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## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND LIVELIHOOD PATTERN OF SLUM AND NON-SLUM AREAS –AN ASSESSMENT KANCHRAPARA MUNICIPALITY -- KANCHRAPARA, WEST BENGAL

KRISHNA PRASAD KHATUA, SACT, Patharpratima Mahavidyalaya

### Abstract:

The concept, perception and definition of slums vary across the states, depending on their socio-economic conditions but their physical characteristics are almost similar. Slums are usually a cluster of hutments with dilapidated and infirm structures having common toilet facilities, suffering from lack of basic amenities, inadequate arrangements for drainage and for disposal of solid waste and garbage. The Kanchrapara Municipality has been selected for the present study as it has an age old history as railway workshop. The central query for the present study is to assess the current livelihood status of slum and non slum communities in Kanchrapara municipality. In course of time a marked growth of population has been observed and at the same time slum population has also been increased. As slums have a tendency to concentrate in the peripheral region of the Towns, Kanchrapara Town has also got a large number of Slum population in almost all wards and some have dominant areas covered by slum population. So economic, social and cultural disparity are distinguishing the status of the slum and non-slum areas. Finally socio-economic diversification are noted in this respect.

**Key Words:** Slums; Livelihood pattern; pavement dwellers; Marginal labour; infirm structures; hutments

### Introduction:

A Slum is unevenly and densely populated informal establishment characterized by substandard housing and squatter settlements. It also includes compact area of at least 300 population or about 60–70 households within its vicinity and consist of Poorly built congested tenements in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure, and lacking of proper drinking water and proper sanitary facilities. More generally, the Slum Constitutes an urban area (Dorélien et al., 2013), and the definition also differs by country (United Nations, 2014), state (Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, 2008) and even city (O'Hare et al., 1998). Recent research has also indicated that slums may be more heterogeneous than is often assumed (Goli et al., 2011, Chandrasekhar and Montgomery, 2009, Agarwal and Taneja, 2005); many poor people like pavement dwellers do not live in slums and are therefore not “counted” by the standard definitions (Agarwal, 2011). The definition of slum area (adopted by different State Governments in India and different countries) is based on Slum acts of the respective States i.e. based on legal stipulations unlike the definitions adopted by RGI and NSSO. The concept, perception and definition of slums vary across the states, depending on their socio-economic conditions but their physical characteristics are almost similar. Slums are usually a cluster of hutments with dilapidated and infirm structures having common toilet facilities, suffering from lack of basic amenities, inadequate arrangements for drainage and for disposal of solid waste and garbage. There are discrepancies between the parameters adopted by State Governments, RGI and NSSO. Generally the State laws provide for a procedure to ‘notify’ or ‘recognize’ slums but the stipulation regarding the number of households in the definition of slums, which is part of the Census and NSSO definitions, is absent in the definitions adopted by State laws which do not place a limit on the number of households for the purpose of identifying a slum. On careful consideration of the various alternative literatures available and keeping in mind the need to use a

definition which is suitable especially for public policy purposes, the Committee decided to adopt the definition used by the NSSO as its working concept. To reiterate, the Committee defined slums as: “A slum is a compact settlement of at least 20 households with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions.” The UN operationally defines a slum as “one or a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area, lacking in one or more of the following five amenities” like,

- 1) **Durable housing** (a permanent structure providing protection from extreme climatic conditions);
- 2) **Sufficient living area** (no more than three people sharing a room);
- 3) **Access to improved water** (water that is sufficient, affordable, and can be obtained without extreme effort);
- 4) **Access to improved sanitation facilities** (a private toilet, or a public one shared with a reasonable number of people); and
- 5) **Secure tenure** (*de facto* or *de jure* secure tenure status and protection against forced eviction) (*Un-Habitat, 2006/7*).

However, the usual trend of migration of world’s population is shifting towards urban areas from rural villages for getting better facilities, with an estimated 49 percent living in urban areas in 2007 compared with 43 percent in 1990 (*WHO, 2009*). United Nation Population Division (*UNDP, 2008*) estimated that by 2030, less developed regions will account for nearly 80 percent of the world’s urban population. According to *UN Habitat Report (2003)*, one third of the world’s estimated 3 billion current urban residents dwell in slums, or places characterized by one or more of the shortcomings like insecurity of tenure, poor structural housing conditions, deficient access to safe drinking water and sanitation as well as severe overcrowding.

