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Slum Dwellers in Indian Cities: The Case of Surat in Western India

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Among the many problems associated with urban growth in India, an increase in the proportion of slums and squatters especially in its 'metros' and other large cities has been prominent.[1] Generally, such locations are inhabited by the poor and their growth "has often occurred independent of any surge in prosperity through large-scale industrialization. Hence the level of urbanization (i.e. the percentage of urban to total population) and the rate of urban expansion (i.e. the percentage increase in the urban population) may not always be caused by the 'pull' of economic prosperity and opportunity in the cities; it is sometimes caused by the push from the rural areas due to significant changes in the mode of production in agriculture... in which there is a steady increase in the proportion of the rural population who are compelled to seek a living outside agriculture.[2] Even with variations in their approach and emphasis resulting from the context and cities examined, most studies recognize the role of migration of the rural poorer sections in search of work and their frequently joining the lower circuits of the labour market and subsequent living in congested and degraded spaces within cities. Placed within this context, the present paper is aimed at portraying a broad economic profile of slum dwellers as well as extent of availability of some essential services within such localities in the city of Surat in the western Indian state of Gujarat, and through this provides a broad imagery of the living conditions of the urban poor.[3] Based on the assumption that an economic profile (by which it is meant to describe the nature and composition of work-force;

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types of occupation that such dwellers remain engaged in; the manner in which the entire work-force as a whole and different 'migrant' groups within it generally respond to the labour market and differentials in their income as well as possession of household items), would not only provide a snapshot of their material resource base, but also help in sieving out important aspects and issues related to the poor and poverty in urban India, the paper is divided in seven sections. While the first section deals with various 'definitions' of slums, the second outlines the dominant contours of Surat's economic history that bears a continuity in its present day economic character and labour market organization. The third section records the recent growth in its slum population, the fourth gives a brief account of the environmental condition and extent of availability of some of the basic services in such localities, the fifth deals with a description of the slum work force; occupations; labour mobility and income, the sixth describes the extent of and variations in ownership of select household items and the last section identifies certain policy related theoretical issues emerging out of the description.

I

Significantly, in spite of substantial amount of literature available on urban planning and problems in the country, it becomes difficult to spell out a definition of slums in clear terms. Various authors, Commissions and Acts define such locations differently, often in a broad and unclear fashion. For example, the Maharashtra Slum Areas Act, 1971, define such pockets as 'any area in the state which is unfit for human habitation'. According to the Commissioner of Madras Corporation (1961), 'a slum is taken to mean hutting areas with squalid surroundings. In such areas huts are erected in a haphazard manner without proper access. Minimum basic amenities are lacking in these areas. Protected water supply and drainage arrangements do not exist in these areas'. Some studies dealing with slums in Delhi, categorize such areas into *Katras* and *Bustis*. A *Katra* is defined as 'a group, usually of single room tenements constructed normally in rows to capacity, within a compound or enclosure having a single common entrance'. A *busti* is defined as a 'thick cluster of small kachcha houses or huts built on open land in an unauthorized manner'. Bombay has three types of similarly degraded housing conditions, viz. (i) *chawls*; (ii) *patra chawls*; and (iii) *jhopadpatties*. Chawls are multi-storeyed buildings built long ago as workers' colonies according to the then prevailing standards but have now quite deteriorated. *Patra chawls* are less permanent structures, authorised as well as unauthorized built often with tin sheets or such similar materials. *Jhopadpatties* are squatter settlements consisting of a large range of units constructed out of a variety of materials for roofs and walls including asbestos, rags, packing boxes, stretched drums, tin-sheets, mud and bricks. In Calcutta such localities are known as *bustees*. Defined as in the city Municipal Act it is an 'area of land occupied by any collection of huts on a plot of land not less than 1/6th of an acre'. Given such various sets of meanings, it appears that the definitions have been varying, based mainly on (a) the purpose; (b) the context and (c) the time of the study. Importantly, however, albeit in a somewhat loose fashion, three common attributes that characterize such areas are, (i) those that refer to specific human geographic spaces or situations and not to isolated physical units; (ii) those which are also identified by a combination of physical attributes and

not with reference to any one single attribute and (iii) the ones that exist with a considerable range of variations with regard to the manifestation of each one of the physical attributes, significant among which are substandard houses, high density and congestion, excessive and unproportionate load on amenities, insanitary conditions and often absence or serious lack of services like protected water supply, electricity, drainage, sewerage and clearance of garbage. For our purpose of identifying slum areas in Surat city, we incorporated elements of some of these attributes and defined them as "habitations located on disputed as well as unused government, municipal and private land and characterized by a serious lack of basic amenities and sanitation with dense and overcrowded housing conditions where dwelling units ranges variously in terms of the use of material for walls and roofs available rather cheap with substantial contribution of one's own or very cheap labour for the shaping of such dwellings."

II

Surat, one of the oldest mercantile centres of the south Gujarat region has witnessed a long history of trade and commerce since the early decades of the seventeenth century. However, from such a prominence during this period it fell to the position of a sub-regional urban centre by the end of the eighteenth century. The causes underlying this decline were a combination of various geographical, economic and political factors ranging from Tapi's increasing incapability to house ships in its harbour due to excessive silting to plunders by Shivaji, the fall of Mughal empire and shift of trade southwards to Bombay. Though the decline of trade took away its cosmopolitan trading character, it did not take a long time for a section of the local traders to find avenues of capital employment especially in small scale industries within and around the region. The potential of the *Jari* industry was realized and revived. Same was true of *kinkhab* (silk and gold cloth) which had, though limited, but a sure market especially in U.P., Bengal, Punjab, and South India including Deccan and was soon picked up as an important potential sector. Such goods also found their ways to

markets in South Africa, Thailand, China and pockets in Persian gulf. Handloom woven fine cotton cloth too was another major important item of export from the city.[4]

The *jari* and *kinkhab* producing units continued to grow through the early decades of the twentieth century without undergoing any significant institutional or even technological change in its modern sense. This however was not true of the handloom sector, for most of it turned into powerlooms. Though during this time, the powerloom sector also grew in other parts of the country such as Mysore, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, it was Gujarat that recorded a continuous growth with the city of Surat having its largest share in the state. The sector received a further boost by the governmental policy of decentralizing and providing impetus to the small scale industries since 1956. This robust boost to small enterprises coupled with the recommendation of the Textile Enquiry Committee (1954) to convert ordinary looms into powerlooms as well as introduction of certain excise concessions to clothes produced in these units aided a substantial growth of this sector in Surat. Supported by a growing service sector, the number of looms increased "from 8105 in 1960 to 19025 in 1970, a growth rate of nearly 14 per cent per year... The growth rate of looms was 21 per cent in the seventies and 33 per cent in the 80's. Today in 1994, there are an estimated 2.5 lakh looms.[5] Such an impressive growth in the powerloom sector has also been propelled by the establishment of industrial estates in many of the city suburbs as well as to some extent the prolonged textile strike in Bombay during the early eighties that brought in some investment to Surat known for its 'peaceful' industrial environment. Growth of powerlooms was followed by the growth of processing units, the number of which grew from 8 in 1961 to 150 in 1986 and to 320 in 1995.

Another prominent industry in the small scale sector in Surat, especially since the late fifties, has been the diamond cutting and polishing industry. Coupled with ease of establishing small scale industries, various governmental policies aimed at increasing the export of polished diamonds aided the growth of such units in the city. During the

sixties, exports in polished diamonds grew by more than 14 times. While by 1978-79, 5667 such registered units employed more than 40 thousand workers, by 1990, around 13,000 such units were providing employment to more than one lakh people.[6]

Barring power looms and diamonds that mainly remain in the small and to a large extent 'unregistered' sector, as most of them are kept fragmented in order to avoid regulations of the Factory Act, the city has a network of traders and agents dealing with yarns, processed and finished textile goods, petty manufacturers of looms and lathes, entrepreneurs dealing with production, processing, repairs and services of a variety of associated as well as diverse products and a handful but significant capital intensive industries in its modern sector. A large volume of the workforce, especially the ones toiling with machines, looms and lathes is from the city slums, a majority of whom has migrated from regions located near as well as farther from it.

III

Not only within the state of Gujarat, but also at the all India level, Surat has recorded an impressive growth in its population especially during the last two and a half decades. Significantly, this has been the period that witnessed an impressive growth of secondary and tertiary activities in the city. From 4.71 lakh in 1971 its population grew to 14.98 lakh in 1991. It is estimated that by 1995 it has crossed the two million mark and at present is the twelfth largest city in the country. Proportionate to the growth in the area of the city limits, the highest growth of population has taken place during the '81-'91 decade while during the '71-'81 period too the growth has been substantial.[7]

In the three zones of Surat viz., old city, inner periphery and outer periphery, the spatial distribution of population has over the time been changing.[8] Proportionately, unlike in the earlier decades, the old city now houses a much lower population. This has mainly been owing to (i) increasing growth of residential areas in the inner periphery; (ii) bulk of the migrants entering the slums of its outer suburbs; (iii) residential mobility of a section of high and middle income groups towards specific

localities in its periphery, and (iv) changes in the actual area of the Corporation limits influencing the related figures. Such spurts in growth within particular wards located especially in its outer suburbs have been in response to the growth and concentration of power looms, diamond processing, petty trade, small industrial units as well as easier availability of dwelling areas in and around the zone.[9] A large proportion of these workers are migrants located mainly in the slum pockets of the city's eastern half.

Based on estimates and figures on the total slum population in the city at three different time points, viz. 1973, 1982 and 1983, it appears that during the early seventies and eighties, the proportion of slum to the city population did not record any significant change with about 18 per cent of its population living in slums. Also during the time, annual growth rate of the population was to the tune of 6.7 and 7.5 per cent respectively for the city and its slum pockets. However, during 1982-'83, the growth in the slum population has been very high with 21.4 per cent of annual growth as against 8.2 per cent growth rate for the city. This growth has been remarkable especially since the area of the city during the time remained the same. Annual growth rate of the slum population during the 1983-'92 period has been 14.6 as against the city population which grew at the rate of 7.8 per cent. Table - 1 gives figures related to the growth in slum population within the city during last two decades.

