



The Political and Social Impact of Displacement in India

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ABSTRACT

To every political policy, economic and development project, on the one side there is welfare in terms of benefits reaped by some section of population and on the other side it increases sorrows and despair to others. Ongoing industrialisation, electrification and urbanisation processes are likely to increase, rather than reduce, the number of programmes causing involuntary population displacement. Causes or categories of development-induced displacement include the following: water supply (dams, reservoirs, irrigation); urban infrastructure; transportation (roads, highway, canals); energy (mining, power plants, oil exploration and extraction, pipelines); agriculture expansion; parks and forest reserves; and population redistribution schemes. The present paper discusses about the political as well as social impacts of Displacement in India.

Keywords: India, industrialisation, land displacement, rehabilitation and sustainable development, political impact, social impact.

INTRODUCTION

Displacement is described as dislocation of people from their native place and region. It often exacerbates rather than mitigates economic insecurity, helplessness and alienation. This could mean loss of economic livelihoods and communities. Looking to background, it can be said, that migration is of two type's voluntary migration intended due to some economic, educational and social reasons in order to have betterment and enhance standard of living. Another is forced migration when people are forced and involuntarily they have to vacate from their residential places, economic setups, political and social systems. This type of migration better termed as displacement resulted to huge economic imbalance, unrest and insecurity in a country and world over due to the over linkage of environment and openness of economies. Displacement of human populations from the natural habitats results in a host of socio-economic impacts.(Goswami, 2011)