In this research social and qualitative values with respect to their livelihood pattern are the most important urban functions which are highlighted in the Kanchrapara Municipalities. In this particular investigation observation and analysis are also adopted for behavioural and regional displacement ratio of habitation in the urban infrastructure. At that period of 1960 the first urban plan has been taken for modernisation of cities. Development ratio & livelihood pattern also divided the world into two major category one is the 1<sup>st</sup> world & the other is 3<sup>rd</sup> world country. The maximum differences are noted in relation to per capita growth of income rate, settlement pattern and also in population increase, so loss of social pathological issue and malnutrition takes a ranking section especially in third world countries. It is needed to provide lots of services that are why mal-nutrition, illiteracy, poverty such of this maintains to improve slum proposal for future establishment.

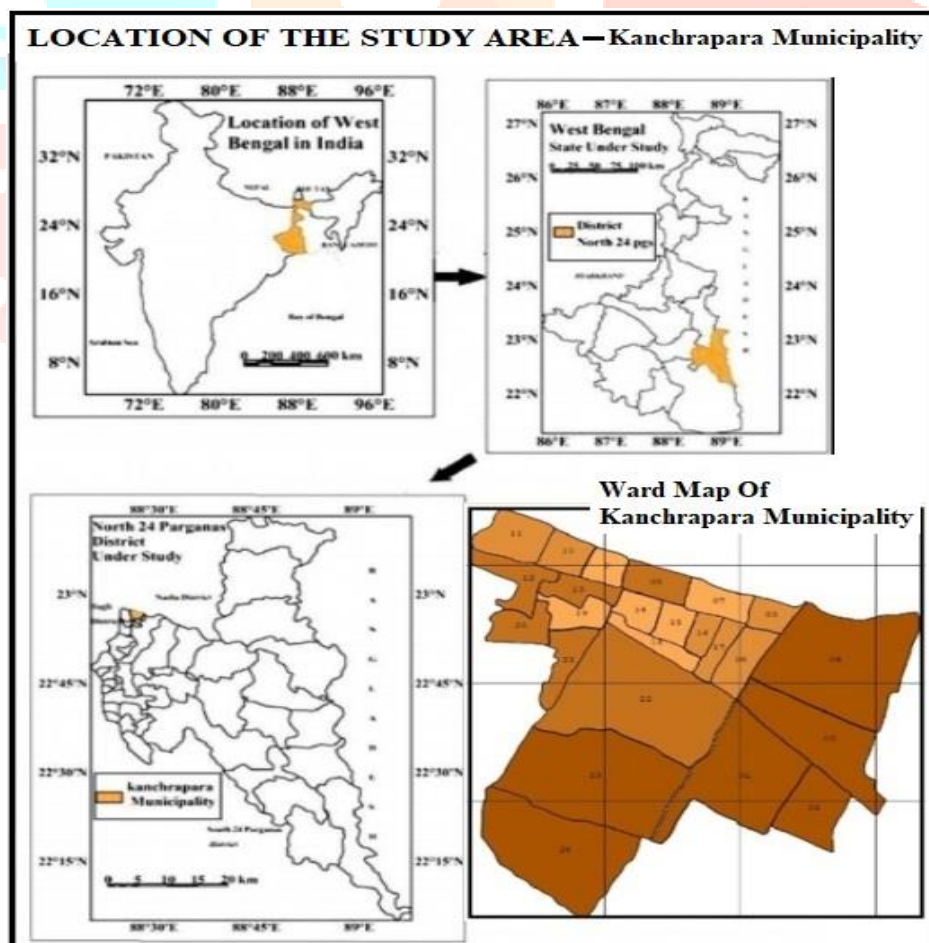


Fig. -01 – Location of The Study Area

## Location of the Study area

Kanchrapara is a sub-urban municipal town under Bijpur police station of Barrackpur subdivision in North 24 parganas districts, West Bengal. Kanchrapara is situated between 22° 92" N and 22° 96" N latitude and 88° 42" E and 88° 47" E longitude with an area of 9.07 sq km and a population of 1,26,191. The town is butted and bonded by Halishahar municipality to the west and south, Kalyani municipality to the north, Gayeshpur municipality and Kampa Chakla Gram Panchayet to the east. The bager khal running from east to west marks its northern boundary. 65% of the area of the Municipality is under the control of Railway Authority (Eastern Rail), referred as railways area and the rest 35% area is under state administration.