Data gathered during 1991-'92 survey[10] in Surat show that the total slum population in the city is 4.34 lacs. This means that 29 per cent of the 1991 city population lived in its slums. This entire population is distributed in 93,943 households with an average of 4.6 persons per unit and comprises of various religious groups with Hindus constituting 81 per cent followed by 18 per cent Muslims. Among others, a prominent group is that of the *neo* Buddhists migrated mainly from the neighbouring regions in Maharashtra. While 9 per cent of the households belong to Scheduled tribes and are migrants from specific districts in the eastern tribal belt of Gujarat, among the Hindus around 38 per cent belongs to lower and another 30 per cent to Scheduled caste groups. The Muslim population too is divided in terms of specific sects and orders

among whom a large section has come from the adjoining district of Bharuch in Gujarat and the districts of Jalgaon and Dhule in Maharashtra.

A larger proportion of the slum population is that of males with a share of 58 per cent as against 42 per cent of females. This proportion however varies across different migrant groups with a predominance of males among those who have come from the states of Uttar Pradesh and Orissa. Around 60 per cent of the total population belongs to the age-group of 15 to 50 years with a markedly low proportion (4 per cent) of people above 50 years of age. The substantially low sex-ratio of 725 is characterized by even low figures ranging from 520 to 570 in many of the slums in its eastern suburbs and dominated by male migrants of younger age-groups. Significantly, as high as 38 per cent of female and 35 per cent of male children in the 6-14 years age group have never attended school. Among the rest, the drop-out rate among boys is slightly higher than that of the girls.

Table - 1*

Growth Trends in Slum Population Within Surat City

	Years						
	1973		1982		1983		1992
Total city population	5.3		8.5		9.2		15.7
Annual growth rate		(6.7)		(8.2)		(7.8)	
Total slum population	0.92		1.54		1.87		4.34
Annual growth rate		(7.5)		(21.4)		(14.6)	
Slum population as percentage of total population	17.3		18.1		20.3		27.5

*Note: Figures related to total population are based on growth rates of corresponding inter-census periods whereas population figures related to the city slums and pertaining to 1973, 1982 and 1983 have been drawn respectively from ORG (1973),

SMC (1982) and Core Consultants (1983) studies. The 1992 figures are drawn from Biswaroop Das (1994

As high as 80 per cent of the respondents stated that they had come to the city from regions outside Surat and did not originally belong to it. The rest returned themselves as 'natives' of the city. Sections of them have come from as far as north-eastern and southernmost districts in the country. In terms of distribution however, the largest proportion of migrant households is from the districts in Maharashtra. As much as 47 per cent of such households belongs to this neighbouring state, followed by Uttar Pradesh from where 18 per cent of them has entered the city at different points in time. The third largest share of 13 per cent is from Gujarat followed by 11 per cent from Orissa and 5 per cent from Andhra Pradesh. A little less than 2 per cent is from Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan.

The entire lot of migrant households has a rural origin with only a handful who have moved from another urban area. Their movements have been from specific regions within particular states. Within Gujarat they mainly belong to Bharuch, Mehsana, Surat, Bhavnagar, Valsad and Panchmahals districts. Majority of the Maharashtrian migrants has come from the *Khandesh* region which includes the districts of Dhule, Jalgaon and Nasik. Other districts in Maharashtra from where a sizable section has come to Surat are Nagpur, Buldana, Bhandara and Raigadh in that order of prominence. A large proportion of migrants from Uttar Pradesh has come from its eastern districts of Varanasi, Jaunpur and Pratapgarh followed by Sultanpur, Faizabad and Banda. As high as 86 per cent of them from Orissa belongs to Ganjam district followed by Puri and Baleshwar. Even from within Ganjam more than 70 per cent has come from its three geographically contiguous blocks of Aska, Bhanjanagar and Kodala. From within Andhra Pradesh the districts from which most households have come are Warangal, Nalgonda and Karimmnagar.

It is important to note that ward-wise data on overall population growth in Surat during the 1971-'91 period show a pattern that manifests an inner or the *old* city stability and to an extent a movement of population towards the periphery. However a

greater number of immigrating work-force has chosen to enter its south-eastern and north eastern zones. Significantly 70 per cent of the slum localities and 73 per cent of slum population is located in the eastern half of the city. Higher concentration in the western half is in parts of the *old* city and the Rander-Adajan stretch. While the average number of households per slums is 319, the slums with highest population density and largest number of households are located in the north and south-eastern sections, among which five house more than 2000 households each and one in Udhna houses 12,000 households. Such an area-specific 'sub'-urban growth in slum population has mainly been a function of the often unregulated land-use and the corresponding spatial lay-out of activity patterns in the city. The pattern of such settlements and the dwelling characteristics in terms of their spread, density and migrant component too has been influenced by the dominance of particular kinds of activities and allied works within its specific zones. It is pertinent to note here that the growth of population as well as density has not been very high in its north-western suburbs in spite of pockets in their vicinity having experienced a growth in various modern manufacturing and allied industries during the last two decades. Instead, the growth has been more in areas that mainly correspond with the concentration of rather fragmented, small, medium as well as home-based units related to textile, manufacturing, repairing, processing as well as jobs in the services and *self-employed* categories. Such a residential ecology that has emerged over the city of Surat especially during the past few decades is an important element in the context of its land market. Maps 1 and 2 present a broad pattern and spatial distribution of slums in Surat city.

IV

Sanitation system in Indian cities is frequently represented by inadequacy of drainage, sewerage, safe drinking water and sanitary facilities as well as highly congested spaces for habitation with unregulated as well as complex land-use mix. This is more pronounced in the city slums and poorer housing colonies which often do not possess the minimum basic amenities as well as access to a tolerable environment. Contrary

to the popular belief, such situations are not only prevalent in the 'metro' and 'million cities' but often more pronounced in the medium and smaller urban centres. For example in the Class-II and Class-III towns of the three most urbanized states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamilnadu, percentage of slum population without access to drinking water and sanitation facilities is much higher compared to their Class-I cities.[11] Situation in Surat has been no exception and conditions in its slum localities is as appalling and alarming as in most other cities in the country.[12] Data from our survey on some aspects of sanitation and services in its slums show that (1) as high as 60 per cent of the slum localities is devoid of any kind of drainage or gutter arrangements; (2) even among slums having some drainage system, conditions of drains range from appalling to bad in a substantial number of them; (3) a serious lack of rain water drainage makes the conditions of many of these localities filthy, muddy and hazardous in terms of health especially during heavy rains; (4) slums located at lower slopes remain water-logged for long and this leads to high incidence of mosquito breeding and tend to contaminate drinking water passing through pipes; (5) for every 1100 persons or 230 households there exists one stand-post with a pressure of about 82 households on one working tap; (6) on an average a household depending on such stand-posts spends about two and a half hours per day to collect water; (7) variously used spaces by the slum households for bathing include (i) spaces inside the dwellings, (ii) spaces outside the dwellings; (iii) spaces around the public water posts and (iv) spaces like river and canal banks, wells etc.; (8) available toilet facilities are enough only for about 22 per cent of the slum population in the city; (9) conditions of a substantial proportion of public toilets are appalling and hence underutilized for the purpose meant for; (10) spaces used most frequently for defecation are nearby open plots or grounds, followed by strips along the canals and river banks; (11) a majority of the private toilets in these slums are of the *dug-pit* type followed by units having basins without any flush facility; (12) a little more than half of the households has access to electricity, though only 48 per cent of them has separate connections followed by as high as 41 per cent of the connections drawn from neighbours; (13) use of kerosene lamps is most prominent among the households without any accessibility to electricity; (14) services like dispensaries/health centres are located within a radius

of 3 kms. in case of 28 per cent of slum localities in the city; (15) a variety of small and petty private shops are located in many of these slums mostly as extensions of dwellings; (16) as high as 68 per cent of the households have not used institutional facilities like hospitals, dispensaries, health centres etc. for delivery of babies; (17) 63 per cent of all births have remained unrecorded or unregistered; (18) in addition to some of the occupational health hazards related to throat, ears and chest especially among the diamond and textile workers, the prevalent illnesses in these areas are malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoea and jaundice; (19) broadly the various kinds of illnesses occurring to people in these areas are (i) related to intense exposure to changes in weather including that of rains; (ii) respiratory; (iii) stomach and abdominal; (iv) water borne; (v) chest related; and (vi) mosquito related; and (20) a very high death rate among children below 5 years of age is indicated by as much as 37 per cent of all deaths recorded in the survey falling in this age category.

V
Work Force, Occupations, Labour Mobility and Income

5.1 *Work Force*:

If the age-group of 19-60 years is taken as the potential work force, we find 54 per cent of the total slum population falling within its various ranges. Out of this, over 60 per cent are males and the rest females. This work force however is not the actual working population for only 39 per cent of them is engaged in a variety of jobs and occupations. Out of the actual work force, as high as 91.5 per cent are males. Compared to 34 per cent of the city population, which also includes the slum population and returned as workers in the 1991 census, the share of workers in slum areas in absolute terms is higher by an additional 5 per cent.

If we assume the actual male and female work participation rates to remain uniform with the rate among females not exceeding 10 per cent, there would always be a little above 18 per cent of the potential work force looking for a job. Such estimates drawn

from the 19-60 years age group(s) however get affected when we examine the proportion of working people in the age group of less than 18 years. In terms of proportion from the total population, workers in this category form as much as 5 per cent as against 39 per cent of the total workers. This means that the more than 19 years age-group has a work participation rate of 34 per cent. Consequently, this also means that the proportion of unemployed is much higher in the 19 to 60 years age group with individuals below 18 years competing significantly with their elders in the city labour market. However, while seen in terms of their proportion from the total working population, the workers in the less than 18 years age group form 13 per cent of the actual working force. Assuming that a higher share of such under age work force comes from the 15 to 18 years category, one finds that they add upto 68 per cent of this slot being actually placed in jobs. This proportion is unevenly distributed across the localities. A clearly larger share of 'under 18' workers is found in the north-eastern followed by the south-western and central zones. Since the figure related to the proportion of this work force from within 15 to 18 years age range comes to as high as 68 and in several pockets more than 80 per cent, it would not be wrong to assume that part of this share is made up of workers less than 15 years of age. This suggests that the extent of child labour in different job types is large. Such younger work force generally works in the diamond polishing and the spinning, twisting and colouring sections in the textile and activities related to petty sales and repairs. Given the spatial distribution of migrants and industrial activities over the city, it appears that a good deal of the under age labour force comes from Orissa, Saurashtra and Maharashtra. Stated in a general way it seems that a significant portion of the workers in Surat slums is less than 18 years of age and their concentration higher in the slums of its eastern half. Table - 2 gives data on number of workers in the slums by sex and proportion.

