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Motivations and Barriers in Slum Relocation: A Case study of Dharavi in Mumbai

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ABSTRACT

The sustainability of an urban environment is not just limited to its ecological footprint; it encompasses ecological, social, and economic dimensions. In urban environments worldwide, a peculiar phenomenon is observed: the hesitation of slum dwellers to relocate to what are presented as superior living conditions. Using Mumbai's Dharavi as a case study this study delves deep into understanding this reluctance. The introduction of a 'top-down' developmental approach, by the local government, has been met with resistance spanning two decades, the protests and resistance highlight the disconnect between policy formulations and ground realities and the resilience of a community that has witnessed multiple eviction attempts. This research juxtaposes Dharavi residents' current living conditions against proposed relocation models, employing Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a framework. The objective is to unveil the multi-faceted reasons - social, cultural, psychological, and economic - that anchor to its familiar habitat. Understanding a slum is not about viewing it as a monolithic entity of poverty and decay. It's about comprehending its intricate dynamics: the small businesses running from homes, the community ties that provide a safety net, the cultural norms that guide daily interactions, and the psychological aspects of familiarity and identity. Hence merely providing improved structural facilities is not enough to motivate them to relocate. The cultural, and socioeconomic dimensions that shape the lives of its residents must be addressed. The true essence of redevelopment should encompass strategies that not only offer better living conditions but also resonate with the intrinsic needs and aspirations of its dwellers. Only then the resident's transition can see the new space not just as a dwelling but as a true home.

Keywords:

Slums; Rehabilitation; Relocation; Resilience; Place Attachment

1. Introduction

India, as the world's most populous nation, is grappling with many environmental concerns ranging from pollution and waste management to biodiversity loss. While India's per capita resource consumption is comparatively modest, the sheer magnitude of its population amplifies the strain on its already limited natural assets. Within this complex landscape, India has pledged to achieve

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ambitious goals outlined in the Paris Agreement which includes achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) objectives such as No Poverty, Good Health and Well-being, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Climate Action. Integral to achieving this goal is to address the issues the existence of over sixty million individuals residing in Indian slums as per Friedman [1]. These ever-expanding marginalised communities, with little to no access to suitable land, often inhabit ecologically sensitive areas. The lifestyle of slum dwellers, often dictated by the lack of access to basic infrastructure and amenities, can inadvertently lead to environmental contamination. Without proper sanitation facilities, waste disposal mechanisms, and a clean water supply, they are forced to dispose of waste in open areas, contaminating land and water bodies.

The consistent failure of successive policies to relocate slum dwellers raises a profound question about the underlying causes of this persistent challenge. Despite well-intentioned efforts, the inability to successfully execute these policies points toward the research problem: What motivates individuals to remain in challenging living conditions, and why is there a solid resistance to Transition to a more structured urban habitat despite the perceived benefits?

1.1. Case Study

Dharavi a prominent slum in Mumbai often hailed as Asia's most significant. It is situated between 2 vital financial centres of the city, Bandra-Kurla axis and Nariman Point, with access to three train stations, Sion, Mahim and Matunga covering the Harbor train line, the central and the western, which means an individual can access any point of Mumbai to traverse from this Point (Fig. 1). It is spread along 530 acres with a population believed to be around 700,000 to 1 million inhabitants, while some studies suggest even more [2].

1.1.1 History of urbanization

Originally Dharavi, was a mangrove island, 18th-century urban expansion of Bombay forced Kohli fisherman to seek refuge there, with fishing at Mahim creek as their source of livelihood [3]. As Bombay grew, Dharavi evolved into an industrial hub, attracting marginalized labour migrants and refugees who settled there due to its strategic location and it being a free and unregulated piece of land which was used for informal rubbish dumping leading to land stabilization. The gradual solidification of marshy land facilitated its growth as an industrial centre, particularly in textiles and leather [4].

Dharavi emerged as a haven for industries deemed unsuitable for Bombay's elite regions, driven by factors like the cotton scarcity in Europe which boosted Bombay's textile mills. The establishment of slaughter house leading to the growth of local leather industry, resettlements of the Kumbhars' pottery community solidified Dharavi's identity as an industrial hub [5] With increased opportunities of employment there was an increased influx of marginalised labour migrants and refugees who encroached in the area and established informal settlements (Fig. 2 & 3) Post-independence, Dharavi faced overcrowding, surge of migrants to 1.5 million and a rise in makeshift dwellings (Fig. 5). Public officials largely ignored the situation [6]

The pivotal turning point came with economic policy changes in the 1970s and early 2000s, particularly the opening of the real estate sector to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). This policy shift fuelled an insatiable demand for real estate in Mumbai, transforming centrally located lands, including Dharavi, into coveted assets. Consequently, privately owned mills began eyeing their excess lands for development, symbolizing a shift where the value of land surpassed the value placed on labour [4].

