

Migration Patterns and Urbanization: Driving Factors Behind the Formation of Urban Slums

Teja Aruman¹, Sisca Lestari², Sendi Muhammad Fikri³, Yudan Sugana⁴

^{1,3,4} Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

²STIS As Saadah Sukasari Sumedang

Email: Tejaarumann@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Urbanisasi dan migrasi merupakan fenomena global yang tidak terhindarkan, terutama di negara-negara berkembang. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor utama yang mendorong terbentuknya permukiman kumuh di daerah perkotaan. Dengan menggunakan metode studi literatur, pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini menganalisis berbagai sumber akademis, laporan pemerintah, dan studi kasus untuk memahami dinamika di balik fenomena tersebut. Penelitian ini mengkaji faktor-faktor utama pembentukan permukiman kumuh di negara berkembang.

Kata Kunci: Urbanisasi, Migrasi, Pemukiman Kumuh, Perencanaan Kota

ABSTRACT

Urbanization and migration are inevitable global phenomena, particularly in developing countries. This study aims to identify the key factors driving the formation of slum settlements in urban areas. Using a qualitative approach and literature review method, the research analyzes various academic sources, government reports, and case studies to understand the dynamics behind this phenomenon. The study examines the primary factors contributing to the emergence of slum settlements in developing countries.

Keywords: urbanization, migration, slum settlements, urban planning

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is the process by which populations migrate to and concentrate in urban areas, leading to the expansion of urban spaces and increasing population density within them. This process is characterized by the massive movement of people from rural areas to major cities or urban centers, resulting in rapid growth and dense settlements in these regions (Ren, 2015).

Urbanization is an inevitable global phenomenon, particularly in developing countries. Many individuals lack the skills or education needed to compete in urban labor markets, forcing them to work in the informal sector with low and unstable incomes. Economic hardships drive these individuals to live in slum settlements, where living costs are more affordable despite the low quality of life. Indonesia, as the world's fourth most populous country, is experiencing rapid population growth. According to Nawasis (2022), Indonesia's population is projected to reach 318 million by 2045, with approximately 67.1% residing in urban areas. However, a significant portion of the population still lacks access to basic services and adequate infrastructure. Moreover, population growth in Indonesia has contributed minimally to economic growth, highlighting the challenges of managing rapid urbanization.

The formation of slum settlements in urban areas is influenced by various interconnected factors, including uncontrolled urbanization, rural-to-urban migration, poverty, economic inequality, limited access to basic services, ineffective urban policies, and rapid population growth (Amegah, 2021). Rapid urbanization without adequate planning often fails to provide proper housing, leading people to reside in slum areas (Cavalcanti, 2019; Mauluddin, 2015, 2019). Rural-to-urban migration driven by the search for employment also contributes to the increasing

number of slum dwellers, especially among those lacking adequate skills. Poverty and income inequality prevent many individuals from meeting their basic needs, including housing. Additionally, limited access to basic services such as clean water, sanitation, electricity, education, and healthcare exacerbates living conditions in slum areas (Roy, 2020; Mauluddin, 2015). Ineffective urban policies and insufficient oversight are also major factors contributing to the formation of slum settlements (Roy, 2014). The impacts of slum settlements are profoundly negative, including increased disease rates, crime, environmental degradation, and low economic productivity.

Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach. Improved urban planning should incorporate proper zoning and the development of infrastructure that supports a healthy environment. Supportive policies, such as affordable housing programs and economic empowerment initiatives, are essential (Mauluddin, 2019). Additionally, increasing access to basic services, such as healthcare and education, along with providing clean water and adequate sanitation, is crucial. Active community participation in planning and implementing environmental improvement programs is also vital, coupled with raising awareness about the importance of a healthy environment. Success stories, such as the "Favela-Bairro" program in Brazil, the "Slum Rehabilitation Authority" in Mumbai, and Indonesia's "Cities Without Slums" (KOTAKU) program, demonstrate that with the right and sustainable approach, living conditions in slum areas can be improved, yielding positive impacts for the entire city.

The formation of slum settlements in urban areas is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors (Mauluddin, 2015). This research aims to identify the key factors driving the formation of slum

settlements in developing countries. The primary objective is to understand how factors such as uncontrolled urbanization, rural-to-urban migration, poverty, and economic inequality contribute to the emergence of slums in urban areas.