Table - 2

Number of Workers in the City Slums by Sex

	Number and proportion of		
	Male Workers	Female Workers	Total Workers
All Slums	154473	14376	168849
	(91.5)	(8.5)	(100.0)

5.2 ***Occupations***:

Similar to the slums in other million plus cities in India, the slum dwellers in Surat too remain engaged in a variety of jobs. We have grouped the 478 jobs identified in the survey into 12 broad groups, viz. (1) white collar; (2) blue collar; (3) self-employed (higher level occupations); (4) self employed (lower level (LL) occupations) - sales (5) self-employed (LL) - production; (6) self-employed (LL) - processing; (7) self-employed (LL) - repairs; (8) self-employed (LL) - services; (9) agriculture and allied;[13] (10) construction; (11) textile related; and (12) other occupations.[14] In terms of distribution by types of occupation, a little less than 7 per cent of the household heads were found to be not depending on any kind of wage employment and belonged to the categories of retired, unemployed, invalid and not being engaged with any 'productive' occupation. They were generally dependents, women heads not doing any paid work, people living on money from house or land rent, pensions etc. Excluding this, while one group depends mainly on the 'factory' sector especially that of the textiles, another large group depends on employment carved out in the more marginal sectors of the economy. They are mainly the *self-employed* groups who tend to shift between different job types and employment status or remain associated with works like petty shop keeping throughout the year. Proportion of people with white collar jobs like clerks, teachers, peons, factory supervisors, policemen etc. is a little less than 4 per cent, followed by about 14 per cent of household heads in blue collar jobs like that of drivers, mechanics, technicians etc. Among different categories of the self-employed groups, the highest proportion of household heads remains engaged in various services, followed by 12 per cent in the self employed (sales), 7 per cent in the self-employed (processing), 5 per cent in the self-employed (production) and about 2 per cent in the self-employed (repairs) categories. Evidently the proportion of self-

employed group is substantially high with 39 per cent of the household heads engaged in related occupations. The fact that only about 2 per cent of the respondents depends on agriculture and allied activities suggests that the set of occupations and the variety of jobs in which almost all households remain engaged is essentially non-agricultural and hence 'city' specific. Activities in the construction sector engage about 4 per cent of the HH heads.

Wide variations exist within and amongst slums in terms of the distribution pattern of household heads by different occupations. Most respondents with white collar jobs are located in the south-west with their least share being in the northern slums. In fact as high as 75 per cent white collar job holders are from the south-west with a large number having supervisory jobs at mills and factories, low paid jobs in private enterprises or working as peons, clerks, telephone operators and teachers. A similar proportion of blue collar workers is located in the north and south-east. They mainly work as printers, drivers, wiremen, workers in small workshops, coolies at the bus and railway station, casual wage labourers, petty-enterprise workers, packers in shops and godowns and sweepers enrolled with the Corporation. A large number engaged in the self employed (services) category is concentrated in many of the southern slums and works as domestic servants, rickshaw, truck and tempo drivers, whitewashers, plumbers, fitters, barbers, transporters of goods in hand carts, bore well diggers, watchmen/*seemrakhs* and cooks or bearers in way-side hotels and smaller restaurants. People engaged in activities related to self employed (sales) frequently pursue jobs of hawking and vending, running of *pan-bidi* shops, vending milk, curd, fruits and vegetables, running small tea *laris*, selling kerosene, petty grocery items as well as deal with sale, purchase and resale of scrap and old garments, sale of readymade garments, toys, posters and calendars on the roadside, street corners and inner lanes and by-lanes. Self-employed (processing) activities are mainly concentrated in the south-east with a near absence of such jobs in the northern slums. Production related works in the self-employed category are mainly located at particular slums in the west where a large section remains engaged in jobs like extraction of sand from the river, furniture making and polishing, carpentry, work at tailoring shop, producing items of

cast iron etc. Those engaged in jobs related to agriculture and allied sectors are mainly located in the north-western and southern peripheries and work as agricultural labourers in the nearby fields as well as in activities like cattle rearing and grazing and poultry keeping. People working in jobs related to the construction sector, in addition to living in some of the inner city slums are also concentrated in its western half and most frequently work as *kadias*, *mistries*, labourers carting material at building sites, window fitters, painters, earth workers and layers of gutter lines. The single most important sector in terms of work-force participation is that of the textiles with as high as 31 per cent of the household heads engaged in a variety of jobs within this industry.[15] In addition to the 30 per cent of household heads, a large section of the slum dwellers depends on this sector for their livelihood. Almost every slum in the eastern half of Surat houses workers depending on jobs in this sector, with a large proportion engaged in weaving, dyeing, twisting, saree cutting, winding, warping, weaving, spinning, jari gilding, beam works etc. Commonly found jobs in the list of other occupations are related to unspecified casual wage labour, *poojaris* (priests) and beggars. Casual jobs related to agriculture and allied activities are carried out in and around the fields of northern and south-western suburbs like Jahangirpura, Jahangirabad, Ved, Dindoli, Panas, Althan, Bharthana, Bhestan etc. Table - 3 gives data related to the distribution of household heads by occupational categories.[16]

Table - 3

Share of Household Heads by Occupational Categories*

N = 87229

Occupation Type	Households	Occupation Type	Households
White Collar	3.7	Self-Employed (LL) (Repairs)	1.6
Blue Collar	13.7	Self-Employed (LL) (Services)	13.4

Occupation Type	Households	Occupation Type	Households
Self-Employed (Higher Level)	0.2	Agriculture and Allied	1.7
Self-Employed (LL) (Sales)	12.1	Construction	4.2
Self-Employed (LL) (Production)	4.7	Textiles	30.7
Self-Employed (LL) (Processing)	6.9	Other Occupations	7.1
Total	100.0		

*Note:

Excludes 6714 household heads or 7 per cent, for they belong to categories like unemployed, disabled, invalid, retired, `house wives' and those who are living on land and house rent inherited wealth or property etc.

While the distribution of household heads by various occupational categories gives one a fairly accurate idea about the character and range of jobs in which the entire working population in the city slums remains engaged, distribution of working population other than household heads shows that only 1.4 per cent of them has any job in the white-collar category, with the rest being in categories other than that. This indicates that almost the
entire work-force living in the city slums essentially lives on a variety of lower category, less paid and footloose jobs in the city.

Certain interesting features emerge if we see the occupation distribution by various migrant groups; among whom people from Maharashtra and within Gujarat have been coming to Surat since last six to seven decades. Those coming from Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra have entered the city during more recent times.[17] Evidently, migrants from Maharashtra along with the ones from within Gujarat as well as Uttar Pradesh are found to be distributed in a broadly uniform manner in the major occupation groups within the city labour market, albeit with some significant

variations. Gujarat migrants are best represented in white collar as well as particular self-employed jobs, whereas migrants from Andhra and Orissa are mainly concentrated in the textile sector. Workers in construction related jobs belong mainly to the districts of Dhule, Jalgaon and Buldana in Maharashtra and Panchmahals in Gujarat.[18] Such 'cumulative configurations' seem to reflect a manifestation of processes which tends to induct the early migrants from specific regions into particular occupations and their kin and peer groups into similar jobs. The advance information about employment opportunities and conditions received beforehand by potential migrants thus is only about a few select job types which helps them in responding to the labour market in a correspondingly constricted fashion at least during the initial phase of their stay in the city.

Engagement of a large proportion of workers in a variety of petty jobs in the self-employed sector gives an idea about the extent to which market can absorb them and the efforts they make to sustain themselves through such jobs. A large proportion of people in the associated sub-sectors within this category viz. sales, production, processing, repairs and services are from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh (see Table - 4). Variations apart, it is mainly among these groups that one finds efforts of responding to the market by adjusting themselves and their trade(s) in accordance with the changing demand patterns in the city, and as a consequence generally never being able to consolidate their position in one kind of job on a sustained basis. In order to cope with limits set by the market, a section of he work force engaged especially in petty sales and production changes its wares and goods with changing demands. As a strategy to survive and sustain oneself, it is not difficult to find a vegetable seller turning into a roasted corn seller, a salt vendor or a hawker of potatoes and onions at specific times during the year. Such responses are however not as common among those engaged with jobs related to repairs and services. Incidence of mobility within these sets of jobs is not very high, though a section continues to move from one to the other. Certain jobs like domestic help however remains dominated by women whereas at small food joints and tea and snack *laris*, male children work as attendants and servers.

Table - 4

Share of Prominent Migrant Groups in

Different Occupational Categories in Surat Slums

Occupation Typen = Migrants from*					
	Mahar-ashtra (32702)	Uttar Pradesh (13256)	Gujarat (9437)	Orissa (8088)	Andhra (3709)
White Collar	3.2	4.6	6.7	0.6	1.5
Blue Collar	16.1	17.2	15.0	6.1	2.1
Self Employed (Higher)	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.4
Self Employed (LL) (Sales)	12.6	12.4	17.9	4.5	1.1
Self Employed (LL) (Production)	4.4	5.3	5.6	2.6	1.9
Self Employed (LL) (Processing)	5.7	7.5	3.0	4.0	6.8
Self Employed (LL) (Repairs)	1.5	1.3	1.8	1.0	2.6
Self Employed (LL)(Services)	17.7	9.3	13.8	0.9	1.9
Agriculture & Allied	0.2	0.2	6.4	0.0	0.0
Construction	6.7	2.0	4.3	0.3	1.9
Textiles	23.9	38.0	16.8	79.5	78.5
Other Occupations	7.8	1.9	8.4	0.5	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Note:

Figures mentioned in parantheses against each identified state in the first row are actual number of working migrant households heads from that state.

