

## RESETTELEMENT & REHABILITATION OF DISPLACED WOMEN - A SURVEY OF RECENT LITERATURE IN INDIA

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Received Oct. 03, 2017

Accepted Nov. 12, 2017

### ABSTRACT

*The present paper aims at making a review of the available literature on Displaced Women. The basic purpose hovers around the interest to generate insight into the phenomenon of effective implementation of R&R policy for displaced women and to bring out the correlation between displaced women and social and political harmony, to bring out correction in the implementation of R&R Policy for the displaced women that can ensure social and political harmony.*

**Key Words:** *displaced, hovers, insight, harmony, implementation.*

The literature review of the present study has been carried out on the basis of certain issues relating to displacement. This issue may be related to problem of resettlement, compensation, recovery of economic and social status, women status, employment and income or livelihood health and sanitation, environment, tribal's problem further, it is difficult to have an absolute classification of all such issues due to its interrelationship nature.

There is a plethora of intellectual research books and papers on "Resettlement and rehabilitation policy of displaced women" which attempt to study the problem of displacement and consequent rehabilitation which is basically an economic problem but it cannot be isolated from environmental economics, sociology, politics, social anthropology and ecology. Thus in true sense of the term it calls for an inter-disciplinary study of the issue. Despite negative effect of development the economic study relating to displacement, resettlement and rehabilitation is inadequate due to externalization of social and economic costs of the affected people/area. In the displacement period, mere restoration of foregone economic status of the displaced people should not be the primary concern for economic analysis of displacement and rehabilitation measures. It is therefore, essential on the part of the economists to study the issues of displacement and provide valuable measures to improve the economic status of the affected people instead of leaving the affect people for self adjustment through inadequate compensate finance. Various researchers have revealed a number of lapses in the ongoing resettlement and rehabilitation process, its implementation, and issues relating to economic and social disarticulation of the displaced people. In this context economists have a clear and solid advantage in comparison to other branches of social sciences.

### Review of Literature:

In India economists have devoted much to the study of poverty and its alleviation programme. But the analysis of impoverishment arising out of land acquisition and displacement due to development projects has been missed. "Solid, extensive research by Indian economists on the economics of resettlement is surely missing. It is surprising that for several decades, when economists have undertaken special studies like economic survey of Orissa State **Mishra (1960)** produced reports on the benefits of Hirakud Irrigation (Government of Orissa, 1968) or when the National Council of Applied Economic Research prepared (1977) the perspective plan of Economic Development of Orissa from 1974 to 1984 have shown no intellectual interest in many forms of impoverishment experienced by project affected persons. Nor are current mainstream economists concerned with the economic and financial dimensions of restructuring displaced persons livelihoods. It is, as if, the development projects they studied did not result in the displacement of any people". In the recent years researchers from economics have come forward to tackle the issue of resettlement and rehabilitation from the purview of economics.

On the role of economists in relation to dam building **J.L. Joy (1968)** has pointed out that, "the economist is usually required to place some sort of value upon the proposed investment - a benefit cost ratio or a present net worth estimate. If this value is high enough, it is concluded that the dam should be built. This is a poor way of making decisions when the alternatives are many and complex and it involves a most inefficient even

dangerous use of an economist"<sup>6</sup> Thus, the role of economist is limited. "The economist must clearly operate in the closest cooperation with technologists from many a disciplines and with the sociologists, political scientists and administrators. To be effective in his own work he needs to know a good deal about theirs" .

Although there is a gap between the studies made by Sociologists and Anthropologists on the one hand and Economists on the other, there is ample scope for further studies of the issue. To overcome this problem leading Economists and Sociologists have advocated for finding the gap (**Ruttan. 1998, Bardhan 1989, Lipton 1992**). By putting population displacement as a byproduct of development process the economic study has tried to set a limit or boundary. But this boundary is no longer acceptable because of growing importance of multidisciplinary studies of social sciences.

Regarding resettlement, studies made by **Shaoshan Zhang and M. Woort (1985)** show that in China the resettlement situation is also less satisfactory. But here the level of involuntary resettlement is better than its neighboring countries like India and Thailand. In case of China the displaced people too have little access to jobs through resettlement measures. Further a sort of imbalance occurs in respect of income and jobs in the host localities.