1.1.2 Social and Economic Bonds

Dharavi's has 85 unique specialized communities or "Nagars," [7] each defined by its economic activities, including leather tanning, pottery, and textiles [8]. As the zones are formed around economic activities, they foster community of shared expertise. Diverse individuals unite in trade out of economic necessities fostering strong community ties through shared expertise and mutual support networks. For example, the Kumbhar community of potters migrated from Gujarat during a drought and established Kumbharwada, where communal kilns and cooperative systems ensure the procurement of essential supplies [9] (Fig. 2). Similarly, the Tamil community, initially drawn to work in the tanneries, formed a cohesive social network, uniting in trade and cultural practices [10].

The spatial arrangement of Dharavi reflects its socio-economic fabric. Narrow lanes lined with workshops and homes illustrate the multifunctional use of space, where daily life blends seamlessly with economic activity. (Fig. 7) The absence of personal space is compensated by the richness of social interactions, with shared courtyards, common water taps, and public squares serving as sites of communal life. These spaces foster a sense of belonging and facilitate the sharing of resources, information, and support, contributing to the residents' overall sense of security and identity

1.1.3 Place Making and Housing Dynamics

Housing in Dharavi is a dynamic and adaptive process, evolving in response to residents' needs and economic growth [9, 11, 5]. Structures range from makeshift shanties to more permanent brick-and-mortar buildings, often constructed incrementally as financial resources become available. (Fig. 8). This incremental approach to housing, while not conforming to formal planning standards, reflects the residents' ingenuity in making the most of limited space

The multifunctional nature of spaces in Dharavi is central to its residents' livelihoods. Homes double as workshops, shops, and storage units, allowing for the seamless integration of work and living. For instance, embroidery workshops transform into dormitories at night [12], while lofts and stackable furniture maximize the use of vertical space [5]. This flexible use of space not only caters to the economic needs of the residents but also fosters a sense of autonomy and agency. However, the unauthorized status of many constructions exposes residents to the constant threat of eviction and limits their ability to improve their living conditions

1.1.4 Risks of Residing in Dharavi

Despite Dharavi's apparent economic activity and industriousness— most residents remain impoverished. Workers in Dharavi are primarily engaged in primary sector jobs like pot making, sewing, etc. While Dharavi contributes significantly to Mumbai's export revenue, and the workers earn relatively low wages as it operates majorly as a part of the informal economy. This means many workers and businesses are unregistered. As factory act laws are not applicable, Lack of registration or having a licence saves them from taxes [13]; however, this leads to no access to formal financial systems, social securities, or institutional support, which often perpetuates cycles of poverty.

Another striking aspect is underselling, where residents compete by selling their goods at meagre prices [14, 9, 15] This practice is a result of necessity, as limited resources, technological enhancement and skills prevent them from accessing more lucrative markets. Consequently, they are often confined to producing lower-quality goods preventing them from tapping into higher-value markets. This limitation is evident in various industries, such as I Seather goods and garments, where the focus is on meeting local needs rather than exploring more profitable export opportunities [9].

Due to unauthorised constructions, homes are tightly cramped, devoid of natural light and ventilation, [16]. As a result of overcrowding adults can be seen sleeping in compromised positions or outside the house due to space constraints. Positioned between two rail tracks results in noisy and tumultuous living conditions [17]. Monsoon causes leaky roofs, and blocked drainage systems. Neglect of solid waste removal, has led to vast garbage accumulation, leading to rats and insects that infiltrate poorly constructed houses, further jeopardising residents' health [18]

Residents not only live but also work within the same space. The merging of living and production areas is particularly problematic for non-home-based industries. For example, some units incorporate furnaces directly into rooms, exposing workers to harmful carbon monoxide emissions day and night. Bakeries fire up wood ovens in the early hours in different sections, enveloping the surroundings in choking smoke. The unhygienic process of treating leather hides, involving washing off blood and flesh and later removing hair, occurs in open spaces near residences, contributing to the contamination of open drains [9]. Access to clean drinking water is limited, Pipes carrying clean water function only for limited hours and are often in a fragile state, frequently breaking and jeopardising the water supply [17]. The plumbing infrastructure is insufficient, with open sewers. During the monsoon season, the community grapples with wastewater contamination, mixing drinking water supplies.