Significantly, distribution of working household heads by caste and religious groups too indicates a tendency of configuration of job types along such lines. As opposed to the Hindus as well as Scheduled castes and tribes, Muslims have an overwhelming presence in the *lower-level* self-employed sector. In fact as high as 60 per cent of the Muslim household heads remains engaged in such jobs with their higher share in the categories of sales and services. They are poorly represented in the jobs related to textile as well as blue-collar works.[19] As opposed to the 37 per cent of the Hindus a

little less than 13 per cent of Muslim household heads are in the textile related jobs. Significantly their share in the lower level service sector far surpasses the share of Scheduled castes and tribal households within those categories. Among Hindus, a total of 55 per cent of household heads remains placed within jobs in the white collar, blue collar and the textiles. The corresponding proportion for the Muslim households in these 'better-placed' occupations is less than 25 per cent. The share of scheduled castes as well as tribal households too in these groups is much better with around 51 per cent of the household heads among the former and 47 per cent of them among the latter placed in similar jobs. The distribution indicates that comparative disadvantage among Muslim household heads in terms of white and blue-collar government and semi-government jobs and their poorer representation in the textiles have seemingly pushed a larger proportion of them in the more 'unorganized' sector of the labour market. It is also pertinent to note here that the proportion of household heads in the unemployed and other 'unproductive' categories among Muslims is not only much higher compared to the Hindus but also higher than the scheduled caste groups. Table - 5 gives data related to the share of households by major social/religious groups in different occupational categories in Surat slums.

5.3 *Labour Mobility Within the 'Informal' Sector*:

An analysis of more than hundred case profiles[20] of slum dwellers in Surat indicates that most who have found entry in the city labour market - especially in its `informal' sector[21] - had to move from various stages of 'un' and 'under' employment to mainly jobs of hawking, vending, petty production, repairs and services. Many joining the 'factory' or the `small-scale production' units were found to have earlier acquaintances or relatives in the city and had a more protected and often a straight entry in their jobs. A large proportion however reflected a mobility between petty and marginal self-employed occupations.

Table - 5

Share of Household by Major Social/Religious Groups in

Different Occupational Categories in Surat Slums*

Occupation Type n =	Social Religious Groups				
	Hindu (51032)	Muslim (14970)	S.C. (13672)	S.T. (7425)	Others (130)
White Collar	3.8	2.6	3.5	4.0	4.6
Blue Collar	14.0	9.5	16.7	14.9	10.0
Self Employed(Higher)	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0
Self Employed(LL) (Sales	10.5	24.6	7.8	5.8	12.3
Self Employed (LL) (Production)	4.6	6.5	3.2	4.3	28.5
Self Employed (LL) (Processing)	8.4	3.0	5.2	6.8	5.4
Self Employed (LL) (Repairs)	1.3	2.8	1.3	1.4	7.7
Self Employed (LL)(Services)	10.6	23.2	13.3	12.5	11.5
Agriculture & Allied	1.3	0.2	3.3	4.4	0.0
Construction	3.8	4.9	4.8	4.6	2.3
Textiles	36.7	12.6	30.7	28.8	13.8
Other Occupations	4.7	9.9	9.8	12.4	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Note:

Respectively excludes 2648, 1651, 1239, 1169 and 7 household heads from the Hindu, Muslim, Scheduled Castes (S.Cs.), Scheduled Tribes (S.Ts.) and others for the reason as noted in Table - 3.

A broad model of occupational groups and mobility among the slum dwellers as given on the next page suggests a broad frame of employment sectors and related characteristics within the micro context of Surat city. In the model, the most vulnerable of the groups is the category (F) where labour reserves often keep swelling. Continued attempts are made by individuals in this slot to enter the categories (D) and (E) characterized often by gross irregularities in employment, lower returns and 'entrapment' within their different sub-sectors. While a section among them manages to enter some of the identified self-employed job types in (D), the other continues to negotiate with a variety of petty and casual jobs within (E). In fact, these two sectors

together absorbs a substantial portion of unskilled workers and houses the largest range of self-employed and casual job types. After having moved horizontally within the sub-sectors of (D) and intermittent job shifts within (E), some slip down to a chronic underemployment or even to the unemployed category. And to this extent, workers in both these slots remain 'unprotected' and extremely vulnerable to the local market forces.

Unlike strong 'individual' attempts that characterize entry into (D) and (E), it is influenced in (C) by modes through which production in the textiles and diamond processing is organized. Both these rather highly 'decentralized' industries prefer to employ migrant workers from particular regions. This explains as to why an overwhelming majority of powerloom workers in Surat is from Orissa and Andhra and a large proportion from Saurashtra in diamond polishing.[22] These groups often enter particular sectors and job types directly, albeit aided by relatives and acquaintances. Such a process has led to an *institutionalization* of labour supply and the mechanics of its absorption as well as organization of production in specific sectors. In spite of being a frequently unregulated and non-protective sector, adhoc arrangements tend to retain a large member of workers in its fold.[23] While irregularities here marginalize the workers in varying intensity, a large majority still remains attached due to its relative advantage over other sectors.[24] Significantly however, even within the textiles, a group remains underemployed to a large extent while another employed on a more or less regular basis. Not many can however rise upto the slots of (A) and/or (B) which may broadly be labelled as partially protected sectors mainly in terms of job continuity and income, though some workers from the Scheduled Castes and tribal groups have seemingly been able to enter these categories probably through benefits of job reservations.

While the distribution of household heads by occupational categories gives a fairly accurate idea about the character and range of jobs in which the entire working population of the city slums remains engaged, distribution of workers other than household heads by broad occupation types indicates that an overwhelming majority

remains placed in jobs other than the white collar category. Proportion of people in white collar jobs among these workers is only a little more than one per cent of the entire work force as against around 4 per cent among the gainfully employed household heads. Among the working population, proportion of people engaged in any 'secondary' occupation is found to be negligible.[25] The related figure is only 0.5 per cent with its highest share in the slums located in its southern periphery. From among the household heads, 3.4 per cent stated that they had some specific types of home-based economic activities within their dwellings.[26] Such jobs included running of petty shops, book binding, bobbin filling, making of paper/plastic bags and envelopes, embroidery and jari work, collection and sale of old clothes and packing boxes, *agarbatti* making, tinsmithy, pickle making etc. Out of the households having such activities within their premises, a large section has petty shops that sell biscuits, lozenges, bread, eggs, cigarettes, *beedis*, match boxes, washing and bathing soaps, small plastic-wares like tea-strainers and mugs, spices, oil, marbles, limited grocery items, brooms etc. However in terms of capital employed and range of goods, these shops vary in their size. Another important work carried out mainly by women and girl children at home is *jari* and embroidery on a piece-rate payment basis.

5.4 ***Income Distribution:***

Even while being engaged in a wide range of jobs and occupation types, the economic condition of the slum dwellers remains rather poor and among a sizeable section nearly appalling. A little more than one per cent of the household heads earns less than Rs.300 per month and is distributed across the city in a nearly uniform manner. Another 12 per cent has an income ranging from Rs.300 to 700 per month. As high as 39 per cent remains placed in the income range of Rs.701-1000 followed by 33 per cent earning between Rs.1001 to 1500. Another 6 per cent earns between Rs.2001 to 2500 while only less than one per cent earns amounts exceeding Rs.2500 per month. In other words around 73 per cent of the earning household heads falls in the broad category of Rs.701 to 1500 monthly earning range. Across the city, proportion of people earning more than Rs.1500 per month is higher in slums located in the vicinity of looms, petty factories, other industrial sheds and production units.

In addition to the data on income of HH heads, it is also worthwhile to look at the total household income. Compared to about 14 per cent of the household heads earning up to Rs.700 per month, the figure at the household level is about 8 per cent. This means that more than 50 per cent of the households in this income range has none but only HH heads as earning members. About 27 per cent of the households has a monthly income ranging from Rs.701 to 1000 as against 40 per cent of household heads placed in the same category. This suggests that about 52 per cent of the households within this income range depends primarily on the wages of a single individual. Evidently, extent of this dependency on the earnings of one individual increases in the next income category of Rs.1001 to 2000 per month with only around 4 per cent of households having either more than one working individual or income from sources other than the earnings of the household head. About 12 per cent of the households has an income between Rs.2001 to 3000 and seemingly in a large proportion of these households there is more than one and in a substantial proportion several such earning members. Eleven per cent of the households exceeds a monthly income of Rs.3000 with about 43 per cent among them earning not more than Rs.4000, 22 per cent earning not more than Rs.5000, 13 per cent earning not more than Rs.6000, 7 per cent earning not more than Rs.7000 and 15 per cent earning more than Rs.7000 per month. Across the city one finds that in all the high income categories between Rs.4000+ and Rs.7000+ per month, higher proportion of households is from the north and north-eastern slums.[27] Thus in a broad way, it can be said that about 35 per cent of the households have a total annual income not exceeding Rs.12,000. Per capita monthly income within this group hence does not go beyond Rs.217 and even among them as high as 22 per cent of the households have a monthly per capita income not going beyond Rs.152. This entire population consisting of 35 per cent of the households can easily be identified as living below as well as on the brink of the poverty line. Tables - 6 and 7 respectively give figures related to the distribution of household heads and families by total monthly earnings.

Table - 6

Proportion of Household Heads by Monthly Income Ranges

N = 93943

Income Range (in Rupees)	Households heads	Income Range (in Rupees)	Household heads
Less than 300	1.4	2001 - 2500	0.5
300 - 700	12.4	2501 - 3000	0.2
701 - 1000	39.4	3000 and above	0.1
1001 - 1500	33.4	N.A.	7.0
1501 - 2000	5.6		
Total		100.0	
N.A. = Not applicable			

Table - 7

Proportion of Households by Total Monthly Income

N = 93943

Income Range (in Rupees)	Households heads	Income Range (in Rupees)	Household heads
Upto 700	7.8	4001 - 5000	2.4
701 - 1000	26.9	5001 - 6000	1.4
1001 - 2000	42.4	6001 - 7000	0.8
2001 - 3000	11.6	More than 7000	1.6
3001 - 4000	4.7	N.R.	0.4
Total		100.0	
N.A. = Not responded.			

