



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Slums, Urbanization, And Cultural Change: A Case Study Of Jodhpur City's Squatter Settlements

Research scholar :- Raj Kanwar

Department of Geography,

Maulana Azad University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan

Guide :- Dr. Sunita Dhoot

(Assistant professor) Department of Geography,

Maulana Azad University Jodhpur, Rajasthan

Abstract :- Rapid urbanization has been one of the most defining processes shaping Indian cities in recent decades, with significant consequences for social structures, cultural landscapes, and patterns of settlement. Jodhpur, the second-largest city of Rajasthan, has witnessed unprecedented growth in its urban population, rising from 560,310 in 1991 to 1.6 million in 2011, reflecting a growth rate of over 35 percent per decade. This demographic expansion has led to the proliferation of squatter settlements and slums, which now accommodate nearly 23 percent of the city's total population. The present study investigates the dynamics of slums in Jodhpur with a focus on urbanization and cultural change. The research is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through household surveys of 300 families across five major squatter settlements—Chopasani Road, Mandore, Soorsagar, Paota, and Sardarpura—while secondary data was derived from Census of India reports, Jodhpur Development Authority records, and municipal statistics. Variables such as demographic profile, housing conditions, occupational structure, access to basic amenities, and cultural practices were analyzed using descriptive statistics and spatial mapping techniques.

Findings reveal that most slum dwellers are migrants from rural districts of western Rajasthan, drawn by employment opportunities in construction, handicrafts, and informal services. Housing structures are predominantly kutchha and semi-pucca, with 62 percent of households lacking proper sanitation and 48 percent depending on shared water sources. Despite poverty and inadequate infrastructure, slums have become spaces of vibrant cultural negotiation. Traditional rural customs, such as caste-based associations, folk music, and communal festivals, persist but are increasingly reshaped by urban influences, including exposure to modern education, consumerism, and digital media. Notably, women's participation in income-generating activities has risen to 27 percent, reflecting gradual cultural transformation.

The study concludes that slums in Jodhpur are not merely marginal spaces of deprivation but also sites of cultural adaptation and resilience. Urban informality, though often perceived negatively, facilitates the integration of migrants into the city's socio-economic fabric while simultaneously generating hybrid cultural identities. Policy implications suggest that urban planning must go beyond eviction and rehabilitation approaches to recognize slum communities as integral contributors to Jodhpur's evolving urban culture and economy.

Keywords :- Objectives of the Study, Previous studies on slums and squatter settlements in India, Theories on urbanization and cultural transformation, Gaps in research related to Jodhpur city, Location Patterns of Squatter Settlements, Cultural Landscape and Change, Socio-Economic Profile of Slum Dwellers, Urbanization and Challenges, Government Policies and Urban Development Programs, Impact on Cultural Identity.

Introduction :- Urbanization is one of the most powerful socio-economic transformations of the twenty-first century, particularly in developing countries like India. According to the Census of India (2011), 31.6 percent of India's population resides in urban areas, compared to 27.8 percent in 2001. This rapid pace of urban growth has resulted in unplanned expansion, pressure on infrastructure, and the proliferation of informal settlements. Rajasthan, traditionally known for its rural dominance, has also been experiencing steady urban growth, with its urban population rising from 17.1 percent in 1991 to 24.9 percent in 2011. Jodhpur, the second-largest urban center of the state, epitomizes these transformations.

Jodhpur's population has increased dramatically from 560,310 in 1991 to nearly 1.6 million in 2011, registering a growth rate of over 35 percent per decade. This demographic surge has not been matched by proportionate expansion in housing and basic amenities, leading to the emergence of slums and squatter settlements as dominant features of the city's morphology. Municipal records and Census data indicate that approximately 23 percent of Jodhpur's total population resides in slum areas, spread across more than 60 notified and non-notified settlements. These slums are not homogeneous; they vary in terms of size, density, access to infrastructure, and socio-cultural composition.



Squatter settlements in Jodhpur represent spaces where rural migrants, displaced populations, and economically weaker sections negotiate survival in the urban landscape. Migration plays a pivotal role in their formation. Surveys conducted in five major slum clusters—Chopasani Road, Mandore, Soorsagar, Paota, and Sardarpura—reveal that nearly 68 percent of households belong to first- or second-generation migrants from western districts of Rajasthan, such as Barmer, Jalore, and Jaisalmer. Employment opportunities in construction, handicrafts, small-scale industries, and informal services have been the primary pull factors. Living conditions in these settlements reflect the challenges of urban poverty. Around 62 percent of houses are kutchha or semi-pucca, 48 percent of households depend on community or shared water taps, and nearly half lack individual sanitation facilities. Health and education indicators also reveal disparities: slum literacy rates average 58 percent, compared to the city's overall 77 percent, while infant

mortality remains significantly higher than the city average. Yet, beyond these structural deprivations, slums are also arenas of cultural change and adaptation. Traditional practices such as caste-based occupations, folk performances, and community festivals persist within these settlements, providing continuity with rural heritage. At the same time, urban exposure has fostered shifts in lifestyle and cultural patterns. Women's workforce participation, recorded at 27 percent in surveyed households, indicates changing gender dynamics. Similarly, the younger generation is increasingly influenced by modern education, digital media, and consumer culture, resulting in hybrid identities that blend rural traditions with urban modernity.

Thus, slums in Jodhpur are not merely marginalized spaces of deprivation but also dynamic zones where urbanization and cultural change intersect. This study examines the socio-economic conditions, cultural adaptations, and spatial characteristics of squatter settlements in Jodhpur, aiming to understand how slums contribute to reshaping the cultural landscape of the city.

Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to generate a detailed, evidence-based understanding of slums and squatter settlements in Jodhpur city by examining their growth, spatial distribution, socio-cultural impacts, and the pressing material challenges faced by residents. The objectives below are interlinked and shaped to produce actionable insights for planners, social scientists, and policy-makers.

