

Migration, Labour Market, Capital Formation, and Social Security: A Study of Livelihoods of the Urban Poor in Two Different Cities of West Bengal in India

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Abstract : Most of the cities in the developing countries like Siliguri Municipal Corporation Area (SMCA) and Raiganj Municipality (RM) in West Bengal, India are changing typically in terms of demographic, economic and social relationship due to rapid pace of urbanization. The mushrooming growth of slums in SMCA and RM is the direct consequence of urbanization and migration due to regional imbalance, unbalanced growth process which is posing a serious threat to sustainable development of the country. Almost all the slums happen to be a breeding ground for poverty, negligence, and disease. Unpredictable growth of slums and poverty alleviation has now become a serious challenge to the global and national policy makers for the development of the slum dwellers. The ethical dimension of the poor in the cities like SMCA and RM stands on equal opportunities, inclusive and harmonious living without discrimination of any kind. But, the migrant slum dwellers in SMCA and RM do not possess high skill or education to enable them to find well paid employment in the formal sector and the surplus urban labour force is compelled to generate its own means of employment and survival in the informal sector. The survey data of the households has been analysed in terms of percentage, descriptive statistics which includes mean, Standard Deviation (SD), ANOVA (Mean Difference) etc., to analyse the socio economic variables of the households. The study shows that the migrant labour forces living in the slums are derived from the social security measures in both the municipal areas of SMCA and RM. The urban poor in the cities of SMCA and RM rely heavily on social capital amongst all the capital assets to help them 'get by' and 'get ahead'. Despite, the slum dwellers in the study areas are vulnerable with respect to other determinants of capital assets. It is noteworthy that Indian plans of anti-poverty programmes was in a proper place even after the neo-liberal regime, where the basic idea behind the massive shift of various welfare and service oriented strategy to poverty reduction strategy for the benefit of the urban poor with the trickle down effects. But, the overall impact of the trickle down effect was unsatisfactory. The objective of the Paper is to assess the magnitude of migration and absorption in the urban labour market. Issues relating to capital formation, social security measures and the support of the Welfare State in order to meet 'Sustainable Development Goals'. This study also highlights the quality of life of urban poor migrants in terms of capital formation and livelihoods.

Keywords : migration, slums, labour market, capital formation, social security

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