What appears from this distribution is that in terms of their earnings, the slum dwellers are a stratified lot with large variations in income even while their earnings are generally low. The data also indicate at the efforts made by members other than

household heads towards earning and that within the lower income ranges (upto Rs.700 and 701 - 1000 per month) attempts made by members other than households heads towards earnings is rather well pronounced. Seemingly thus the poorest of the lot makes stronger efforts for survival and seemingly remains located within jobs characterized with much lower returns.

Significantly there exists notable variations in earnings among different migrant groups. The largest proportion of households with their total annual income not exceeding Rs.12,000 is from Maharashtra followed by Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. This proportion is substantially low among the U.P. and Oriya migrants. The pattern remains broadly uniform if we take Rs.2000 per month household income as the cut-off point since the majority of the slum households in the city does not earn more than this amount. As high as 89 per cent of Andhra, 87 per cent of Maharashtra and 85 per cent of Gujarat migrants fall in this category. As opposed to this, only 35 per cent of Oriya and 65 per cent of U.P. migrants remain placed within this bracket. In fact, as high as 19 per cent of Oriya migrants earns more than Rs.6000 a month. While among the U.P. migrants share of such households is around 4 per cent, proportion of them from Gujarat, Andhra and Maharashtra earning more than Rs.6000 a month is negligible. Table - 8 gives proportion of households falling within different income ranges by dominant migrant groups within the city.

Such variations in earnings by different migrant groups also indicate at differentials in returns from specific occupation types and jobs. A section among the Oriya workers earns a larger amount of money from the textile sector often by working double shift. However, even while a sizeable proportion of the Andhra household heads is in the same sector, their earnings are not as high.[28] It is possible that a wide range of jobs in the ‘informal’ and especially the different categories of jobs in the self-employed sector are characterized by low returns due to irregularity of employment and lower profit margin. The returns also remain too low in the jobs within the category of other occupations and generally depressed in the construction sector. Significantly 15 per cent of the migrant household heads from Maharashtra and 13 per cent from within

Gujarat remain engaged in these two sectors, and also as noted earlier, have an overwhelming presence in the self-employed sector. Seemingly inter as well as intra sectoral differentials in job types have, to a large extent determined the income differentials among various migrant groups within the city.

Table - 8

Proportion of Migrant Households from Different States by Income Groups*

Income Range (in Rupees)	Migrants from				
	Maharashtra	Uttar Pradesh	Gujarat	Orissa	Andhra
Upto 700	8.4	3.6	9.2	1.0	5.0
701 - 1000	33.8	19.7	29.2	8.2	24.6
1001 - 2000	44.4	40.1	46.1	26.0	59.2
2001 - 3000	9.7	15.6	10.6	14.8	7.4
3001 - 4000	2.4	9.1	3.0	12.7	2.0
4001 - 5000	0.6	5.1	1.2	10.4	0.9
5001 - 6000	0.3	2.8	0.3	8.0	0.4
6001 - 7000	0.1	1.5	0.1	5.4	0.1
More than 7000	0.1	2.3	0.1	13.5	0.3
N.R.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Note:
Proportions shown here are based on total number of migrant households as given in Table - 4.

Other important variations that exist between the bulk of migrants and the locals as well as various groups among the migrants relate to the aspects of dwelling status, space and rental structure. As against 85 per cent of local residents only 57 per cent of

migrants own the dwellings and the rest live in rental units.[29] Across the major migrant groups as much as 58 per cent of Oriya and 44 per cent of U.P. migrants dwell in rental units. The proportion is much lower in case of Gujarati and Maharashtrian migrants with their respective share being 30 and 32 per cent. Significantly, the amount of rent paid by the migrants is much higher. As much as 40 per cent of the local tenants pay rent that does not exceed Rs.50 per month as opposed to only 7 per cent of the migrants paying in the same range. In fact as much as 54 per cent of the migrants pay between Rs.100-200 a month as dwelling rent as against 19 per cent of locals paying similarly. Amount paid as rent is invariably higher for the Orissa, U.P. and Andhra migrants and lower in case of Gujarati and Maharashtrian migrants. This is in spite of a lower amount of dwelling space available to the migrants which does not exceed an area of 100 sq.ft. (popularly known as 10 X 10 units) for as high as 42 per cent of them as against 20 per cent of locals has a dwelling space within this range. Significantly, 11 per cent of the locals has dwelling area that goes beyond 400 sq. feet while only a little less than 2 per cent of the migrants has a similar area. This is reflected as well as substantiated by the fact that 74 per cent of the locals as against 90 per cent of migrants live only in one room units. Across the migrant groups, 53 per cent from Orissa and 49 per cent from U.P. lives in units that do not exceed an area of 100 sq.ft.[30] Corresponding proportions for the migrants coming from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat respectively are 35, 31 and 30. Notably only 30 per cent of the Oriya and 39 per cent of the U.P. migrants have access to electricity supply with corresponding figures for migrants from other states being within the range of 60 to 69 per cent. Charging a refundable deposit amount from tenants - especially the non-locals is a common practice. As high as 80 per cent of the migrants as against 30 per cent of the local tenants had to pay deposits for renting huts.

VI

Possession of Household Items

In order to gain further impression on the general economic condition as well as mode of living among the slum households, data were collected on ownership of household items. It was found that the commonest item possessed almost by each household is steel utensils. The next common item is *kerosene* stove owned by 92 per cent of the households. From among those not owning a kerosene stove, a small section depends on food from hotels; another group - especially the male migrants living jointly eat at specific food joints often run by people coming from their own native states and a third group depends on coal, wood etc. for cooking. Only a negligible proportion of households has gas stove. While 79 per cent has some or the other kind of cots, share of those not having cots is highest in the northern and north-eastern slums with around 35 per cent households not possessing them. Groups of workers in these pockets use 'berth' like wooden platforms placed one above the other to sleep. Such an arrangement is more frequent among the migrants from Orissa. Every second household in the city has a bicycle used mainly in reaching work places. Thirty eight per cent of the households has chair/s with their lowest share in areas where workers live together in cramped spaces. If we examine the distribution of households by availability of five most common items viz. steel utensils, chairs, kerosene stove, cycles and cots, it is seen that a negligible proportion of households does not have any of these items, followed by 2 per cent of them having one item, 15 per cent having two items, 30 per cent having three items, another 30 per cent having four items and 23 per cent having all the five items. It is significant to note here that a larger proportion of households in the western half of Surat possesses all the five items listed above. Their lower share within the slums of the eastern half that has a higher proportion of industrial and petty trade workers seemingly suggests their attitude towards having as less assets as possible within their dwellings. For some workers hence such localities are more like transit camps rather than settled housing units. Out of the items in the second set that includes transistor/radios, wall-clocks, electric fans, tables and cupboards one finds as much as 37 per cent of the families not owning any of the items, 26 per cent having one, 16 per cent having two, 11 per cent having three, 6 per cent having four and only a little less than 5 per cent having all the items. It

appears from the data that with the increasing number of items there is a progressive reduction in the proportion of households owning them.

Among the more expensive items like gas stoves and television sets, one finds only a little more than one per cent of the households owning gas stoves, proportion of which is higher in the slums of the western half of the city. A significant proportion of 6 per cent has television sets in their houses. Around 7 per cent has either a television or a gas stove or both items in their houses, though within this distribution, proportion of households owning television sets far surpasses the share of households owning cooking gas. This indicates at the effects of market and increasing consumerism towards items of entertainment. Based on data on the possession of radio/transistors by 40 per cent of the households, it can be said that nearly half of the population has direct access to electronic media inclusive of television sets.

The frequency of possessing motorized two wheelers like *mopeds* or bikes is quite low. A total of 903 such vehicles are distributed differently in the 294 slum pockets. A little more than one per cent of the households owns auto rickshaws which in absolute terms adds upto 1120 households though the total number of auto drivers in these localities is 2458. This means that about 55 per cent of the auto drivers living in slums runs rickshaws on a rental basis belonging to others. There are 246 households owning tempos which are generally used in the transshipment of goods from one point to another within the city. There are also 4108 or a little more than 4 per cent of the households having four-wheel carts (*laris*).

When assigned with weightages corresponding to the proportion of asset ownership by particular sets of items, it is found that migrants from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra own not only a higher proportion of such assets, but also possess a larger share of ‘higher grade’ items like fans, cupboard, television, transistor/tape-recorders and motorized two wheelers. As against these groups, migrants from Orissa and Uttar Pradesh remain much lower at the scale with the Oriyas coming at the bottom of the order. Availability of otherwise commonly owned assets like cots and chairs too is

less frequent among the Oriya households. For example, as against the respective share of 84, 83 and 75 percent of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra migrants, only 41 percent of the Oriya households has cots. Similarly while as much as 45 percent of the Gujarat, Andhra and Maharashtrian migrants own chairs, only 17 percent of the migrants from Orissa and 26 per cent from U.P. have them. As against 20 percent of all households only 6 percent of the oriyas and 12 percent of the U.P. migrants own tables. Significantly, less than 1 per cent of Oriya and around 3 per cent of the U.P. migrants as against 7 per cent each from Andhra, Gujarat and Maharashtra own T.V. sets. The variation in distribution suggests that the tendency of owning assets is not influenced by the extent of earnings alone, but determined also by factors like actual dwelling area, household type, tenancy status, rent differentials, remittances, savings as well as investment and expenditure strategies of the migrants.[31]

What appears from the distribution pattern of various items of use is that the frequency of possessing most common items and also some of the relatively more expensive and *consumer* items is higher among the 'native' slum dwellers. If the extent of asset ownership is taken as a proxy reflecting a tendency towards settling down, it would seem that significant number of households from Orissa and U.P. are not as inclined to settle and instead interested in earning as much money, and remit parts of their income back to villages of their origin. Though we have no systematic data to substantiate this, during our survey a large number of people from Orissa and Uttar Pradesh expressed their desire to return to their native regions as soon as they were able to acquire some land, retrieve their mortgaged land, establish a petty shop or set up micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector that could sustain their families there. However, most migrants from Maharashtra talked about Surat being as good as their native place and that they were but part of the city.[32] It seems that though propensity to migrate does not decrease with increasing distance, but the desire to return back to one's own native and hence making efforts for it remains stronger amongst people who come from 'culturally different' farther locations - often 'pushed' out of their primary sustenance system.

