



A study on Psychological impacts due to displacement in India

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ABSTRACT

Forced internal displacement has been rising steadily, mainly due to conflict. Many internally displaced individuals (IDPs) are displaced for an extended period of time. Many of these IDPs are at greater risk of acquiring mental problems, according to study, which adds to the global disease burden. Personal and group resilience, on the other hand, may operate as protective factors. Development induced displacement is primarily a socioeconomic issue associated with loss or significant reduction of access to basic resources on which communities depend. The removal of access to natural resources such as soil, grasslands, forests, and clean water, as well as economic benefits such as socio-economic linkages, will be prioritized over the physical abandonment of the existing dwelling. The research focuses on the psychological health consequences of human displacement, and also the displacement-related alterations that can assist understand such emotional distress. All in all, the studies indicate that losing one's homeland compromises mental health—particularly the highest point of positive emotional well-being related to happiness, satisfaction with life, future optimism, and spiritual contentment—in aspects that even the most well relocation programmes focusing on material compensation as well as wellbeing re-establishment cannot easily fix. The most significant among these are rural community displacement, disruption of traditional livelihoods, as well as environmental degradation.

Keywords: Displacement, livelihood, urbanization, industrialization, mental health, depression, anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

Displacement, as a result of large developmental projects has surely resulted in a transfer of resources from the poor class to the more privileged. In particular in India, mega-dams are known to be the major cause for creation of victims of development - especially the indigenous members and farmers who barely participate in development achievements. It can be said that bigger the developmental project, greater is the impact on displacement. Further the federal structure with a stronger centre also plays a role in terms of execution of such large projects in India. As economic development was remarkably poor until recently, every Government became more focused on economic development, measured primarily by way of growth in Gross National Product (GNP), which considered factors like factories, dams, megaprojects, mines, etc. (Aneesh & Patil, 2015)

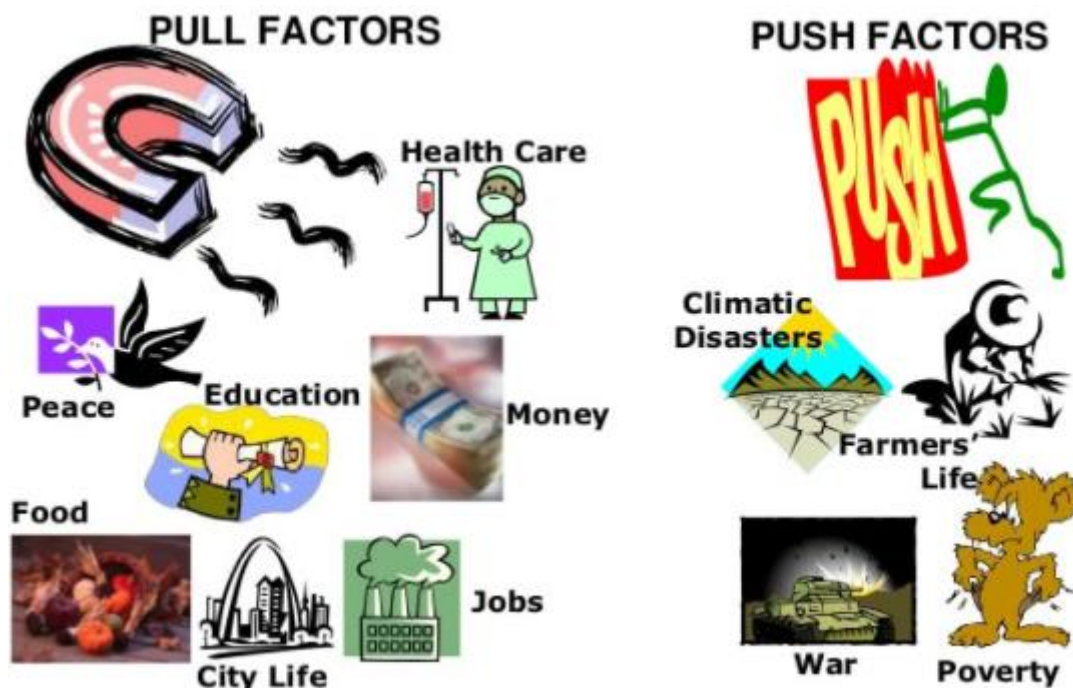


Figure 1: Reasons for displacement

Displacement, or the forcible displacement of people, is increasingly recognised as one of the most serious negative development projects. Occasionally, displaced people have been compelled to abandon their homes and relocate. Surprisingly, among all kinds of displacement, development-induced displacement has the biggest number of victims, with indigenous people accounting for the majority of them. In a rapidly growing country like India, land acquisition by the government has grown leading to increased pressure on land due to urbanisation, increasing infrastructure requirements, and so on. (Terminski, 2013) Most notably, the government acquires land under the doctrine of "eminent domain" for the purpose of development, causing millions of people to be relocated in the procedure.

