

Experiences and Challenges of Community Participation in Urban Renewal Projects: A Case Study of Bhendi Bazaar, Mumbai, India

Authors : Madhura Yadav

Abstract : Urban redevelopment planning initiatives in developing countries have been largely criticised due to top-down planning approach and lack of involvement of the targeted beneficiaries which have led to a challenging situation which is contrary to the perceived needs of beneficiaries. Urban renewal projects improve the lives of people and meaningful participation of community plays a pivotal role. Public perceptions on satisfaction and participation have been given less priority in the investigation, which hinders effective planning and implementation of urban renewal projects. Moreover, challenges of community participation in urban renewal projects are less documented, particularly in relation to public participation and satisfaction. There is a need for new paradigm shift focusing on community participatory approach in urban renewal projects. The over 125-year-old Bhendi Bazaar in Mumbai, India is the country's first ever cluster redevelopment project, popularly known as Bhendi Bazaar redevelopment and it will be one of the largest projects for urban rejuvenation of one of Mumbai's oldest and dying inner city areas. The project is led by the community trust, inputs were taken from various stakeholders, including residents, commercial tenants and expert consultants to shape the master plan and design of the project. The project started in 2016 but there is a significant delay in implementing the project. The study aimed at studying and assessing public perceptions on satisfaction and the relationship between community participation and community satisfaction in Bhendi Bazaar of Mumbai, India. Furthermore, the study will outline the challenges and problems of community participation in urban renewal projects and it suggests recommendations for the future. The qualitative and quantitative methods such as reconnaissance survey, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, walking interviews, a narrative inquiry is used for analysis of data. Preliminary findings revealed that all tenants are satisfied for the redevelopment of an area but the willingness of residential tenants to move in transit accommodation has made the projects successful and redutant of some residential and commercial tenants, regulatory provisions rising to face challenges in implementation. Experiences from the case study can help to understand dynamics behind public participation and government. At the same time, they serve as an inspiration and learning opportunity for future projects to ensure that they are sustainable not only from an economic standpoint but also, a social perspective.

Keywords : urban renewal, Bhendi Bazaar, community participation, satisfaction, social perspective

Conference Title : ICURR 2018 : International Conference on Urban Redevelopment and Redesign

Conference Location : Vancouver, Canada

Conference Dates : September 17-18, 2018