Those who employ them often demonstrate a notable absence of concern for their living conditions or prospects. This lack of accountability is exemplified by the willingness of certain labourers to accept wages as meagre as Rs 500 per year. Discussions about labour standards or occupational health hazards within this landscape are curiously absent. Fear and resignation stifle dissent, preventing labourers from forming unions. Replacements are readily available if they protest, given Mumbai's surplus labour force. This discourages efforts to improve conditions or unionise, sustaining a cycle of vulnerability and exploitation. The phenomenon of child labour, especially in the rag-picking and tailoring industry, further underscores the gravity of the situation. Despite acknowledging the inherent danger, many labourers have become so acclimatised to their hazardous circumstances that they scarcely ponder the risks. Dipping ornaments into a solution containing potassium cyanide with bare hands is one example of the same [9].

The effects of inadequate healthcare, poor living conditions, and the myriad of health risks that Dharavi's residents confront daily have reduced life expectancy within the community. While the national life expectancy in India averages 67 years, in Dharavi, it is dishearteningly lower at just under 60 years. [19]

1.1.5 Industrial and Commercial Activities

Dharavi transcends its stereotypical portrayal as a mere slum, solely characterised by poverty and deprivation; Dharavi emerges as a bustling hub of diverse indus tries According to a survey conducted by SPARC, the landscape includes 240 mini-scale industries, nearly 723 recycling sites, around 24 bakeries, over 110 restaurants, about 40 large businesses, and 150 food preparation establishments of various kinds [6], producing an annual turnover of around \$1 billion [20]. This vibrant economic ecosystem is sustained by the resourcefulness of its residents, who have developed intricate networks of interdependent trades. For example, the evolution of the leather industry is intricately linked to transforming raw hides into finished goods, extending even to sutures [9]. Furthermore, the Aluminium Brick Making industry employs mixed metal waste as a raw material, employing a sophisticated process involving magnetic separation and melting [20].

Dharavi's economic activities are not limited to its internal market; they extend to broader markets [9], with products such as leather goods and pottery being exported beyond Mumbai. Despite this economic vitality, the majority of residents remain in poverty due to their reliance on informal, unregulated markets that lack access to formal financial systems and social protections. The constant struggle for economic survival and the threat of displacement loom large, with many

businesses operating in precarious conditions, often lacking adequate infrastructure and facing risks such as fire hazards and health issues.

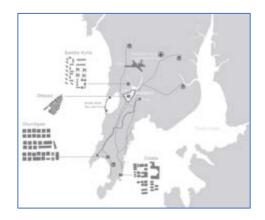


Fig. 1. Dharavi's Transit Links Across Mumbai,[60]

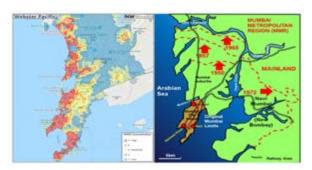


Fig. 2. Wealth Distribution and Growth of Mumba city limits. [61]



Fig. 3. Contrasting Realities: Mumbai's Urban Landscape Amidst Persistent Social Divides [62]



Fig. 4. Protest against Adani and DRP [63]



Fig. 5. Dharavi zones illustrating regions of origin of migrants within India. [64]



Fig. 6. Kumbharwada Market [65]



Fig. 7. Chill Spots [66]



Fig. 8. Housing typology variation [67]

1.2. Objectives

Objective of the present study is to investigate the social, psychological, economic, and cultural factors influencing slum dwellers' resistance to relocation. The present study also aims to analyse how socio-cultural factors, including religion, shape perceptions of slum dwellers towards relocation. Another objective of the present study is to investigate the influence of social networks and community ties on decisions to relocate or stay. Attempt has been also made to evaluate the perceived pros and cons of government provided housing from slum dwellers' viewpoint as well as studying the dynamics between policy enforcement, resistance, and public perceptions.



Fig. 9. Housing Typology-based zoning of Dharavi [68]



Fig. 10. Living in Dharavi [69]



Fig. 11. Cramped living quarters in Dharavi [70]



Fig. 12. Diverse Livelihoods [71]



Fig. 13. Property Prices Around Dharavi, [72]

1.3. Literature Review

The rapid pace of urbanization has been a significant driver of slum formation, especially in developing countries where cities often lack the capacity to provide adequate housing and services for their growing populations [21] Thus, the emergence of slums can be attributed to several interconnected factors, including population growth, rural-urban migration, weak governance, economic vulnerability, underpaid work, displacement due to conflict, natural disasters, climate change, and, notably, the absence of affordable housing options [22]

1.31.Slum Redevelopment Approaches

The urban sector, devoid of government intervention, is often manipulated by speculative interests favouring the urban affluent [22]. To historically address these far-reaching slum issues, housing policies have been divided into the "provider paradigm" and the "support paradigm." The former emphasises the technical provision of shelter, often neglecting social aspects and human needs, while the latter promotes resource management for societal well-being.

