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ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AND URBAN INFORMALITY IN AVOIDING RESETTLEMENT A CASE STUDY OF KATHPUTLI COLONY

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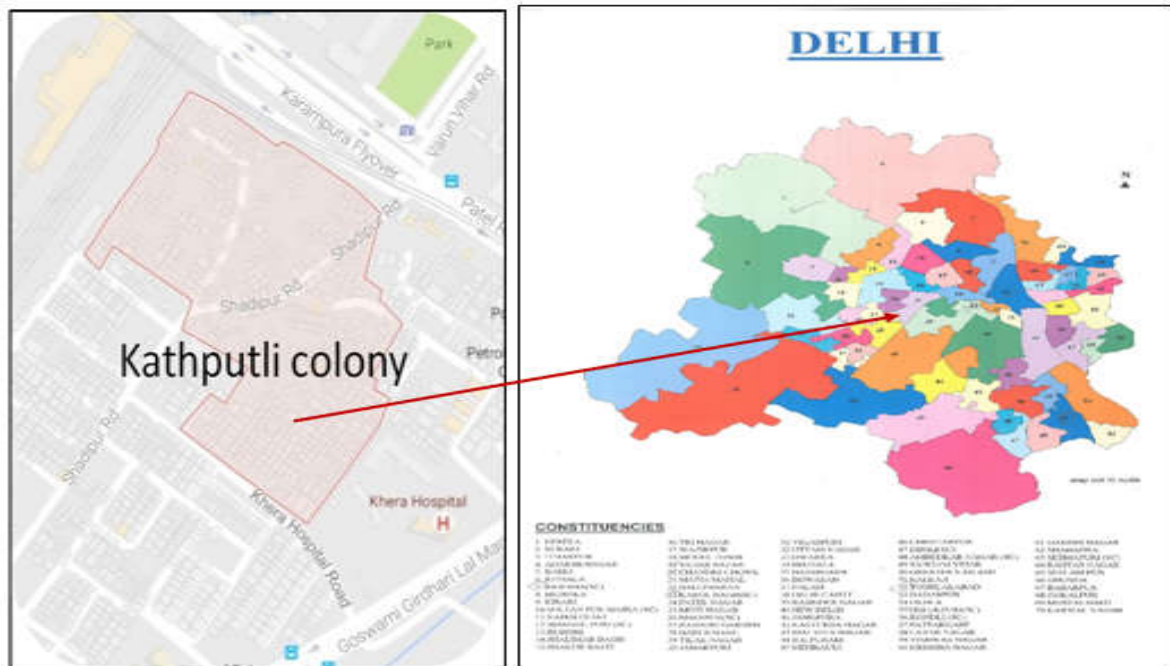
ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to understand the role of social capital and urban informality in avoiding resettlement project of DDA's first in-situ pilot project of Kathputli colony comparing with the Alaknanda camp where the dwellers were forced to resettle based on field work in Delhi. The study is based on the indicators of social capital formulated from the Bourdieu's theory of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986), urban informality and avoiding resettlement. The finding indicates that in the implementation process the Project affected population had to undergo various loss of both natural and human capital. It plays an important role in avoiding resettlement. Social disintegration is one of the major risks which affects and damages their livelihood and income generation. The most important finding is that dwellers are using legal means and government is using informal means to evict them. The study concludes with the recommendation that the responsible agencies should work for the wellbeing of the people trying to build trust by giving proper information to the dwellers and rule breaking for their own self-interest needs to be avoided.

INTRODUCTION

Informal urban settlements are a major issue in the developing world (Habitat 2009). People living in informal settlements have to face irregular situation in respect of planning, development and due to lack of tenure security. They are not entitled to claim legally and they can be evicted from these locations (Durand-Lasserve 2006). The governments across the world are trying to devise various solutions, and resettlement is one of the most common policy (Patel & Mandhyan, 2014). This study attempt to understand the role of the social capital and urban informality in avoiding resettlement project of DDA's first in-situ project in Kathputli colony. Delhi Master Plan 2021 has incorporated "slums dwellers right" in the planning process. However in-situ resettlement in one such approach of resettlement. The Kathputli colony is 40 years old slum, with families of puppeteer, magicians, folk singers, dancers, acrobats, jugglers and storytellers. There are total 3200 inhabitants living in 5.2 hectare of land in Kathputli colony.

