

Understanding Urban Poverty: A Case Study of Two Slums in Mumbai

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Abstract

Poverty is part of a social process or phenomena which can be contextualized and historicized in the way it is defined. However the manner in which poverty is articulated and the poor defined, has direct implications for those designated as poor because the concept then becomes a categorical ground for distributing resources. Focus on attributes rather than on the process of the creation of this social category, leads to a narrow definition of poverty and thereby an inherently limited category of analysis. The United Nations Development Programme's Multidimensional Poverty Index goes beyond a traditional focus on income to determine poverty. The main indicators to determine overall poverty are: education, years of schooling, child enrollment in schools, health, nutrition, access to water and electricity, sanitation, cooking fuel and ownership of assets. The study of two Mumbai slums facing severe poverty is studied in the light of the above indices.

Keywords: Urban Poverty, Slums, Malnutrition, Poverty Indicators

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