THE IMPACT OF FORCED EVICTIONS ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE URBAN POOR: THE CASE OF A DEVELOPMENT INDUCED DISPLACEMENT IN KORAIL, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

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Abstract

This paper talks about such a case from April 2012, which involved an eviction of a section of the biggest informal settlement Korail, in Dhaka. The eviction has brought into focus the need for a coherent urban poverty and resettlement approach. One part of the slum was bulldozed to extend the main road, as a development project of the government. The plans worked in terms of development initiative, but the policy remained silent on relocation of the evictees. The progress for this research was supported by a quasi-experiment as a strategy. The objective was to reveal an evaluation of the effects on the livelihoods of the evictees and suggest right based alternatives to this development induced eviction. The experiment compared two groups on their livelihood assets and strategies. The evictees were titled as the treatment group and the non-evictees as the control group. Although the comparison inclined more on the "before-after" situation of the treatment group, the control group was considered to explain what would have happened to the treatment group if this eviction had not happened. The research method involved analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data obtained from surveys and semi-structured interviews. The specific suggestions for the policy makers and involved authorities remain to be focused on the laws against eviction and housing rights besides being considerate and coordinated towards the issues of homelessness or landlessness.

Keywords: Forced eviction, Development induced displacement, livelihoods, Impoverishment Risk, Coping strategy.

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Introduction

Population displacement because of a development project has been an outstanding feature in many developing countries. With the growth in economy and expansion of cities, there has been an escalating demand and investment in projects concerning infrastructures, communication networks and other services. However, this also heightens the demand for land acquisition, which might end up in the mass displacement of the population already residing there. In other words, these development projects cause involuntary displacement which includes relocation, and at times compensation. Although, for a long time it has been clear that those displaced by development induced projects, have not usually been benefitted. Instead, they are more often impoverished, losing economic, social and cultural resources (Koenig, 2002).

Displacement is a big challenge for the government of many developing countries because there is always not a scope or plan of relocating the displaced people, which results in more squatters. The suffering of those displaced by development projects can be severe, and the numbers as large, as those displaced either internally or internationally by conflict and violence (Courtland Robinson, 2003). This can be tougher for countries with worse housing conditions. Eviction is an outcome of such situation. Considered as a global problem, every year, there are a large number of people recorded as evictees, against their will and equitable compensation. These evictions are carried out despite of international laws recognizing the right to housing and security of tenure, explicitly stating that eviction is a violation of housing rights. According to one of UN Commission's resolution (1993/77) on Human Rights, "Forced evictions constitute a gross violation of human rights, in particular, the right to adequate housing" (Plessis, 2011).

Although many international declarations have opposed forced evictions without relocation and several developing countries have started being justified towards the slums and the slum dwellers, Bangladesh had not shown any positive inclination towards improving their environment. In fact, most of the cases exhibited the reluctance of the government to handle the crisis of slums more humanely. Recently, awareness of a positive role of the slums is growing in this country. There are many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working to establish the rights for the urban poor. However, it requires a concerted effort by the government, NGOs and communities. Having said all that, the existing situation where evictions are still being one of the most unavoidable instances, cannot be ignored. Hence, this study tends to explore the impacts of forced eviction on the livelihoods of the evictees in Korail, the largest slum in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

Korail at a glance

Korail is the biggest informal settlement in the centre of Dhaka (Fig:1). It covers an area of approximately 90 acres of government land owned by the state owned Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL), The Public Works Department (PWD) and the Ministry of Information and Communication. It is one of the most densely populated areas in the city with an estimated population of 100,000 (CUS, 2006) many of which were formerly engaged in agricultural works and now work as rickshaw pullers, garment workers or domestic helps. The eastern and southern edges of Korail are defined by a main water reservoir for the adjoining areas; the wealthy neighborhoods of Dhaka, Banani and Gulshan. Korail could be accessed by several roads or by water across Gulshan Lake. The slum was developed by the settlers on government land without any security of tenure or formal interventions (Jabeen, 2012), and it is gradually expanding across the lake by repossession of land and through dumping of waste and soil.
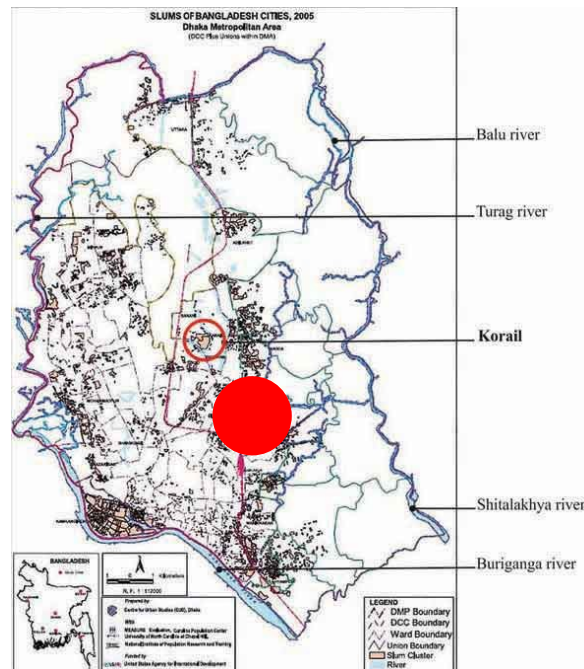
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Fig 1: Location of Korail in Dhaka
Source: CUS, 2006

