Declining Number of Slums: Nature of Urban Growth

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The population living in urban slums grew more slowly than the overall urban population between 1991 and 2001, suggesting an exclusionary nature of urban growth. This was also revealed in the form of massive slum evictions and a low incidence of rural-urban and urban-urban migration among classes with low monthly per capita consumption expenditure.

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By showing a decline in the growth of slum population,[1] the government has claimed success in its slum-related programmes, though these claims are questionable. But lack of slum data based on detailed questionnaires and surveys before the 2001 Census makes research on slums an onerous task. Prior to the 2001 Census, slum data are available for only notified slums, which is not comparable with that of the 2001 Census. The latter cannot be disaggregated into notified and non-notified slums. In this article, an attempt is made to make the data comparable. The main objective is to analyse the nature of urban growth by looking at trends in the growth of slums. The article is organised as follows: Section 1 explains the methodology, Section 2 has a brief explanation on the census information on slums, and Section 3 analyses the trend and patterns in the growth of slums in our cities, followed by the conclusion.

1 Methodology

The main data sources for the study are Census of India 1991, 2001 and the 58th round of the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) on "Condition of Urban Slums". For the sake of comparability, we consider 2001 Census data for only 15 states and union territories, which provided notified slum data in 1991. As stated earlier, the 2001 Census contains the combined population figures for both notified and non-notified slums. The slum population living in notified slums in 2001 can be calculated by using the NSSO data (58th round), since it provides information on the percentage of slum population living in notified slums. This is done to make the 1991 and 2001 Census data comparable.

A correlation matrix has been constructed among various indicators, i e, urban population growth rate (1991-2001), slum population growth rate (1991-2001), slum population as a percentage of total urban population, urban sex ratio, total receipts per hundred persons, total expenditures per hundred persons,[2] scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population, each as a percentage of total urban population.

2 Census of India and Slum Data

The Census of India provided slum data for the first time in 2001 by canvassing proper questionnaires. Before 2001, the census relied on municipalities/urban local bodies for such data. The census organisation initiated the collection of data on amenities in notified slums of class I and class II towns[3] by introducing statement IV A as a part of Town Directory statement of the 1981 series. Slum data were available for 15 states and union territories in 1991 as against 12 in 1981.[4] Only notified slums of class I and class II cities/towns were covered in 1991; and 507 cities/towns reported slum population (Table 1). Slum population data were not available for 17 cities/towns in spite of slum areas in these cities/towns. Out of these, eight were class I cities. Slum data were not available even for the city of Patna, which had notified slum areas. This shows negligence on the part of local urban bodies.

In the 2001 Census, 640 cities/towns reported slum population. Out of the 15 states and union territories which provided slum data in 1991, 582 cities/towns reported slum population. This increase is due to

Table 1: Number of Cities/Towns Reporting Slums

	1991			2001		
States	Class I	Class II	Total	Class I	Class II	Total
Andhra Pradesh	35	38	73	44	33	77
Bihar	12	26	38	21	13	34
Goa	0	3	3	0	2	2
Gujarat	17	28	45	22	19	41
Haryana	11	11	22	20	2	22
Karnataka	16	20	36	22	13	35
Kerala	7	7	14	7	6	13
Madhya Pradesh	24	26	50	30	25	55
Maharashtra	30	15	45	39	22	61
Rajasthan	12	9	21	14	12	26
Tamil Nadu	21	37	58	25	38	63
Uttar Pradesh	30	28	58	50	25	75
West Bengal	29	11	40	47	12	59
Delhi*				7	9	16
Pondicherry	2	1	3	2	1	3
Total	246	260	507	350	232	582

For comparability, the newly formed states (Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal) are included in their maternal states in 2001.
* Combined population figure was provided for Delhi in the 1991 Census.
Source: Constructed from data provided by the Census of India 1991 and 2001.

the increase in the number of class I cities. Interestingly, the number of class II towns reporting slums declined from 260 in 1991 to 232 in 2001. This decline is mainly due to a very low percentage of slum population in these towns in 1991 and not reporting of slum population in 2001, which may be due to slum clearance in these towns or negligence in data collection in 2001 Census. Interestingly, some cities/towns which reported slum population in 1991 did not report the same in 2001. Further, the 2001 Census has some new additions – for instance, in Gujarat, the cities/towns of Anand, Chandkheda, Gandhinagar and Unjha did not report slum population in the 1991 Census. On the other hand, Bharuch, Bhuj, Dabhoi, Dholka, Dohad, Godhra, Valsad, Vejalpur reported slum population in the 1991 Census, but not in the Census of 2001.