This study will explore how rural-to-urban migration, driven by hopes for better economic opportunities, often results in a significant portion of the population residing in slum settlements due to their limited skills and education. Furthermore, the research will examine the impact of poverty and economic inequality on individuals' ability to access adequate housing. The inability of many residents to meet their basic needs forces them to live in poor conditions. This study will also analyze how limited access to basic services, such as clean water, sanitation, electricity, education, and healthcare, worsens conditions in slum areas and perpetuates a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break.

Ineffective urban policies and poor planning will also be a focus of this study. The lack of regulations supporting affordable housing development and weak oversight of urban development often overlook the needs of low-income populations. Uncontrolled urbanization and rural-to-urban migration frequently fail to meet expectations of a better life, forcing migrants into low-paying informal sector jobs and slum settlements (Nugraha, 2019). The research will identify how such policies contribute to the formation of slums.

Finally, this study will assess the impact of rapid urban population growth on the strain placed on urban infrastructure and resources. Without proper planning and adequate investment, slum settlements will continue to expand as cities struggle to accommodate the increasing population. By identifying and understanding these factors, this research

aims to provide deeper insights and more effective solutions to address the phenomenon of slum settlements in developing countries.

RESEARCH METHODS

To examine the factors influencing the formation of urban slums, this study will employ a literature review method with a qualitative approach. The first step involves conducting a detailed and systematic search through academic databases and online libraries to collect various scholarly articles, books, government reports, and case studies related to the topic. Subsequently, critical text analysis will be performed to explore findings relevant to the phenomenon of slum formation.

The qualitative approach will enable the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and political contexts underlying the formation of slums. Additionally, the literature review will provide insights into the roles of various factors, such as urbanization, migration, poverty, urban policies, and population growth, in the development of slum settlements in developing countries.

The qualitative analysis of the literature will involve identifying patterns, findings, and arguments emerging from diverse sources. The results of this analysis will be used to develop a more comprehensive conceptual framework on the factors influencing slum formation. Thus, this literature review method is expected to offer a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics behind the phenomenon of slum settlements in urban areas.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Migration and Urbanization Patterns

Migration and urbanization patterns play a significant role in the formation of slum settlements in urban areas. As explained by Mark Gottdiener (2020), population movement from rural to major urban

centers is often driven by various push-and-pull factors, such as the search for employment opportunities, access to better educational and healthcare facilities, and the hope of improving quality of life. However, the rapid growth of cities is frequently not accompanied by adequate development of infrastructure and housing.

As a result, many migrants are unable to find decent housing and ultimately settle in slum areas. These slum settlements are typically located in underdeveloped areas with poor environmental conditions, limited access to basic services such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity, and often suffer from extremely high population density. Gottdiener (2020) highlights how non-inclusive urban planning policies and socio-economic inequality exacerbate these conditions, creating a persistent cycle of poverty that is difficult to break. Thus, poorly managed migration and urbanization patterns significantly contribute to the emergence and expansion of slum settlements in urban areas.

Factors Contributing to the Formation of Slums

Migration from rural to urban areas and rapid urbanization have become inevitable global phenomena over the past few decades (UN-Habitat, 2016). These processes have significantly contributed to the formation of slums in many major cities worldwide, particularly in developing countries (Satterthwaite, 2016). Slums, characterized by substandard housing conditions, inadequate access to basic services such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity, and high population density, have emerged as increasingly concerning urban issues (UN-Habitat, 2016).

One of the primary drivers of slum growth is rural-to-urban migration. Many rural residents migrate to cities in search of economic opportunities and a better quality of life, yet they often lack the skills or

resources needed to secure decent housing (Garau, 2005). Consequently, they are forced to live in slum settlements located on the outskirts of cities or in areas prone to natural hazards, such as floods and landslides.

In addition to migration, rapid and uncontrolled urbanization also contributes to slum formation. Population growth in major cities, unaccompanied by adequate infrastructure development and affordable housing provision, has led to a shortage of housing for the urban poor. As a result, many city dwellers are compelled to reside in densely populated and substandard slum areas (Mauluddin, 2019).