Despite threats of eviction, the settlement grew over the past three decades as one of the major concentrations in the city, where, considering the economic status, significant proportions of the residents could be referred to as urban poor. Nevertheless, high demand for housing and services has encouraged the residents to develop the settlement on their own where they share a house with multiple households in different rooms, with common use of services like toilets, washing areas and kitchens. To support these services an informal system of supply of services has been developed in the area by the residents (Jabeen and Johnson, 2013). Besides providing access to affordable housing with services, Korail has also attracted a high concentration of low income households, along with access to livelihood opportunities, which are labour intensive, for both women and men. The women are mostly employed in the ready-made garments industries or as household help in the surrounding areas; whereas the men are engaged in small business such as street vendors or rickshaw pullers. Many families have home based business within that area, which are run by mainly female members, alongside managing the household chores.

The Korail eviction

Despite the injunctions, Korail has been going through a spate of evictions beginning in September, 2011, when 200 households were affected (Shiree-DSK, 2012).The evictees resisted with the support from political actors, NGOs and civil society. There was another sanction from High Court in 2012, to protect the Banani Lake from more expansion of the slum. A more or less participatory process was followed to remove the existing slum houses mainly from the lake side where a pavement was intended to develop, with gradual removal of almost 2000 households from the southern and eastern part of Korail. Since, Korail is an unofficially developed area; there has always been a conflict between the "owners" of the land and the local government. Government had already agreed to put forward the law of "no eviction without relocation"

(Shiree-DSK, 2012) in condition with the so-called leaders that the perimeters of Korail cannot be extended beyond the existing one. Apparently, the area that got evicted was extended beyond that boundary and after that agreement. The intervention involved cleaning and improving the main access road; which resulted in bulldozing whatever was structured within 10 feet of either side of the road.

Fig 2: Approximate zone of eviction, Korail slum
Source: Shiree-DSK report, 2012

The eviction on April 4, 2012 was sudden, unexpected and violent, leaving the residents inadequate time to accumulate or take practical steps to preserve their property and livelihoods. In fact, this was part of a larger eviction campaign taken on by the government, demarcating the Gulshan Lake and removing all illegal structures. There was no advanced notice provided to the people residing there, and the demolition process shattered over 2000 households, leaving about 10,000 people homeless. They instantaneously moved to a nearby field with whatever they could save after the bulldozers left them devastated. What added more to their misery was the intermittent rain, while living in the open. The evictees were helped by some local NGOs with ground sheets (Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR), 2012) and some emergency aid like water, rice and some dry foods, so that they could survive for the next few days. Some of these households were partially affected while shifting their belongings during the eviction, the number being approximately 4000. Stealing of assets, physical harassment by the law enforcement agencies and other reprobates were noticed. Over all, a number of at least 20,000 people were displaced (Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), 2012). They did not immediately leave Korail, even after the devastation and were temporarily supported by their relatives nearby and people from part of Korail, which were out of the eviction plan.

The loss of physical assets, as a result of forced eviction has a negative impact on the livelihoods of people because it threatens the existing and future planned income generating activities in the area. Some of the evictees were supported by their relatives within the other parts of the slum to manage temporarily, but that could never be a long term approach. The loss of their assets, physical assets to be specific were major concern, since they were involved in small scale business to earn their livelihood. The vulnerability context of these people has increased to an extent that has become hard for them to cope with, provided that they have not received any

compensation from the Government, or support from the "leaders" who were in a way at the rear of this eviction process.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to carry out an evaluation of the effects of eviction on the livelihoods of slum dwellers in Korail after a major eviction and to formulate more right based alternatives to this development induced eviction.