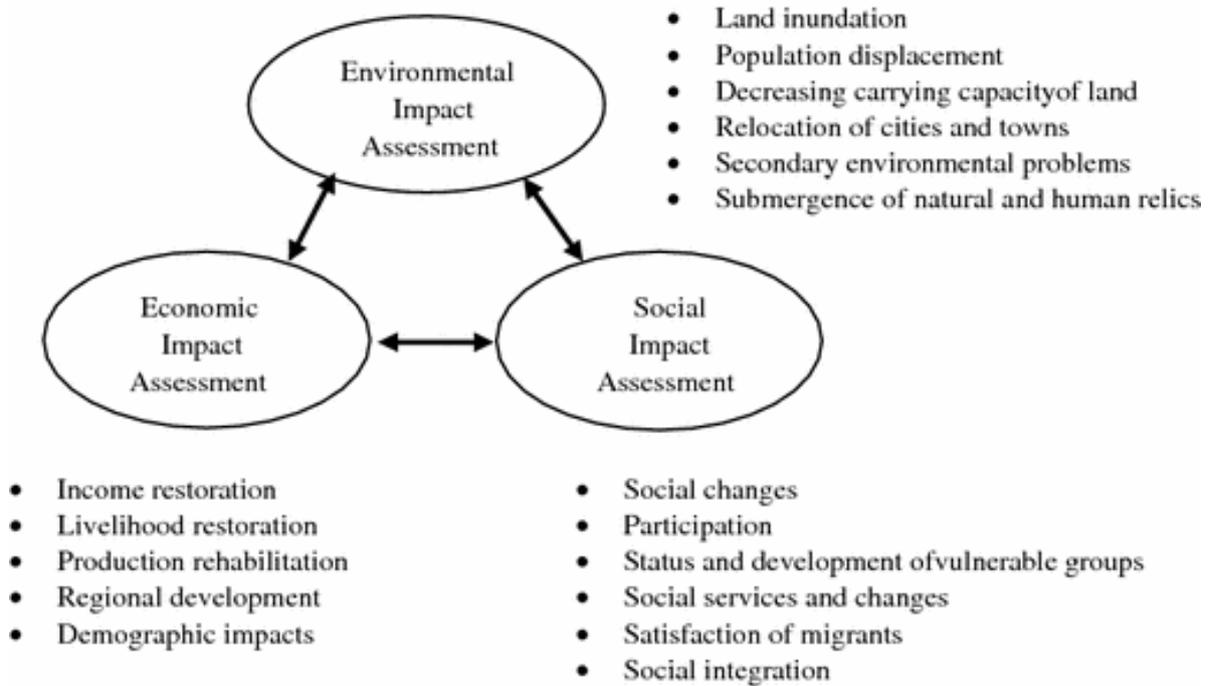


Figure 1: Impacts of Displacement and Resettlement

The voluntarily migration is mainly due to some economic consideration like high wages, better employment, business opportunities, good standard of education, urban style of living and modernization in skills and is intended intentionally for the welfare and development consideration. But forced migration and displacement occurred due to some social, political crisis, armed conflict, human rights violation, natural disasters, construction of some projects like dams, power projects, railway lines, mineral extraction, processing zones etc. Forced migration and displacement again can be looked in several ways one is due to natural causes which cannot be stopped, other is due to some political unrest i.e. wars, human rights violation, conflicts the solution lies in well-designed political and social policies and regimes.(Jaysawal, 2013) The third type of forced migration takes in course due to the construction of some developmental projects which are intended into construction only for welfare and development of masses and overall economy but there is lot of crises and sufferings to the people who are displaced due to the construction of such projects, this is a paradoxical situation. In the paper the displacement originated from the construction of developmental projects like dams, power projects, etc. is dealt with and the paper is based on secondary sources and data collected from world development reports, various published papers and articles. The main objective of paper is to locate the figures of displacement caused at the name of some prominent developmental

projects in India. Further to assess the impacts and measures taken for the wellbeing of displaced people.(Mohanty, 2015)

It has been seen that large number of development projects have been poorly constructed and not properly implemented resulting in an undesirable impact on environment affecting the quality of people's lives. Development- induced displacement resulted in landlessness, homelessness, joblessness, marginalization, poor food insecurity, increased morbidity, loss of common property resources and social disarticulation.

Social Impact

One important aspect of the social impacts caused is involuntary displacement and resettlement. It is estimated that there were approximate 40–80 million people who were subjected to displacement and resettlement from 1950 to 2000. The displacement and resettlement brought about considerable impacts on the societal stability and livelihoods of the displaced people. Therefore, assessing social impacts caused by displacement and resettlement and mitigating the adverse social impacts would be of great importance to project development in particular and sustainable development in general. Social impacts are often severe for vulnerable groups, such as tribal groups, female household, elderly persons, landless persons and the poor. (Garada, 2015)



Figure 2: Social Impacts of Displacement



Social networks often help people cope with poverty through personalized strategies such as informal loans, exchange of food, clothing, durable goods, and mutual help with farming, building houses and caring for children. Loss of such multifunctional, yet virtually invisible social networks through displacement acts as a hidden but serious cause of impoverishment through displacement. Such loss is higher in projects that relocate people in a dispersed manner rather than in social groups and Units. In such cases, it is very difficult for the oustees to reconstitute similar social structures and networks.(Huang et al., 2017)

Political Impact

In the political sphere, dispossession takes place through the process of political integration in the so-called national polity. This gradually leads to the traditional political systems and institutions' redundancy. The displaced people are incorporated into the state and have to conform to and become integrated with the so-called mainstream political system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Huang et al., 2017) Dam projects are inevitably accompanied by massive displacement and resettlement, which imposes intricate social impacts on the host community. This study aims to investigate the social impacts of dam-induced displacement and resettlement in China through a comparative case study where both the control and experimental groups were investigated. Data were collected through a mix of questionnaire-survey, archival files, and face-to-face interviews. The results show that dam-induced displacement and resettlement was conducive to improving residence conditions and facilitating the acceptance of rural cooperative medical insurance. But it had negative impacts on employment, income level and income resource, and overall well-being. Implications for theory and for practice are provided in the end.

(Naika, 2016) In the present neo liberal era, countries are moving towards a new model of development which requires investment from different countries. In order to attract foreign investment National governments are offering many incentives and providing land for cheaper price is one among them. But unfortunately, in many regions of the developing world, this development has been forced to confront a wide variety of losses. For instances, the developmental projects that convert the land on which people live into dams and industrial corridors which cause people to lose their land and forcefully displaced. What is most important



is that at present there are no policies or guidelines for relief and rehabilitation for displaced people and attempt by the governments to formulate such policies have been feeble. In fact, India is not an exception the above rule, this is because the present central government has proposed an amendment to the existing land acquisition act for diluting the rehabilitation and resettlement clause and asking the states to do away with the most essential provisions such as 'prior informed consent', 'social impact assessment etc in their land acquisition acts. In this context, this paper will critically examine the inter relation between land acquisition, development and displacement. In addition, this paper analyses the rights of displaced under Indian and international laws with special reference to recent states different legislation on land acquisition.