The 31st round enquiry of the NSSO (July 1976 to June 1977) was the first nationwide survey on the slum, but its coverage was restricted to only class I towns having 1971 Census population of 1,00,000 or more and two class II towns (Shillong and Pondicherry). It should be noted that undeclared slums were kept out of the survey coverage for the eight big cities.[5] Thus, data are neither additive over all cities nor comparable across the cities belonging to these two groups. According to the 31st round, 15.7% of the total population of class I cities, including Shillong and Pondicherry (class II towns) and excluding the eight big cities with population of one million or more, lived in slum areas. Nearly 17% of the total population of these big cities lived in declared slums. NSSO started conducting systematic surveys of slums in its 49th round on "Slums in India" (January 1993 to June 1993). Interestingly, slums in the rural areas were also included in its coverage. The third nationwide survey of slums was conducted by the NSSO in its 58th round (July 2002-December 2002). In the 49th round, 598 sample slums in urban areas and 2,928 urban blocks were taken, while the figures for the 58th round were 692 slums and 3,538 urban blocks.

3 Trends in Slum Growth

A calculation based on procedures mentioned in the methodology section shows a decline in the notified slum population as a percentage of the total urban population of cities/towns reporting slums from 18.4% in 1991 to 14.2% in 2001 (Table 2). This decline in the percentage of slum population suggests massive slum evictions. During 1991-2001, West Bengal observed the sharpest decline in the percentage of notified slum population in urban population, followed by Delhi, Rajasthan and Bihar. In general, the states which reported high percentage of notified slum population to total slum population observed an increase in the percentage of slum population in urban population over the period 1991-2001, i e, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Maharashtra. Andhra Pradesh reported 85% of its total slum population living in notified slums. The corresponding figures for Haryana and Maharashtra are 75.6% and 74.7%.

A comparison of the trends in slum growth rate vis-à-vis urban growth rate corroborates the above findings. Urban growth rate of class I and II cities/towns exceeded the slum growth rate for 18 states and union territories during the period 1991-2001 (Table 3). During this period, the urban growth rate was 3.67% and slum growth rate was 1.12%. This reveals that urban growth rate is exclusionary in nature. At the state level, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Haryana and Tamil Nadu are exceptions; observing higher slum growth rate than that of urban growth rate.

The above finding needs to be verified at the micro level of city/town. A correlation matrix is constructed among various indicators. There is significant negative correlation between urban growth rate and the percentage of slum population, implying that cities/towns with high urban growth rates reported low percentage of slum population (Table 4, p 77). Almost all cities reporting population growth rate as high as 5% or more and low percentage of slum population are class I cities. Sex ratio in these cities/towns was also low, implying that growth in male population was a major contributing factor to the high urban growth rate. Interestingly, cities with a higher slum population growth rate have a lower percentage of their urban population living in slums. This reveals that slum population has increased in those cities/towns where the percentage of slum population is low.

Table 3: Urban and Slum Exponential Growth Rate: 1991-2001 (Only Class I and Class II Cities/Towns)

	Urban Growth Rate	Slum Growth Rate
Andhra Pradesh	2.13	4.07
Bihar	5.58	-7.18
Goa	-1.39	-9.22
Gujarat	2.29	-4.82
Haryana	3.88	6.91
Karnataka	3.21	6.30
Kerala	1.02	-12.58
Madhya Pradesh	2.80	0.01
Maharashtra	3.59	4.03
Rajasthan	6.32	-28.63
Tamil Nadu	2.12	4.40
Uttar Pradesh	5.34	2.75
West Bengal	5.66	-3.71
Delhi	4.43	-14.69
Pondicherry	1.95	-7.12
Total	3.67	1.12

Source: Constructed by the data provided by Census of India 1991 and 2001.

Table 2: Notified Slums' Population as a Percentage of Urban Population (Class I and Class II Cities/Towns)

	1991	2001			1991-2001
	Notified Slum Population as a % of Urban Population	Slum Population as a % of Urban Population	Notified Slum Population as a % of Urban Population	Notified Slum Population as a % of Total Slum Population	Decline in Notified Slum Population as a % of Urban Population
Andhra Pradesh	22.58	32.24	27.44	85.1	4.86
Bihar*	15.57	11.51	4.35	37.8	-11.22
Goa	11.75	8.25	5.37	65.1	-6.38
Gujarat	11.59	14.7	5.69	38.7	-5.9
Haryana	18.45	33.06	24.99	75.6	6.54
Karnataka	6.13	12.73	8.35	65.6	2.22
Kerala	5.16	2.02	1.32	65.6	-3.84
Madhya Pradesh*	23.01	26.51	17.42	65.7	-5.59
Maharashtra	23.8	33.31	24.88	74.7	1.08
Rajasthan	12.23	16.88	0.37	2.2	-11.86
Tamil Nadu	8.51	20	10.7	53.5	2.19
Uttar Pradesh*	13.52	20.62	10.43	50.6	-3.09
West Bengal	36.04	27.11	14.12	52.1	-21.92
Delhi	24.98	18	3.69	20.5	-21.29
Pondicherry	10.25	14.26	4.14	29	-6.11
Total	18.38	23.4	14.24	60.85	-4.14

* Population of newly formed states (Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal) is included in their maternal states' population in 2001.
Source: Constructed by the data provided by the Census of India 1991 and 2001.