Efforts to address slum challenges have shifted from eradication to improvement policies and affordable high-rise housing initiatives. However, such approaches encounter complexities like the "rebound" effect and "poverty recycling" [23, 24], leading to suboptimal living conditions even after relocation. Displacement and involuntary resettlement can disrupt production systems, communal structures, and cultural identities, negatively affecting residents' well-being (25, 26).

While examining the complexities surrounding slum growth and mobility, regional perspectives can provide nuanced insights. These actions have been termed insurgent practices that align with the earlier discussions on place attachment and housing satisfaction in influencing mobility and relocation decisions. [27,28] concepts of 'invited' and 'invented' spaces of citizenship, wherein communities either collaborate with allies or directly confront authorities [27,28,29]

In a study [30] residential mobility is influenced by various factors that trigger individuals to move or change their housing situation. They emphasize that different individuals may have diverse reasons for moving, including both "push" factors arising from poor housing quality and "pull" factors driven by the prospect of better housing [31]. This phenomenon has been extensively studied, with scholars highlighting the role of housing satisfaction as a significant influence on mobility decisions.

Household characteristics, location, and housing satisfaction contribute to residential mobility. Gender and age differences also play a role, with males and older individuals generally less likely to move [32,33] Employment, education, and seeking a better living environment have been identified as motivations for residential mobility [34] Additionally, the physical condition of housing is recognized as a predictor of the willingness to move [35] Another study suggests that individuals can find contentment in their current housing, even if it is not their end goal, as long as they know there is potential for mobility. This is rooted in the fact that "housing is viewed differently when seen as a stepping stone towards a greater aspiration" [36] Moreover, individuals might be content with their apartments yet still wish to move if their choice was dictated by a lack of options rather than the apartment's attributes or benefits.

Place attachment is also seen as a factor that influences individuals' decisions to move, owing to the emotional bond people establish with specific locations where they feel comfortable and safe [37] This attachment is viewed as a barrier to relocation, as people attached to their housing are less inclined to move [38].

A study conducted in the Oke-Foko Community in Ibadan, Nigeria, states that this attachment manifests in two primary ways: place dependence (relying on the environment for specific needs) and place identity (emotional and symbolic associations). The study indicates that residents lean more towards the former. The results counteract the stereotype that slum residents are averse to

development. Instead, they can have strong attachments to their community, which means they can be active participants in improving their living conditions.[39]

Moreover, there seems to be a generational shift in how slum residents perceive their connection to place. Younger migrants, often detached from the land of their forebears, might be more open to relocating when faced with perceived risks. Given this, when contemplating resettlement strategies, governments and policymakers should focus on creating environments that foster a renewed sense of place, helping households adjust post-relocation [40]

2. Methodology

The study utilized a variety of secondary data sources, including research papers, videos, documentaries, newspaper articles, and books. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to establish a solid foundation for the study. Academic research papers, journal articles, and reports were examined to gain insights into slum redevelopment, sustainable design principles, urbanization challenges, and associated concepts. Secondary data was collected from various sources to capture a diverse range of perspectives and insights:

- Existing research studies and scholarly articles focused on slum redevelopment, social dynamics, economic factors, and environmental considerations.
- Visual and narrative content from online videos and documentaries was used to gain insights into slum conditions, community viewpoints, and development initiatives.
- Relevant information was extracted from newspaper articles to comprehend contemporary events, policy shifts, and public opinions concerning slum redevelopment.
- Data of significance were extracted from books that provided comprehensive analyses of slum-related issues, urban planning strategies, and sustainable development concepts.
- Official documents, government reports, policy frameworks, and urban development plans were analysed to understand the historical context, policy objectives, and potential implementation gaps.

The study used a case study method, an in-depth examination of Dharavi, an urban informal settlement in Mumbai, India. It was selected because of its cultural diversity and the authority's inability to implement the Dharavi redevelopment plan over two decades. These challenges persist today, compounded by the residents' reluctance to relocate (Fig. 4) despite living in precarious housing, unsanitary environments and facing potential risks of infections and fire hazards. This approach encompassed various data sources by extracting insights from documentaries dedicated to Dharavi's history, challenges, community dynamics, and redevelopment endeavours. These visual narratives provided valuable context and perspectives. Maps and spatial data were utilised to analyse Dharavi's layout, infrastructure, and urban planning, contributing to a more holistic settlement assessment.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs a psychological framework of five levels: physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization was applied to identify recurring themes, challenges, and potential solutions for slum redevelopment Information from various sources was categorized according to Maslow's five levels of needs. Each category was further analysed to identify the extent to which current living conditions and relocation proposals address these needs.

