



Urban Housing Problems: A Micro-Level Study on Residential Houses of Tibetan Community in Srinagar City

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Abstract:

Housing is undoubtedly an essential element of life for most human beings. The modern concept of housing does not limit the idea of housing merely to the provision of shelter. Housing constitutes a physical matrix in which human interaction occurs. The house that people live in, touch upon every facet of their lives and the society as a whole. The Main focus of this study is the Spatiotemporal Analysis of Residential Houses and housing problem of the Tibetan Community in Srinagar City. This analysis can serve as a helpful resource in policy advocacy, with the aim of influencing changes to positively affect the current housing situation in J&K state, in a way which will ultimately lead to a better socio-economic development of society. This endemic problem has been growing persistently with the passage of time and consequently it has become a chronic, complex and a knotty problem. This study is based on both primary as well as secondary data sources and a primary household survey was conducted consisting of all 251 respondent Tibetan households from Hawal and Eidgah localities of Srinagar City. The study concluded that the Tibetan community of Srinagar city faces housing problems and there is need to improve

their housing conditions for a balanced socio-economic development of society.

Key words: Urban Housing, Housing ownership, Housing typology, Housing condition, Tibetan community, Housing problem

Introduction

Housing is one of the primary human needs coupled with need of food and clothing, for human survival. For a citizen, owning a house provides significant security and status in society, since a house endows him with a social identity, thus integrating him with his immediate social milieu. In India, a substantial proportion of the people either do not own houses or have inadequate housing. As the population of the country is increasing rapidly, the number of houseless families is increasing at an alarming rate. The total housing shortage at the end of the tenth plan has officially been assessed as 24.71 million dwelling units for 67.4 million households, where 98% of this shortage was in the Low Income and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS).

The situation even at the end of 11th Plan, despite efforts envisaged to be implemented, is also not projected to improve, but rather this shortage is expected to escalate to 26.53 million houses for 75.01 million households. There has been a very slow pace of housing development in India and to improve the housing conditions of the poor, it is essential to have a realistic approach in view of the scarce resources and that the most effective strategy is to go for self-help to the possible extent, construction of houses in stages and provision of essential services, community facilities, and public utilities (Mathur 1980).

Housing is undoubtedly an essential element of life for most human beings. The modern concept of housing does not limit the idea of housing merely to the provision of shelter. Housing constitutes a physical matrix in which human interaction occurs (Naik 1981), the house that people live in, touch upon every facet of their lives and the society as a whole (Paul, 1983). The importance of housing was universally recognised from the dawn of history. With the advancement of knowledge and civilisation man became particular about sanitation, environment, privacy and location of the house, he became conscious of better facilities which make his life easy and comfortable (Misra, 1996).

Pugh (1990) advocated the possibility of developing accessible, practical and habitable low-income housing based on the implementation of three simple constructs viz. affordability, cost

recovery and replicability. He argued for a shift in emphasis in housing policy from radical redevelopment to a system of feasible upgradation and betterment. Mathema (1999), while evaluating the housing and land markets in Kathmandu, Nepal highlighted the housing scenario in prevalent Kathmandu, debating the positive and negative aspects of these trends, followed by an explanation of the basic microeconomic principles of housing markets. Then he describes a general overview of the importance of informal housing in today's urbanizing third-world cities, based primarily on the views of Rakodi, Turner, Dowall and Peattie. Housing as a problem is not unique to India. There is hardly any country whether developed or under developed in the world today which could justly claim to have solved this problem. The problem of housing in the poor or economically less developed countries particularly those of Asia, Far East and Africa assume a more painful complexion because such countries do not only have serious housing shortages, growing additional housing needs and poor housing stocks, but are woefully deficient in essential services and community facilities also.