Provisional Research Question(s)

The overall research question is:

What are the implications of Development Induced eviction on the livelihoods of the evictees?

The specific research questions are as follows:

- Which were the livelihood assets and strategies of the community before eviction?
- To what extent has the eviction affected the livelihood assets and strategies of these people?
- How do people cope after eviction to restore livelihoods?

Scope and Limitations of the study

Scopes for this study was exploring the challenges faced by the evictees in a situation where their basic human rights have been violated. Also, to know their coping strategies after their assets are lost and how they deal with the fact of no support from the authorities or a group they can report to. Reluctance of the local government to reveal the actual reasons behind the evictions might be one of the limitations in the process. Usually, the people after the eviction undergo both physical and psychological stress. So they might not be co-operative in providing information of what they went through. Considering the existing conflict between the government and the local NGOs, who wish to support the evictees, it might be a complicated task to reach the authenticity of the core issue and might end up in a comparison between different versions of statements

Development Induced Displacement

Development, as it has been generally and broadly conceived and applied, is the process through which the productive forces of economics and supporting infrastructure are improved through public and private investment (Oliver-Smith, 2006). In recent times, which are after the 1990s, Development Induced Displacement concept has emerged as a major concern. This happened due to a striking rise in Development Induced Displacement in 1970s and 1980s, propelled mainly by a global infrastructure boom, together with disastrous outcomes in resettlement projects (Dwivedi, 2002). In simple words, this could be seen as movement of a group of people from their living in order to carry on a development process. However, urban Development Induced Displacement and Resettlement (DIDR) are rights violating when it deprives people of the communities in which they have created livelihoods, social structures and meaningful lives. At the same time, it has the potential to be rights affirming in so far, as it assists people to move toward improved living conditions, including food, shelter, and livelihoods (Koenig, 2002).

Development Induced Displacement approaches

Development induced displacement could be brought down under two broad approaches, namely Managerial and Movementist. They have different ways of addressing an issue dealing with displacement or resettlement. Managerial approach looks at displacement as a foreseeable outcome of development and focuses on minimizing the adverse outcomes of displacement (Dwivedi, 2002). A research carried out through this process is more goal-based. Area of focus for a managerial approach is an ill planned resettlement, where it has to balance the interest of different groups. In order to implement a proper resettlement, it follows a top-down approach, making planners susceptible to the local needs. In a Movementist approach; displacement is noticeable to a development crisis and it is the evidence of development's uneven and unfair distribution of costs and benefits. Also, it focuses on fundamental political issues of rights, governance and negotiation, which questions development that displaces. Movementist approach is applied where there is development not so appropriately conceived (Dwivedi, 2002). It prioritizes values and focuses on right based approach. When implementing, it follows a bottom-up approach, prioritizing the community needs. There is another approach which somehow balances the other two approaches, Institutional or responsible approach focuses on lack of agreement. Between two groups, worked credibility of the government and negotiated decision making process. There is a lack of agreement between certain groups and a convincing governance is found missing. It focuses on establishing norms within the society and the policy focuses on negotiating in decision making process. In the implementation process, every stakeholder is involved and asked for approval before the displacement process.

Consequences of Development Induced Displacement

The consequences of development-induced displacements are often overwhelming. It is a reflective socioeconomic and cultural interference for those affected. Dislocation breaks up living patterns and social stability. It take apart existing modes of production, disrupts social networks, causes the insolvency of many of those uprooted, intimidates their cultural identity, and amplifies the risks of epidemics and health problems. The suffering of those displaced by development projects can be as severe, and the numbers as large, as those displaced either internally or internationally by conflict and violence. But unfortunately, the victims of development-induced displacements do not attract public sympathy and international aid as victims of disaster-induced displacements although the consequences may be comparably dire (Courtland Robinson, 2003). Resettlement could be placed at the same discussion of eviction; since it is expected to have a resettlement plan or initiative after an eviction occurs. In general terms, we know we can put it as forced eviction when there is no compensation handed to the evictees after they are being displaced. Considering development is a process through which certain services are improved for the people by public and private investment, development induced displacement and resettlement is, in many ways, a clear expression of the ambitious engineering projects of a state with a monopoly on the management of force (Oliver-Smith, 2006). Resettlement is a right, where policy is subjected to a process of the people centric democracy, which also means that the affected people are part of the deliberation process in terms of the amount of investment needed. Some aspects of resettlement rights are (Chakrabarti and Dhar, 2010b):

- With zero tolerance towards concrete dislocation, no form of development-induced disruption in general and its specific form such as physical displacement would be accepted.