As primary data was not collected, the study relied on existing information, potentially limiting the depth and specificity of the analysis. The accuracy and reliability of secondary data sources, such as YouTube videos and documentaries, may vary, affecting the credibility of the findings. Nevertheless, the significance of these videos and documentaries lies in their role as valuable social records, even in the presence of potential misrepresentations and biases. The evaluation of these sources alongside established literature aids in validating their credibility.

3. Results

3.1. Community Perspective on Relocation

The refusal of a house, even with a 90% subsidy, may seem perplexing [41], but the survey suggests that 41% felt that the relocation process was imposed on them [42]. The HLRN report shares a worrying trend of forced evictions is seen across India, leading to the demolition of 22,250 homes and displacing over 107,600 people. The reasons were cited for these evictions from 'city-beautification' drives and infrastructure development projects like 'smart city' initiatives to environmental projects; in most cases, national and international human rights standards were ignored. While resettlement was provided in only about 26% of the reported eviction cases, most displaced were left without alternatives [43]. The resettlement sites were often in remote areas, lacking basic infrastructure [41].

The trauma of forced eviction followed by subsequent resettlement is profoundly exacerbated when individuals are relocated to homes with little to no choice or knowledge concerning design, material, or layout. The Housing is not a mere structural entity; it represents an individual's sanctuary and sense of security. Being thrust into an unfamiliar environment without prior knowledge can instil feelings of displacement and alienation.

To add to this issue, the housing rehabilitation project has several design deficiencies stemming from developer-driven construction and a lack of government oversight [41]. In a tragic incident, a building that housed employees of the BMC collapsed, resulting in the loss of 13 lives, growing public frustration over repeated building collapse incidents in the city and raises questions about the city's preparedness and response to such calamities [44].

In the wake of these challenges, when Dharavi residents ask who should lead the redevelopment initiative, community members have diverse perspectives. Some advocate for the MHADA, emphasising governmental accountability. However, some residents are sceptical about government efficacy and advocate for private builders. These differing viewpoints underscore the complexity of choosing the correct entity to drive the redevelopment process [45].

Dharavi residents aspirations encompass a thirst for advanced amenities, an uplifted quality of life, and a locale with schools, libraries, medical facilities, and open recreational spaces. (Joseph & Damle, 2022) However, diving deeper into the technicalities, grassroots organisations teamed with urban specialists foresee looming contention around the Floor Space Index (FSI). In Dharavi's context, a mere 103 hectares [46] of available land for this extensive construction endeavour, the rehabilitation buildings for slum inhabitants would need to soar to heights of approximately 16-17 stories. In stark contrast, the skyscrapers designated for the sales component would tower to 25 stories. There is also the looming concern that the government might not deliver on their promised commitments, potentially rendering those assurances as falsehoods designed to encourage relocation. The massive number does not account for imperative infrastructures like roads, playgrounds, educational institutions, and healthcare centres. [45]. This will unintentionally perpetuate a cycle where the urban poor are confined to unsuitable apartment structures or coerced beyond the confines of what we consider our city limits.

Amidst these aspirations, however, a significant misunderstanding persists the belief in a guaranteed temporary abode during the redevelopment phase. Many harbour the expectation of being seamlessly sheltered during construction, only to return to their renewed homes in the same locality [47]. Alarmingly, this pivotal provision remains absent from policy dialogues, leaving a gaping hole in the redevelopment blueprint. These tales of unfulfilled relocations, where slum dwellers willingly moved in hopes of improved living conditions, they found themselves without any transitional homes. The sombre narrative of 200 families, out of 900, still waiting in makeshift homes beside towering constructions, even six years later, speaks volumes about the uncertainties shadowing the promise of resettlement [48].

A study on one such hastily constructed house shows that residents lack careful planning and suffer from critical issues such as inadequate lighting, ventilation, and drainage systems, resulting in unhealthy living conditions [49]. The flawed design has also given rise to problems like leaks, drainage blockages, and the fear of water contamination due to subpar infrastructure. The absence of effective garbage collection further exacerbates the challenges. Certain relocation colonies have witnessed an upsurge in tuberculosis cases and deteriorated health conditions [41].

Relocated families grapple with lacking essential water connections, resorting to individual water tankers. While electricity meters have been installed individually, they have led to exorbitant billing. This, coupled with escalated energy consumption—where households allocate 40% of their income to electricity, often driven by the increased use of air conditioning—has fuelled a change in mindset among slum dwellers [50]. Due to the high costs of upkeep and maintenance, they now view the new housing as investment opportunities, opting to rent out properties at lower prices rather than embracing them as permanent solutions, as seen in a survey where nearly 40% of tenements under the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) scheme are occupied by unauthorised tenants, with many original beneficiaries either renting or selling their allotted homes [51].