Study Area

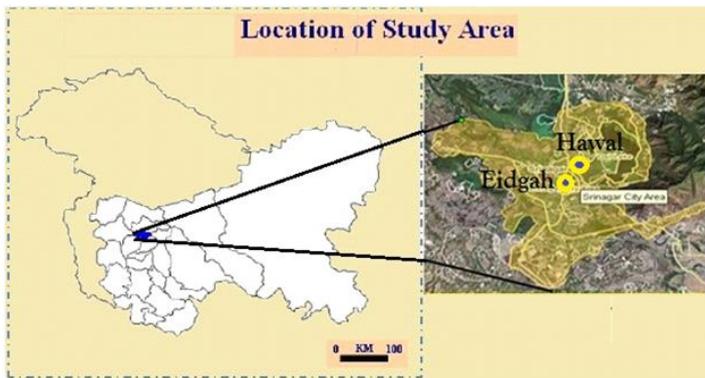


Figure showing Location of Study Area

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is the northern most state of India, located between 32°15' - 37°5' north latitude and 72°35' - 80°20' east longitude. Srinagar city is situated at an average elevation of 1585 meters above mean sea level and it is spread over in the heart of the oval shaped Valley of Kashmir. It is situated between 74°56' - 75°79' East Longitude and 33°18' - 34°45' North Latitude and is spread over an area of about 294 Km². The state of J&K recorded a population of nearly 12.5 Million souls & the Srinagar city of around 1.2 Million souls (Census of India, 2011)

Objective

The prime focus of this study is the Spatiotemporal Analysis of Residential Houses and housing problem of Tibetan Community in Srinagar City.

Database & Methodology

This study is based largely on primary data sources and methods used for data collection mainly included analysis of archival records pertaining to housing of Tibetan community. A primary household survey was conducted studying whole population consisting of all 251 respondent Tibetan households from Hawal and Eidgah localities of Srinagar City, comprising a population of around 2045 souls in year 2011 (TMWA). The collected data has been analysed and represented with aid of statistical, graphical and cartographic techniques.

Highlights of the Study

- ✓ The census houses in state have shown a total decadal growth of nearly 30%, with growth in dilapidated houses by almost 99%, and houses in livable condition have shown negative decadal growth (-4%).
- ✓ Similarly, near about four-fifth (80%) of the houses in J&K state were of pucca category, 12 per cent of them as semi-pucca and the remaining 8 per cent as kutcha houses during the year 2011.
- ✓ Further, the decadal growth rate of Tibetan population (2001-2011) has been 29.6%.
- ✓ Overall merely 8% Tibetan houses were in good condition, three-fourth in livable condition and about one-fifth houses were in dilapidated condition.
- ✓ Overall about four-fifth (82%) Tibetan houses were Pucca, 12% Semi-pucca and about 6% houses were of Kutcha category.
- ✓ Majority of Tibetan households (86%) had more than 5 persons per household and 62% households had more than 7 persons in single household, depicting the congestion and shortage of accommodation.

- ✓ It is evident also, that majority of the Tibetan houses (97%) have been taken on lease from J&K government and only less than 3% are on rent. Furthermore, none of the Tibetan is owner of his/her house in which he/she dwells.
- ✓ Tibetan community of Srinagar city faces housing problem and there is need to improve their housing conditions for balanced socio-economic development of society.

Condition of Census Houses in J&K (2001-2011)

Condition of the Houses					
	YEAR		Variation 2011-2001	%	Variation
	Absolute Figure & %age				
Number of households (Excluding Inst. Households)	2011	2001			
Total	20,15,088	15,51,768	463,320		29.86
Good	10,90,386	6,28,478	461,908	54.1	73.5
Livable	8,46,388	8,83,909	-37,521	42.1	-4.24
Dilapidated	78,314	39,381	38,933	3.8	98.86

Source: Directorate of Census Operation J&K (2011)

It may be observed from above data that census houses in state have shown a total decadal growth of nearly 30%, with growth in dilapidated houses by almost 99%, and houses in livable condition have shown negative decadal growth (-4%). Further, more than half (54 %) of the houses were in good condition, 42 per cent of them in livable condition and the remaining 4 per cent in dilapidated condition during the year 2011.