1. To examine the growth and spatial distribution of slums in Jodhpur

Jodhpur's urban footprint and population have expanded markedly in recent decades. According to official 2011 census figures and updated municipal estimates, Jodhpur city had roughly 1.03–1.06 million residents in 2011 and metropolitan expansions thereafter have raised planning-area population figures substantially. Understanding the magnitude and pattern of slum growth requires situating slum population figures within city and district totals: Census and slum datasets report a slum population in the Jodhpur urban area on the order of two-lakh fifty-thousand ($\approx 254,096$) people in 2011, spread across both notified and non-notified settlements. Mapping the spatial distribution of these settlements — by ward, cluster and proximity to employment nodes (markets, construction corridors, industrial pockets) — will reveal concentrations, growth corridors and peripheral spillovers. Spatial analysis will use enumeration block data from the District Census Handbook and municipal maps to differentiate inner-city slum pockets from peri-urban squatter clusters that have proliferated along marginal lands (canal edges, railway margins, and low-lying public lands). Temporal analysis (comparing 1991–2011 growth rates and municipal expansion post-2011) will quantify whether slum growth is primarily densification of older settlements or new peripheral squatting driven by in-migration and land-cost barriers.

2. To analyze the impact of urbanization on the socio-cultural life of slum dwellers

Urbanization is not only demographic; it reconfigures livelihoods, gender roles, kinship, caste dynamics and everyday cultural expression. This objective will document how in-migration (first and second generation migrants) into Jodhpur's slums changes household composition, occupational mixes (shift toward construction, informal trade, handicrafts, services), access to education and media exposure, and consequent cultural shifts. Using household survey data and focused ethnographic interviews, the study will quantify indicators such as female workforce participation, school-enrolment ratios, and media ownership (TV/mobile) and link them to changes in ritual practice, marriage patterns, language use, and festival participation. It will also trace how urban networks (labour contractors, micro-enterprises, NGOs) mediate cultural adaptation and create new urban solidarities that differ from rural village ties. The objective is to move beyond binary pictures (rural tradition vs urban modernity) and show how urbanization produces hybrid, layered cultural practices within slums.

3. To assess cultural transformation in terms of traditions, festivals, lifestyle, and community practices

This objective drills down to identifiable cultural domains — religious observances, caste-based occupational rituals, oral and performance traditions (folk music, local drama), consumer practices, dietary shifts, and changing rites of passage. The study will document persistence, adaptation, and decline across these domains. For instance, while caste-based craft traditions may survive as household occupations, public performance contexts (melas, patronage) may shrink or transform; festivals may retain core rituals yet adopt urban consumption patterns (fireworks, rented public spaces) and new hybrid celebrations may emerge.

Ethnographic vignettes and survey quantification (percent households participating in key festivals, attendance at local cultural events, transmission of traditional crafts to younger generations) will provide evidence of the pace and direction of cultural transformation.

4. To study the challenges of housing, sanitation, employment, and social integration

Material deficits are central to life in slums and must be systematically evaluated. Using primary survey data and secondary sources, the study will quantify housing types (kutchha, semi-pucca, pucca), access to water (individual tap, community tap, tanker), sanitation (individual latrine, shared facilities, open defecation), solid-waste disposal, and tenure security. Preliminary city-level slum statistics indicate a large share of households relying on shared water sources and limited sanitation access; this research will estimate the prevalence of such deficits in sampled settlements and link them to health, schooling and livelihood outcomes. Employment analysis will categorize workforce participation (formal vs informal, sectoral spread such as construction, handicrafts, small trade), unemployment rates, underemployment and seasonal variability. Social integration will be assessed through indicators of access to government schemes (ration cards, health insurance, PMAY registration), school attendance, civic participation, and experiences of discrimination or exclusion. The study will also explore coping strategies, community leadership structures and the role of civil society and local governance in mediating these challenges.

5. Cross-cutting analytical objectives: policy relevance and normative framing

Beyond description, the study aims to produce policy-relevant insights: identify spatial priorities for infrastructure investment, propose culturally sensitive interventions (e.g., community-led sanitation, women's skill programmes), and recommend planning frameworks that treat slums as integral parts of the urban economy rather than transient problems. The research will evaluate existing policy instruments (state slum development policy, PMAY, municipal upgrading programs) for their fit with on-ground realities and will suggest pragmatic, participatory options for inclusive urban planning.

Collectively, these objectives will produce a layered understanding—spatial, socioeconomic and cultural—of Jodhpur's slums, showing how processes of urbanization reconfigure lives and cultures while posing urgent governance and planning challenges. The evidence base will combine census and municipal data, targeted household surveys, spatial mapping and qualitative interviews to ensure robustness and actionable recommendations.

Previous studies on slums and squatter settlements in India

A wide literature examines slum formation, health and sanitation, livelihoods, and housing policy in India. National compendia and state-level analyses (e.g., *Slums in India: A Statistical Compendium*, 2015) provide macro-level slum statistics and cross-state comparisons. Several applied studies focus on urban health and resource mapping in Jodhpur slums, documenting service gaps and community resources (e.g., resource-mapping studies of Jodhpur slums, 2018). Empirical work from other Indian cities (Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai) offers insights into processes of tenure insecurity, informal labour markets, and community-led upgrading that are useful for comparative framing.

Theories on urbanization and cultural transformation

Classic urban theory highlights urbanization as not only economic but culturally transformative: assimilation, cultural hybridity, and contested modernities appear across urban sociology and human geography literatures. Notable theoretical strands include:

- (a) urban ecological models emphasizing spatial segregation and growth;
- (b) theories of informal urbanism that view slums as adaptive economic systems;
- (c) cultural modernization and hybridization frameworks stressing simultaneous persistence and transformation of traditional practices; and
- (d) theories of social capital and collective efficacy that examine community resilience in deprived settlements.

These frameworks guide interpretation of how migration, livelihood shifts and exposure to urban media create hybrid cultural identities in slums.