- Resettlement right takes with loads of salt any comparison between the two states-before and after the movement of people.
- The development-induced disruption and the physical displacement are not accepted.
- Due to a misplaced argument that the stage after the displacement taking place has to be better than the one that took place before it, a rehabilitation package based on this kind of comparison is not accepted.

A few more concepts regarding resettlement rights are concrete dislocation, notional dislocation and re-location, where concrete dislocation is the actual event of disruption emanating from says the initiation of development projects, while notional dislocation can be conceived as a state concerning the condensation of perceived effects following the possible occurrence of an event. The approach to resettlement now is generally treated as a development question, with the idea that resettlers must benefit from new economic opportunities that the project generates (Mathur, H. M., 2006).

Defining Forced eviction and Market-driven eviction

Now, we look at eviction as a result of development induced displacement. According to a generalized version by Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), forced evictions are the permanent or temporary removal against the will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or the land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection. In simple words, it could be referred to a displacement without prior notice and compensation. Every year, the forced eviction of millions of persons from their homes represents one of the most common, yet often times unrecognized, violations of human rights in the world. The arbitrary loss of one's home places people in all corners of the globe in situations of increased vulnerability, at times going so far as to render those persons homeless (The Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2002). Evictions continue to occur in large scale despite many positive developments in recent years that has strengthened legal stands against forced eviction under human rights law and occurs due to causes such as urban redevelopment projects, infrastructure upgrading, city beautification, climate change, political conflict or economic crisis. Forced eviction, according to various international organizations, is a violation of housing as a human right. If we look at the vulnerability context of the group, under the threat of (forced) eviction, an issue of adequacy is put forward, which includes certain components;

- Security of tenure
- Availability of services
- Affordability
- Habitability
- Accessibility
- Location
- Cultural adequacy

In some cases, where there is a tendency of an increasing market pressure on urban low-income settlements, evictions occur as a result of the dynamism in the context where resources generated by economic growth are rarely allocated to housing and resettlement projects. These evictions either might not even require forcibility, or are compensated in some form. This frequently results in a deterioration of the economic and housing conditions of the evicted, and ultimately in the formation of new slums. This is called market-driven evictions. Mainly, those who have settled on land whose value has increased over time, and who cannot provide sufficient evidence as to their rights on the land, are exposed to "market evictions" (Durand-Lasserve, 2006).

How people face eviction

Forced evictions are more or less defensible in those cases where there is no alternative in incomparable circumstances. In this case, there should be a relocation plan complying with the international law. The evictees tend to face the consequences of eviction with various strategies. The fact that they become more vulnerable to the already existing situation makes them learn to adopt certain measures or approaches as a means of resistance to the eviction. These strategies could be applied simultaneously and they might change over time (Cabannes, Guimaraes, et al., 2010). They are:

- Negotiation: A mediating step, discussed with the authorities for relocation plans, accepting the situation of being displaced.
- Occupy-resist-live: This involves occupying empty properties, a resistance to eviction and developing permanent housing solutions for some.
- Legal channels: This is successful for communities that have a support from an organization recognizes housing rights and eviction and has displacement solutions.
- Open struggle, resistance and political perspective: People are seen struggling for adequate housing and against evictions, especially after being put in that situation, which sort of works as a means to gain political force and change in society.
- Building rights and policies: The evictees or the supporting organizations can develop new policies regarding building rights defending a right based approach.

Assessing the impacts of forced eviction

The problem of forced eviction seems to be growing in spite of the best efforts and struggles of communities and support groups, organizations and institutions that have resisted evictions and advocated for developed alternatives (Plessis, 2011). Mass urban displacement, if put in that way are neither unusual nor they are limited to only developing countries. There also has been a range of responses to it by either the affected communities, supporting organizations, even individuals and in some cases government too. These responses or strategies include protest and resistance against the eviction, with or without external support. Also the usage of normative instruments like tenure security and housing rights and advocacy aimed at improvement of national policies and regulations are focused on. The impacts of forced eviction are wider in the context of a society. Often, it is found out that in response to the eviction, or as a means of compensation, evictees end up with less or no compensating factors or very inadequately dealt with.

Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction Model (IRRM)

The IRR model by Michael Cernea, introduced in the 1990's, is a concept that analyses the key risks that are caused by involuntary displacement that might lead to impoverishment. The model also provides measures that can be used for mitigation of impoverishment risks caused by reconstruction of livelihoods. For this research, the IRR model will be used as analytical tool. Michael Cernea has analyzed eight specific risks in this model (Perera, 2011).

- **Landlessness**: This occurs due to the expropriation of land for project purposes. This automatically limits commercial activities and other land based livelihood options. If necessary steps are not taken to transfer the usage to another location or more stable employments, the acute issue of landlessness worsens that leads to insolvency of the resettled households.

- **Homelessness**: Loss of shelter is one of the major violence to one's basic rights. Homelessness could be a temporary problem to some, but in the long run, many remain dispossessed or end up in substandard housing. The ultimate result could be social exclusion and diminish the social status of the affected group.

- **Joblessness**: There is a high risk for people losing jobs specifically those who rely on wage employment or small scale businesses. Creation of new job is always difficult and capital intensive. This leads to unemployment to add more to the already worse situation.

- **Marginalization**: The loss of economic power and the inability to utilize their earlier skills after the eviction are the outcomes. Deterioration in human capital, an eventual social exclusion and diminishing social status leads to a marginalization, both physical and psychological; that goes beyond impoverishment.

- **Food insecurity:** Another basic human right, food security is more or less threatened during the displacement or relocation, since the food production or income source tends to drop out. Re-establishing food production may take longer time to achieve.

- **Increased morbidity and mortality:** Social and psychological stress, chronic epidemics contribute to the deteriorating health status. The groups that are mostly vulnerable are the elderly, children and the infants.

- **Loss of access to common property:** Access to basic public services such as schools and health services and common properties such as open spaces adversely affects livelihood.

- **Social disarticulation:** This ends up in the destruction of social ties and networks and self-organized mutual services which form the basis of social capital. A great portion of urban poor households depend on social capital, which is threatened when there is no resettlement planned. However, this social disarticulation still remains unperceived by planners, according to Cernea.

The livelihood framework and the threat of eviction

Livelihood indicates the essential parameters, in forms of capabilities, assets or activities for means of living. Sustainability depends upon whether the approaches are enhancing or maintaining the existing assets and opportunities for both the present and the future. The concepts of livelihood are a realistic recognition of the multiple activities in which household are engaged to ensure their survival and well-being (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002b). The livelihood framework (Fig: 4) has the assets on which households or individuals build their livelihoods, right in the centre. The assets namely physical capital, social capital, natural capital, human capital and financial capital; form a pentagon which is more or less controlled by the rise or fall in certain externalities. These include vulnerability contexts, infrastructure and services, policies and institutional processes or other livelihood opportunities. There are certain components that make the livelihood framework legible from defining the scope to provide the basis of livelihood analysis by identifying the main factors affecting livelihoods to providing a basis for identifying appropriate interventions to support livelihoods.
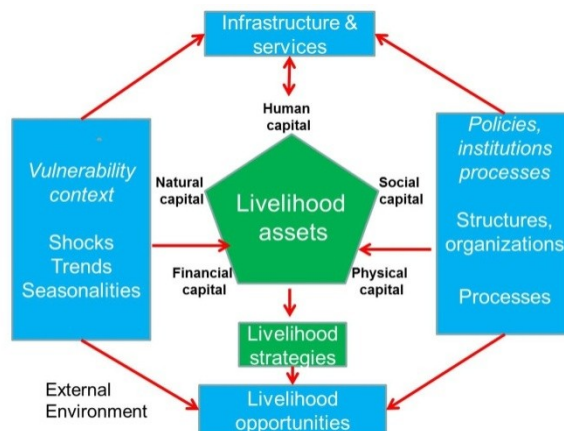
Fig 3: The livelihood framework
Source: Developed from Department for International Development (DFID)'s sustainable
livelihoods guidance sheets, section 2.1 by Tony Llyod -Jones

The livelihood model is more legible in perceiving the state of an individual's or households' state of coping with the externalities or wellbeing, because it is possible to judge how a certain capital is on the track of decline or rise, and how it affects the whole livelihood situation. It focuses on the theme that sustainable poverty elimination could be obtained if the external support deals with what matters to people most and are related to the current livelihood strategies (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002b). An agreement could be achieved by partnership between local institutions that involve both public and private sectors. Another advantage of this frame work is that it somehow supports the functioning of the policies or processes that tend to influence the livelihood strategies available to poor people. This approach involves some activities that help to operationalize it, besides acting as positive aspects of the model. The actions are directly focused to the needs of people and they include opportunities and issues that address the participation of them, as an ultimate state of enabling actions to support policies for poverty reduction.