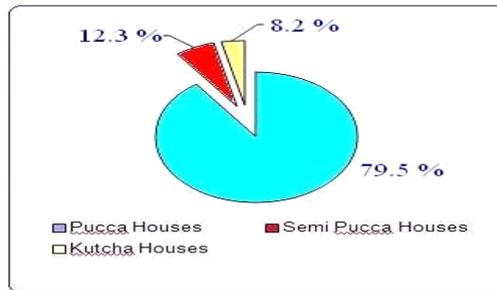
Typology of Census Houses in J&K (2011)

On the basis of materials used in the construction of houses mainly wall and roof, Census of India classified the houses in to three categories viz. pucca, semi-pucca and kutcha. For framing this typology of housing, the norms adopted by the National Building Organization (NBO) have been made use of.

S.No	Materials		Type
	Wall	Roof	
1	Burnt bricks, Glass sheets or other metal sheets, stone, cement concrete	Tiles, slate, shingle, corrugated iron, zinc, or other metal sheets, asbestos, cement sheets, bricks, lime stone and RBC/RCC Concrete	Pucca
2	Grass, leaves, reeds, bamboo, mud, un-burnt bricks, woods, etc.,	Grass, leaves, reeds, bamboo, thatch, mud, un-burnt bricks, woods, etc.,	Kutchra
3	Combination of 1 & 2		Semi-pucca

Source: Census of India 2011

Typology of Houses in J&K



Source: Compiled from the Housing data records of Directorate of Census Operation J&K (2011)

Figure 1: Showing Typology of Census Houses in J&K (2011)

It may be observed from above figure that near about four-fifth (80%) of the houses were of pucca category, 12 per cent of them as semi-pucca and the remaining 8 per cent as kutchra houses during the year 2011.

Spatio-temporal Analysis of Residential Houses of Tibetan Community in Srinagar City

The immigrant Tibetan Muslims to Kashmir, as reported, comprised of 120 families. On their arrival in Kashmir, they were sheltered in Srinagar, at Idd Gah ground. Later, three buildings were constructed for their permanent residence, there. Each building consisted of 40-two room sets, one for each family. Due to the population increase in succeeding years, from 700 persons in 1960's to about 2000 in 2011, the accommodation became insufficient for their needs. With the collective efforts of these people and their organisation, Tibetan Muslims Welfare Association, they were able to

secure land and construct houses. This new settlement is located at Sangeen Darwaza, Hawal Srinagar, just at a distance of one and a half kilometre from the Eidgah settlement. It comprises of 125 sets; each set having been constructed on a plot of land measuring 1300 sq. fts. This land had been allotted to them on lease basis, at an annual rent of Rs. 130 per square foot. The houses have been constructed by loan provided by the state government. Each house consists of 4 rooms with a bathroom.

Table 1: Showing Demographic Profile of Tibetan Community of Srinagar City

Age (in years)	2001		2011	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Below 10	31	28	40	48
11-15	35	31	49	49
16-40	252	266	361	373
40- 60	382	373	437	432
60 above	91	89	119	117
Total	791	787	960	1019
Grand Total	791+787 = 1578		1026+1019 = 2045	
Population Growth Rate (2001-2011)	29.6 %			

Source: Tibetan Muslims Welfare Association (TMWA) 2011

Table 1 pertaining to Demographic Profile of Tibetan Community of Srinagar City, clearly reveals the fact that the decadal growth rate of Tibetan population (2001-2011) has been nearly about 29.6%. The Chi-square value for population distribution is 0.920 (χ^2). Therefore, there is a non-significant difference in growth rate with respect to gender. Table 2 shows the population size of the study, which is 251 households comprising a total population of 2045 souls.

Table 2: Showing Population Size of the study n=251

Sampling site	Total Households	Sample Population
Hawal	125	1018
Eidgah	126	1027
Total	251	2045

Source: Primary Survey, 2012

Table 3: Showing Condition of Tibetan Houses **n=251**

Samples Site	Hawal	%age	Eidgah	%age	Total	%age
Total Households	125	-	126	-	251	-
Good	05	04	15	12	20	08
Livable	100	80	83	66	183	73
Dilapidated	20	16	28	22	48	19