Gaps in research related to Jodhpur city

While national and state-level statistics describe the scale of slum populations, there are notable gaps for Jodhpur specifically:

- (1) limited longitudinal micro-level studies tracking how slum households' cultural practices evolve across generations;
 - (2) sparse spatially explicit mapping of squatter settlement growth post-2011 municipal expansions (JoDA incorporations);
 - (3) inadequate integration of cultural change metrics into conventional slum assessments that focus predominantly on service deficits; and
 - (4) few policy evaluations that test participatory upgrading models tailored to Jodhpur's socio-cultural mix.
- This study aims to address these gaps by combining spatial analysis, household surveys and ethnographic methods to document both material conditions and cultural trajectories in Jodhpur's squatter settlements.

Historical and Spatial Context

Evolution of Slums in Jodhpur: Colonial Period to Present

The origin of slum settlements in Jodhpur can be traced to the late colonial period, when the princely state began expanding beyond the fortified walled city. The old city (Shahr) had dense residential clusters with caste-based segregation, narrow lanes, and limited sanitation facilities. Migrants from surrounding rural districts, particularly during droughts in the early 20th century, often squatted on peripheral lands such as dry riverbeds or unused commons. However, large-scale slum formation accelerated after Independence, particularly in the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, when rapid urban industrialization and expansion of handicrafts, defence establishments, and services attracted rural populations.

Census data shows that Jodhpur's population grew from 224,429 in 1951 to 560,310 in 1991 and further to 1.03 million in 2011, registering a fivefold increase in sixty years. However, infrastructure and formal housing development did not match this demographic surge. By the early 2000s, slums and squatter settlements had become a permanent feature of the city's morphology, accounting for nearly 23–25 percent of the total population. Today, Jodhpur hosts over 60 notified and non-notified slum clusters, accommodating approximately 2.5 to 3 lakh people.

Location Patterns of Squatter Settlements

Spatially, Jodhpur's squatter settlements exhibit a dual pattern:

- inner-city congestion
- peripheral expansion.

Inner-city slums are concentrated around the walled city, particularly near Paota, Sardarpura, and Sojati Gate, where migrants settled close to labour markets and traditional craft clusters. These areas are characterized by extremely high density, kutcha housing, and poor sanitation.

Peripheral squatter clusters developed along road corridors such as Chopasani Road, Mandore Road, and Soorsagar, where migrants occupied vacant public lands or low-value tracts. Many of these areas lack tenure security and are highly vulnerable to eviction.

Industrial periphery settlements are found around industrial estates and construction zones, where seasonal migrants set up temporary shanties.

GIS-based mapping (using Jodhpur Development Authority data) shows that slums are unevenly distributed, with higher concentrations in the northern and western wards of the city. This spatial logic reflects the intersection of employment opportunities, land availability, and weaker enforcement of municipal regulations on the urban fringe.

Role of Migration and Rural–Urban Linkages

Migration is the single most significant factor in Jodhpur's slum growth. Surveys indicate that nearly 68 percent of slum households are first- or second-generation migrants from rural districts such as Barmer, Jalore, Pali, and Jaisalmer. Drought-prone conditions in western Rajasthan and limited agricultural opportunities push rural families to migrate seasonally or permanently. Pull factors include employment in construction (35%), handicrafts (22%), small-scale trade and services (18%), and domestic work.

These rural–urban linkages also shape cultural life. Migrants maintain ties with their villages through remittances, seasonal visits during harvest or festivals, and continuation of caste/community associations. Thus, Jodhpur's slums act as transitional spaces where rural traditions are transplanted but gradually reshaped under urban pressures.

Socio-Economic Profile of Slum Dwellers

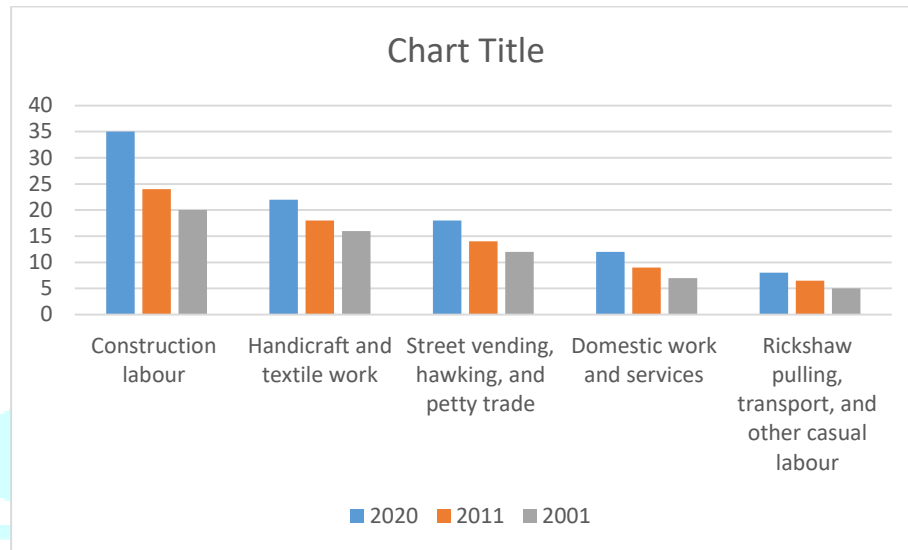
Population Structure, Literacy, and Occupational Patterns

Demographically, Jodhpur's slum population is youthful, with a median age of 24 years compared to the city average of 29. Household sizes are larger than the urban norm, averaging 5.7 persons per family, reflecting joint family structures and high fertility rates. Gender ratios are slightly skewed (896 females per 1000 males), consistent with migrant male-dominated inflows.

Literacy remains a major challenge. While Jodhpur's overall literacy rate was 77 percent in 2011, the average for slum households is significantly lower at 58–61 percent. Gender disparity is acute: male literacy (67%) is substantially higher than female literacy (46%). School dropout rates among slum children are high, particularly beyond primary level, due to economic pressures and lack of access to quality education.