The research question revolves around the impact of eviction on the livelihoods of slum dwellers. In which case, the fact that livelihood model is influenced by external factors is quite effective since it could be judged which component is most affected due to the eviction. It could also be seen how that asset or component have risen or declined compared to other approaches. The main concepts of the livelihood approach consist of assets, vulnerability, livelihood and coping strategies and institutional and policy environment. Assets being in the centre of the framework let us know which the sectors that get affected by the eviction are. Vulnerability context explains the scale of shocks or trends in the similar context. Livelihood and coping strategies work in opposite situations from asset building to management to secure livelihood in times of negative change. The policy environment is based upon how the overall situation is reactive and adaptive to the aftermath of an eviction.

Since the issue is about eviction, it would be wise to look at the entire livelihood model. Although the main focus would be vulnerability context regarding the eviction itself, shocks and aftermath. There is also an involvement of physical infrastructure and livelihood opportunities from the model. Explanations on how the physical infrastructure contributed to the livelihoods of the evictees and the community needs to be explained and the coping strategies after the eviction to restore the assets need to be considered. Whether there are any opportunities to restart the livelihood circle or the policies to support the resettlement or the sectors to be engaged in the process would be brought forward as well. The livelihood framework, as a whole

24

would be analyzed and implicated accordingly throughout the research questions, focusing on certain sections if required.

Research approach and technique

For social science research, there are many techniques that researchers follow. These techniques depend on factors like type of questions, the targeted group or the context where the research is taking place. In this particular research which is entitled as "The impact of forced evictions on the livelihoods of the urban poor", experiment, was used as a research strategy, which was expected to reveal a causal relationship of an independent variable on the change in one or more dependent variables. In the field of Social Science, experiments are used to measure the effects or study impacts of a certain event. Generally, "experiments are done when an investigator can manipulate behavior directly, precisely, and systematically" (Yin, 2002). Experiments contain certain stages such as Pre-test and Post-test, which are used to design the research technique. Pre-test consists of the "action", as in the event and the Baseline information, as in the present scenario. Post-test consists of the Treatment and the Effect measurement state. To be more specific, this research was intended for a Quasi-experiment, where the researcher does not have full control over the situation. As researchers, we tend to have a control over the independent variables in experimental designs. This might lead to the target groups consigned to various treatments as potential independent variables where the consequences for some dependent variables are measured (Black, 1993a). Such research designs are quite difficult to arrange and often considered superficial. Hence, the quasi experiments are structured using the existing groups of people, where these groups already have had something happen to them and the researcher tends to discover the effect of this event on them.

Nature of data

Two types of data were collected to measure the effects of the displacement on the evictees and also to know the involvement of different institutions in the process. Information were collected to support as the background of the situation and if any interventions were made to improve the livelihoods of the evictees after the eviction.

Primary data

Data at primary level were collected by survey questionnaires. A representative sample from the treatment group (evicted) was selected along with a sample from the control group (non-evicted) to compare the "before-after" situation. Several semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the coping strategies adapted by the evictees to restore their livelihoods. In addition, semi structured interviews were carried out with representatives from local NGOs to understand how the aftermath of the eviction was immediately followed by them and whether there are any initiatives planned by them to help the evicted cope with the situation. This was also expected to solve any validation of primary data collected through questionnaires.

Secondary data

Data regarding any previous studies or reports on the research area was collected from relevant sources. Information and documents were collected from:

- Dhaka District administration— information regarding the initiation of eviction and plans for the evicted group.
- Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) and other NGOs—previous studies and reports on the affected area and initiatives taken by them to help the evictees.

Implications of development induced displacement

The scenario being a state after an eviction had its implications on the lives of the evictees to an extent where their livelihood assets and strategies were at loss. The theories regarding development induced displacement have been found operative in the process of researching the impacts. As discussed earlier in the literature review in Chapter 2, Development Induced Displacement follows two broad approaches (Dwivedi, 2002). To be specific, a movementist approach is more observable in this case, due to the fact that the development process in that area of Dhaka had resulted in a discriminating and uneven distribution of outlays and assistances to the people residing there. This has raised a question on the development, regarding the policies and negotiation processes. Resettlement rights are questioned in the process of development initiatives, where the general idea is that the people resettled (displaced) must be benefitted from the opportunities that the development project generates (Mathur, H. M., 2006). The core objective was to assess the effects on the livelihoods besides calculating the losses verified by the victims. The implications were elaborated through the livelihood framework, assessing the availability of the assets, evaluating the extent of destruction and the individual coping strategies adapted by the evictees. It was also illustrated how external supports, deal with people's needs and relation of that to the livelihood strategies that they have. In the process, it was also possible to judge how change in a certain asset affects all other livelihood aspects.