**Eriksen, J.H. (1999)** has studied voluntary and involuntary resettlement programmes in different countries and has found that "voluntary resettlement in agricultural development projects in Brazil, India, Indonesia and Ghana were more successful than involuntary resettlement " Further, he pointed out that the "surveyed documentation provides little evidence that the involuntary resettlement projects in Brazil, India, and Indonesia made significant efforts to engage those scheduled for resettlement in the decision making that shaped their options or modified procedures."

**Singh, S.K. (1990)** on evaluating large dams has covered several aspects of dam projects, such as, benefit cost ratio, environmental issues, life of dam and problem of displacement. On the issue of displacement, he has pointed out that rehabilitation as a programme for the oustees is one of the least satisfactory aspects of reservoir projects. The authority did not bother about development oriented resettlement, he added.

**Mathur, H.M. (1990)** states that among the reasons for unsatisfactory record of most irrigation settlements a major one is the inability of planners to take a holistic view of the development process. Human factors tend to get relegated to the background.

**Xavier, R. & Kaur, S. (1990)** on the issue of displacement and resettlement pointed out that "the economic problems of displaced people are mainly an outcome of the failure of rehabilitation programmes for a decent livelihood. Inadequate and inconsistent economic assistance affects their efforts to adapt to the new situation", Faulty implementation and exploitation by middle-men further leads to the deterioration in the process of resettlement.

**Reddy, I.U.B (1990)** on the study of NALCO finds that the people displaced lack skill. As a result the skilled jobs of the project mostly went to the outsiders. They had to serve only as casual labourers. Thus for them agriculture became a past occupation as they failed to gain equal quantity and value of land due to low amount of compensation and lack of provision of the same value of cultivable agricultural land in the policy.

In the case of the Hirakud multipurpose dam project **Baboo, B. (1991)** points out that none of the resettled colonies got benefit from the canal irrigation. Further the displaced people could not buy the costly land in the future command area with the meager compensation received for their acquired land. They suffered untold hardship in the resettlement colonies, because they were completely uprooted as they are located in remote areas and were provided with some skeletal needs such as shelter and barren land.

The Independent Review Group Study on **Sardar Sarovar Project in India (1992)** presents a dismal working of resettlement and rehabilitation measures. The report has stated that the World Bank and India both have failed to take stock of proper assessment of human aspects of Sardar Sarovar Project. There was an inadequate understanding of the nature and scale of resettlement.

**Vergheese, B.G. (1990 & 1994)** has carried out several outstanding studies relating to a few major dam projects in India like Bhakra, Narmada and Teheri, and evaluated the problems and prospects in relation to ecology and economic gains from such projects. For him, displacement is a tremendous emotional and economic wrench for those who are compelled to move. Thus the treatment of displaced people needs greater care, sympathy and generosity. Further, he pointed out that the word 'rehabilitates' in its pristine sense means to invest with dignity. There has been little rehabilitation in its truest sense.

**Stanley, W. (1996)** has studied displacement problems in relation to Machhakund, Upper Kolab (dams) and National Aluminium Company in Koraput district of Orissa and concluded that traditional method of rehabilitation is insufficient and there is an urgent need to amend the Land Acquisition Act which is not in accordance with the spirit of Indian Constitution.

**Paranjpye, V. (1997)** on the Review of World Bank's Rehabilitation Directives commented that "In India there is not a single project where during the last six years any of the displaced families have in fact been able to share benefits, over and above the compensation worked out according to the market value, not the replacement cost".

**Fernandes, W. and Paranjpye, V. (1997)** have pointed out the apathetic attitude of the government to this man-made displacement over the last fifty years of planning in India. The study exposes the inadequate official information or data on the displaced people and the information gap between the project executor and displaced people. This serious human problem has failed to make aware the urban elite and the middle class who often serve as the pressure group to highlight the issue.

**Ravindran, L. (1998)** has dealt with the land holding position of the displaced people on Upper Indravati Project who have adopted their own resettlement sites. The land provided to the displaced people opting for land for land policy, is of very poor quality, whereas displaced people given the liberty to select and purchase land, would have not bought land that is poor in quality in comparison to what has been acquired for them."