## Objectives and Hypothesis:

The central query for the present study is to assess the current livelihood status of slum and non slum communities in Kanchrapara municipality. To achieve the main objective some sub queries have been framed as follows

1. What is the current slum population status in the municipality at ward level?? Is it increasing over the year??
2. What is the educational and occupational status of slum and non slum communities in the municipality? Is there any distinct difference between the two locales?
3. What is the general health condition of slum and non slum communities in the municipality?
4. What are the present educational occupational and health infrastructural facilities available in the municipality?
5. What general problem do there slum and non slum communities are facing in their everyday life?
6. What major initiatives have been taken so far by the municipality for slum improvement in recent years?

*So, it has been assigned in this paper that socio-economic status and livelihood pattern of the Slum and Non-slum areas are markedly different from each other*

## Methodology and Data Base:

Observation, assessment, sampling and collection of data have been performed for this painstaking study and investigation. Apart from the collection of secondary data, Primary data have also been collected through household survey conducted in slum and non slum areas of Kanchrapara Municipality. Data have also been collected from the district census handbook and also from planning and Implementation section of the Kanchrapara Municipality. Kanchrapara municipality has large area and nearly 26000 households with more than 125000 population. So, a considerable portion of this study are supervised and conducted by the secondary data from Govt. and Non-Govt. sources. For ground checking purpose sampling techniques within the slum and non-slum areas have been taken into consideration for drawing the inferences of the study. In Kanchrapara municipality there are 24 wards and some wards have high population density. So, apart from primary survey, secondary sources of information are also employed for this study.

## Results And Discussion:

### Population – Character and Composition In Slum and Non-Slum Areas:

Kanchrapara Municipal Town is an old and significant urban area in North Twenty Four Parganas district of West Bengal and especially an age old famous railway workshop town where 65% of the area of the Municipality is under the control of Railway Authority (Eastern Railway), referred as railways workshop area and the rest 35% area is referred as non-Rail municipal area. However, as most of the area of this municipality is under the control of Railway Authority, some specific residential colony have been developed with population of cosmopolitan nature. From spatial observation it has been observed that a considerable portion of the Kanchrapara Municipality is represented by slum population. Nearly 26% of the total area is dominated by slum population who are mostly migrated from different places and for various purposes. Presently outskirts areas of the town are primarily captured by slum people due to various reasons.