VII

The broad economic profile of slum households in Surat as sketched above is determined by the *macro* economic processes as well as *micro* economic context. The present day economy of the city is mainly an amalgamation of a decentralized production system perpetuated and sustained by a variety of private initiatives in form of small and divided units especially in its powerloom and diamond processing sectors. While these two sectors together employ around 2.7 lakh of workers in Surat[33], a large number of other workers remains engaged in a wide range of jobs in the 'informal sector'. Nature of participation and the dynamics of production organization, especially within the textiles and diamond gives a specific character to its labour market, and to this extent Surat remains atypical of similar sized cities in the country. This would however be as true in case of other cities with certain dominant sectors and the manner in which production and market remain organized in them. Barring such specific character of economic enterprises that partly determines the form of social and physical environment of slum localities across cities in the country, there exist similarities among them in terms of their causes of formation and growth as well as slum dwellers' response to the labour market, life, living conditions and mechanisms towards sustaining themselves in cities. Within the context of the discussion so far it would thus be meaningful to identify certain issues and questions that remain embedded in the above description.

1) In general, urban population growth in the country has also witnessed an increase in the proportion of those living in appalling conditions in the slums, shanty towns and squatters. This has also been true of many cities in other developing countries. Rural to urban migration has been an important factor contributing to such growth. More often than not such population movements in India and elsewhere in Asia have been caused by 'push' factors from rural areas especially from households lacking support for raising a sustainable income from agriculture, livestock, wage-labour and non-agricultural activities. Bound by lack of credit and other risk constraints many households try to insure themselves against risks by placing

members in labour markets outside the village. To what extent such strategies actually help in strengthening or sustaining the resources base of such rural households and at what time points monetary remittances begin to contribute 'positively' is a matter of further research. But the very fact that a large section of the migrants have moved to Surat owing to causes that vary from weak resource base, landlessness, low returns from agriculture, low wages as well as indebtedness, indicate at the existing scenario at the points of origin of such city ward movements. With increasing migration, labor absorption in the limited sectors of the city economy becomes difficult with labour getting further casualized. The insecurity of employment renders large sections of work-force unemployed, underemployed or compel workers to engage in a wide range of works in the self-employed sector as well as a variety of casual jobs. Proportions of such casual workers varies across cities, depending partly on their level of industrialization, the nature of industries and modalities of production organization within dominant sectors. Studies dealing with slums in India and status of urban poor in different regions of Brazil, Panama and similar regions show their higher share in the self-employed and unprotected jobs and rather lower proportion in permanent or secure employment.[34] Such variations in status and placement within different sectors and job types put these workers in a wide range of income categories with significant differences in earnings across groups.

2) Easy access to jobs has often been labelled as one of the characteristics of the 'informal sector'. The Surat data as well as other studies from Asia however show that with increasing pressures, jobs in this sector too becomes scarce. Also in specific jobs, entry is influenced by one's belonging to specific region, caste or community. This is reinforced by employers' preferences for outside labour as a strategy to keep the production organized in manners that suit them the most as well as potentials of such modes in keeping sections of the work force entrapped into a long drawn 'employer-employee' dependency relationship. Expressions of such processes and forms are evident in the Surat case that has nearly 'institutionalized' the entry of workers from specific regions into select sectors

through 'informal' modes and channels. The intensity of rural out-migration from specific pockets seems to get triggered off after a group has been able to create a niche in specific job sectors and the process is then subsequently sustained by a kith-kin-peer network. Similar patterns also emerge from other studies in India and elsewhere.[35] Such evidences suggest that a section of the migrants moves out while already having access to jobs and does not need to crowd in the bottom pit of the market. Some among those entering jobs in the 'self-employed' sector too have prior knowledge about the nature of work and a carved out space for entry. Labour mobility within such sectors however remains broadly rigid and is often reflected in terms of job shifts between works of similar status. However, a variety of unskilled jobs including construction and repairs etc. provide a relatively easy entry on an adhoc and day to day basis. Labour markets fragmented in this manner create an impression of specialized labour force(s) placed in specific job types over the time, and gets kind of locked for those coming from other regions. Significantly however, with a much lower wage-work participation rate, women are found in specific jobs like domestic help and particular kind of put-out contractual jobs, and to that extent the labour market for them seemingly remains socially defined and quite constricted in terms of mobility.

3) Placed within a wide range of job types, employment situations, income-groups, socio-cultural backgrounds, coping strategies and modes of entry into the labour market, the slum dwellers are an heterogeneous lot. This is quite opposite of the popular belief as well as prevalent administrative view about their generally being a homogeneous group of urban poor. In fact, it is probably their heterogeneity that produces a range of 'entrepreneurship' especially in the 'self-employed' activities. As an extension to this proposition, it may also be said that their social and economic behaviour within a given urban context is not only determined by limits posed by the market, but also regions of their origin, tendencies of crowding over specific spaces and economic sectors, available and created support systems as well as long and short term objectives. Manifest forms of such processes can be seen in the locales, inhabited nearly exclusively by the *Oriyas*, *Telugus* and the

ones from Uttar Pradesh. While on the one hand coming together on 'regional' lines, does help in cutting down on actual migration costs, the shared experiences of the work and living spaces on the other, create as well reinforce an 'identity' vis-a-vis 'others'. Even while working within different as well as same divisions of a particular sector, such identities do not really get blurred and continue to be sustained and reinforced through importation and subsequent implantation of cultural practices brought in by different groups. Hence the 'secular' spaces of work, leisure and interactions get negotiated by commonly shared as well as perceived norms helping towards creating fixed sets of beliefs and perceptions about one another. For example, Oriyas are generally thought to be an inward looking group but with a high degree of collective solidarity by the Marathis, whereas they think of the Marathis to be an aggressive lot. The Andhraites are thought to a very enclosed but a more politically conscious group and those from Uttar Pradesh as cunning but generally non-interfering petty hawkers. Concentrated over specific spaces, such beliefs about each other not only encapsulates various groups in terms of social intermixing but also potentially can be competition and conflict ridden. At one level such stereotypes get projected as 'natives' opposed to 'migrants' and at the other one regional group vs. another; often paving way for vested interest groups to appropriate such social configurations in their favour.

4) Given the wide range and substantial differences in income between groups, a question often raised is that as to whether or not all slum dwellers can be labelled as urban poor. The implied aspects of such a question remain placed in developing parameters that are able to gauge and assess poverty levels and often emerge with reductionist quantitative measurements. While they help in making quick slots by status variations among groups and thereby work out different programmes, they do tend to be more mechanical lacking in comprehensive understanding of the very nature of such problems. As a consequence the process(es) related to the problems gets only marginal recognition and gets disaggregated and reduced into components. What thus appears significant here is to understand the social and

spatial context that limits the mobility of slum dwellers within an urban labour market and the opportunity structure as well as resource bases available for them. It became evident during the Surat survey that even while some were able to earn an otherwise higher income by exploiting certain situations, their life-styles did not seem to improve much and neither did their households get a boost through which at least some members in the family were able to acquire high skills. In other words, some among these groups who are able to create a greater elbow space for themselves, experience a change more or less in *quantitative* rather than *qualitative* terms in a progressive manner.[36] What thus becomes essential is to measure their position within the context of job and income (in) stability, the many dimensions of deprivation that these groups experience in terms of their entry into the labour market, their housing conditions, status of health and nutrition, levels of education, material and non-material resource bases as well as facilities related to various services and institutions.

5) Another important set of issues that could be drawn from the discussion relates to the 'formal' and 'informal' sector dichotomy. With large proportion(s) of slum dwellers located within the 'informal' and/or 'unorganized' sector as well as 'self-employed' activities, there appears a relationship between poverty and types of work. And with this it is often assumed that the *sector* is capable of absorbing a great deal of surplus labour. This however is never the case. In fact, inspite of their somehow holding on to the labour market and intensely participating in a variety of jobs, the poor are often unable to improve their position in real terms. Among other factors, this is mainly due to their lack of access to capital, low earnings, 'un' as well as 'under' employment and limited work opportunities that together gives a different complexion to the activities that they depend on in a progressive manner. As opposed to this, activities that are generally grouped under the 'formal' sector have easier access to market, institutional credit, skills, information as well as capacity to 'casualize' sections of workers at different levels of production. What may thus be said that the extent of presence or absence of such factors actually determine the character of an activity as well as the groups

having access to them. In other words, it should be more realistic to view the distribution of work-force placed in terms of a spectrum of jobs and sectors that are, at the same time, continuous and yet fissured; linked as well as compartmentalized, and caused by their differential access to technology, capital and the market that determines the character of a sector, the labour within it as well as their extent of vulnerability.

It is also pertinent here to recognize that a substantial section of slum dwellers in Surat as also in other major cities in the country belongs to lower caste and tribal groups, and this suggests a correspondence between poverty and groups that remain placed in the lower stratum of the social hierarchy. This is not to say that slum localities do not have a share of middle and upper caste groups, but raises a question as to how a greater number of lower caste and tribal groups falls in the marginal sectors of an urban economy and also as to whether it can be presupposed that such groups have a higher propensity to migrate out from rural areas in order to respond to their growing poverty.

6) The very fact that dwellings which get labelled as ‘slums’ are structures that are made of cheaper materials on plots of a variety of status suggests constraints in the accessibility of the poor to a market dealing with easy housing finance, better construction materials and clearer land status. Even within and across slum localities thus one finds variations in the types of dwellings depending upon several factors. Certain locations remain more vulnerable to evictions compared to others. Inhabitants in areas paying water tax, having legitimate electricity connections and political patronage fear less about displacements or immediate removal. It is generally within such pockets that people seem to have higher interest in renewal and participation in the environmental management of their localities. Slums near industrial belts tend to have a higher proportion of rent paying households. Such responses of being selective in terms of locality types suggest differentials in the rationality of location choice among poor households. Consequently, the world as well as material view of such different groups often

vary and hence any intervention towards improving their environment by voluntary or government agencies would call for ascertainment as well as appreciation of such variations. This will also require an understanding of differentials in people's perceptions of their problems and priorities.