We observe a positive correlation between the percentage of slum population and the percentage of scheduled caste population implying that slum phenomenon is interlinked with socio-economic deprivation. Lack of significant correlation among financial indicators (receipt and expenditure per hundred persons) and slum growth rate indicates that slum phenomenon is not related to the financial status of cities/towns.

As per the NSSO's 49th, 58th and 65th rounds, the number of slums has decreased from 56,000 in 1993 to 52,000 in 2002 and further to 49,000 in 2008. However, the number of slum households has increased from six million to eight million during the period 1993-2002, indicating increased densification of slums because of slum evictions. Interestingly, slum households as a percentage of total urban households decreased marginally from 15.3% to 14% during the same period.[6]

In order to understand the genesis of the exclusionary nature of urban growth, we need to explore the reasons for a decline in the percentage of slum population and a lower slum growth rate vis-à-vis urban growth rate. Massive slum evictions may be one of the determining factors for both. Slum eviction has become a common policy instrument of the central government, the state governments and local bodies. For instance, the combined number of slum clusters demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the Delhi Development Authority for the five years leading up to 2000 rose more than tenfold (Ghertner 2008). Around 51,461 houses were demolished in Delhi under "slum clearance" schemes during the period 1990-2003. Further, at least 45,000 homes were demolished from 2004 to 2007 (Bhan 2009). Slum-dwellers of Greater Mumbai also faced massive eviction. In this city, 90,000 homes of slum-dwellers, located over 44 localities, were demolished between November 2004 and March 2005 (Mahadevia and Narayanan 1999). This accounts for about 8% of the population living in slums within the jurisdiction of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. Between 1994 and 1998, an alarming average of 72,000 houses a year were destroyed in slum clearances.

The trend and pattern of migration may be another determining factor. According to various rounds by the NSSO, during the period 1983-2000, the percentage of male migrants in the total population remained almost constant (about 7%) for rural areas and showed a slight decline from 27% to 25.7% for urban areas. Moreover, economic deprivation is a less important factor in the migration of men in both rural and urban areas. As per the NSSO's "Migration in India", in 1999-2000, migration rate was as high as 23.3% in the category with the highest monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) and as low as 4.3% in the lowest class in rural areas. The same pattern was observed in urban areas, the corresponding figures being 43.3% and 10.5%. Further, a study by Kundu and Sarangi (2007) reveals that the likelihood of falling below poverty line is low in case of rural-urban migrants as well as urban-urban migrants as compared to the non-migrants. Thus, it is largely the relatively better off sections which are able to migrate to urban centres, since moving to cities requires initial staying capacity and certain levels of skill. Certainly, better off sections do not dwell in slums. This may be a reason for the low slum growth rate and the decline in the percentage of slum population.

Table 4: Correlations among Indicators at City/Towns Level

	UG	SG	Per_SP	SR	TR	TE	Per_SC	Per_ST
UG	1	-0.004	-.102*	-.293**	-0.006	-0.013	.120*	0.039
SG	-0.004	1	.216**	0.079	-0.04	-0.046	0.074	-0.043
Per_SP	-.102*	.216**	1	0.032	-0.019	-0.026	.173**	0.082
SR	-.293**	0.079	0.032	1	0.039	0.032	-0.049	-0.035
TR	-0.006	-0.04	-0.019	0.039	1	.994**	-0.004	0.082
TE	-0.013	-0.046	-0.026	0.032	.994**	1	-0.018	0.074
Per_SC	.120*	0.074	.173**	-0.049	-0.004	-0.018	1	0.01
Per_ST	0.039	-0.043	0.082	-0.035	0.082	0.074	0.01	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Abbreviations: UG-Urban population growth rate (1991-2001).
SG- Slum population growth rate (1991-2001).
Per_SP- Percentage of slum population to total urban population (2001).
SR- Urban Sex ratio (2001).
TR- Total receipts per hundred persons.
TE- Total expenditure per hundred persons.
Per_SC- Percentage of scheduled caste population in total urban population (2001).
Per_ST- Percentage of scheduled tribe population in total urban population (2001).

Conclusion

A low slum growth rate vis-à-vis urban growth rate and a decline in the percentage of slum population in the total urban population reveals the exclusionary nature of urban processes manifesting itself in massive slum evictions and low incidence of migration among the lower strata of society. This finding is observed at both macro level and micro level of the city/town. If in situ slum upgradation and slum improvement programmes were reasons for the observed declining trend of slum growth rate and percentage of slum population, it would have been a model of inclusive urban processes.

NOTES

1 As per the recent National Sample Survey's 65th round on "Some Characteristics of Urban Slums", about 49,000 slums were estimated to be existed in urban India in 2008-09 while it was around 52,000 in 2002 (58th round of NSS).
2 These are related to municipal finance indicating financial condition of city/town administration.
3 Class I cities have population equal to or more than one lakh and Class II towns have population equal to 50,000 or more but less than one lakh.
4 Newly formed states, i e, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal are included in their respective maternal states.
5 These cities are Greater Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Kanpur.
6 49th and 58th rounds of NSS on "Housing Conditions in India".

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