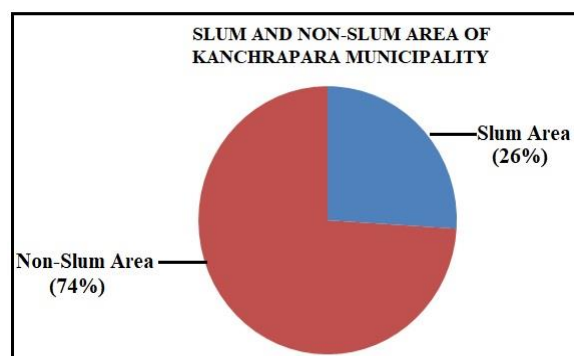


Fig. – 02 – Slum and Non-Slum Area



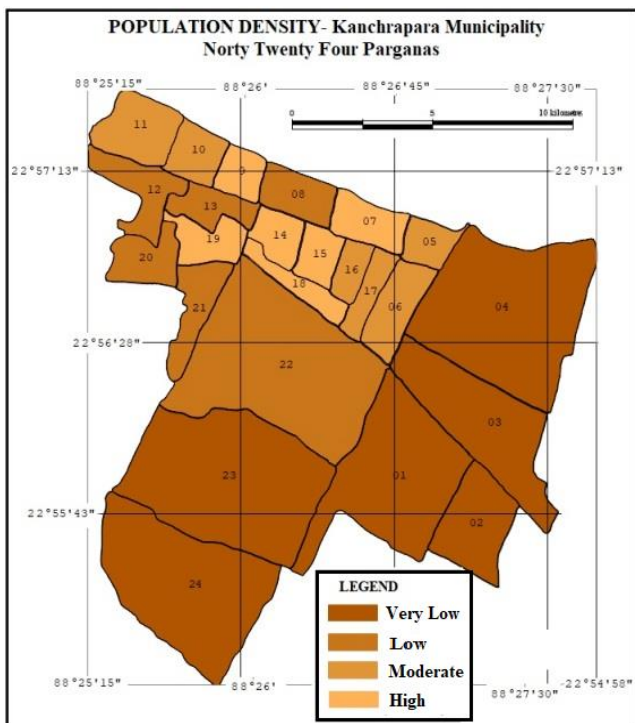


Fig – 03- Density of Population

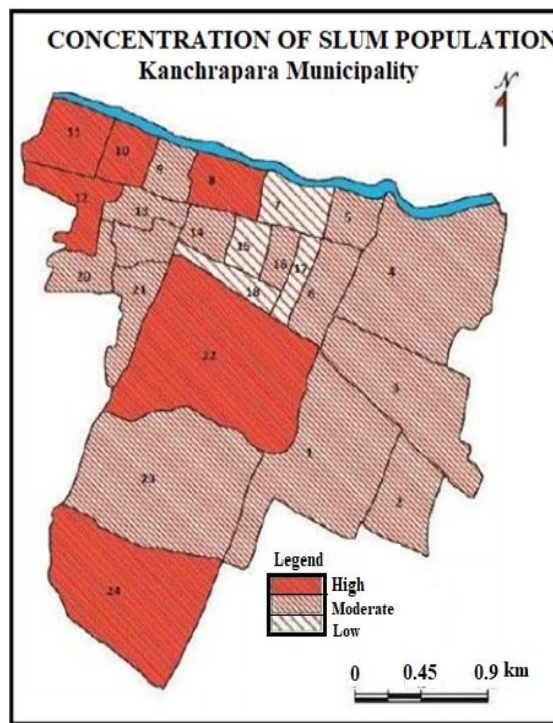


Fig. -04 –Concentration of Slum Population

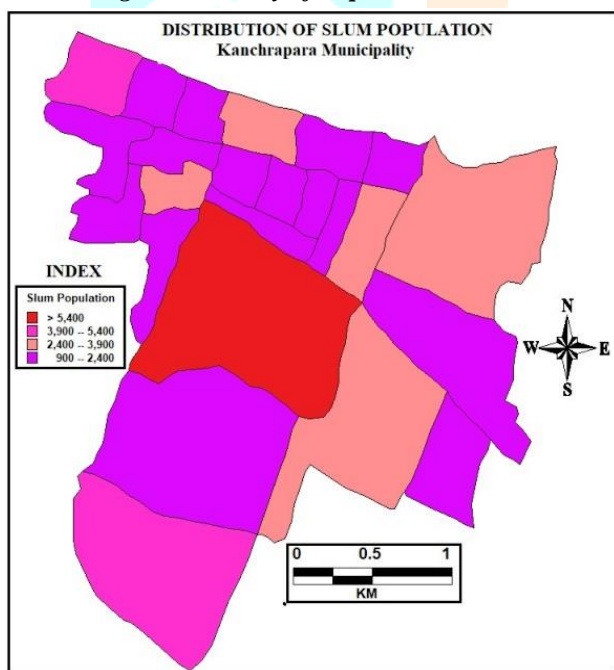


Fig-05- Total Population with respect to Slum Population

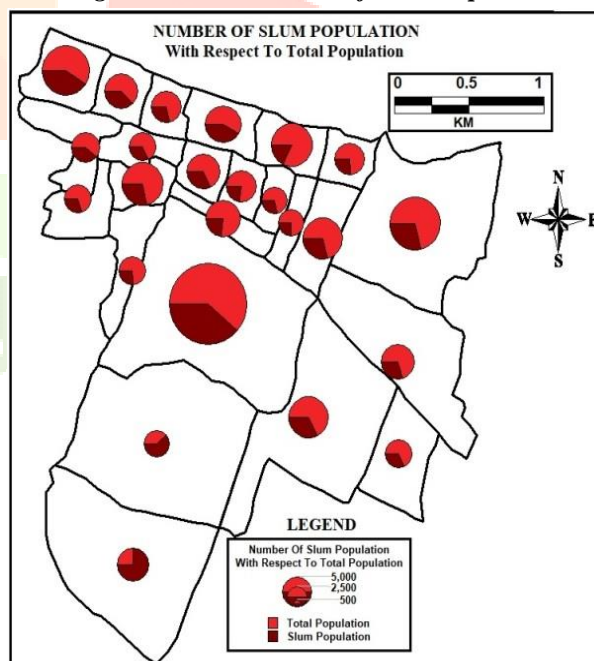


Fig.-06- Distribution of Slum Population

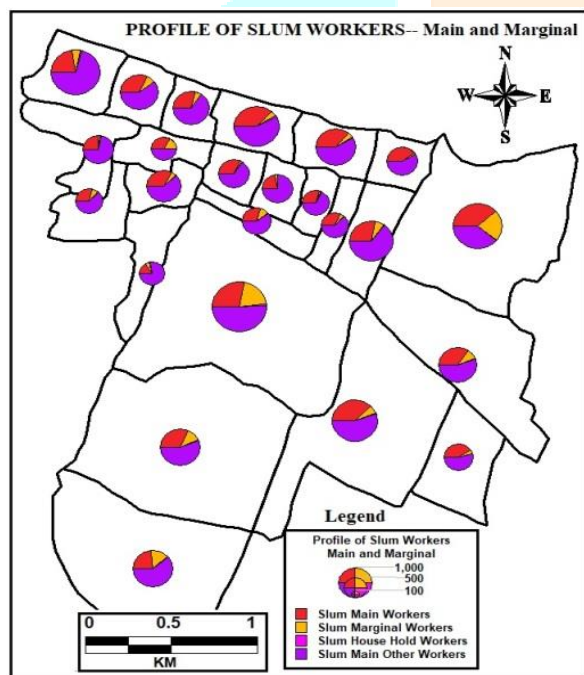
As the economic structure of this municipality is primarily depend on service sectors, most of the people have livelihood pattern based on tertiary activities. People almost from all throughout the states in India have migrated for different purposes especially for different services in Railway workshop. In course of time large number of people have migrated from different states of India and from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh. So, diversity of language, economy, culture and society are most common in this cosmopolitan town. In this diverse town a very small area is represented by local and old resident with Bengali language.

All most 70% of the area of this town is represented by floating and migrated population from different places especially for business and services. If we review the nature and character of the distribution and density of population and subsequent intensity of slum population in the Kanchrapara Municipality, a number of spectacular features are to be recorded. Fig. 5 showing the distribution of slum population and it has been revealed from this map that the non-slum dominated areas have lower number of population and slum dominated areas have high house hold density and moderate to high number of population are noted. Large

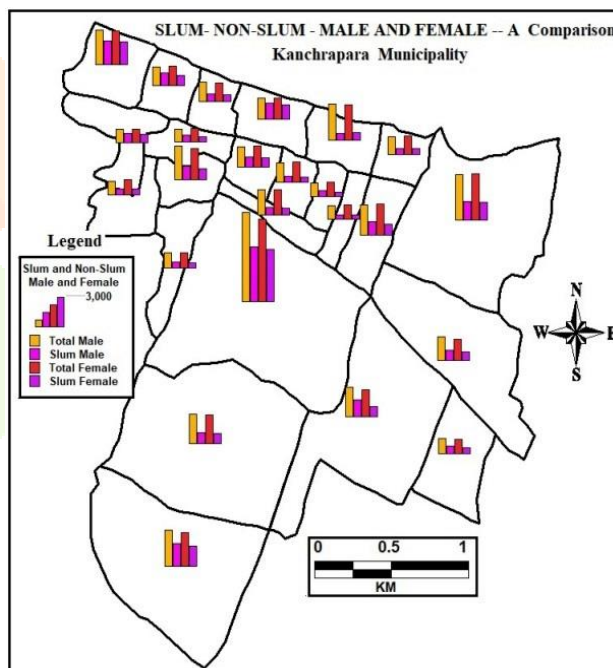