To achieve quick economic expansion, India has spent in industrial projects, dams, roadways, mines, power stations, and new towns. It has been made easier by extensive land purchase and subsequent population displacement. (Siddiqui, 2012) Among the Internally Displaced Populations, Development Displacement Population is the greatest single category (IDPs). Over the last 50 years, over 50 million indians have been displaced as a result of development activities.

Concerns about development Direct and indirect displacement are the two types of displacement. The term "direct displacement" refers to situations in which the installation as well as commissioning of development projects result in the immediate relocation of people who have lived on these places for generations. Between 1955 and 1990, nearly 21 million people were internally relocated in India as a result of mines, reservoirs, and industries, as well as wildlife and other initiatives. Indirect displacement is caused by a mechanism in which the construction and operation of projects increases the dependency on natural and environmental resources, depriving indigenous populations in the nearby areas of their traditional sources of income and sustenance. (Zetter et al., 2011) Vast, capital-intensive infrastructure projects, when viewed in this manner, hastened the pace towards another bright and prosperous future. Meanwhile, in recent years, a "new development paradigm" has emerged, promoting economic growth, environmental conservation, social equality,



and human rights. Modernization is considered as providing both benefits and drawbacks in this worldview. One of the most significant expenses has been the forced relocation of millions of vulnerable individuals.

According to various researches, displacement and development are both contradictory terms on the other hand they are the evidences of our national life and in comparison with any other fictions, these factors are more astonishing. As per the studies, more than 50 million people were displaced from their homes and huts during last 50 years in the name of “National Interest”. These millions have seen their own lifestyles, wellbeing, and way of life destroyed. All through these years, even so, development-induced displacement has stayed largely a non-issue for governments, elected officials, and policy makers. It is true to say that government is not having any exact data about the actual number of people displaced from their homes and huts due to various developmental projects like Nuclear power plants, thermal power plants, hydroelectricity projects, mines, Irrigation projects, industrial complexes etc. (Cohen & Bradley, 2010)

Despite the fact that the number of displaced persons since independence is more than thrice the number of population displaced by India’s partition, they are yet to enter into our national consciousness. The primary reason seems to be that the majority of those displaced are rural poor with few assets, such as landless labourers and small - scale farmers.

Trauma of displacement

Displacement has well-documented negative effects on mental health, which are exacerbated in these cases by the traumatic circumstances that often lead to displacement, and also the social difficulties that follow. (Casparly et al., 2007) Due to social environment and pre-displacement health, causation may be complex which varies on the basis of nature of stressors which gives rise to displacement. From post-displacement environment, the stress of the displacement episode arises. The entire process of displacement is disempowering because it breaks up socio-political organisations opposing the project or the development process itself. In the case of tribals, the experience of displacement becomes much more monstrous. They encounter tremendous odds in dealing with the market economy. A majority of tribals are forced into servitude and bondage as a result of their lack of knowledge with modern technology and abilities, as well as governmental indifference to their integration into the global economy. (Ray, 2000)

Rehabilitation and Resettlement

India still needs to formulate a national rehabilitation policy regardless of the severity and scale of the trauma of displacement. Rehabilitation is not included in all the projects. However, if it is included in the scheme, it is done after so many years of the project’s beginning. The people of Tungabhadra are the best example as they were displaced due to construction of dams and they were resettled after 5 years of the displacement.

Since India lacks a national rehabilitation laws and policies, displaced people as well as project affected individuals are unable to seek compensation as well as demand rehabilitation. The question of how displaced people will make a living has not been a concern for Project planners. Only Maharashtra, MP and Karnataka have rehabilitation laws. Orissa and Rajasthan have policies.