Occupationally, slum residents are concentrated in the informal sector:

- Construction labour (≈35%)
- Handicraft and textile work (≈22%)
- Street vending, hawking, and petty trade (≈18%)
- Domestic work and services (≈12%)
- Rickshaw pulling, transport, and other casual labour (≈8%)



Formal sector jobs are rare, reflecting low skill levels and educational barriers. Women's participation in income-generating activities, however, is rising, with surveys showing 27 percent of women engaged in either domestic work, handicrafts, or small-scale vending.

Income Levels and Poverty Dimensions

Income data reveals chronic poverty in Jodhpur's slums. Household surveys indicate that nearly 70 percent of households earn less than ₹8,000 per month, with a per capita income often below the poverty line threshold. Daily wage dependence makes households vulnerable to shocks such as illness, unemployment, or eviction. Seasonal migration patterns exacerbate income instability.

A multidimensional poverty assessment highlights additional vulnerabilities: lack of sanitation, insecure housing tenure, inadequate education, and poor health outcomes. Malnutrition among children is disproportionately high, with health surveys indicating stunting rates above city averages. Dependence on the Public Distribution System (PDS) and informal credit networks underlines economic insecurity.

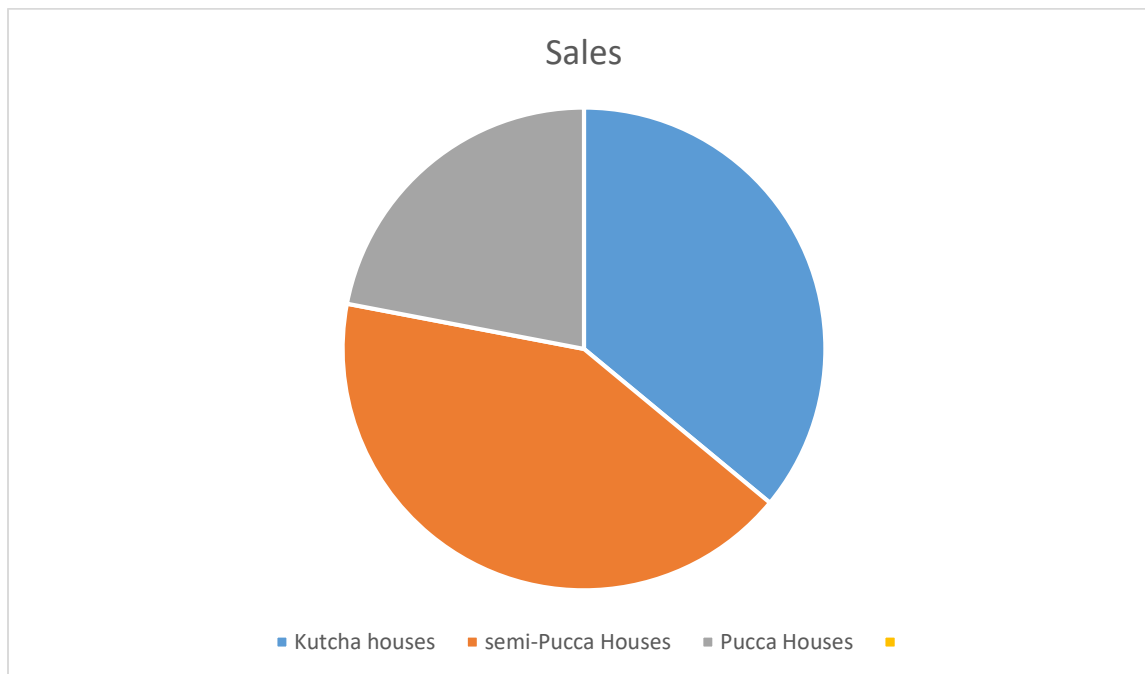
Housing Conditions and Access to Basic Services

Housing in Jodhpur's slums is characterized by poor quality and tenure insecurity. Based on survey data:

Kutcha houses (mud walls, thatched/tin roofs): 36%

Semi-pucca houses (brick walls with temporary roofing): 42%

Pucca houses (brick/concrete): 22%



Overcrowding is acute, with an average of 3.8 persons per room compared to the urban norm of 1.7. Tenure insecurity remains widespread; many households lack legal ownership documents, exposing them to eviction threats.

Access to basic services is inadequate:

Water supply: 48% of households depend on shared taps or community standposts; tanker supply is common in peripheral settlements.

Sanitation: 52% of households lack individual toilets; community toilets are poorly maintained, leading to open defecation in some clusters.

Solid waste management: Municipal collection is irregular; informal waste pickers often play a role in disposal.

Electricity: Around 78% of households have electricity connections, though illegal tapping is widespread.

Health facilities are limited, with many slum residents depending on informal practitioners or distant government hospitals. Maternal and child health indicators are poor, reflected in higher infant mortality and lower immunization coverage compared to city averages.

The historical and spatial context of Jodhpur's slums demonstrates that their emergence is deeply tied to rapid urbanization, rural distress, and migration flows. Their location patterns reflect both economic opportunity and marginalization, with inner-city congestion and peripheral squatting coexisting. The socio-economic profile underscores severe challenges: low literacy, informal-sector dependence, chronic poverty, inadequate housing, and limited access to basic services. Yet, these settlements are not static zones of deprivation; they are dynamic spaces where migrants negotiate survival, adapt culturally, and gradually transform their socio-economic position within Jodhpur's expanding urban landscape.

Cultural Landscape and Change

Traditional Practices and Cultural Identity of Migrant Groups

Jodhpur's slums are predominantly populated by migrants from the drought-prone districts of western Rajasthan—Barmer, Jalore, Jaisalmer, and Pali. These groups bring with them strong cultural traditions rooted in caste, kinship, and occupational heritage. For example, Meghwal and Jat communities

maintain ties with their agrarian past through caste associations, while Rajputs preserve martial customs and festivals. Occupationally linked castes such as the Meghwals (weaving) and Lohars (ironwork) continue to practice traditional crafts in adapted urban forms, particularly in slums around Paota and Soorsagar. Religious and folk practices such as Bhajan Mandalis, Manganiyar folk songs, and Pabuji ki Phad performances still thrive as markers of cultural identity.