number of slum population are concentrated especially in the south and south-eastern part of the Municipal Town, where tertiary occupations are mostly concentrated. Slum population usually prefer outskirts areas of non-slum zones because they can get marginal occupation in this region easily. It has also been observed that in the non-slum areas male-female ratio is almost same in comparison to slum dominated areas, where numbers of male is mostly higher than female.

**Table No. – 01 -- Spectacular Features of Population Density and Concentration of Slum Population**

Ward Number(s)	Population Density Status	Status of Slum Population
01, 02, 03, 04, 23, 24	Population density is <b>very low</b> and primarily covering the marginal areas of the town, Scattered huts with unhealthy environment(open Toilet, common drain etc.,).	Concentration of Slum population density is high to moderately high. Very high slum density is observed in ward number 22 and 24.
08, 12, 13, 20, 21, 22	Population density is low, also concentrated in marginal areas with poor infrastructure	Concentration of Slum population is High to moderately high
5, 6, 10, 11, 16, 17	Population density is moderate with moderate facilities	Concentration of Slum population is moderately low, High concentration of population is noted in 10,11 wards
7, 9, 14, 15, 18, 19	Density of population is high with better facilities	Concentration of population is low to moderately low



**Fig.-07-Male-Female Ratio of slum-Non-slum Areas**



**Fig- 08-Main and Marginal Worker**

In connection with the population density, it has also been observed that the population density is moderate to low where concentration of slum population is moderate to high. Marked changes of sex ratio is also observed from non-slum to slum dominated areas.