(Terminski, 2013) The most fundamental cause of displacement is the presence of dynamic conflict among several categories of actors within a static and limited territory. The desire to take control over a certain territory and its resources becomes a cause of conflict which forces its residents to leave their current homes. Each of the already mentioned causes of displacement involves certain antagonisms. The kind most visible and easy to analyze are displacements associated with conflict over resources or antagonisms based on ethnic background. In the case of development-induced displacement or conservation-induced displacement, territory becomes an arena of specific conflicts between the interests of the public or private sector and the needs of people displaced or affected by particular development decisions. Development-caused displacement is often associated with conflict over resources which has led to landlessness and consequent problems (joblessness, homelessness, food insecurity, and social disarticulation). Displacement is primarily a phenomenon associated with the loss of land, which is a fundamental point of economic, social and cultural reference. In each of these cases the largest single cost of the conflict is paid by affected individuals and communities, who in many cases are not even the subject of the dispute leading to their displacement.

(Siddiqui, 2012) Displacement of human populations from the natural habitats results in a host of socio-economic impacts. This study will focus on mainly farmers and tribal communities in India and how the modernization process has affected these communities especially since the adoption of neoliberal economic reforms. For the rural people the displacement is a traumatic both in terms livelihoods and cultural point of view. The paper will analyse the issues of displacement of the villages that have been relatively isolated from the outside world. The



development induced displacement becomes important due to its impact on the rural communities through land alienation in the form of protests by the affected communities. I find that not even a single study shows the socio-economic and environmental effects of these policies on the rural poor. Analysis of the reasons for these changes point in many directions. Displacement, the loss of traditional livelihoods of the rural communities and environmental destruction are the most prominent among them.

(Lee & Vivarelli, 2006) In this paper an ex-post measurable definition of globalization has been used, namely increasing trade openness and FDI. A general result is that the optimistic Heckscher- Ohlin/Stolper-Samuelson predictions do not apply, that is neither employment creation nor the decrease in within-country inequality are automatically assured by increasing trade and FDI. The other main findings of the paper are that: 1) the employment effect can be very diverse in different areas of the world, giving raise to concentration and marginalisation phenomena; 2) increasing trade and FDI do not emerge as the main culprits of increasing within-country income inequality in DCs, although some evidence emerges that import of capital goods may imply an increase in inequality via skill-biased technological change; 3) increasing trade seems to foster economic growth and absolute poverty alleviation, although some important counter-examples emerge.

(Colchester & Peoples, 2000) On paper, measures to avoid or mitigate these negative impacts have been progressively improved over the past 50 years as international law and the policies of developers have been revised in response to growing voices of dissent. As this study shows, however, despite these advances and even where these policies are meant to apply, large dams continue to have serious, even devastating, effects on Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities. In large part this is because dam-building in particular, and development programmes in general, are driven by powerful interests and visions, which provide neither the incentives nor the time for developers to apply these new standards.

CONCLUSION

Development projects though are associated with numerous consequences; they are largely associated with risks due to displacement and resettlement processes. These risks as indicated by most research findings, cause impoverishments and deterioration to the livelihoods of resettled households and vulnerable categories of people such as the women, poor households

and the elderly. It has also been observed that most of the development victims belong to the poor sections of the society like Dalits, tribals, women and other backward classes. Women are the worst victims of development and displacement. Research show that that number of social problems arise among displaced women such as increased domestic violence (because the availability of cash received in compensation has led to increase in alcohol intake by men resulting in violence against women such as wife beating). Feeling of insecurity at new sites, weakness in kinship bond, breakdown of familial relationship, and conflict among family members, loss of income resources and additional burden on women, increased in dowry demand are some of the offshoots of forced displacement.

Addressing the livelihood risks associated to development induced displacement and resettlement could contribute towards minimizing political and social vulnerabilities associated with large scale development projects among the affected communities.

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