needy people. The members of the cooperatives are selected from within the area and allotted duties. The NGO, social entrepreneurs work as facilitator/lubricants to run the process efficiently with the available resources. The non formal education offered is said to consist of innovative learning, bringing creativity, overall growth for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water source</th>
<th>Rural India</th>
<th>Urban India</th>
<th>Non notified slums</th>
<th>Notified slums</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tap</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tube well</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Well</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No electricity</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>No latrine</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Drainage</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>15</td>
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the children in these areas. Social entrepreneurs have increasingly emerged as providers of services where there is lack of resources, tackling issues through business strategies that aim to provide sustainable development for the social strata. Social entrepreneurs have a tendency to operate outside of the traditional, conventional school system, working with the resources at hand to engage in promotional activities. In 2000 there were 869 million slum dwellers in the developing world (UN HABITAT, 2003). Instead of working against slum dwellers Social Entrepreneurship believes that they could work with slum dwellers to find business related business related educational solutions that will pull slum dwellers out of poverty (Lindstrom, 2003).

The living examples of slum development through cooperatives and social entrepreneurship: slums of Hyderabad, Bal Jyothi, a social entrepreneur, runs a network of 200 pre schools and primary schools. In November 2010 the University of Hongkong launched its first overseas office in Delhi, India. Preliminary contacts have been made with the HKU office in Delhi to coordinate work with them.

**NEED OF RESTRUCTURING SLUMS**

India is considered to be the second largest growing economy after China. India’s urban population consists of a large percentage of slum people living in small houses, lacking in basic facilities. Thus, the development of the area has become important for overall growth of the economy. The rehabilitation of the slum people now requires collaborative efforts of the non governmental bodies, micro financial institutions and cooperatives for their development. The Indian megacity of Mumbai has an estimated population of about 14 million. Of those, only about 35% live in ‘regular’ permanent housing. The other 65% live in informal settlements, which for more than a third of those people means squatting on sidewalks and under bridges. The rest nearly 6 million people occupy settlements on private and public open lands, some of which are more than 50 years old. Dharavi is one of the most famous common depiction as a "slum"; it is actually a successful work-cum-residential settlement.

Developers have been trying to redevelop the area for years, but Dharavi is a model settlement that needs to be replicated, not replaced. Dharavi pulsates with intense economic activity. Its population has achieved a unique informal "self-help" urban development over the years without any external aid. It is a humming economic engine. The residents, though bereft of housing amenities, have been able to lift themselves out of poverty by establishing thousands of successful businesses. The social and economic networks which the poor rely on for subsistence can hardly be sustained in high-rise structures. These high rise projects are not appropriate for home-based economic activities, which play a major role in Dharavi. Case studies all over the world have documented the inappropriateness of high-rise resettlement projects in poor areas. The social and economic networks which the poor rely on for subsistence can hardly be sustained in high-rise structures. These high rise projects are not appropriate for home-based economic activities, which play a major role in Dharavi.

**ESSENCE OF COOPERATIVES IN THE HOUSING SECTOR**

The main objective of housing cooperative in the figure is to provide its members with suitable housing accommodation at the reasonable cost. Today, housing also relates to the fulfilment of physical, social, spiritual and economic needs of the people as it forms a vital place in every humans life. The main functions of the housing cooperatives include.

Figure 2 is based on the aspect of maintaining the economy by utilising the resources in the house, so that it can create a space for promoting innovative ideas from their household especially focus on women contribution.

The society here requires social entrepreneurs for creating opportunities and taking risk for bring socio-economic change in the community. The facilitation of housing cooperatives by social entrepreneurs is essential in the slum areas because the people there are homeless, poor, dependent and helpless. These houses can serve as a multidimensional model in the Indian community –through restructuring the internal and external surrounding of the house. These social entrepreneurs here could work as catalyst for change by developing new mode of cost effective housing cooperatives and opening avenues for livelihood in the slum areas of India. This innovative model works on three aspects a) welfare b) designing houses c) promoting savings and investments in the community in the slum area.

**Empowerment**

Figure 3 depicts a social empowerment model for slum areas by facilitating social entrepreneurship for the empowerment of the dependent and poor people of the economy by promoting Welfare, Housing and Banking cooperatives.