### Socio-economic Status in The Slum and Non-Slum Areas:

A number of marked features are noted and extracted from the slum and non-slum areas especially in connection with the socio-economic in Kanchrapara Municipality. A considerable portion of the Town are used by the Railway workshop colony which are mostly dominated by floating population and primarily depending on the railway services. A large portion are used by them and slums are mostly preferring those areas as they can get varied types of marginal jobs in this portions of the Town. Though Kanchrapara Municipal Town has 74% non-slum area (Fig.-02), the social and economic disparity are very high in the 26% slum dominated areas. Non-slum areas are dominated by residential places with stable residents. Mainly nucleus of the old town has been found near the Hooghly river though number of infiltrated population is also increasing in these areas. In non-slum areas most of the people are engaged in Tertiary and quaternary occupation rather than primary occupation. Marginal Tertiary labour particularly in household industry are most common in the non-slum areas.

Fig.- 09- Main and Marginal Worker in Slum areas

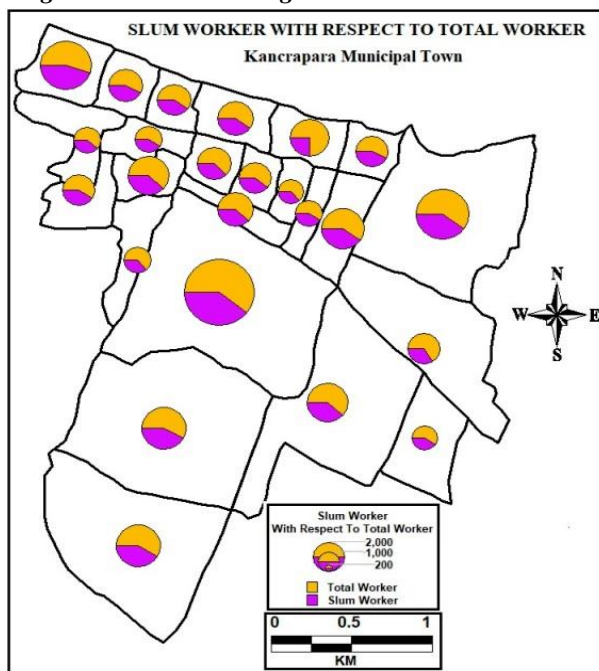
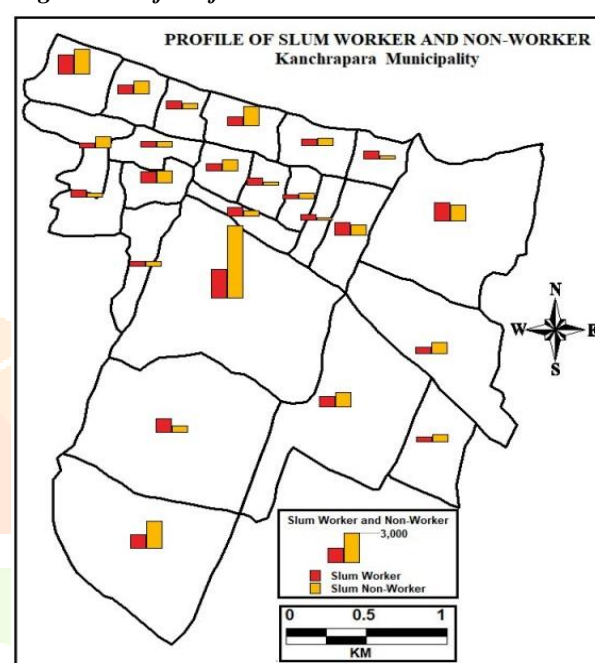