Available assets and strategies

We have noticed in the literature review, that the livelihood framework makes it easier to perceive one's households' state or ability to cope with externalities because it is then possible to judge how the change in one capital affects the whole livelihood situation (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002b). The assessment of livelihood assets and strategies of the evictees in Korail was hence carried out considering the asset pentagon. In terms of livelihood assets, it could be said that the people living in Korail were quite well off. Starting from the income range to the access to basic services, this group of people had almost what was required to call them an active group. First and foremost, education was something that had been accomplished by the slum dwellers, even if it was only the completion of primary level. This allowed them to either choose to be in a self-run business, or be involved in an activity that did not require a higher educational background. A stable income for majority of the households enabled them to even save up for future. The savings varied from saving individually or being in a saving group, the objective remaining the same. This was also facilitated by involvement of local NGOs, who introduced the provision of micro credits, equipment for business or technical training for anybody and everybody who had chosen to be a member of their organization. The availability of additional skills were also acknowledged by the NGOs, it is only that very few respondents got a chance to apply them in practice. In case of physical assets, probably they stood out of all perceptions. The presence of household assets as well as assets in their rural home itself was an achievement for them and whoever got a chance to preserve them was fortunate enough. Although security of tenure remains one of the unsolvable aspects in Korail, before the eviction had taken place, a number of people had managed to be owners of houses and also built some by themselves.

The social ties within the slum were an outstanding feature to be noticed. This not only made Korail, a stable settlement socially, but also helped later on in reviving the unique characteristic.

Evaluating extent of devastation

The impacts of eviction are not only limited within individuals but are much wide within the society and relevant context. Sadly, despite of struggles and efforts by organizations and support groups, the problem of forced eviction still seems to be growing worldwide (Plessis, 2011). In the case of Korail, where the development project was aimed towards an infrastructure improvement, differences occurred with the slum, being in the location which was under a government plan for development on an urban scale, as a result of which the eviction took place. These people were devastated. Watching their home going down in front of their eyes and perceiving the uncertainty they were going to face had helplessly taken over them. They had lost their shelter, assets, and social ties. It was hard to accept that there were not much people feeling the enormity of the situation. If looked through theories, the IRR model by Michael Cernea was mainly focused to mitigate against the impoverishment risks that were posed on them. The inevitable distress caused by joblessness, a fact of being homeless, the persisting risk of landlessness, marginalizing one's skills and abilities, the unavoidable insecurity of food, lack of access to common property and last but not the least, an indisposed situation of social disarticulation; were the findings after the evaluation of queries conducted with the evictees.

If focused individually on each risk factor, being landless was not that significant, because they have been living in the same slum, just that they had been expropriated from their previous settlement. Homelessness was something they had to deal with patience and to some extent being cautious. They had to gather the housing materials; in fact for some of them it was being in a competition with the other evictees in collecting the materials from the evicted site and trying to make a shelter. The hardest part was probably the search or reviving the source of income. The income level has dropped than earlier, but the significance is not that much when compared to the non-evicted group. The people in Korail are quite enriched in their human capital, which has been signified by their level of education although not much responses on having any additional skills. Though, they do not always get the opportunities to apply their skills, they still possess that as a coping strategy. Loss of access to common properties was shared out by them with respect to the extremity of individual household situation. When compared with a non-evicted group, the scale of damage caused was clearer. However, social disarticulation was something they did not really suffer. Whatever coping strategies they had previously or adopted after the eviction, having strong communal ties still remain one of their greatest strength. This also explains to us that participation or the sense of being "one" group, is one way to avoid impoverishment risks, which the people of Korail have successfully demonstrated. From the analysis, it was apparent, how the evictees could have had a better life, but that the circumstances went completely against them and left them with nothing but uncertainties.