The residents were relocated to the new housing before its completion, leaving them without basic amenities like tap water and sewage lines for an extended period. The lack of housing cooperatives has left the slum dwellers unfamiliar with communal living and maintenance practices, contributing to issues such as open defecation and the accumulation of waste in shared spaces. On higher floors, residents often face the task of hauling buckets of water to their homes due to weakened water pressure. Consequently, women resort to washing clothes and dishes outside the building. Furthermore, concerns persist regarding drainage deficiencies, inadequate understanding of septic tanks, and the potential contamination risk arising from the absence of separation between drinking water and sewage systems. In addition to these outcomes, unintended repercussions include disrupting students' education due to a hurried transition and repeated relocation. Together, these challenges significantly impact the overall well-being of the relocated residents.

A similar case can be seen in Hangberg, Cape Town, where the standardised design of the RDP houses was criticised for not considering the residents' socio-cultural practices and needs. The lack of provisions for in-situ upgrading of informal settlements meant that many informal settlements continued to grow without essential services and infrastructure and led to modifications and expansions by homeowners, sometimes without proper guidance or adherence to building regulations. For example, the expectation that individuals could use their homes as collateral for business loans was not realised in many cases, as banks were hesitant to provide mortgages in historically marginalised areas due to perceived high risks. Moreover, the secondary market for RDP houses did not function effectively, so residents could not sell their properties at expected prices, diminishing the envisioned asset-building potential. [51].

3.2. Policy Gaps

The policies often failed to consider the importance of community ties. These ties acts as residents' support systems and access to resources. The Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS) of 1995, while providing secure tenure for some, also introduced divisions within the community due to varying benefits received. The 1971 act paved the way for the issuance of Photopass, designed to provide some legitimacy to many of Mumbai's informal housing residents. However, landlords began to view the Photopass with suspicion, associating it with tenants potentially staking a claim to ownership rights. This led to anxiety among renters, who became reluctant to acquire such documentation as ration cards¹. They feared that if their landlords became aware of their efforts to

¹ Ration card: an ID card. Ration translate to Groceries, A ration card enables eligible people to receive subsidized food from the government.

obtain a Photopass, it could result in their eviction. This dynamic has instilled a sense of vulnerability among tenants, undermining trust and creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability in many of Mumbai's informal housing sectors [52]. Additionally, the police rationalise the "Operation Demolition" slum demolition by suggesting that 90% of Bombay's crime emanated from slum areas.

Eviction concerns stemming from the Slum Area Improvement and Clearance Act of 1956 and Operation Demolition by BMC deter residents from even home improvements however illegal constructions continue due to police bribery. Dharavi locals report cases where even minor repairs result in police demanding bribes, often coupled with threats of arrest They perceive such investments as potential drains on their limited resources.. This has prevented residents from improving their homes, leading to roof leaks, deteriorating structures, exaggerated property sizes, false documentation, and soaring rents. [9].

Under the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme of 1995, numerous concerns have arisen. The postponement of constructing rehabilitation homes, coupled with the misuse of the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) clause to create more commercial space, has resulted in many slum residents being left without shelter or advantages [46]. Additionally, the quality of rehabilitation housing provided under this legislation is inadequate given the government's lack of stringent regulation regarding the standard of these dwellings.

Under the slum improvement initiatives, the initial goal was to provide one toilet for every thirty-five residents. This standard was later revised to one toilet for every fifteen individuals. However, in reality, due to the high density of the population, the achievement was only one toilet for every 100 individuals. The constrains being challenge of demolishing existing residences [9], hurdle in connecting toilets to sewer lines as it would require structure demolition to set up new swear lines [53].

None of the proposed redevelopment strategies recognises the intricate web of interdependent industries in the area. Relocating even a single sector can trigger a domino effect, negatively impacting other sectors. This potential for widespread disruption contributes to the residents' hesitation to relocate. Business owner anticipates that the allotted spaces might not be conducive to their micro-enterprises. Those producing farsan², leather goods, embroidered attire, imitation jewellery, and other such businesses might be at risk of shutting down. Although the property value might increase post-relocation, there is a considerable likelihood that numerous business owners would choose to sell off their new properties and leave the area [54,55]. This perspective aligns with the observation of property prices in the surrounding areas of Dharavi. Given the high real estate values, many residents might deem it more beneficial financially to lease their spaces instead of running their traditional businesses therein. Another consideration is that many individuals feel more comfortable in settings where work and life seamlessly blend [56]. "My son, who is an engineer, and other youngsters can stay here after the redevelopment, but we will lose our work, and only the name of our locality, the Potter's Colony, will remain' Voiced a resident of Kumbharwada [57].