Fig.- 10- Profile of Slum Worker and Non-Worker



Diagrams 07, 08, 09 and 10 are clearly depicting the Scenario of workers profile in relation to main and marginal workers with respect to total population and slum population. These are also clearly explaining the profile of slum worker and non-workers in relation to main and marginal worker in the slum dominated areas. The distinctive features of the occupational pattern of the slum and non-slum areas which are primary determinants of the socio-economic status of the slum and non-slum areas. **Occupation is the important parameter of Livelihood pattern and economic condition is a major determinant of economic disparity, controlling human well-being .** In the study report occupational status is measured by two indicators through the field survey- a) first one is the % of working and non-working population and b) the second is the percentage of participation in various economic sectors. In the non-slum areas in the town percentage of working population is more than non-workers. It indicates that percentage of dependent population is moderately insignificant. The next indicator is participation in economic sector. According to field survey In this area the next indicator, that is the percentage of participation in various economic sectors is higher in others and marginal labour categories. The **others** category is mainly from the maidservant, Rickshaw puller, garbage collectors, van pullers etc., but considerable number of slum females are engaged in the household works especially as maidservants and nurses. Some people from slum areas are also engaged in the primary occupation. **Alternatively, in the Non-slum areas the % of non workers is higher than working population and those are mostly educated unemployed.** The economic sector is primarily concentrated in Tertiary sectors especially in government and non-government services . Other important category of occupation is the business and a large number of people are involved in small and medium range of business. Rest categories included the medical representative, lawyer, doctors , skilled labours, managers, small factory owners etc.



Ward(s)	Slum Literate	%	Slum Worker	%	Main Other Worker	%	Marginal Worker	%
0001	1408	2.59	1125	4.29	1476	4.33	105	4.44
0002	1425	2.62	566	2.16	769	2.26	35	1.48
0003	1785	3.28	685	2.61	1153	3.39	109	4.61
0004	4205	7.73	1895	7.22	2053	6.03	405	17.13
0005	1455	2.67	855	3.26	1135	3.33	18	0.76
0006	1825	3.35	1325	5.05	1835	5.39	106	4.48
0007	2825	5.19	1895	7.22	1984	5.83	55	2.33
0008	1825	3.35	945	3.60	1211	3.56	75	3.17
0009	1658	3.05	895	3.41	1177	3.46	65	2.75
0010	1985	3.65	915	3.49	1099	3.23	85	3.60
0011	2855	5.25	1955	7.45	2140	6.28	95	4.02
0012	1105	2.03	568	2.17	849	2.49	18	0.76
0013	1205	2.21	595	2.27	686	2.01	105	4.44
0014	1845	3.39	785	2.99	1283	3.77	19	0.80
0015	2045	3.76	795	3.03	1188	3.49	22	0.93
0016	1856	3.41	512	1.95	818	2.40	11	0.47
0017	1875	3.45	605	2.31	799	2.35	32	1.35
0018	2564	4.71	915	3.49	1384	4.06	72	3.05
0019	2895	5.32	1155	4.40	1786	5.24	48	2.03
0020	1425	2.62	815	3.11	1058	3.11	55	2.33
0021	1545	2.84	565	2.15	931	2.73	34	1.44
0022	7565	13.90	2958	11.28	3736	10.97	455	19.25
0023	2588	4.76	1455	5.55	1717	5.04	155	6.56
0024	2655	4.88	1455	5.55	1787	5.25	185	7.83
TOTAL	54419	100.00	26234	100.00	34054	100.00	2364	100.00

### Ward wise Socio-Economic Status Of Slums – Kanchrapara Municipal Town

Compiled By The Author from Kanchrapara Municipality

and a large range of occupation are recorded in the non-slum areas. It indicates the socio-cultural hierarchy and economic disparity are diametrically differing from each other. *The slum area is under the informal economy which is not secure and stable; inequality of income and diverse magnitude of social and economic structure are present here.* But the non-slum area have structured and formal economic sector and though there are hierarchy of socio-economic structure, but we can see prominent zones of socio-economic stratification. *Disparity of income level is also prominent between two areas.* The range of income of the slum population is more dispersed than non-slum populated areas. In the non-slum areas high income, middle income and low income groups belong and almost zones are distinct, but in the slum areas stable income groups are very uncommon, mostly belong to seasonal and insecure income level.

*In the Slum dominated areas urban poor have no easy access to education due to financial inability.* Child labour are common practice because instead of taking education, earning of some money are more preferable to those families. Lack of proper education and health facilities among the urban poor are major causes of their economic backwardness, which is a pre-requisite for employment, poverty reduction, and in the long-run sustained economic growth.

*Level of education is also a significant parameter which is distinguishing slums from non-slum areas.* In the study area primary survey shows that more than half of the respondents are illiterate and question of literacy is less significant than earning money of the slum households by any means. The highest educational qualification of slum dominated wards is H.S which is 6.51% of total population. In the slum dominated areas female Childs are mostly illiterate and early marriage is also a common phenomenon. Alternatively, the people in the non-slum areas are mostly educated and most households have considerable number of highly educated persons and percentage of population engaged in tertiary services are most common. Small and medium level businessman are also dominating in this wards.