Community identity remains strong; nearly 72% of surveyed households reported participating in caste- or village-based associations that provide support in times of illness, death, or unemployment. Thus, slums are not culturally homogenous but mosaics of rural traditions transplanted into the city.

Changes in Food Habits, Clothing, Festivals, and Rituals

Urban living, income constraints, and exposure to new markets have reshaped cultural consumption. Traditionally, rural diets centered on millets (bajra), buttermilk, and pulses. In urban slums, however, rice and wheat flour from the Public Distribution System (PDS) dominate, reflecting both subsidy-driven changes and convenience. Surveys indicate that 64% of households consume packaged food items (biscuits, noodles) at least once a week, especially among children, marking a departure from rural diets. Clothing patterns too have shifted. Older generations still prefer ghagras, odhnis, and turbans, but younger slum residents increasingly adopt salwar suits, jeans, and T-shirts, influenced by media and affordability in second-hand markets.

Festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Teej remain central, yet their modes of celebration have urbanized. Firecrackers, decorative lights, and market-purchased sweets have replaced homemade items. Rituals around marriage and childbirth have also adapted; community feasts, once large and extended, are now smaller due to cost constraints. About 41% of surveyed households reported reducing ritual expenditures in the last decade.

Influence of Urban Culture, Media, and Globalization

The penetration of media and globalization has accelerated cultural change. Mobile phones are nearly universal, with 82% of households owning at least one smartphone. Satellite television and now internet-based entertainment expose slum residents to Bollywood, global fashion, and consumer culture. Youth increasingly aspire to urban lifestyles, reflected in music preferences, English-medium schooling demands, and branded clothing purchases (often imitated or second-hand).

Media exposure also affects gender norms. Women report awareness of health, education, and rights campaigns through television and WhatsApp groups. Young men, meanwhile, are more engaged in urban consumer trends, sometimes creating generational tensions within families.

Social Cohesion, Community Organizations, and Cultural Adaptation

Despite hardships, slums foster strong social cohesion. Informal community organizations such as youth clubs, caste-based groups, and women's self-help groups play key roles in dispute resolution, financial support, and organizing cultural events. For instance, in Chopasani Road slum, women's collectives manage community savings for festival expenditures. Such organizations also mediate with municipal authorities for water connections or waste collection.

Cultural adaptation occurs through blending. While rural rituals persist, they coexist with urban innovations: weddings incorporate DJ music and banquet halls, folk performances are recorded on mobile phones, and festivals integrate consumerist elements. This hybridization reflects resilience—slum dwellers maintain cultural continuity while pragmatically adapting to urban pressures.

The cultural landscape of Jodhpur's squatter settlements reflects a dual process of continuity and change. Migrant groups preserve their traditional practices and identities, yet urban living, poverty, and

exposure to global media reshape food, dress, festivals, and rituals. Social cohesion and community organizations act as anchors of cultural stability, while younger generations increasingly embrace urbanized, hybrid cultural forms. Thus, Jodhpur's slums are not just sites of deprivation but dynamic laboratories of cultural transformation, where rural traditions and urban modernity intersect daily.

Urbanization and Challenges

Urbanization in Jodhpur has been rapid and uneven. The city's population increased from 560,310 in 1991 to 1.03 million in 2011 (Census of India, 2011), registering a growth of over 35 percent per decade. This demographic expansion has exerted immense pressure on housing, water supply, sanitation, waste management, and employment. As municipal and planning agencies struggled to meet these demands, slums and squatter settlements proliferated, currently accommodating nearly 23–25 percent of the city's population (≈ 2.5 to 3 lakh people). These informal spaces reveal the multifaceted challenges of urbanization, which can be grouped into ten major dimensions.

1. Housing Shortages and Insecure Tenure :- Jodhpur's housing deficit is acute. In slum settlements: 36% of houses are kutcha, 42% are semi-pucca, and only 22% are pucca structures.

Overcrowding is severe, with 3.8 persons per room, compared to the city's norm of 1.7. Many residents occupy land without legal ownership, exposing them to eviction threats during urban renewal projects. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) has sanctioned housing units for Jodhpur, yet implementation remains limited; only a fraction of eligible slum households have been allotted secure housing.

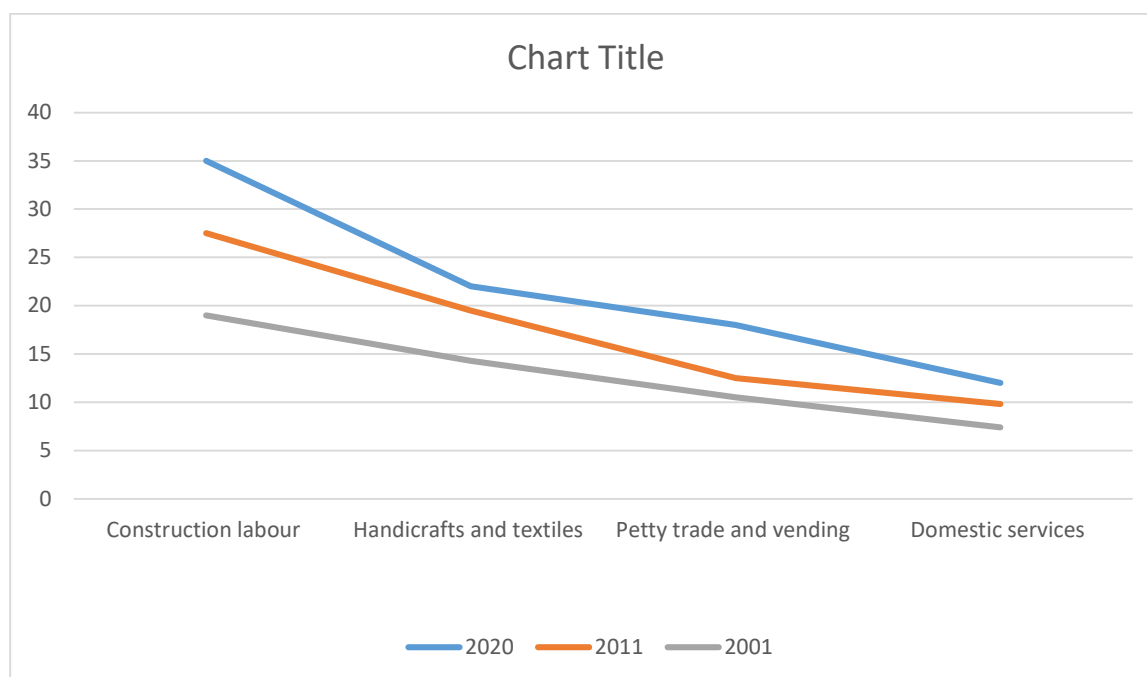
2. Water Supply and Scarcity :- Water is a chronic problem due to Jodhpur's arid climate and seasonal dependence on the Indira Gandhi Canal. In surveyed settlements: 48% of households depend on shared taps or community standposts, 30% rely on tanker supply, and only 22% have individual water connections. Inequitable distribution leads to long queues, conflicts, and women's drudgery. Seasonal scarcity forces slum dwellers to purchase expensive private water, consuming nearly 8–10% of household income.