Consequences of Displacement

In comparison with other nations, India is the largest dam building nation. In India, there are 4291 dams out of which 3596 have been built and remaining are under construction. Displacement is frequently thought of as a one-time event in which a person is compelled to leave his or her original



location and relocate. It was also observed that a person who losses its land due to displacement is only entitled with some cash compensation under Land Acquisition Act. As per a World Bank report, dams are the source of the most displacement. Dams relocate over 66 percent of the population and drown enormous swaths of farming fields. It causes unemployment and, as a result, social pressure among the villagers' oustees. The displacement of human population is considered traumatic, unemployment, breakdown of associations, dismantling of agricultural production system and disorganization of social systems. The current study attempt to highlight some displacement related issues.

The displaced women face multiple problems such as economic, social, and financial and health issues. It has been found that the women are the most affected one due to displacement.(Vedavathy, 2010) Since they do not have legal rights to the land, they do not receive any compensation. Women are not treated differently than men in many positions under resettlement and rehabilitation plans due to the patriarchal country. In India, there is an absence of uniform national resettlement and rehabilitation policy.(Kedia, 2015) Whatever policies are there for the displaced people in the country they are not properly implemented. A large percentage of dam projects are built without sufficient planning. Policymakers do not pay enough attention to those who have been displaced. People who have been displaced have compensated them financially and then left them free. As a result, a policy and regulation that integrates social and occupational issues relating to land is required. Even after the revision of 1984, the Land Acquisition Act (1894) does not acknowledge the right of land losers to rehabilitate. It disperses them by paying monetary compensation only.(Negi et al., 2011) Major changes are required in the Act and in the policies dealing with land acquisition so as to make them welfare oriented.

Table 1: Effects of displacement

Benefits	Negative Effects
Cheap labour	Pressure on housing and health services
Large market size	Congestion and development of slums
Increased productivity	Environmental degradation
Increased revenue	Increase in number of crimes and social vices

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Terminski, 2015) According to the study conducted by author, he analyzed that more than 15 million people are forced to leave their homes for the developmental projects for example: dams, highways and mining. The main reasons behind these projects are to increase the social vulnerability and ecology thus leaving the affected people displaced, disempowered and destitute. The focus of the literature review article was on the various dangers that communities face as a result of development-induced displacement and relocation. The information presented is evaluated on the basis of online peer-reviewed as well as grey literature from 1980 to 2018. During social vulnerability assessments, the risks examined through the Impoverishment, Risk, & Reconstruction (IRR) model serve as a guide in choosing and comprehending the hazards of development induced displacement and resettlement (DIDR). Often the question of social vulnerability has been largely



ignored due to the difficulty in quantification. In developing countries like India, Sudan, and Kenya, risk assessment also provides the foundation for further investigation into the reasons for the incidence and persistence of dangers. According to the conclusions of the review using the IRR model, project-affected persons are exposed to certain possibilities, but they are also exposed to increased hazards.

(Negi et al., 2011) studied the development schemes that most nations in the world have seen since the post-colonial period have resulted in the separation and suffering of huge sections of the population via the displacement process. Without a doubt, it has caused damage to all, but the amount of loss is greater in the case of females in comparison with the case of men, as they are cut off from nature, which is their primary source of life. Women's usage rights over certain areas, which provided them with independent spheres of control, are revoked without reimbursement. In addition, the loss of forests as well as common land resources has harmed women's income and economic standing. The projects' employment generates dangerous workplace conditions, poor salaries, and little job security, pushing even more women into the informal sector. The paper's main point is to investigate what other kind of loss women have suffered as a result of displacement, what policies are being implemented to help women in cases of displacement, and also what role women play in the displacement movement. The research attempts to reflect according to the above topics based on a review of the current research and the authors' personal experiences.

(Vedavathy, 2010) evaluated displacement of human populations from the natural habitats results in a host of socio-economic impacts. This research will look at how the modernization process has impacted farmers and tribal people in India, particularly with the adoption of neoliberal economic policies. The displacement of rural people is distressing from both a livelihood and a cultural standpoint. The purpose of this study is to look into the challenges of displacement in villages that have been largely isolated from the rest of the planet. The effects of development-induced displacement on rural populations is significant, as evidenced by land alienation as well as protests by the impacted populations. Author can't locate a single study that illustrates how these policies affect the rural poor in terms of socioeconomics and the environment. The reasons for these shifts can be traced in a variety of ways. The most significant among these are rural community displacement, loss of traditional livelihoods, as well as environmental degradation.