In relation to Health and sanitation the review shows that the people are living in most vulnerable condition. Most of the population are suffering from air borne and water borne disease. Common toilet, dirty surroundings are common phenomena in the slum

dominated areas. Food, dress and shelter which they are using are mostly unhealthy and unhygienic. Consumption of liquor and social criminalization are common phenomena in those areas. But non-slum dominated areas have much better account regarding health, education and sanitation facilities.

## Findings And Suggestions:

Following inferences have been taken from the foregoing discussion based on various socio-economic determinants in the slum and non-slum dominated areas. Primary survey based on random sampling apart from secondary data collected from different government and non-government offices the revealing phenomena are –

- i) Kanchrapara municipal town is a cosmopolitan town and a considerable portion of the area is under the supervision of the Railway authority. So, social and economic disparity are common phenomena in this areas Both areas have slum dominated part and non-slum areas are more organized than slum areas in terms of socio-economic status.
- ii) There are considerable dispersion in basic services and occupational pattern between both areas, so social, economic and cultural determinants are also distinctive in nature. Unorganized economic sectors, unscientific health and sanitation, non-directional education and unplanned housing are more common in the slum dominated areas.
- iii) From primary survey it has been responded by the residents of the slum areas that they are suffering from many problems. Unauthorized electric connection, intolerable housing condition, lack of basic services, especially unpurified drinking water, health and sanitation, high concentration of BPL population, Social and economic deprivation, Child labour, Social crime, Consumption of liquor, bad road condition etc. are most common problems in the slum dominated areas.
- iv) Almost all slum dominated areas are suffering from lack of pure drinking water and bad sewerage condition. Community taps are the only source of water supply and more than 70% have no personal water source and acute water crisis and water borne disease are more common in those pockets. Regarding Health and sanitation more than 80% of the population usually practice unscientific medical treatment.

Kanchrapara municipality and Railway workshop authority have parallel administration in this age old town. So, slums are unevenly distributed in both areas with their own formation. Random field survey on different issues of their present situation and problems in different wards within the municipality has been revealed that not proper and effective steps and development policies have not been taken by the respective authority for improving their condition. But the secondary data given by the Municipal Authority are reflecting varied points regarding their development, though the ground checking is not reflecting the same. Here some special programme like Urban Welfare and Social Development Program and Urban Welfare Economic Development Programme and some parallel social well being programs like Community Development Society and Urban Community Development Network measuring lots of beneficial value like canteen garage food processing, small industry product manufacturing, co-operative banking, vocational training for rural development land acquisition of slum settlement, self-help group etc. which are in some cases most helpful and playing significant role to eradicate the regional as well as local disparities within this region. Some of self help groups are also involved in small business through selling their own product in the group of Urban Women Self-help Programme. A considerable number of people are getting old-age pension, widow pension and also getting subsidy under SHG scheme. The others slum improving programmes are *CDS* (Community Development Society), *UDN* (Urban Community Development Network), *BSUP* (Basic Service Of Urban Poor), *RSBY* (Rastriyo Sastho Bima Yojna), *USHA* (Urban Statistic House Assessment Survey), The present micro level study has tried to assess the social and economic status of slum and non-slum communities of Kanchrapara Municipality. It is observed during the study that the unplanned and stressful living conditions in the slum and non-slum persons have direct impact on the socio-economic and cultural life in this region. The awful ambience and unhealthy condition in the slum result in large numbers of undernourished people in the particular localities in the slum dominated areas in comparison to non-slum communities.



The significant issues and observations are-

- i) Unplanned housing, unauthorised electricity connection, lack of pure drinking water facilities are most common.
- ii) People in the slum areas usually suffer from several water borne and vector borne diseases like asthma, cholera, malaria, heart, cough/cold, liver etc. which are particularly due to poor hygiene condition.
- iii) in case of non-slum communities both man and women are much aware of adopting family planning programs compared to the slum communities. In the slum areas most of the people are under EBC communities and not much aware about health and sanitation.
- iv) In the non-slum areas several programmes are implemented by the municipal authority, but in the slum areas as their identification are not recorded, such programmes are not activated so easily.
- v) Facilities regarding several development schemes are implemented in regular basis in comparison to slum areas. Job facilities are also smooth in the non-slum areas in organised sectors. But in the slum areas jobs are not so classified and not organised.

However, proper policies and development plan from the local administrative authorities are needed to implement and awareness programme are also necessary about the education, health and sanitation, job prospect, child labour etc to organise their economy and society in place of some discontinuous and unplanned development programmes.

### Acknowledgement:

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