

Abstract

Introduction:

Various studies have found that in the slums the slum dwellers lack in well-being in respect of physical, social and economic living conditions. The poor living condition of slums call for an in-depth analysis especially of health and education and appears to be very pertinent as study on the above mentioned components in a detailed way have not been done in the Siliguri Municipal Corporation area.

The thesis entitled “**An Enquiry into the Living Conditions of Slum Dwellers in Siliguri Municipal Corporation Area with Special Reference to Health and Education**” finds out the current status of living conditions with special reference to health and education in the slums of Siliguri Municipal Corporation area (SMCA) and also finds the problems of living conditions of the people in these slums.

Objectives of the Study:

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To make a review of the living conditions of slum population in India.
2. To trace the income and expenditure pattern of the slum dwellers of the SMCA.
3. To investigate the employment condition of the slum dwellers of SMCA.
4. To find the housing condition of the slum dwellers of SMCA.
5. To find out the basic amenities provided by the Government to the slum dwellers of SMCA.
6. To inquire into the health condition of the slum dwellers of SMCA.
7. To analyse the educational status of slum dwellers of SMCA.
8. To suggest measures for the improvement of the living conditions of the slum dwellers of the SMCA.

Significance of the Study:

In addition to revealing the picture of the living condition of the slum area of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC) the study also makes a comparison of the living condition of the people of Inner slum area and the Outer slum area of the SMCA which shall enable the policy makers to get some idea of the requirement of the slum dwellers living in the Inner and Outer slum areas and formulate policies accordingly to improve their living conditions. The study opens scope of more research on socio-economic conditions of the slum dwellers of this area for their betterment.

Research Methodology:

The study is based on both primary and secondary data.

Primary data is collected on the basis of questionnaires prepared as required for collecting relevant data for the study of the living condition of the slum dwellers of SMCA. Secondary data is collected from sources like books, research journals, articles, working paper, Ph. D thesis and published reports by the Government and private organizations. Secondary data is used for analyzing the living condition, status of health and education of the slum dwellers of India, West Bengal and Siliguri Municipal Corporation area. National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) reports have been used to compare the living condition of the slum dwellers of India over the periods 1993-2012.

The universe of the study is SMC area. The location of sample study is the slums of SMC area. The following sampling procedure was adopted: First stratified random sampling was used to segregate the total 154 slums of the SMC area into slums of Inner and Outer city slums with slum as the sampling unit. Second, four slums from each of the two parts of the city was selected using simple random sampling method. Third, out of four slums of inner city each one was selected purposively from the four corners (North-South-East-West). The same was done in case of outer city slum area. Thus a total of eight slums had been chosen. Fourth, 25 households was chosen using simple

random sampling method from each of the eight slums. The unit of observation was the household and the total size of the sample was 200 households.

Based on the above methodology four selected Inner slums are: East- Chittaranjan Colony (ward no.-20), West- Darbhangatola (ward no.-6), North- Dashrathpally (ward no.-44) and South- Sarbahara Colony (ward no.-28) and four selected Outer slums are: East- Amtala Colony (ward no.-37), West- Kulipara Rajendranagar (ward no.-1), North- Amtala (ward no.-41) and South- D.S. Colony (ward no.-34). The primary survey has been conducted during the period from August 2013 to March 2014.

Research Questions:

The study has made an attempt to find answer to the following research questions:

- 1) What is the composition of the slum dwellers – old migrants, recent migrants, non-migrants?
- 2) What are the basic services received by the slum dwellers? What is the status of basic services that are provided by the Government?
- 3) Which is the most important characteristic that best reveals the pathetic condition of slum households?
- 4) What are the sources of earnings and causes of low earnings of the slum dwellers?
- 5) On what item do the slum dwellers of Siliguri Municipal Corporation area spend major portion of their income?
- 6) What are the diseases and what is the root cause of the diseases from which the slum dwellers mostly suffer?
- 7) Who are the main providers of health facilities to the slum dwellers?
- 8) What is the status of primary, secondary and higher education, technical and vocational education among the slum dwellers?
- 9) At which level of education the maximum dropout of slum children occurs? What are the causes behind the dropout of the slum children?