The people of Kathputli colony are avoiding in-situ rehabilitation (Dupont, Véronique; Banda, Subhadra; Vaidya, Yashas; Gowda, Shankare 2014). The problem about the resettlement policy globally is that there is a tendency to avoid resettlement especially when the planning process is top down, without slum dwellers participation (Cernea 2008). The urban transformations in the developing world are particularly associated with informal settlement. There is a need to rethink and plan sensitively for urban informality (McFarlane, 2012; Roy, 2005). The expansion of the city is due to informal urbanization. The theory on which this research is based, is Bourdieu's concept of social capital. This research also focusses on the aspect of rule breaking, vote bank politics and brokers role in avoiding the resettlement process. Every citizen has a right to live in the city. The right to city depends on individuals to claim to ownership of the property (Huchzermeyer, 2010). Social disintegration is one of the major risks which affects and damages their livelihood and income generation. Social networks are important assets for the dwellers of informal settlements.



Source: Google map and Author (MapInfo)

Bourdieu describes social capital as “the actual or potential resources which are linked to a durable network which provides each member with their mutual support of the collectivity-owned capital with ‘credential’.”(Bourdieu, 1986). The social network helps to raise voices during vulnerable situations and struggles. Mostly all groups have an institutionalised form of delegating social capital and it is the basis of existence for groups which is mostly represented by one actor or group of people to represent the whole group for the collective benefit of the group. The individuals with access to a particular social network are mobilized and are utilized as a resource in struggle or crisis (Dijk, 2011). Governance in a city is significant to urban poor (Devas, 2004). One of the major issues seen in the governance is rule breaking by government.

The bureaucrats and employees intentionally violate the formal organisation policy or regulation to promote stakeholders (Morrison, 2006). The employees do this intentionally for self-interest. Vote bank, in modern times, is described as social protection and a symbolic form of conscious consumption by the political parties for canvassing their power. In India vote bank politics have increased in manifold. It tries to influence the electoral role of the slum dwellers. The broker plays a key role between the individual and politicians. The people take these gestures in fear but they vote more sensibly (Breeding, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this research is case study (Yin, 2012). This research is concerned about the settlement in Delhi known as Kathputli colony, where dwellers are avoiding the resettlement successfully since 2009. This study also examines another settlement known as Alaknanda Camp where dwellers were forced to move to resettle in different location. In order to investigate this research topic, qualitative method of data was collected by in-depth semi-structured interview. The in-depth interview was carried out and to analyse the interview qualitative programme Atlas ti software is used to interpret the data.

RESULTS

From the analysis and the interviews given by the residents and key informants, it was evident that the inhabitants of Kathputli colony were avoiding resettlement due to uncertainty pertaining to the implementation process by DDA and PPP. DDA failed to provide proper information and awareness among the inhabitants of KC due to lack of communication causing fear of eviction. The development authority tried to forcefully evict the inhabitants it was than they moved to court with the help of NGO. The KC inhabitants used legal and formal procedure in avoiding resettlement. It shows as a community they are strong in avoiding resettlement. In Kathputli colony people are avoiding resettlement due ineffective planning and its proper implementation which is causing fear of permanent eviction among the residents. On the contrary in Alaknanda Camp dwellers were forced to move to the relocation site due to misguidance of the Pradhan. They tried to avoid resettlement almost for 5 to 7 years. In Delhi, the slum policy focused on beautification and development of the city by clearing the slum for which they were forcefully evicted from the sites where they lived for decades without providing proper housing and services. The local leader misguided them and never informant about the notice given by DDA which lead to forcefully relocate to the new site. It shows there was lack of communication and support with the local leader which is the reason they were forced to relocate to new site.

Secondly, it is important to study the different types of social capital and how it plays an important role in avoiding resettlement. The researcher identified indicator to measure network i.e., number of membership in association, number of connections to other groups and type of benefits for member. In Kathputli colony the networks are very strong which is playing an important role in avoiding resettlement. On the contrary in Alaknanda the network is very week which is the reason that they were unable to avoid resettlement. In Kathputli colony two types of networks prevalent which is helping them by large in avoiding resettlement. The individual membership with the organisation is benefiting them.

