

SPATIAL DIMENSION OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION. AN IMPERIAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE SLUMS OF DHAKA CITY

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Abstract

Slums are perceived to be heavily populated urban areas characterized by inadequate access to safe water, hygienic sanitation, urban roads, legitimate power supply, poor structural quality of housing and insecure residential status. From that perspective, slums are the clear manifestation of urban poverty. This article emphasize that slums are not just simple expression of poverty but there is a causal process that leads to poverty and inequality. It is not a mere static state describing the inequality rather it is an outcome of structural process causing a chain of disadvantages and deprivations of the community living in the slums. In view of this, this article commences by outlining the key elements of housing in slums and through empirical findings summarises how each of these elements relate to the processes and outcomes involved in social exclusion. Findings from questionnaire interview and in-depth discussion with slum dwellers tend to lend credence to the drawing of a spatial margin of social exclusion. It is understood that slum dwellers' socio-economic deprivation is closely related with housing elements that further leads to their segregation in social and economic life - thus invigorating a vicious cycle. The systematic exploitation, material deprivation leads to social and economic marginalization of the poor people and results in greater vulnerability of this marginalized group.

Keywords: Social Exclusion, spatial dimension, slums, Dhaka, Housing.

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