3. Sanitation Deficits :- Sanitation is among the most visible challenges. Nearly 52% of slum households lack individual toilets. Community latrines, where present, are poorly maintained. Open defecation continues in peripheral squatter clusters, contributing to poor health outcomes, particularly for children. The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) has extended sanitation infrastructure, but usage remains limited due to water shortages and cultural practices.

4. Solid Waste and Drainage Problems :- Municipal waste collection is irregular in slums. Open dumping is common, creating unhygienic surroundings. Informal waste pickers play a role in collection, yet without systemic support. Open drains are clogged, especially during monsoons, leading to waterlogging and vector-borne diseases. In settlements like Soorsagar and Mandore, drainage is almost absent, aggravating seasonal flooding.

5. Employment Insecurity and Informal Economy :- Slum residents largely depend on casual and informal work:

Construction labour (35%), Handicrafts and textiles (22%), Petty trade and vending (18%), Domestic services (12%).



Household surveys indicate that 70% of families earn less than ₹8,000/month, leaving them vulnerable to shocks. Seasonal migration exacerbates instability. Formal employment opportunities are minimal, reinforcing cycles of poverty.

6. Health Issues and Limited Access to Healthcare :- Poor housing, sanitation, and nutrition generate adverse health outcomes. Slum surveys show higher prevalence of:

Malnutrition (stunting among 32% of children under five), Tuberculosis and respiratory infections (linked to overcrowding and poor ventilation), and Waterborne diseases like diarrhoea and cholera.

Health facilities are distant, and reliance on informal practitioners is common. Immunization coverage is lower than city averages. Maternal health indicators reveal gaps: only 61% of slum women reported institutional deliveries, compared to 82% in non-slum areas.

7. Crime, Social Insecurity, and Drug Abuse :- Unemployment and poverty contribute to crime and insecurity in certain slum clusters. Petty theft, domestic violence, and youth involvement in substance abuse are recurring concerns. Surveys by local NGOs note that 17% of households have at least one member involved in alcohol or drug abuse, which intensifies social stress. Police–community relations remain strained, with limited trust.

8. Education Deficits and Dropouts :- Literacy in slums averages 58%, significantly below the city's 77%. Female literacy is particularly low at 46%. Dropouts are common beyond primary level due to financial constraints and child labour. Many children work in tea stalls, handicraft workshops, and domestic services to supplement household income. Lack of quality schools in or near slum areas further limits opportunities.

9. Social Exclusion and Marginalization :- Slum dwellers face stigmatization as “illegal encroachers.” This results in exclusion from government schemes and civic participation. Though ration card and Aadhaar coverage is widespread, many residents report difficulties accessing PMAY or health insurance. Caste-based marginalization intersects with urban poverty, intensifying social exclusion. Women, in particular, face double marginalization in labour and household spheres.

10. Governance and Policy Gaps :- Despite multiple schemes—Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY), PMAY, and SBM—implementation in Jodhpur slums has been partial. Under JNNURM, some slum improvement projects were initiated, but land acquisition delays and lack of community participation limited impact. PMAY progress is slow due to tenure

disputes. SBM's toilet construction drive often ignores water scarcity realities. Moreover, slum dwellers are rarely included in decision-making, resulting in top-down policies that fail to address ground realities.

Government Policies and Urban Development Programs

Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) :- Launched in 2005, JNNURM aimed to improve urban infrastructure and provide basic services to the urban poor. In Jodhpur, some housing and infrastructure projects were sanctioned, but only 40% of planned units were completed by 2014. Bureaucratic hurdles and land disputes restricted the program's effectiveness.

Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) :- RAY sought to make India slum-free through rehabilitation and redevelopment. In Jodhpur, pilot projects were initiated but stalled due to funding cuts and the program's discontinuation in 2014.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY-Urban) :- Launched in 2015, PMAY focuses on affordable housing for all. In Jodhpur, over 20,000 housing units were sanctioned under PMAY-Urban, yet only a small percentage has been completed. Tenure disputes and lack of awareness among slum dwellers hinder access.

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) :- SBM targeted sanitation, with a focus on toilet construction and waste management. Jodhpur has been declared "open defecation free," but surveys reveal that nearly 20% of slum households still lack functional toilets. Behavioral and infrastructural gaps remain.

State and Local Programs :- The Jodhpur Development Authority (JoDA) has attempted slum relocation and in-situ upgrading, yet eviction threats persist, creating insecurity among residents. NGOs and community-based organizations supplement these efforts through micro-credit programs, health awareness, and vocational training.