An overall summary of the change in livelihood assets of the evictees is illustrated through Fig 5, where asset capitals of the evicted and non-evicted group are plotted on the asset pentagon. This is a depiction of the present scenario.
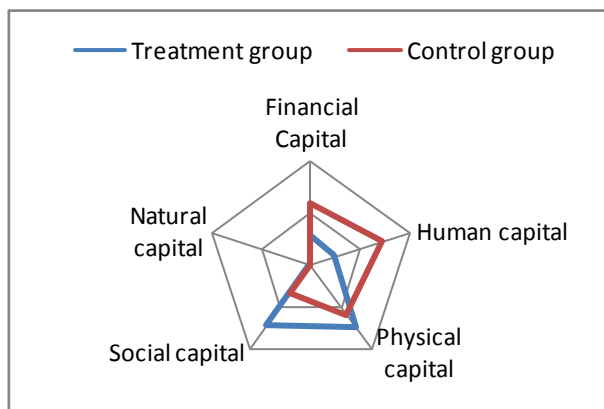
Fig 4: Comparison of aggregated livelihood assets for the treatment and the control group

The treatment group might have had a drop in financial and human capital but they are still enriched in physical and social capital. This is an indication of their coping strategies being effective even after the devastation. However, for the control group, they excel in financial and human capital, the absence of which the treatment group face as major drawbacks. Social ties are seen not so strong among the control group, but at present, they have what they need for a better future.

Coping strategies

In other words, getting to know about the coping strategies was a way to know how hardships have made the people tolerant in this settlement, to cross each obstacle to restore the livelihood assets, yet having that strong resilience. Initiating with searching for housing materials on the evicted site to searching for a new source of income, the evictees from Korail have come a long way, trying to gather what they had lost. In the process, they had to seek assistance from their relatives besides sacrificing their own belongings, which were reserves for them. They were not alone in this journey. They had received a hand from the local NGOs, who in the first place, intervened in the eviction process and did not let the entire eviction plan to succeed. This might have enabled them to gather some of the assets that they have lost. The efforts of the local organizations remain to provide them with micro credit so that they can make a use of it as a means of living, trainings on sectors, so that they could turn that into an income source. It is the driving force for them to cope. Even after a year, they are still trying to help the evictees, so that they manage to get through the whole situation. Although now the people have learned to survive in their own ways but there always remains a need for the institutes to raise their voice against this sort of evictions.

Recommendations

Evictions like the one in Korail, might take only few hours to implement, but the repercussions for thousands would continue for generations. Recommendations for such events are more likely to be short termed, which are instantaneously actionable. The suggestions for this starts with focusing on the law itself, which states eviction must not happen without rehabilitation. All departments and agencies of Government of Bangladesh (GoB) should implement all existing domestic and international laws related to evictions, which comes hand in hand with the relocation schemes(Shiree-DSK, 2012). In the unlikely case of eviction as an inevitable situation, adequate warning must be given to the concerned people, providing them enough time to react to the unexpectedness of the experience. Civil society and local government should be more

coordinated in their response to such state of affairs. There is expected to be an increased coordination between different stakeholders in arranging resources in relation to rehabilitation and legal alternatives.

In case of the long term alternatives, low cost housing is considered as a possibility for facing the resettlement options. Although, the success of this being implemented is questionable, it could be a guideline for policy making in favour of the slum dwellers. It is important to involve the concerned individuals and groups in the whole process, initiated by the respective authorities, to avoid the risk of failure of the plans. Besides, as mentioned earlier, the civil society, in particular the ones who are involved in making changes alongside the government, must recognize the contribution of the urban poor to a greater extent and consider their restrained situation.

Scopes for further research

Some interesting finding through the research has come out to be possibilities for further research. Some conclusions from the research were not according to the foreseen outcomes of evictions. The assessment of the impacts of the eviction has described the change in the overall livelihood assets and strategies of the evictees, for a chosen sample size, where we do not see much deviation when compared to a non-evicted group. One of the scopes for further study could be an explicit assessment on the extremity of impacts on individual asset capital and see how it has affected the general livelihood scenario to understand the implication of eviction further.

The role of NGOs could also be taken into account for further research to find how they support the slum dwellers to have a well-thought-of lifestyle, from a much worse situation. After the eviction, livelihood aspects of many of the NGO beneficiaries besides the other dwellers have gone back to "square one". An enhanced research could be carried out to assess the impacts of eviction specifically on the NGO beneficiaries and then compare it with that of the non-beneficiaries. A comparative research in that case would bring out the difference in livelihood aspects of the two different groups and in the process, would judge the level to which the groups have been affected.

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