Economic factors, such as poverty and limited resources, are also major contributors to slum formation. Migrants and the urban poor often lack access to stable employment and reliable sources of income, forcing them to seek cheap, albeit inadequate, housing. These resource constraints also hinder their ability to access basic services such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity—hallmarks of slum settlements (UN-Habitat, 2016).

Slums are often located in areas highly vulnerable to natural hazards, including floods, landslides, and fires. This is largely due to poor urban planning and the limited availability of land for the urban poor (Garau et al., 2005). Additionally, slums are particularly susceptible to health issues, including the spread of infectious diseases and inadequate access to healthcare services.

Urban Policies and Urban Planning

Addressing the challenges of slum settlements requires an integrated effort from various stakeholders, including governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and communities. Governments play a crucial role in formulating effective policies and strategies to reduce

poverty, enhance access to affordable housing, and provide adequate basic services for the urban poor (Garau et al., 2005; Mauluddin, 2019).

One approach is to increase investment in urban infrastructure and affordable housing development. Governments can collaborate with the private sector and NGOs to develop sustainable, affordable housing projects and ensure access to basic services such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity.

Additionally, improved urban planning is essential to prevent the uncontrolled growth of slum settlements (Satterthwaite, 2016). Governments can devise strategies to relocate slum dwellers to safer and more habitable areas while promoting sustainable development that considers environmental, economic, and social dimensions.

Efforts to reduce poverty and create economic opportunities for the urban poor are also critical. Governments can partner with the private sector to generate decent jobs and implement skill training programs for urban poor residents. These initiatives can help improve their incomes and access to better housing (Garau et al., 2005).

Community involvement is another vital component in addressing slum challenges. Communities can participate in empowerment programs, such as skill development, raising awareness about environmental and health issues, and forming community groups that collaborate with governments and NGOs to improve living conditions (Garau et al., 2005).

On a global scale, slum issues are complex challenges that require collective efforts from multiple parties. International organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) and international NGOs, play an important role in supporting these efforts through technical, financial, and policy assistance (UN, 2015).

One notable global initiative is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the UN in 2015. Goal 11 aims to “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.” This goal includes specific targets, such as increasing access to affordable housing and basic services and enhancing community participation in urban planning and management (UN, 2015).

Programs like Cities Alliance, a global partnership among the UN, governments, and NGOs, also play a crucial role in addressing slum issues at the local level. The program provides technical and financial assistance to cities in developing countries, helping them improve their capacity for sustainable urban growth planning and management.

International NGOs such as Habitat for Humanity and Oxfam are also actively involved in tackling slum issues. They work with local communities to build affordable housing, provide access to clean water and sanitation, and support economic empowerment programs for the urban poor.

Cross-country cooperation and collaboration are key to addressing global slum challenges (UN-Habitat, 2016). Countries can share experiences and best practices in addressing these issues and work together to develop effective policies and strategies. Furthermore, technology transfer and funding can assist developing countries in building infrastructure and affordable housing for the urban poor.

In summary, addressing slum challenges requires a holistic and integrated approach involving multiple stakeholders and encompassing economic, social, and environmental aspects. With consistent efforts and close cooperation among governments, the private sector, NGOs, communities, and international organizations, we can achieve the goal of

creating more sustainable, inclusive, and livable cities for all residents (UN, 2015).

However, it is essential to recognize that addressing slum challenges is not an easy task and requires long-term commitment from all parties involved. Challenges such as rapid population growth, uncontrolled urbanization, resource constraints, and climate change can hinder progress. Therefore, flexible and adaptive approaches, along with regular evaluations, are necessary to ensure that implemented strategies and programs meet the evolving needs and conditions of local contexts.

Moreover, education and awareness-raising about environmental, health, and sustainability issues are crucial aspects of slum-related efforts. By enhancing public understanding and awareness, we can encourage behavioral changes and foster a culture of care for the environment and improved quality of life.

Ultimately, addressing slum challenges goes beyond physical aspects such as infrastructure and housing development. It also encompasses interconnected social, economic, and environmental dimensions. By adopting a comprehensive approach and involving all stakeholders, we can create sustainable, inclusive, and livable cities for current and future generations.