Source: Primary Survey, 2012

Figure 2: A horizontal view of Tibetan Colony

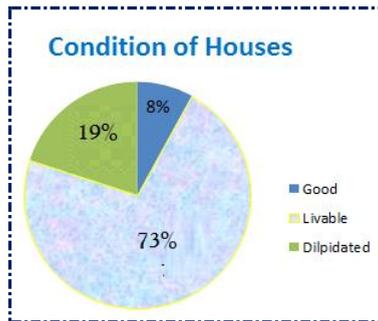
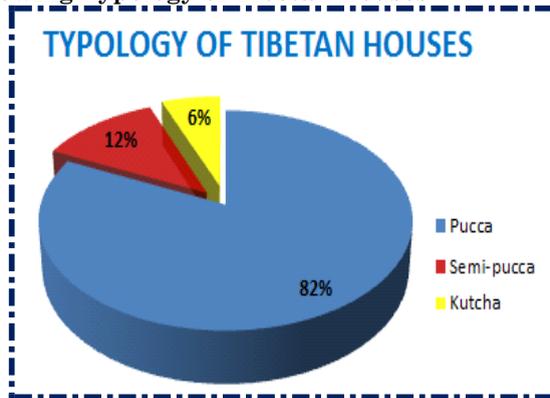


Figure 3: Showing Tibetan Housing Condition

Table 3 and Figure 3 pertain to the Condition of Tibetan Houses and it is evident that overall merely 8% Tibetan houses were in good condition, nearly three-fourth (73 %) in livable condition and about one-fifth (19%) houses were in dilapidated condition. Similarly, overall merely 82% Tibetan houses were Pucca , 12% Semi-pucca and about 6% houses were of Kutcha category (Figure 4). The Chi-square value for condition of houses is nearly 0.64 (χ^2). Therefore, there is a significant variation in housing conditions with respect to location of site.

Figure 4: Showing Typology of Tibetan Houses n=251



Source: Primary Survey, 2012

Figure 5: Showing Household Density n=251

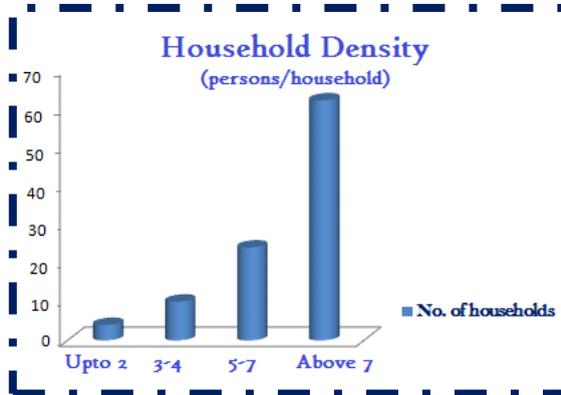


Table 4: Showing Household Density

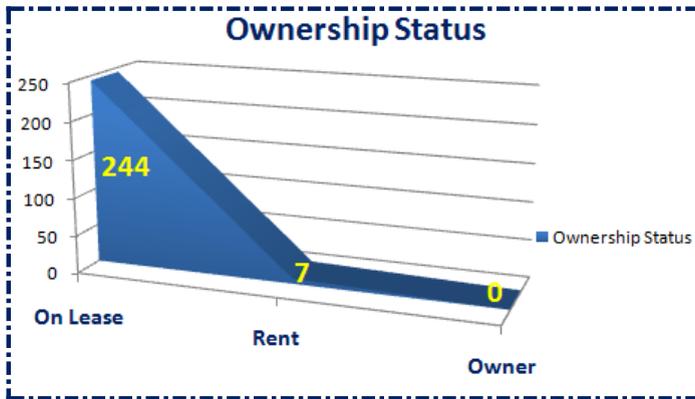
Household Size (persons/household)	%age of households
Up to 2	04
3-4	10
5-7	24
Above 7	62
Total	100

Source: Primary Survey, 2012

Majority of Tibetan households (86%) had more than 5 persons per household and 62% households had more than 7 persons in single household, depicting the congestion and shortage of accommodation as is evident from Table 4 and Figure 5. The Chi-

square value for household size is about 0.420 (x^2). Therefore, there is a significant difference in number of households with respect to household size.