3.3. Moslow Hierarchy Analysis of Resident Concerns and Aspiration

Analysing the hesitance towards change and relocation by juxtaposing the existing living conditions of the slum dwellers with their potential future circumstances, using Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a lens [58] as shown in Fig. 14, we can understand the compelling reasons Dharavi holds for its residents.

² Farsan: A salty snack

3.3.1. Physiological Needs (Basic needs for human survival):

Current Living: The multi-functional spaces of living, strategic location to amenities like hospital, schools and workplace, livelihood needs fulfilled by the established economy inside Dharavi's vast range of industrial activities cater to these physiological needs

Relocated Standards: Relocation threatens a large segment of Dharavi's population, especially tenants and migrant workers, without documentation proving residency before 2000. Nearly 80% of residents cannot prove their residency rights [59] increasing eviction risks. Many may become homeless or inadequately compensated, leading to squatting again. Many households in Dharavi also double as businesses, producing various goods. The proposed regulations could shut down many such enterprises. The potential move to high-rises threatens these businesses' customer relations. Dharavi's central location is crucial to its residents, who work in menial jobs close to their homes. Relocating them to the city's outskirts could disrupt their work-life balance and increase commuting challenges.

3.3.2. Safety Needs (Security and safety)

Current Living: Even with concerns like fire hazards, electrocution risks, sanitary issues and inadequate infrastructure, it might seem paradoxical that many residents of Dharavi feel safe. However, the sense of security prevails due to strong community ties and the familiar stability of the known environment.

Relocated Standards: The risk of building collapses (as with the BMC building) poses a significant threat. Add to that the possibility of not having transitional homes, which further compromises their security. Looming concern that the government might not deliver on promised commitments leads Slum dwellers to associate relocation as a threat rather than a means to uplift them. Relocation for Dharavi's residents also brings familiar problems: persistent water contamination, inadequate sanitation, and inconsistent amenities like irregular water supply and electricity. A mere change in address does not guarantee improved living standards. For genuine improvement, comprehensive infrastructural development is imperative.

3.3.3. Belongingness and Love Needs (Intimate relationships, friends)

Current Living: Dharavi thrives on its deep-rooted community ties and joint families. Festivals that unite various religions and daily communal interactions cement these bonds.

Relocated Standards: When slum dwellers are relocated, they are not just moving houses. They are transitioning from a tight-knit community, where everyone knows each other and shares common spaces, to possibly more isolated living conditions. This can affect their sense of belonging and connectedness. They might have to adapt to new social norms, rebuild community ties, and possibly cope with feelings of isolation or alienation. The lack of housing cooperatives leads to unfamiliarity with communal living and maintenance practices. Disruption of students' education due to a transition profoundly challenges their sense of belonging and connection to the broader society.

3.3.4. Esteem Needs (Prestige and feeling of accomplishment)

Current Living: Many residents are skilled artisans, taking immense pride in their craft. Many residents feel pride in being featured in movies like "Slumdog Millionaire" and inviting tourists into their houses and lives, while others yearn to shed the "slum" label.

Relocated Standards: Redevelopment promises modern conveniences that may elevate their status. However, concerns about sustaining livelihoods and the financial burdens of maintaining the new accommodations could diminish this newfound esteem. Individuals might face challenges finding the same level of respect or role in the new community as in their previous setting.

3.3.5. Self-actualisation (Achieving one's full potential)

Current Living: Dharavi might not offer traditional avenues for self-actualisation. However, its residents' ingenuity in business, resilience, and continuous efforts for better living hint at an intrinsic form of self-fulfilment.

Relocated standards: The proposed redevelopment does not offer clear avenues for residents to self-actualize.

The challenge with the relocation policies currently being implemented for slum dwellers is that they often aim to solely address the pyramid's base: physiological needs. Even there, they fall short as none of the schemes shows plans for the tangible employment issue. The policies inadvertently compromise their job security by relocating people further from their jobs, a foundational need. If employment security is jeopardised, it causes a ripple effect, threatening the stability of other foundational needs. To provide cleaner, safer accommodation, policymakers overlook the vital sense of security, community, and belonging these people have cultivated over the years in their original settlements. While basic needs are unmet, even the sense of community and self-actualisation at higher hierarchy levels are not fulfilled. This complicates the effort to "improve" conditions since improvement is subjective.