In the mid 1990s the State Government of Maharastra introduced an innovative strategy of slum development in Mumbai, based on demolishing existing slums and rebuilding the same sites. The redevelopment project over a period of 12 years: the Markandeya Cooperative Housing Society (MCHS) analyses the problem faced and the solutions innovated, identifies non traditional issues often overlooked in housing improvement strategies, reveals the complexities involved in housing
Figure 2. Role of housing cooperatives.

Figure 3. Social empowerment (Self developed).
production for low income group and provides solution for development process like water supply, individual sewerage connections, individual toilets, paved roads, street lightening and community development (Lakshmanan, 2007). Here, the model aims at similar types of activities for the slum people in metro cities of India.

Feasibility aspect of the model:

1. Operational feasibility-This model can be run in those slums where the slum area is more than 2.5 acres with the total population around 2000 peoples.
2. Technical feasibility- This model is supported by telephone/mobile towers, access to computer and internet services and other related technological instruments.
3. Financial feasibility – This model is based on the assumption that at least 1/3rd of the total slums population is working either as casual worker/daily wage worker/payroll worker including both non skilled and skilled.

WORKING ASPECT OF THE MODEL

Almost 50 years of experience in improving housing and living standards for the urban poor people has taught the development community that neither the government nor the private sector alone can provide the poor with the basic requirements for healthy urban living. Public goods are often considered the responsibility of the State. The social entrepreneurs may organise bodies like NGO’s and MFI’s to extend services in the slum areas of urban India. The unmet needs for basic services and housing in rapidly growing slums presents an enormous development challenge. Yet it also presents a significant market opportunity for private entrepreneurs. Here, we have considered social entrepreneurs in slum upgrading and identifying the challenges, good practices and raise opportunities for the slum dwellers.

In this model, the social entrepreneurs form different types of cooperatives and facilitate the activities through organisational bodies like SHG’s, NGO’s and MFI’s to empower the urban slum people to make their life independent and utilise the present resources for bringing a new leap in the society. In the slum welfare cooperatives, they work to increase the welfare of the people through providing basic facilities, recreation for children and micro self employment opportunities for the adults. The housing cooperative looks for restructuring the house for personal and occupational use. The banking cooperatives would work as promoting thrift, saving and investment of slum people for productive purpose.

Research methodology

It involves the descriptive study and considering the statistics data from 2001 to know the current situation of slum dwellers in India. The study is secondary which analyses critically their socio economic background and challenges. Many cooperative societies and social workers are working to facilitate empowerment and welfare in these areas by promoting social entrepreneurship. The study is case of slum dwellers in Dharavi in Mumbai, Bhalsawa in New Delhi, NochiKuppam slum in Chennai and Basanti slum in Kolkata. These are the top slums registered with over thousands of people with low facilities and income. The cases are considered from these slums to propose a suggestive model for empowerment of women and children and providing a path of income generation and self employment.

Impact of change

In the many cities of India like NGOs, MFI’s have adopted an approach to solve the current problem by demolishing and resettling the dwellers; they are working with the available resources to improve what they already had (redeveloping) through cooperatives (Khurana, 2004). Here, the women and the children are most sufferers and can find a place for their development and future prosperity.

The restructuring of slums requires the initiative of the slum dwellers to develop a cooperative society for their welfare through support from social entrepreneurs. Each fellow being with requisite skills, knowledge and resources can start the self initiative for the improvement in their environment. Example: One is imparting knowledge about health and hygiene and importance of cleanliness in India. 2. Take step for stopping child labour. 3. Starting tiffin services from home 4. Imparting education to children. 5. Utilisation of spaces in households. 6. Awareness about changes in employment opportunities and their rights 7. Mobilise their savings and investments.

Conclusion

This paper focuses on redeveloping the existing resources as it is one of the best possible solutions for integrated development for such a large population in India. In the past decade, slums have attained greater attention in India and several countries have adopted different models for slum development, which in the long run have shown limited success. The NGO’s and the Cooperatives are working on the parallel level with governmental officers for improving the condition in the slum area to make them independent. The women empowerment has increased in how they can contribute to growth in their life.

The social entrepreneurs here play a great role of a facilitator for taking risk and making a link with the organisational bodies to empower the common people
towards the achievement of societal goals. They are the key drivers for the growth in the community as they bring a revolutionary change by identifying the problem arising in the society.

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