Poverty Alleviation and Slum Upgrading Programs

Despite the significant challenges in addressing slum-related issues, there are numerous examples of successful programs worldwide that can serve as inspiration and learning opportunities. For instance, the slum upgrading initiative in Dharavi, Mumbai, India, involved active participation from local communities in planning and project implementation. This effort not only improved housing and infrastructure

conditions but also created economic opportunities for residents through the empowerment of small and medium enterprises.

Another example is the slum upgrading program in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which was executed through collaboration between the government, civil society organizations, and international financial institutions (Satterthwaite, 2016). This program focused on providing affordable housing, enhancing access to basic services, and fostering economic and social development. Its success has inspired other Latin American cities in their efforts to address slum challenges (Garau et al., 2005).

While each case and local context has unique characteristics, these success stories highlight that addressing slum issues can be achieved by engaging all stakeholders and adopting a holistic approach. By learning from the experiences and best practices of various countries, we can continue to develop innovative and contextualized solutions to create more sustainable, inclusive, and livable cities for all.

In addition to the efforts mentioned earlier, addressing slum challenges can also be approached by developing local economies and empowering communities. By creating sustainable economic opportunities in urban areas, we can help reduce poverty levels and increase residents' purchasing power to secure decent housing.

A notable example is the local economic development program in Surabaya, Indonesia. Through partnerships with the private sector, the city government has promoted the establishment of small and medium enterprise clusters and provided access to capital and training for local entrepreneurs. As a result, many urban poor previously living in slums have improved their incomes and accessed better housing.

Community empowerment is also key in tackling slum challenges. Actively involving residents in planning, decision-making, and implementing improvement programs ensures that solutions align with their needs and preferences. This approach also fosters a sense of ownership and sustainability in the efforts undertaken.

A good example is the slum upgrading program in Bangkok, Thailand. The city government collaborated with local community organizations to design and implement projects for housing improvement, infrastructure development, and basic service provision. Residents were actively involved in decision-making processes and contributed labor and local resources. This approach not only improved the physical conditions of the settlements but also strengthened social cohesion and the community's capacity to manage their environment.

Efforts to address slum issues must go beyond physical and economic aspects. Social and cultural considerations are essential to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives. For example, in some communities, norms and traditions may hinder efforts to improve living conditions. Thus, culturally sensitive approaches involving community leaders and key figures are crucial.

One example is the slum upgrading program in Cairo, Egypt (Garau et al., 2005). The government worked with religious leaders and community figures to build trust and garner local support. The program also involved women's organizations in planning and implementation, ensuring that women's needs and perspectives were addressed. This approach proved effective in overcoming social and cultural challenges while enhancing program sustainability.

Environmental concerns are another critical focus in slum upgrading efforts. Many slums are located in areas prone to natural

hazards such as floods and landslides, requiring special measures to improve resilience and risk mitigation. Additionally, environmental issues such as air pollution, poor sanitation, and inadequate waste management need comprehensive solutions.

A strong example is the slum upgrading program in Semarang, Indonesia. This initiative emphasized improving drainage infrastructure, flood control, and waste management. It also engaged communities in reforestation activities and maintaining green spaces to enhance climate resilience. Integrating environmental considerations with community participation proved effective in improving the quality of life in slums and fostering sustainable environments.

Addressing global slum challenges requires international collaboration and support. International organizations such as the UN, the World Bank, and NGOs play critical roles in providing technical, financial, and policy assistance to countries in need. Additionally, cross-country collaboration in sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices can accelerate progress.

An example of international collaboration is the Cities Alliance program, supported by the UN, the World Bank, and bilateral donors. This initiative aims to assist cities in developing countries in planning and managing sustainable urban growth, including tackling slum challenges. Through Cities Alliance, cities can access funding, technical support, and shared learning from other cities facing similar challenges.

One notable success is the program in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where Cities Alliance helped the city government plan and implement an integrated slum upgrading initiative. This program improved housing conditions, provided public facilities, enhanced access to basic services, and created economic opportunities for local residents.

In addition to specialized programs, international collaboration can involve knowledge and technology transfer. Developed countries can share their experiences and best practices in addressing slum issues with developing nations. Furthermore, technology transfer in areas such as construction, sanitation, and environmental management can help developing countries improve housing quality efficiently and sustainably.