Fig. 14. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs [73]

4. Conclusions

Historically, cities have emerged and evolved based on the unique needs of their societies. The ancient city of Masuleh in Iran is known for its rooftop roads. Venice was constructed around its iconic canals, and Varanasi was built around its temples. Each city's distinct design and essence are grounded in its societal and environmental context.

Urban development requires collaboration, not just top-down decisions based merely on external assumptions about their needs. Relocations enforced without consent, for instance, do not present long-term solutions may inadvertently spawn new slums. A convergent solution with compromises from both government and residents is essential. The government's fear of setting a precedent for illegal settlements must be balanced with the community's needs. Slum redevelopment needs empathy and understanding, not just land grabs for profit.

The lack of funds for effective governance, the challenges of migration and urbanisation, social stigmas, deeply rooted cultural norms, people's unwillingness to change, and the overwhelming scale of the problem are a part of the issue resulting in increased pressure on housing, the solutions provided.

Infrastructure challenges, like the construction of PMGP buildings only around the periphery of slums due to internal drainage issues, further complicate matters. To address risks like fire hazards, houses need to maintain a certain distance from each other. Moreover, it is vital to separate industrial areas from residential ones for health reasons.

For any policy to be genuinely effective, it must be crafted with empathy, understanding, and respect for the community's intricacies and needs. While it is understandable that Dharavi differs from master-planned neighbourhoods, where zoning regulations strictly dictate land use, its unique housing typology seamlessly integrates living and working spaces, allowing for incremental growth. This flexibility empowers residents to determine how their spaces are utilised, leading to a vibrant mix of functions within each household. Unlike areas bound by stringent zoning rules, Dharavi's residents can tailor decisions based on their immediate needs and long-term aspirations. Engaging residents in decision-making will draw from local knowledge and ensure initiatives resonate with their needs and aspirations.

A fair and transparent process can be crafted through thoughtful measures if the government pursues a relocation strategy, particularly concerning shifting hazardous industries causing environmental pollution. Empowering slum dwellers with a degree choice is pivotal to such an approach as seen in Singapore's HDB development strategy, the rehab apartments mimics their current living conditions, which grants residents the opportunity to voice their housing preferences. This guarantees that the new dwellings align with their requirements. A mandate that if a resident opt for the new apartment, they must inhabit and uphold the property as their primary residence, as seen in the case of Singapore. This provision thwarts the risk of allocated apartments lying dormant or repurposed for unrelated uses. This dual pronged approach of choice-driven housing options and stringent occupancy prerequisites not only upholds the principles of fairness and transparency but also instils a sense of responsibility among relocated individuals and safeguards the efficacy of the relocation effort.

To bolster the success of such initiatives, the government could involve the slum dwellers more directly. For example, it allows them to visit and inspect the new housing sites before the relocation or even allows them to choose their neighbours to maintain community bonds. Such measures empower the residents to make informed decisions and assuage concerns about relocating to an unfamiliar environment. Actively engaging them in the process fosters a sense of ownership and builds anticipation. Additionally, providing support services during the transition, such as transitional housing, counselling, vocational training, and assistance with accessing social services, schools, and hospitals, can significantly aid in their adaptation to new surroundings. These services are crucial in enhancing the overall quality of life for the relocated residents.

India, home to roughly 18% of the global population [60] faces unique sustainability challenges not solely rooted in resource consumption. Despite having a lower per-capita consumption compared to many nations, the sheer number of its inhabitants strains its limited resources. The crux of India's sustainability dilemma pivots more towards social sustainability. Marginalised communities often lack appropriate land for habitation and settle in ecologically fragile areas. This poses environmental threats and exacerbates these communities' challenges, such as polluting limited freshwater sources. India needs a comprehensive action plan that should prioritise land preservation, ensuring that marginalised communities can access sustainable habitats without endangering delicate ecosystems.

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List of Acronyms:

BJP: Bhartiya Janta Party

BMC: Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation COVID-19 - Coronavirus Disease 2019

CRH: Committee for the Right to Housing

DRP: Dharavi Redevelopment Plan

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

FSI: Floor Space Index

MHADA Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority

NGO nongovernmental organisation PMGP Prime Minister's Grant Project

PROUD People's Responsible Organisation for United Dharavi

PUKAR: Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action & Research

RPI Republican Party of India SIP Slum Improvement Program

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SPARC Society for the Preservation of Area Resource Centres

SRA Slum Rehabilitation Authority

SRD Slum Re-Development program

SRS Slum Rehabilitation Scheme

SUP Slum Upgradation Program

TDR Transferable of Development Rights

UN: United Nation

YUVA Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action