The community is largely avoiding resettlement under the leadership of BBKT with the support of an external organisation i.e., Hazard Centre. On the contrary Alaknanda camp there is only external network prevalent. The absence of internal organisation is an important reason of weak connections. The external organisation tried to support them but due to the Slum Policy they were forced to relocate to the new site. For gaining access to any resources investment of capital is required with different types of availability, exchange rates and opportunities and interactions among different actors. The interaction among actors helps to trade different forms of capital and grant access to resources (Bourdieu, 1983, & Wacquant, 2000). The individuals with access to a particular social network are mobilized and are utilized as a resource in struggle or crisis (Dijk, 2011). The residents of Kathputli colony was very supportive and were mobilized as a resource. The people in large participate in the protest and public meeting under BBKT. They individual member was utilized as a resource which was very strong. On the contrary in Alaknanda Camp the people were not supportive and helpful. To provide awareness among the inhabitants the organisation had to campaign door to door. It was difficult to mobilize them for meetings and protest for their own rights. The networks and resources mobilization was weak in the Alaknanda camp as compare to Kathputli colony.

Finally, the researcher analysed how governance is dominated by informality. The researcher tried to explain the ignorance of the system so that people living in squatter settlement evict the land and move. The indicators are rule breaking, vote buying and brokerage. The bureaucrats and employees intentionally violate the formal organisation policy or regulation to promote stakeholders (Morrison, 2006). However there is a divide while implementing these policies due to bureaucracy (Dahling et al., 2012). In Kathputli colony, location plays a strategic role in increased real estate market/ high land value. The government is violating Delhi Master Plan 2021 for their own benefit and to support the PPP i.e., Raheja Builder. The land of these informal settlements are valuable resources and now these stakeholders are trying to grab these land. There is new strategy of land grabbing. These are financially backed by state authorities and sometimes tried violent ways to clear these informal settlement (Weinstein, 2014). The Raheja builder will use 40% of land to develop commercial complex which is against policy and regulation. On the contrary in Alaknanda camp as per the interview and observation analysed that government authority bribed the local leader. DDA demolished their house when they were gone for the work.

The total 370000 square metre of more land in Kathputli colony is required to establish all the basic services which was one of the important rule breaking as per Delhi Master Plan 2021. The community are facing severe crisis because of lack of basic services. DUSIB and MCD is responsible to provide basic services to JJ cluster. The biggest problem is ration shops were closed, no legal electricity, toilets were closed, MCD is not picking the large garbage dump which is the entry point of the colony and Karamcharis have refused to work. The government by these informal ways making their life vulnerable so that they evict the land move to transit camp. On the contrary Alaknanda camp had all basic services in their JJ cluster but in their relocated colony they are living in worst condition. They do not have basic amenities and almost 14 years they have moved to Madanpur Khader. In Kathputli colony it was analysed political parties come for their own

interest. They tried to give money in the name of welfare for their vote bank but the residents mentioned none of these political parties helped them. They mentioned that they vote logically. Vote buying denotes an exploitive political tool which excludes poor whom they purchase with small welfare and governance and social policy through vote bank politics allow community groups to use their votes instrumentally to get benefits from the state, thus democratising potential. The urban poor exchange their votes more logically. They also know to act according to their benefit but more logically (Lisa, 2014). On the contrary Alaknanda camp inhabitants did not mention about political parties.

Conclusion

At last I would like to conclude that, the in-situ plan of Kathputli colony seems very high-tech with full modern facilities but it failed as it was not in accordance to their livelihood. This plan is an attempt to develop the city according to the demands of urban elite and at the same time marginalising the dwellers. Social capital played an important role in avoiding resettlement. In Kathputli colony the social networks and their connections were so strong that they are trying to negotiate with the government machinery. As per the literature informality means informal people living in slums working informally but in case of Kathputli colony government used informal ways to evict them from their own land. The government is using urban informality for their own self-interest and stake holder's interest by depriving them from basic amenities which is acting negatively in case of Kathputli colony. There was a network of brokers but as per the research finding they were part of builder's lobby who were trying to divide the community so that they evict the land. As per the recommendation, responsible agencies are required to use participatory mapping and planning with the collaboration of planning expert and people from the community which will provide collaborative policy. The agencies should work for the wellbeing of the people trying to build trust by giving proper information to the dwellers and rule breaking for their own self-interest needs to be avoided.

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