An example is the partnership between Singapore and several Southeast Asian countries in training and technology transfer programs for slum upgrading. Singapore shared its expertise in affordable vertical housing construction, modern sanitation systems, and waste management. Recipient countries adapted and implemented these technologies in their local contexts (UN, 2015).

A holistic and integrated approach is essential in addressing slum challenges. Solutions must encompass physical, economic, social, and environmental aspects in a coordinated manner. A notable example is the slum upgrading program in Medellin, Colombia, known as the Integrated Urban Project (Proyecto Urbano Integral) (Garau, 2005). This initiative focused on improving physical conditions, such as housing and infrastructure, while also enhancing access to basic services and fostering social and economic development. By combining multiple strategies and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, slum upgrading efforts can achieve sustainable outcomes that benefit all urban residents.

CONCLUSION

Understanding the factors driving the formation of urban slums is a crucial first step in addressing this issue. Uncontrolled urbanization and migration underscore the urgent need for better and more coordinated strategies. In the context of Indonesia, which faces significant challenges

from rapid urbanization and population growth, effective solutions must address various aspects.

Urbanization must be managed through sustainable urban planning. This includes the development of adequate infrastructure and spatial planning that considers the evolving needs of the population. Such an approach must be inclusive, ensuring that all segments of society, including the most vulnerable, benefit from development.

Government policies should support balanced economic growth alongside urbanization. This involves policies that promote the creation of formal employment opportunities, improve access to education and skills training, and establish regulations that protect the rights of informal workers. Equitable housing policies are also critical to ensuring that all urban residents have access to adequate shelter.

Basic services such as clean water, sanitation, healthcare, and education must be accessible to all urban dwellers. Investments in these infrastructures will improve the quality of life and reduce dependency on slum settlements.

Community involvement in planning and implementing policies is essential. Active participation from residents ensures that the solutions developed align with local needs and conditions. It also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for their living environment.

By understanding and adopting these approaches, we can move toward more effective and sustainable solutions to address urban slum issues. These steps are not only about improving current conditions but also about building a strong foundation for a better future for all urban residents.

REFERENCES

- Alliance C. About Cities Alliance.
- Amegah AK. (2021). Slum Decay in Sub-saharan Africa: Context, Environmental Pollution Challenges, and Impact on Dweller's Health. *Environ Epidemiol.* 2021;5(3):6-8. doi:10.1097/EE9.000000000000158.
- Cavalcanti T, Da Mata D, Santos M. (2019). On the Determinants of Slum Formation. *Econ J*, 129(621):1971-1991. doi:10.1111/econj.12626.
- Garau P, Sclar ED, Carolini GY. (2005). A Home in The City. *UN Millenn Proj Task Force Improv Lives Slum Dwellers.*
- Gottdiener M. (2020). *The Social Production of Urban Space.* doi:10.7560/727724.
- Humanity H for. Inclusive Housing Partnership.
- Mauluddin, A. (2015). Kota Kumuh dan Konvergensi antara Rural dan Urban. HU. Sinarharapan.
- (2019). Kontestasi Perebutan Ruang Kota Jakarta: Negara, Privat, dan Masyarakat. *JCIC : Jurnal CIC Lembaga Riset dan Konsultan Sosial*, 1(2), 110-112. <https://doi.org/10.51486/jbo.v1i2.23>
- Nations U. Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. *New York United Nations.* Published online 2015.
- Oxfam. Urban Poverty and Slums.
- Ren GY. (2015). Urbanization as a major driver of urban climate change. *Adv Clim Chang Res.* 6(1):1-6. doi:10.1016/j.accre.2015.08.003.
- Roy D, Bernal D, Lees M. (2020). An exploratory factor analysis model for slum severity index in Mexico City. *Urban Stud.* 57(4):789-805. doi:10.1177/0042098019869769.
- Roy D, Lees MH, Palavalli B, Pfeffer K, Sloot MAP. (2014). The emergence

- of slums: A contemporary view on simulation models. *Environ Model Softw.* 59(2014):76-90. doi:10.1016/j.envsoft.2014.05.004.
- Satterthwaite D. (2016). A new urban agenda? *Environ Urban.* 28(1):3-12. doi:10.1177/0956247816637501.
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). (2016). *World Cities Report: Urbanization and Development - Emerging Futures.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

[This page is intentionally left blank]