

A Brief Summary
Of
Baseline Survey of Bhopal District
Madhya Pradesh

Minority Concentrated Districts Project
Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India

Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

Bhopal: A Sketch of the Field

In terms of its area, Bhopal, the city of lakes, is second largest one in Madhya Pradesh after Indore. The city is divided into two major areas, the old and the new city. Muslim population of the city is largely concentrated in old city most of whom find employment opportunities from certain small scale industries. The district is highly urbanized with nearly 80% of its population marked as urban; it also has a sizeable chunk of the population residing in villages many of whom retain their rural characteristics. Administratively, the district of Bhopal is divided into two subdivisions, Berasia and Huzur. Of this, Huzur, is more urbanised with nearly 90 % of its population residing in urban areas. Most of Berasia subdivision is rural comprising of nearly 285 villages. Minority religious groups together comprise close to 26% of the district's population. In terms of their population share, Muslims constitute the principal community among the religious minorities of Bhopal. Despite their predominance, Muslims seem too have lagged behind all other groups. This is made obvious by their relatively poor performance in literacy. Yet Muslim literacy in Bhopal is higher than their literacy rate computed nationally. Amongst minority groups, Jains and Christians together with Skhs have near total literacy.

Development Deficits in Bhopal District, MP

S1 No	Indicators	Survey results 2008	All India (2005)	Gap between All India and District	Priority ranking
		1	2	3 = 1-2	4
Socio-economic indicators					
1	Rate of literacy	74.3	67.3	7	7
2	Rate of female literacy	69.3	57.1	12.2	6
3	Work participation rate	33.1	38.0	-4.9	3
4	Female work participation rate	15.01	21.5	-6.49	2
II					
Basic Amenities indicators					
5	Percentage of households with pucca walls	46.3	59.4	-13.1	5
6	Percentage of households with safe drinking water**	68.8	87.9	-19.1	1
7	Percentage of households with electricity	83.7	67.9	15.8	10
8	Percentage of households with water close set latrines	58.38	39.2	19.18	9
III					
Health Indicators					
9	Percent age of fully vaccinated children	24.9	43.5	-18.6	4
10	Percentage delivered in a health facility	74.16	38.7	35.46	8

Note: (1) Survey data of the district (Col. 1) pertains to rural area only, but other data (Col.2) pertains to total. (2) Data in Col 2 from Sl. No. 5 to 8 pertain to year 2005-06 from NFHS-3 and the rest of the data in Col. 2 pertain to the year 2004-05 from NSSO

Methodology

The methodology adopted was both quantitative as well as qualitative. The primary data was collected through pre-designed and largely pre-coded interview schedules,

administered by research investigators hired for the purpose. In the absence of religion wise demographic composition for units smaller than sub-divisions, voter lists of all the constituencies of district were mapped to calculate the religion wise voter population percentage. Thus voter lists constituted our sampling frame.

For the purpose of survey, 600 households were sampled from 30 different polling stations all across the district by the multistage random sampling method. At level I, The polling stations were segregated into three strata viz. Category I, II and III in proportion to their minority population:

Localities with minority concentration between 0 to 25 %: Category I

Localities with minority concentration between 25 to 75 %: Category II

Localities with minority concentration 75% and above: Category III

Income and Employment

Significantly, the data from minority concentrated areas report a relatively lower proportion in the manufacturing units. On the other hand, their section in the primary sector, here farming, is disproportionately higher than the other groups. The tertiary sector of clerical, administrative, managerial and technical workers is weak in Bhopal district. Workers working from their own dwellings i.e., home based, in category I outnumber the workforce from mixed and minority concentrated areas. On the contrary, the workers of Category II and III areas largely work from employer's dwelling or enterprise.

The Survey attempted to address the issue of underemployment by making an assessment of the aspirations of respondents. . The desire to be self-employed was rated highly by the respondents. Salaried jobs that guaranteed a degree of stability in terms of earnings were the next choice that the respondents preferred to exercise. It is noteworthy that all across, there was a summary rejection of caste based hereditary occupations. Amongst those indebted, it was observed that minority groups' dependence on government/ cooperative banks (66% together) was much higher compared to that on the commercial banks. The fact that the research team failed to come across a single person from minority areas who had been able to borrow from commercial/private bank speaks volumes about the functioning of such banks.

Education

Our survey discovered that contrary to state's claim of near total enrollment in school, 7.54 % of the children were not on the rolls. Compared to Category I, enrollment was found to be higher among children residing in Category III areas, however, their presence is significantly more in informal schools. Madarsa education does not seem to have found much favour as an alternative by the minority households. Only 5.68% of the Category III population between 5-25 years of age had ever attended or were enrolled in Madarsas. Considering the fact that the government schools are better equipped and less cost-bearing, the inclination towards private schools that the survey detected is difficult to explain. Adequate attention is therefore required towards the availability of government schools in minority concentrated areas. The void created by the absence of government schools is filled in by the private schools that the majority amongst the surveyed Category III population had attended.