In retrospect, it can be said that migrants keep entering cities from rural as well as urban areas with aims of survival, occupational benefits and mobility, entry into employment, educational purposes, business activities and so on. Among them the group with enough resource base and institutional supports generally enters or undergoes processes of induction to enter sectors that remain more or less protected and cushioned. Another section providing direct as well as indirect support base to such sectors also remains protected at least to some extent. However, the group which is placed within the last layers of the urban economy is often made up of marginal and poor rural households moving towards sectors with potentials of higher earning possibilities. While a section among them continues to be used by the market forces as and when needed, the other keeps circulating between limited sets of sectors. Generations of them continue to struggle for their survival through various means in diverse occupations in the cities. Not many of them really get employed ever in the formal wage sectors and continue to hang on to unemployment, destitution, disguised and underemployment, petty jobs and the marginal self-employed occupations with low returns and pronounced insecurities. Broadly the pattern also remains true for the locals inhabiting such areas and together gives shape to the broad canvas of urban poverty in the Indian and similar South Asian cities.

[Base data for this paper come from my 1992 census of slum households in Surat. Much of the work on this paper was done at the International Development Centre of the Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, where I was a Visiting Fellow during the first two terms in 1997. I am grateful to Barbara Hariss-White and Nandini Gooptu of the QEH and D.C. Sah of the CSS, Surat for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper]

Endnotes and References

1. The estimates showing proportion of slum population in Indian cities by different agencies like the National Sample Survey Organization (1976-77), Census of India (1981), Town and Country Planning Organization (1985) and Task Force on Housing and Urban Development (1983), though vary from one another owing mainly to variations in their definitions over time and across regions, but clearly suggest that proportion of slum dwellers is higher in cities having a population of more than a million with their share reducing substantially in the medium and small-sized towns. According to an estimate worked out by the Task Force (1981), 26.3 per cent of the entire urban population in the country lived in slums while in the million plus cities their share was 38 per cent. Their estimate also showed that out of their total population, 50 per cent in Delhi, 45 per cent in Bombay and Kanpur, 40 per cent in Calcutta and Lucknow, 35 per cent in Madras and Nagpur, 30 per cent in Jaipur and 25 per cent in Ahmedabad and Bangalore lived in slums [Task Force on Housing and Urban Development, Shelter for the Urban Poor, (Part - IV), Planning Commission, 1983].

2. Jane Pryer and Nigel Crook, Cities of Hunger: Urban Malnutrition in Developing Countries, OXFAM, Oxford, 1988.

3. According to the 1991 census, Gujarat tops the list of states in terms of its share of population living in its urban areas. As high as 41 per cent of its population lives in its cities and towns. It has surpassed Maharashtra and Tamilnadu which ranked first and second in that order in terms of their share of urban population at the end of 1981. Their share of urban population at the end of 1991 is 38.7 and 34.2 per cent respectively.

4. For more details on Surat's resurgence into a contemporary trading and industrial city subsequent to its downfall in the eighteenth century, especially see Douglas E. Haynes, Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India: The shaping of a Public Culture in Surat City, 1852-1928, University of California Press, 1991 and also by the same author, "The Artisanal Origins of Surat's Contemporary Industrialization - 1870-1950", paper presented at the IInd International seminar on Gujarat Society: Development and Deprivation (6-9 December, 1994), Centre for Social Studies, Surat.

5. Ghanshyam Shah, "Economy and Civic Authority in Surat", Economic and Political Weekly, October 8, 1994.

6. S.P. Kashyap and Tiwari, Shaping of Diamonds in Surat: Some Passas (Facets), Sardar Patel Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ahmedabad, 1987.

7. Figures related to the area under surat city limits has intermittently been changing over the time. Prior to 1963, only the old city area and a small pocket in its north-east housing the city water works formed the city limits within an area of 8.18 square kms. Subsequently by the end of 1963 a further area of 13.78 sq.kms. was added to it. A further addition of 11.85 and 21.75 sq.kms. were made respectively in 1970 and 1975 increasing the total area of the city by about 680 per cent from the total city area in 1963. During 1986, another 55.60 sq.kms. was added to the city limits. The present area of the city now is 111.16 sq.kms.

8. The Inner or Old city zone with an area of 8.18 sq.kms. includes the wards of Nanpura, Sagrampura, Salabatpura, Begumpura, Haripura, Mahidharpura, Saiyedpura, Gopipura, Vadifalia, Sonifalia, Nanavat and Shahpur. The Inner periphery and Rander zone with an area of 47.37 sq.kms. includes Athwa, Rander Tika-1 to Tika-11, Rander, Rander (Ramnagar), Adajan, Varachcha water works, Lal Darwaja, Nanpura (T.P.S. 2), Katargam-Gotalavadi, Ashwanikumar-Navagam, Athwa-Umra, Majura-Khatodara, T.P.S. 7 to T.P.S. 9, Tunki, Singanpore, Dabholi, Ved, Katargam, Fulpada and Kapadra. The Outer periphery

with an area of 55.60 sq.kms. includes Nana Varachcha, Karanj, Umarwada, Magob, Dumbhal, Anjana, Limbayat, Dindoli, Bhewad, Bhestan, Pandesara, Udhna, Bamroli, Majura, Bhatar, Althan, Umra, Piplod, Jahangirabad and Jahangirpura.

9. These exists a strong tendency of locating oneself as near to the work-place as possible. Examined in terms of the maximum distance covered by any number within a slum household, the figure indicates that as high as seventy per cent of such working individuals does not travel beyond 3 kilometres to reach work-places. In fact, a small section, especially from among the Oriya migrants and working as apprentice resides at the work-place itself before gaining an access to a more stable accommodation in nearby localities through help of co-workers who often are their villages mates too.

10. Biswaroop Das, Socio-Economic Study of Slums in Surat City, Centre for Social Studies, Surat, 1994.

11. The Indian census classifies urban centres into six classes: Class-I (population exceeding one hundred thousand); Class-II (population between 50,000 and 99,999); Class-III (population between 20,000 and 49,999); Class-IV (population between 10,000 and 19,999); Class-V (population between 5,000 and 9,999) and Class-VI (population less than 5000). According to the NSSO 31st round survey on Socio-Economic Conditions of the Slum Dwellers, the share of slum households without drinking water was 11.79; 30.23 and 33.03 per cent in Gujarat, 4.42; 11.78 and 19.03 per cent in Maharashtra and 15.50; 32.82 and 43.29 per cent in Tamilnadu for their Class-I, II and III cities respectively for each state. Similarly population of slum households without sanitation was 10.35; 30.17 and 61.19 per cent in Gujarat, 9.59; 35.50 and 38.39 per cent in Maharashtra and 35.90; 48.49 and 68.62 per cent in Tamilnadu respectively for their Class-I, II and III cities in that order.

12. However, especially since 1996, parts of a number of slums have been stone-paved and in some of them surface drains as well as toilet complexes constructed by the

Surat Municipal Corporation.

13. Under this category workers either go for wage-labour in the villages located nearby as well as in the periphery of Surat and/or engage in rearing cattle; growing spinach and other seasonal vegetables on narrow strips of land within the localities.

14. Range of jobs under various occupational categories are for example, (1) white collar - cashier, draughtsman, nurse, postman, govt.-lawyer, school teacher, sales representative, insurance broker, telephone operator, laboratory assistant, supervisor in mills etc.; (2) Blue Collar - Cinema doorkeeper, driver, fireman, faras, petty technician in mills and factories, railway cleaner, bus driver, truck labourer, security guard in government and semi-government agencies, pump operator in the SMC, helper and mechanic in S.T. depots etc. (3) self-employed (higher level occupation) - labour and building contractor, practicing architect, doctor, lawyer, sharaf, nursery school owner etc.; (4) self-employed (lower level occupation - sales) - manure seller, bangle etc. seller, liquor seller, balloon seller, old books seller, kerosene, cattle seller, etc.; (5) self-employed (LL occupation - production) - pickle maker book-binder, hand cart maker, papad maker, polish maker, cap maker, toy maker, furniture maker etc.; (6) Self-employed (LL occupation - processing) - saree cutting, leather and leather goods polishing, jari gilding, yarn twisting, etc.; (7) Self-employed (LL occupation - repairs) - bag/suitcase repairs, umbrella repairs, primus/stove repairs, repairs of electric items, scooter/auto repairs, drum repairs, sewing machine repairs etc.; (8) Self-employed (LL occupation - services) - ayah, attendant, domestic servant, barber, plumber, cook and bearer in wayside hotels/restaurants, welder, tutor, washerman, tiffin supplier and carrier etc.; (9) Agriculture and Allied - livestock rearing, agricultural labourer, poultry raising, vegetable grower, fruit grower etc.; (10) Jobs in the Construction Sector - helper, carpenter, plumber etc. in building construction, water pipe fitter, laying of gutterlines, tar-road making, tile polishing, earth worker for road construction and laying of railway sleepers etc., (11) Jobs related to textiles - yarn twisting, loom operator, machine master, spinning, colour worker, designer, weaver etc.; and (12) Other Occupations - beggar, bhawai dancer, band player, fortune teller, pandit, pickpocket, puppetteer etc.

15. The textile sector in Surat generally means its large number of power looms and the art-silk industry, which in addition to a host of jobs related to the production of

cloth and sarees and the labourers working in various stages of production; includes a chain of traders, businessmen, commission agents and the transporters handling finished and semi-finished goods tied in a complex but clear network of relations.