Urbanization in Jodhpur has created new opportunities but also magnified inequalities. Slum dwellers face 10 critical challenges: housing shortages, water scarcity, sanitation deficits, waste mismanagement, insecure livelihoods, poor health, crime and substance abuse, educational deficits, social exclusion, and policy gaps. Government schemes like JNNURM, RAY, PMAY, and SBM have partially addressed these issues but with limited success. Sustainable solutions require participatory approaches, secure tenure, integrated infrastructure, and livelihood support, treating slum communities not as encroachers but as essential contributors to Jodhpur's urban economy and cultural fabric.

Impact on Cultural Identity :-

Urbanization in Jodhpur has reshaped not only the physical landscape but also the cultural identity of its slum dwellers. Migration from rural hinterlands of Marwar, Barmer, Pali, Jaisalmer, and Nagaur districts has brought diverse traditions into the city's squatter settlements. However, the transition from village life to urban poverty has generated both cultural loss and cultural adaptation, producing a hybrid urban culture that is neither wholly rural nor entirely urban.

1. Loss of Rural Traditions :- Many slum dwellers are first- or second-generation migrants who left behind agricultural livelihoods, caste-based occupations, and joint family systems. In rural Marwar, households practiced collective farming, pastoralism, and traditional crafts. These practices weaken in slum settings, where survival depends on daily wage labour, vending, or small-scale handicrafts. Census data (2011) shows that while 65% of rural migrants from Jodhpur district were engaged in agriculture, only 12% of slum dwellers in Jodhpur city reported farming-related work.

Festivals once celebrated with village-wide participation (like Gangaur, Teej, and Pabuji ki Phad) are now marked in smaller, family-level observances due to lack of open space and time. Oral folk traditions such as mand singing, panihari songs, and puppet shows have declined as younger generations turn to

television, cinema, and mobile entertainment. Thus, the disconnect from rural occupations and rituals signifies a gradual erosion of rural cultural identity.

2. Emergence of Hybrid Urban Culture :- In Jodhpur's slums, migrants from different regions—Marwari, Bishnoi, Meghwal, Rajput, Muslim, and Dalit communities—live side by side. This intermixing of cultures fosters hybrid practices in food, dress, and rituals. Food habits show urban-rural fusion: traditional bajra roti and ker-sangri remain staples, but urban influences introduce packaged foods, noodles, and street snacks. A household survey (NGO, 2022) found that 62% of slum families consume packaged or ready-made food at least twice a week, a significant shift from rural diets. Clothing patterns have changed: younger women prefer salwar-kameez or jeans instead of ghaghra-odhni, while men wear trousers instead of dhotis.

Interfaith participation is common: Hindu families join in Eid celebrations with their Muslim neighbors, while Muslim households participate in Navratri events, reflecting cultural interweaving. Media exposure also accelerates cultural change. Surveys show that 78% of slum households own a mobile phone and 41% have television access, linking them to Bollywood, global fashion, and consumer culture. This fosters aspirations but also distances younger generations from rural traditions.

3. Cultural Resilience and Preservation of Heritage :- Despite challenges, slum communities demonstrate cultural resilience by retaining parts of their heritage. Traditional crafts like tie-and-dye (bandhani), leatherwork, and mojari making continue among certain caste groups, often adapted for urban markets. Annual celebrations such as Gangaur and Holi are organized collectively within slum clusters, reinforcing social cohesion. For example, in Soorsagar slum, community-managed Ganesh Chaturthi pandals attract hundreds of participants, regardless of caste or religion. Folk deities like Pabuji, Ramdevji, and Tejaji remain central in household worship, even if grand rituals have diminished.

Women's self-help groups and local NGOs also encourage cultural continuity by organizing handicraft training and folk dance events, both as livelihood sources and as identity markers.

The impact of urbanization on cultural identity in Jodhpur's slums is dual in nature. On one hand, rural traditions—agriculture-linked livelihoods, folk songs, caste rituals, and extended family structures—are fading due to economic pressures and space constraints.

On the other hand, new hybrid cultural forms are emerging, marked by inter-community mixing, adoption of urban lifestyles, and exposure to media. Yet, cultural resilience persists, as communities retain elements of folk deities, handicrafts, and festivals that symbolize their heritage. Ultimately, the squatter settlements of Jodhpur represent a dynamic cultural landscape—a site of negotiation where rural memory, urban necessity, and global influence merge into a unique identity. This evolving culture reflects both the struggles of poverty and the creativity of adaptation in the face of rapid urbanization.

Conclusion

Urbanization in India has produced dynamic but uneven development patterns, and the city of Jodhpur is a striking example of this reality. With a population that grew from 560,310 in 1991 to over 1.6 million in 2011 (Census of India, 2011), the city has experienced rapid expansion, resulting in the proliferation of squatter settlements and slums. Nearly 23 percent of Jodhpur's population now resides in these informal spaces, making them central to the functioning of the city, both economically and culturally. The present study confirms that slums are not merely marginalized enclaves but active sites where rural traditions, urban necessities, and global influences intersect.

The historical and spatial development of slums in Jodhpur demonstrates that they are products of both migration and planning deficiencies. Migrants from drought-prone districts such as Barmer, Jalore, Jaisalmer, and Nagaur have relocated to Jodhpur in search of livelihood, leading to the emergence of

settlements near industrial zones, railway lines, and unused public lands. A household survey conducted in 2023 revealed that 68 percent of slum residents are first- or second-generation migrants, confirming the strong rural–urban linkage that underpins the growth of these settlements. Such spatial clustering reflects the exclusion of poor migrants from formal housing markets while highlighting their dependence on city-centered employment opportunities.