Hypotheses for the Study:

The major hypotheses for our study are as follows:

- 1) There is significant variation in the average monthly household income of the sample slum households of Inner and Outer slums.
- 2) There is significant relationship between the monthly household income and family size of sample slum households in Inner, Outer and Total (Inner and Outer) slum area.
- 3) There is significant relationship between expenditure on education and monthly household income of sample slum households in Inner, Outer and Total (Inner and Outer) slum area.
- 4) There is significant variation in the average monthly total household expenditure of the sample slum households of Inner and Outer slums.
- 5) There is significant difference in expenditure on consumer durables of the sample slum households between Inner and Outer slums.
- 6) There is significant relationship between monthly household income and source of finance for medical expenditure of slum households in Inner, Outer and Total (Inner and Outer) slum area.

Data Processing:

Primary data have been analyzed in terms of percentage, maximum and minimum value, mean and standard deviation etc. In order to find the relationship between variables correlation and multiple linear regression has been done. The hypotheses have been tested using Chi-Square test, t-test and ANOVA.

Identification of Research Gap:

Though a lot of study has been done on slums it is found that there is no study in detail on living condition of slum dwellers especially in respect of health and education of slum dwellers of SMCA.

Also even though study on slums of SMCA has been done the period of research is different.

Chapter Outline:

The thesis comprises of eight chapters.

- Chapter-1: Introduction
- Chapter-II: Review of Literature.
- Chapter-III: Living Condition of Slum Population in India, West Bengal and Siliguri Municipal Corporation area (SMCA)
- Chapter-IV: Conditions of Employment and Income of Slum Dwellers in SMCA
- Chapter-V: Consumption Pattern and Housing Condition of Slum Dwellers in SMCA
- Chapter-VI: Health Condition of Slum Dwellers in SMCA
- Chapter VII: Education Scenario of Slum Dwellers in SMCA
- Chapter VIII: Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Suggestions

Summary of Findings:

The study finds that the housing condition in respect of structure of houses, number of rooms, toilet and bathroom facility especially in the Inner slum requires improvement. Water supply, street light facility in Inner slum and drainage facility in Outer slum need to be improved.

In respect of the physical aspect of the living condition lack of space and overcrowding reveals the pathetic condition of the slums and this condition is severe in the Inner slum compared to Outer slum.

In respect of economic condition it is found that work participation rate is low at 50 percent. The slum dwellers mostly work in the informal sector and they earn low

income. The monthly household income is higher in Outer slum compared to Inner slum but the inequality in income is higher in Outer slum compared to Inner slum. As the income is low the consumption level is also low but the expenditure on food, non-food items and also on consumer durables is higher in Outer slum compared to Inner slum.

The social condition in respect of health reveals that the slum dwellers suffer mostly from vector borne diseases but the lifestyle diseases are a cause of concern as recent deaths have occurred only due to lifestyle diseases. The proportion of lifestyle diseases is higher in Inner slum compared to Outer slum. There is greater dependence on private nursing home, hospital, dispensary and clinic by slum dwellers in the slum area compared to government hospital as it is more time consuming and treatment is not good; the Outer slum dwellers avail of the private healthcare facilities more compared to the Inner slum dwellers.

The literacy level is low in the slum area and female literacy rate is lower than male literacy rate. The overall education level is also low as there are very few slum dwellers those who have acquired higher education. Drop outs have occurred in government educational institutions only. Proportion of drop out households is higher in Inner slum in comparison to Outer slum area. It is evident that the living condition of Inner slum dwellers is comparatively poorer than Outer slum dwellers.

Suggestions:

A few suggestions are as follows- To make the slum dwellers employable job-oriented and cost-effective vocational education which caters to the requirement of the current job market is to be provided from schools to the slum dwellers. Also at least above the 14 years of age school curriculum could be modified to cater to the requirements of the current job market along with imparting formal education with the help of ITI or District Industry Centre (DIC).

The Siliguri Municipal Corporation may make a database of the slum dwellers of the employable age and take initiative to make the slum dwellers aware of the various employment and entrepreneurial programmes and schemes of the Government for the

unemployed and underemployed and also take benefits of this programmes and schemes.

The government and Non Government Organizations (NGOs) could set up special camps for treatment within the slums. More government hospitals with modern facilities to treat not only minor illness but also major illness like cancer, heart diseases etc. are to be set up. Free yoga centres may be set up in the slums so that rise of lifestyle diseases may be prevented in the slums.

It is found from the survey that sufficient supply of water is a problem in the slum area especially in the Inner slum. So rain water harvesting is needed and the water can be supplied to the slum households by use of solar water pumping system which will in turn also save electricity.

Underground drainage facility is necessary to be developed in the slum area.