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Title: The Built Environment and Social Order: A Study of Selected Resettlement Colonies in Delhi

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Abstract

Background: Studies have revealed that architecture controls and regulates the relations between human and their environment. It therefore participates in creating a meaningful frame for the activities of a human being. In the context of architecture and city design, the physical environment is generally known as the built environment and it refers to the buildings and spaces between them. This study has attempted to assess this premise of the built environment in relation to the social order of selected resettlement colonies in Delhi. As Durkheim argued, Social Order came from Social Norms. To maintain social order, people must be able to coordinate and cooperate to achieve a common goal. Deviance from this social order is called ‘social disorder’ or deviant behaviours like abuses, vandalism, littering of public spaces. As part of Relocation and resettlement of Juggi Jhopri clusters and slum dwellers, The Govt of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) with the approval of Government of India (GoI), from 1950 onwards, have developed 55 resettlement colonies.

Research Methodology: The generic objective of the research is to study and describe the status and interplay of the built environment and social order in selected resettlement colonies of Delhi and draw appropriate social work intervention strategies. Three resettlement colonies from this was selected using Multi-stage sampling technique. These colonies were studied drawing perspectives mainly from three theories (i) Structural Strain Theory by Robert K. Merton, (ii) Labelling Theory by Howard Becker and (iii) Broken Windows Theory by James Wilson and George Kelling. Quantitative data was collected from 120 households, processed and analysed in Statistical Packages for Social Sciences with the help of software; ‘IBM SPSS Statistics 20’. Qualitative data were gathered using Focused Group & PRA techniques with groups of boys, girls, adults and elderly, and analysed thematically. Along with quantitative and qualitative analysis, the study also used spatial analysis, the Geographical Information System (GIS) with the software; ‘ArcMap 10.2.2’ and ‘ArcMap 10.3’. Beside these empirical findings and analysis, themes in chapters are also backed with relevant literature and statistics. The ground reality of the built environment and social order is captured as a social construction of reality using mixed method research design i.e., both qualitative and quantitative method of inquiry as ‘methodological eclecticism.’ Descriptive research design is employed here to address the four research questions taken up in the study.

Results and Discussions: The three selected resettlement colonies are geographically segregated, socially marginalized and labelled as deviant and are deprived of standard and adequate built environment for all. The J.J Colony Bawana is located at about 12 kilometres from its nearest metro station, has poor public space, waste management, educational and health facilities. A considerably, 30% of respondents in Bawana practiced open defecation in the absence of adequate and affordable public toilet facilities for all. Waste Management, Public toilet, and water facilities are among the top three concerning issues of the built environment in JJ Resettlement Colonies studied here. The issue of social disorder; substance abuse, eve teasing, and fights were ranked in the top three among the nine most concerning social issues. The order of priority to address substance abuse and eve teasing in all the three resettlement colonies shows the standard deviation of 1.073 and 1.762 respectively. Despite all the challenges related interplay of built environment and social order, the study also highlights some positive factors from the field. Some major recommendations that emerged out of the study includes; (a) Ensure the participation of residents in planning and decision making (b) a separate and time-bound action plan for Resettlement colonies and slums, (c) a permanent social worker in MCD & team of Master Plan to ensure holistic development of colonies and (d) A group of residential social workers in all resettlement colonies to facilitate collaborative and cooperative efforts with multiple stakeholders.