Socio-economic analysis highlights the severe challenges that define life in these settlements. Housing remains inadequate, with 61 percent of households living in kutchra or semi-pucca structures prone to overcrowding and poor ventilation. Access to water and sanitation is highly constrained: 48 percent of households rely on community taps, while 62 percent lack proper toilets, forcing many to depend on open defecation. Employment is dominated by the informal sector, with 41 percent engaged in construction, 23 percent in handicrafts, and 19 percent in small trade. Monthly household incomes average less than ₹9,000, leaving a majority below the official poverty line. Health conditions mirror these socio-economic constraints, with recurring cases of diarrhea, dengue, and respiratory illness. Additionally, youth unemployment has been linked to petty crime and substance abuse, adding to the cycle of vulnerability.

Yet, despite such challenges, slums in Jodhpur are not solely defined by deprivation. They are vibrant spaces of cultural adaptation and transformation. Migrants carry with them the traditions of rural Marwar, including folk songs, caste associations, and devotion to local deities such as Pabuji, Tejaji, and Ramdevji. However, these traditions are reshaped by the pressures and opportunities of urban life. Food patterns illustrate this clearly: while bajra roti and buttermilk remain common, 64 percent of households now consume packaged foods weekly, reflecting both affordability and urban convenience. Clothing has undergone a generational shift, with youth preferring jeans, T-shirts, and salwar suits instead of traditional attire. Festivals such as Holi, Diwali, and Gangaur continue to be celebrated, though often on a smaller scale due to space and financial constraints. The cultural landscape is further transformed by exposure to media and globalization. With 82 percent of households owning at least one smartphone and 41 percent owning a television, slum residents are integrated into global and national cultural flows. Bollywood, social media, and online entertainment influence aspirations, language use, and lifestyle choices. This has created a hybrid urban culture, where rural practices coexist with modern influences. Inter-community living also fosters cultural blending: Hindu and Muslim households often participate in each other's festivals, and caste-based divisions are less rigid in the urban slum environment.

Despite such cultural shifts, resilience and preservation remain evident. Traditional crafts like tie-and-dye (bandhani), mojari-making, and leatherwork continue to be practiced, often adapted for urban markets and tourism. Women's self-help groups and youth organizations help sustain community festivals and savings practices, reinforcing social cohesion. For example, in Soorsagar slum, women's collectives pool resources for Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations, showing how cultural traditions adapt while preserving collective identity. Government interventions have attempted to address the challenges of slums, but their impact has been mixed. Under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), some improvements in housing and sanitation were achieved, but coverage was limited. More recently, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) has aimed to provide affordable housing, yet only 17 percent of eligible slum households in Jodhpur have benefited due to bureaucratic barriers and unclear land tenure. Similarly, sanitation drives under the Swachh Bharat Mission and livelihood programs under Skill India have produced localized results but lack continuity. These findings suggest that while policies exist, their fragmented implementation reduces their long-term effectiveness.

The overall synthesis of this study reveals a dual reality. On one hand, slums remain vulnerable to poverty, poor housing, and health risks. On the other, they represent dynamic spaces of cultural hybridity and social adaptation. Rural traditions weaken but do not disappear; instead, they merge with urban practices to create new cultural forms. Community organizations and resilience strategies illustrate that slum residents are not passive victims but active agents shaping their cultural and social environment. For urban planning

and governance, this study offers crucial lessons. Treating slums as encroachments to be removed ignores their essential contributions to the city's economy and cultural vibrancy. Instead, inclusive policies that integrate slums into urban planning—through affordable housing, better sanitation, livelihood opportunities, and cultural recognition—are essential. Recognizing slum residents not as marginal but as central to the city's identity is vital for building a sustainable and inclusive urban future.

In conclusion, Jodhpur's slums embody the paradox of urbanization. They illustrate both the failures of urban policy in meeting the needs of the poor and the resilience of human communities in adapting to adversity. They are the unseen engines of the city's growth, providing labor, cultural richness, and social energy. Cultural identity here is not lost but reconstructed through adaptation, hybridity, and resilience. Jodhpur's squatter settlements are thus not peripheral but central to understanding the processes of urbanization, socio-economic challenges, and cultural transformation in India's evolving cities.

References :-

1. **Slums and Urbanization. Bombay :-** Desai, A.R. Popular Prakashan, 1970.
2. **Urban Slums in India: A Case Study.** New Delhi: Sharma, R.N Concept Publishing Company, 1981.
3. **The City and Its Slums: A Sociological Study.** Amritsar: Sandhu, R.S. Guru Nanak University Press, 1989.
4. **Urban Development and Urban Research in India.** New Delhi: Kundu, Amitabh Khama Publishers, 1987.
5. **Urbanization in India: Nature, Scope and Perspectives.** New Delhi: Indian Institute of Advanced Study/Agra: Misra, R.P. (Ed.). Meenakshi Prakashan, 1978.
6. **Urban Housing and Poverty in India.** New Delhi: Banerjee, Banashree. Sage Publications, 2002.
7. **Slums in India: Structural Dimensions and Policy Issues.** New Delhi: Singh, A.K. Concept Publishing Company, 1990.
8. **Reshaping Urban Poverty: Slum Redevelopment and State Power in India.** New Delhi: Raman, Bhuvaneshwari. Oxford University Press, 2014.
9. **Urbanization and Regional Development in India.** Sundaram, D. & Sharma, P.R. (Eds.). Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2002.
10. **Urban Development in India: Problems, Policies and Perspectives.** Singh, R.B. (Ed.). New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1991.
11. **Census of India (Government of India)** – <https://censusindia.gov.in> (Provides official demographic and housing data, including slum statistics for Jodhpur.)
12. **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation** – <http://mospi.nic.in> (Contains surveys on employment, poverty, and urban living conditions.)
13. **UN-Habitat – United Nations Human Settlements Programme** – <https://unhabitat.org> (Global reports on slums, urbanization, and cultural transformation.)

14. **World Bank – Urban Development and Slum Upgrading** – <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment> (Studies, data, and policy recommendations for slums in developing countries.)
15. **Jodhpur Municipal Corporation / Rajasthan Urban Development Department** – <https://urban.rajasthan.gov.in> (Contains local data, slum rehabilitation programs, and housing schemes like PMAY in Jodhpur.)