(Kalin, 2008) examined that the Sahariya, an indigenous tribal conservation refugee group from central India, were recently relocated from a wildlife sanctuary. Researchers concentrate on the mental health consequences of human displacement, as well as the displacement-related alterations that serve to explain such emotional distress. To do so, researchers compare people who were removed from the sanctuary's centre to those who were allowed to stay in their communities within the sanctuary's buffer zone. The drafting of the sanctuary boundary—and, as a result, the allocation of communities to relocation or the buffer zone—was arbitrary. As a result, these village settings presented a natural experimental opportunity to investigate the influence of relocation on mental health. The ethnographic and formal psychiatric scale data from our study show that moved Sahariya suffer much more in terms of mental health. Material, livelihood, and poverty reasons explain some of the misery, but not all of it. Ultimately, the findings suggest that the loss of someone's homeland affects mental health—particularly the highest levels of positive emotional well-being such as happiness, satisfaction with life, future enthusiasm, and spiritual contentment—



in aspects that even well-intentioned relocation programmes concentrated on material compensation as well as livelihood re-establishment cannot quickly fix.

(Baird, 2008) evaluated Dam construction is invariably followed by large-scale displacement and resettlement, resulting in complex socioeconomic consequences for the host community. The purpose of this study is to look into the social effects of dam-induced relocation and resettlement in China using a qualitative approach study that looked at both the control group & experimental group. Data was gathered using a combination of questionnaires, archival files, and in-person interviews. The findings demonstrate that dam-induced displacement & resettlement aided in improving living conditions but also promoting rural collaborative medical insurance adoption. However, it had a negative effect on economic growth, family income and income sources, as well as overall happiness. In the end, there are implications for theory and practice.

(Casparly et al., 2007) suggested that following independence, India concentrated on different development projects as well as dam construction. These were seen as symbols of modern India, despite the fact that they all contributed significantly to India's development. However, millions of people were displaced from their ancestral lands as a result of such megaprojects. The poor planning and implementation of numerous relocation and rehabilitation policies made life even more difficult for displaced individuals. No one from the relevant government enquired about the well-being after they had been rehabilitated. People were completely cut off from God's kindness. This research is based on secondary sources and attempts to investigate a variety of concerns among affected persons as well as their challenges. In this study, it is shown that displaced persons have experienced a variety of issues as a result of the state government's failure to address their concerns. Women and kids are by far the worst victims since resettlement and rehabilitation strategies do not take them into account. Because women have less property ownership on the land, women are not able to get coverage. The majority of those who belong to the poorer sector of society are harmed in the name of development.

(Ray, 2000) analyzed Anti-displacement movements are one of the most pressing concerns facing the world today. Since the beginning of its anti-colonial movement, the global south has faced massive resistance. In this setting, gender has played a crucial role in transforming it into a large-scale mass movement, as women face the burden of the migration. In this context, the current paper aims to investigate the impact of development-induced relocation on Odisha's adivasi women, as well as their socio-historical struggle to survive. The data for the study was gathered via a field survey using a stratified simple random sampling procedure. The goal of this study is to learn about adivasi women's changing livelihood patterns pre and post displacement, as well as how they cope with the mental anguish induced by their eviction. In theory, adivasi women are thought to have more autonomy over their non-adivasi counterparts. However, the study's main finding is that, in the aftermath of the neoliberal economy, evictions are producing major difficulties such as asset loss, drunkenness, wife-battering, as well as domestic violence, resulting in increased threats of life and a worsening living standards. As a result, the research aims to examine the condition of adivasi women who are suffering as a result of the onslaught of damaging "progress" and are consequently participating in a number of active anti-displacement campaigns.

CONCLUSION

Today in India about two-thirds of the people depends on the land. A critical issue is gaining ground whether those who lose out in the process of development have been consulted at all. Or they should



be entitled to be part while deciding the future management of natural resources, which are integral part of their livelihood and existence. Rural impoverished and indigenous populations are viewed as second-class citizens with no rights, and their livelihoods are taken away without their consent. Although most of the jobs on such development activities are filled by outsiders since individuals who lost their property and occupations lack necessary skills.

Agriculture plays an essential influence in determining people's socio - economic and cultural well-being in National economy. But their forcible relocation becomes a contentious issue in contemporary debates, policy issues, and, on occasion, in the form of protestors by people who were affected.

India does not require a land grab programme to favor corporate interests, but rather a land conservation policy that preserves eco-systems and biodiversity. The government needs to invest further in agriculture to boost productivity and create employment, not just through "free market" ideas, but by encouraging small scale farmers and agricultural labourers, therefore increasing their earnings and food production.

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