16. Out of 478 different jobs in which the household heads in these slums are engaged, there are eighty two specific kinds of jobs that are more common and frequent within their respective occupation categories. These are (1) clerks, (2) peons, (3) supervisors in mills/factories, (4) labour contractors, (5) telephone repairers, (6) cleaners and sweepers with the corporation, (7) drivers, (8) other sweepers, (9) wiremen, (10) loaders of goods in trucks, (11) workers in unspecified workshops, (12) packers in grocery and other shops, (13) unspecified casual wage labour, (14) roadside readymade garment sellers, (15) workers in boilers, (16) beldars, (17) chanaseeng vendors, (17) ice-cream vendors, (18) collector of old clothes in exchange of utensils, (19) small pan-bidi shop-keepers, (20) roadside spices (mari-masala) sellers, (21) butchers and meat sellers, (22) cobblers, (23) fish vendors, (24) bangle sellers, (25) vegetable vendors, (26) milk vendors, (27) cloth vendors, (28) fruit vendors, (29) kerosene vendors, (30) salt vendors, (31) petty grocers, (32) scrap dealers, (33) tea lari owners, (34) omlette lari walahs, (35) pav-bhaji lari walahs, (36) selling old goods/items at the weekly flea market, (37) gardeners and flower vendors, (38) helpers in omlette/tea/pav bhaji laris, (39) workers at tailors' shops, (40) bobbin filling, (41) dyeing, (42) centing, (43) spinning, (44) weaving, (45) loom operating, (46) twisting, (47) printing, (48) folding, (49) jari gilding, (50) beam workers, (51) carpenters, (52) ironsmiths, (53) workers polishing furniture, (54) bamboo net makers, (55) cardboard box makers, (56) mattresses and pillow makers, (57) cycle and scooter repairers, (58) domestic servants, (59) watchmen/seemrakhs, (60) window/door cleaners, (61) fitters, (62) plumbers, (63) barbers, (64) people ironing clothes, (65) welders, (66) hand-cart pullers, (67) auto-rickshaw drivers, (68) tempo and truck drivers, (69) cooks/bearers in restaurants, (70) white-washers, (71) borewell diggers, (72) casual wage labour in the textile market yard, (73) loader-unloaders, (74) field labourers, (75) cattle rearers, (76) kadias, (77) mistries, (78) scaffolding workers, (79) gutter/cable line diggers, (80) priests (purohits), (81) beggars, and (82) name plate/ bill board writers.

17. In case of Oriya workers it seems that the early migrants came during the beginning of seventies and got identified as malias, for a section among them was initially hired as workers in gardens by individual businessmen, some Parsi households and few institutions in the city. Gradually they entered petty trade and small business activities and since the mid 'seventies were able to create a niche for themselves in the power-loom sector, which especially from the beginning of early eighties began to attract a larger number of younger males mainly from the

villages in Aska, Bhanjanagar and Kodala blocks in Ganjam district. Large-scale migration from U.P. started during the late 'sixties with a prominent share of workers belonging to its eastern district of Jaunpur and opting for jobs related to petty production and sales in the self-employed sector.

18. One finds a strong tendency of living together with friends and acquaintances and also a higher proportion of single member households among the migrants. It is revealed from our data that as against a negligible share among locals (0.2%), 11 per cent migrants live in such mixed households. This is very much marked among people from Orissa and Uttar Pradesh who mainly work in the textile and jobs related to sales and repairs in the self-employed sector.

19. The Muslim household heads are frequently found as vendors of fruits, meat and vegetables, scrap-dealers, workers at tailoring shops, coolies at the bus and railway station, hand-cart pullers, construction workers, domestic servants and auto rickshaw and tempo drivers. Among the frequent and more or less regular blue-collar jobs in which household heads from the scheduled castes are engaged include sweepers enrolled with the corporation, office peons, state transport bus drivers and casual labourers. A large proportion among the scheduled tribes works as unspecified casual labourers, domestic servants, peons at government offices and hand-cart pullers.

20. Number of cases covered under different occupational groups was not selected proportionate to the frequency of households in them, but attempts were made to interview larger number of household heads from among the prominent occupation groups. A total of 102 cases were covered that included 4 from white collar, 5 from blue collar, 16 from sales, 8 from production, 12 each from processing and repairs, 14 from services, 18 from textiles, 6 from diamond and 7 from other occupational groups.

21. The term informal sector has been used here to include all jobs grouped under self-employed (lower level) categories as well as jobs in small scale production units especially in the textiles and diamond which reflect a pronounced lack of

protection in the workers' conditions of employment.

22. It must be noted here that a large majority of the diamond workers who mainly belong to Saurashtra region in Gujarat and have migrated to Surat since the early seventies does not live in the slum hutments. In the north-eastern Varachcha stretch, they generally live in chawls and tenements that are only a shade better than most slums in terms of their appearance and access to amenities.

23. Though a large majority of workers in the sectors of powerloom as well as diamond is employed on an adhoc and temporary basis, the likelihood of job continuity and possibilities of earning a relatively better amount by working for longer than stipulated hours or double shifts places these workers in a better position compared to those in the other self-employed job types.

24. In spite of widely prevailing irregularities and depressing work environment, low wages, job insecurity and various kinds of exploitation of the labourers working in different areas of the powerloom sector, workers' unions are but only feeble in Surat. Often the existing organizations are formed and sustained along regional lines. Migrant workers from Andhra Pradesh are generally affiliated to one of the two organizations in the city formed by them. Similarly workers from Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra gather around specific organizations. In spite of the otherwise common interests of the working class, such parochial configurations help nurturing the regional identities of workers and manifest in different forms over the city-scape of Surat.

25. The data related to household members working in subsidiary occupations show an extremely low participation rate. This may have been caused by peoples' attitude of not reporting their secondary occupations generally, and also to a large extent unavailability of such jobs. The detailed case-studies done by us of workers pursuing varied occupations however gives a different impression, for many of them reported to be opting as well as looking for another job and also members of same household engaged in parts of the main or subsidiary works like running a petty shop, packing and preparing chana-danas for sale, helping others in jari making, rag-picking and sorting, saree-cutting, bobbin filling etc. It is possible that much of these activities remain within their perception of `domestic work'. Family labour inputs in different tasks that go a long way in the organization of especially such `self-employed' as well as put out contract jobs often get overlooked and the responses curtailed accordingly.

26. These activities were defined as income earning if located within the residential premises or their tiny extensions and conducted by the household heads or members themselves. This also included piece-rate workers with only rudimentary skills as well as those involved in and dealing with collection and sale of old clothes and packing boxes in a small scale at their dwellings.

27. It should be noted here that a large section of the 4 per cent of households earning more than Rs.5000 a month are units where male migrants especially from Orissa, and Uttar Pradesh are living together and working mainly as weavers, spinners, dyers, folders and similar jobs in the textile and allied sectors. Hence the higher average income among such groups have been owing to the higher number of earners per household. To take such amounts as income for the households can be misleading, for such earnings are owned individually and at times collectively between working brothers, and utilized in ways and manners that vary from one person to another. A section among them sends part of the money back home to their families in order to improve their resource base or for consumption purposes in the villages of their origin. Thus many of these individual members within such households are essentially parts of those rural households from within which they have migrated to the city. The city households of which they form parts are products of their attempts to live together in order to economize on their costs of living and thereby increase chances of saving portions of their income to be sent to their families back home.

28. This can be partly explained by the fact that a larger proportion of the Oriya migrants works as weavers which is the highest paid task in the industry compared to the other tasks associated with the production of cloth. A general impression that I gathered during the field work is that compared to others, a larger group among the Oriya workers put in more number of hours in the looms. Partly this may be due to a majority among them being without their families and hence able to put in longer hours at their work-places.

29. In terms of their tenancy status, there are three kinds of dwellings in the slums of Surat. These are (i) owned: Where the site and the hut belong to the dweller; (ii) hut alone owned: Where the site belongs to somebody else and the dweller has to pay a land rent and (iii) rented: Where the site and the hut belong to some other party but the occupant pays a fixed amount as rent per month to the owner.

30. Even such smaller units are often shared by five to six male members generally belonging to the same village or region especially in the states of Orissa and U.P. The incidence of such collective living is however higher among the Oriya men who are either bachelors or have their spouses, children and parents in the villages of their origin.

31. Most dwellings belonging to migrants from Orissa and Uttar Pradesh are devoid of many commonly available items. Space for sleeping, tin trunks or suitcases, a kerosene stove for cooking in turn by off-shift workers, some cooking vessels and plates, a stringful of Gamchchas (a thin towel) and a mirror nailed to a pole or wall is all that their dwellings have. Broadly these do not resemble any more than ramshackled labour camps meant for resting after a 10-12 hours gruelling work-shift.

32. It is important to note here that among the Maharashtrian slum dwellers a good deal of marriages takes place within Surat itself and that a second generation has been born and brought up here. This is not the case with migrants from Orissa, U.P. as well as Andhra who remain linked almost entirely with their `parent' regions for such and similar social events and purposes. The stronger social roots that the Marathi population has been able to gain in the city has also helped in popularizing as well as strengthening the Ganapati festival in Surat.

33. The correlation co-efficient between the growth in the number of looms and slum population at the four time points, viz. 1960, 1973, 1983 and 1992 comes to R = 0.98. This suggests a very high correlation between the two variables and indicates that with the growth of looms there has been a corresponding growth in the slum population in the city.

34. Especially see Chapters two, five and nine in Gerry Rodgers (ed.), Urban Poverty and the Labour Market, I.L.O., Geneva, 1989 and John Hariss, "Character of an Urban Economy - Small Scale Production and Labour markets in Coimbatore", Economic and Political Weekly, 17(24), 1982.

35. See, for example L.K. Deshpande, 1979, The Bombay Labour Market, (Bombay, University of Bombay, Department of Economics, [mimeo.]); J. Harriss, 1982, "Character of an Urban Economy: `Small-Scale' Production and Urban Labour

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36. A 1987 National Institute of Urban Affairs poverty survey shows that in low income neighbourhoods about 60 per cent of the families above poverty line were living in Kutcha houses and suffering from the same forms of environmental degradation as the families living below poverty line. For more details, see Kirtee Shah (1989), "Urban Poverty: A Matter Whose Time has Come", paper presented at Regional Seminar on Urban Poverty, Bhopal.