Figure 6: Showing Ownership Status of Tibetan Houses n=251



Source: Primary Survey, 2012

It is evident from the Figure 6 that the majority of the Tibetan houses (97%) have been taken on lease by Tibetan community from J&K government and only less than 3% are on rent. Furthermore, none of the Tibetan is owner of his/her house in which he/she dwells.

Conclusion

It may be observed from the data and figures that census houses in state have shown a total decadal growth of nearly 30%, with growth in dilapidated houses by almost 99%, and houses in livable condition have shown negative decadal growth (-4%). Similarly, near about four-fifth (80%) of the houses in J&K state were of pucca category, 12 per cent of them as semi-pucca and the remaining 8 per cent as kutcha houses during the year 2011. Further, the decadal growth rate of Tibetan population (2001-2011) has been 29.6%. Overall merely 8% Tibetan houses were in good condition, three-fourth in liveable condition and about one-fifth houses were in dilapidated condition. Overall about four-fifth (82%) Tibetan houses were Pucca, 12% Semi-pucca and about 6% houses were of Kutcha category. Majority of Tibetan households (86%) had more than 5 persons per household and 62% households had more than 7 persons in single household, depicting the congestion and shortage of accommodation. It is evident also, that majority of the Tibetan houses (97%) have been taken on lease from J&K government and only less

than 3% are on rent. Furthermore, none of the Tibetan is owner of his/her house in which he/she dwells.

The Chi-square value for population distribution is 0.920 (χ^2). Therefore, there is a non-significant difference in growth rate with respect to gender. Similarly the Chi-square value for condition of houses is nearly 0.64 (χ^2), which means that there is a significant variation in housing conditions with respect to location of site. And the Chi-square value for household size is about 0.420 (χ^2). Therefore, there is a significant difference in number of households with respect to household size. Thus, it may be concluded that the Tibetan community of Srinagar city faces housing problem and there is need to improve their housing conditions for balanced socio-economic development of society.

Suggestions (according to Industrial and Economic Planning Division of TCPO)

Shelter must be treated not as an activity to be carried out in isolation but as an important integral factor for attaining economic growth with stability of the country with special emphasis on the economically weaker sections of the society. For removing the existing bottlenecks in housing sector in J&K and planning for attaining sustained economic growth with stability in housing sector in coming years, the policy makers, researchers, academicians, planners etc. should take into account certain well established norms before making policy decisions like:

1. Careful Cost- Benefit Planning, well planned, sustainable, development oriented, equal development irrespective of all and recognition of the needs for structural change required for attaining the objectives of the better housing.

2. A fully versatile and well defined development programme aiming at promoting self-reliance and participation of private as well as public called joint venture by building up available resources, technical capability and managerial capability.

3. Generally accepted norm of the housing is that of low cost building and long-term durability of houses. This is very important especially for the poorest sections of the society and informal sector. For attaining this improvement in the built environment of the neglected houseless is very essential and it plays as a catalyst of socio economic development.

4. Develop a well-oriented housing activity, as it creates a multiplier effect through widespread social, economic, psychological and other benefits. The role of informal sector especially in urban

sector has a vital importance and perspective role to play, provided that necessary support systems are available to it.

5. The easy way for attaining development in housing sector or to speed up the activity is through the improvement in the informal sector mainly by providing material goods at the lower level, cash aid, technical advice, use of locally available resources, etc.

6. To attain the optimum potential that improved shelter has to offer to the society, the decision must necessarily be self-financing and viable. Moreover before implementing, any scheme regarding housing needs a well-defined study that clearly aims at economic conditions of the concerned people. Only in a professionally sound manner can we attain the level of efficiency of activities required.

7. There has been a considerable population growth in the Tibetan community by now and this has resulted in the shortage of accommodation which is a great concern to be immediately taken care of.

8. These people live in miserable residential apartments, as they have to adjust themselves within the limited rather inadequate housing space, as was leased to them in the early years of their settlements in Srinagar. The state government as such must provide some more land on lease, so that construction of more houses can be taken up and the residential problems faced by the community at present be eased to some extent.

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