Unlike other areas, a significant fraction of the population in minority areas had their schooling in Urdu medium schools. At the primary and upper primary level, very few schools have girl toilets and it is alarming to note that nearly a quarter of the

secondary schools too depend upon common toilets alone. While other infrastructural facilities have improved, yet much needs to be done to upgrade the quality and content of education.

Infrastructure and Amenities

It is notable that nearly one third of the house types in each category were of katcha khaprail variety. Most of the roads were semi pucca and the few pucca roads were badly in need of repair and maintainance. One fifth of the respondents used public tap in the absence of private taps in their homes. The drinking water quality in minority concentrated localities was far worse than in mixed localities. The electrification was not universal in the district as houses of 16.25 % of the total respondents were not electrified. The results of the survey revealed the poor availability of street light, especially in category I localities where 67.6 % of the households denied having light on their streets. A shocking 95% of the respondents in minority concentrated areas did not have toilet in their houses. Sewage lines were either not laid down or were not functioning satisfactorily. The data clearly showed that drainage facility on the street, too, was reportedly missing on the streets of half of the respondents. The overall position of cleanliness according to more than 90 % of the total respondents was unsatisfactory.

The illness profile of the households showed that incidence of vector borne diseases was higher due to poor sanitation of the area. On the whole, pre natal care fared better than post natal. Government hospitals were used more by category one while category III relied more often on Private medical service. Immunization against diseases other than polio needed to be upgraded. There was very little open space and encroachments on public land were quite common. On an average 85.2 % households in the entire sample denied having any access to a public park Sports facilities were similarly lacking. . In a nut shell, the public infrastructure such as the quality of drinking water, the voltage situation, sanitation and cleanliness, access to good health care and open public spaces needs to be improved on all fronts.

Development Schemes

Not all the households which claimed to have BPL status, however, possessed BPL cards. The mismatch between the claims and the actual card holders was highest for category III and least in category I. Nor does the mere possession of card ensured access to ration in the PDS. Amongst the reasons reported for non availability of ration, insufficient quantity and dishonesty in measurement were on the top. Irregularity in supply was also felt by a 13.36 % of the respondents.

There are several development schemes run by the state but benefit is not availed by the needy. For instance ICDS which is a flagship programme of the government could benefit only 36.29 % of the women and children of our sample. An analysis of the table revealed the huge gap that existed between awareness and actual benefit with respect to different development schemes. This applied across schemes and across categories though the level of this gap was variable. It is worth noting that National Social Assistance Programme did not benefit anyone in our sample. The % age of beneficiaries for National Old Age Pension Scheme and Total Sanitation Campaign were also comparatively very low. Government must ensure that awareness campaigns are started in category II and category III localities. It also ought to strengthen the existing awareness campaigns to ensure that maximum number of potential benefit seekers could know about various schemes. With regards to PDS, it

must provide more centers and at closer distances to ensure that benefits could reach the needy.

Migration

In Bhopal, a total of 521 households from both urban and rural areas, were selected to analyze the pattern of migration into the city. Across all categories, 64.30 % of households were natives of Bhopal, while 35.70 % of households had migrated from elsewhere. Over all, 78 % of migrant households identified employment as the single most significant reason for their migration. The second most important reason that forced people to shift to Bhopal was the abysmal lack of amenities in the native area.

Issues of Security and Conflict

The old city is extremely sensitive to violent outbursts of communalism. Large scale communal strife broke out in Bhopal in 1993 following the demolition of the Babri Mosque. It left nearly 140 dead, majority of them being Muslim. The Survey tried to capture and comprehend the fear and insecurity that these communal skirmishes have instilled in the minds of the residents of Bhopal. The proportion of respondents from minority areas whose families had suffered loss of life and property was considerably higher than those in mixed localities or those staying in the predominantly majority inhabited colonies. The number of families that had to bear the loss of immovable property, too, was substantially high among the minorities. This has left a pervasive feeling of insecurity amongst the minorities. This could be one reason for the emergence of segregated localities across urban India. During the course of the survey, an attempt was made to comprehend the perceptions about the police force and its role during the outbreak of violence. This again was put into a comparative framework to understand the differentials across categories. The picture that emerges is a complex one. While the residents of the minority dominated areas largely found the police co-operative, but in its handling of communal violence, they felt that the police and the administration were biased against their community. Not many in the majority dominated areas found the police too cooperative in normal circumstances, yet they felt that it operated with a fair degree of impartiality in responding to inter-community clashes.

In a communally charged city such as Bhopal it is imperative that all developmental schemes, particularly those aimed towards uplifting minority groups, take account of the impending situation so that schemes serve towards mitigating tensions rather than ending up aggravating them. The fact that the minority respondents of Bhopal question the impartiality of the police force and state authorities, especially in situations of inter-community conflicts, makes the task even more challenging.