Regarding voluntary resettlement measures, **Garikipati, S. (2002)** has observed that voluntary resettlement measure along with other benefit packages is more suitable than the involuntary resettlement of the displaced people. To improve the conditions of displaced people, resettlement need to be free from its bureaucratic nature and made more people oriented. This will help the resettlers, planners and the executors as well.

**Murickan, J. & et al (2003)** of Indian Social Institute, Bangalore, on their study Development Induced Displacement of Kerala attack the phrase of 'involuntary resettlement' which is nothing but forced eviction. They are critical about the wrong terminology used for the displaced people as beneficiaries of compensation and rehabilitation package. It is nothing but the irony of the development agents to term the sufferers/losers of the project as beneficiaries.

**Dharmadhikary, S. (2005)** on the study of 'Bhakra' dam over the river Sutlej finds that the oustees were deprived of water and electricity the product of the dam. The administration helped the project beneficiaries rather than the project suffers and harassed them in a number of ways. Displacement disrupted the entire economic and social structure of the displaced people. They have struggled long arduous years to get the minimum sustenance. They have not been able to iron out their economic troubles.

**Salpekar, A. and Sharma, K. (2006)** commenting the rehabilitation measures of Sarisailam projects point out that the process of harassment begins from the point of issue of notices for acquisition of land which does not end even after resettlement. The people are hounded out of their villages and remain handicapped for the rest of their lives. The bureaucracy operates in imaginative fashion. Rumour affect the oustees in a number of ways.

**Iyer, R. (2007)** observes on the rehabilitation process of Narmada project (SSP) that rehabilitation lags behind the construction of the project thereby leading to injustice and distress. A great man-made tragedy has been inflicted upon the displaced people of the Narmada project. The civil society tends to show a declining interest over the tragedy and the media moves out of the site as it becomes old news. This is also true in the case of the Tehri project located in the Himalayan ranges of Uttarakhand state in India.

**Desai, K. and et al (2008)** assess on the India Sagar Pariyojaria (ISP) of the large dams of the Narmada project points out that due to poor and lackluster implementation of resettlement and rehabilitation measures the living standard of the displaced people have deteriorated very fast as incomes of most families have fallen by more than half as compared to that of pre-displacement years.

The cases of multiple displacements, at Singur, Rihand, Tehri, Hirakud, the plights of the oustees cross limits. The problem of multiple displacements put a grave question mark on the nature of our planning process, whereby a section of the population bears the brunt of development i.e. displacement, more than

once, even during one generation. **Pandey, B. (2000)** explains the cases of multiple displacements in Orissa. As for example the Hirakud and Upper Kolab dams displaced people in the 1960's. Again, they faced displacement in the 1980's due to the construction of Ib Thermal Power Station (UPS) and Hindustan Aeronautic limited (HAL) respectively.

**Billorey (1987) (World Bank Consultant Team)** has observed that cash compensation has resulted in the deterioration in the standard of living of the relocated people of Sardar Sarovar Project. While reviewing the World Bank financed projects, 1986-1993, the report of the Bank mentions the cost accrued and the problems faced by the displaced people due to incorrect assessment of compensation for the acquired assets. Compensation rates rarely reflect the true replacement value of lost assets, particularly for the oustees who must replace their lost land."

There is a lot of difference between the compensation paid to the oustees of industrial projects and dam projects. **Reddy (1992)** found that average amount of compensation per acre paid to the oustees in case of National Aluminium Company at Darnanjodi was Rs.13,668.00 while it was half (only Rs.7,536.00) in case of Upper Kolab Dam Project, although both the projects were in the same district of Orissa. This is a clear case of discrimination on payment of compensation to the displaced people of various types of development projects.

**Viegas, P. (1992)**, in case of Hirakud Dam has pointed out the inadequate compensation paid to the oustees for their acquired land and assets and the problem women due to unethical and immoral practices adopted by the officials and middlemen. The illiterate oustees spent the compensation in unproductive channels and reduced themselves to a state of near destitution. Cash compensation also created mistrust and division in many families, who were otherwise living peacefully. The more cunning and stronger members of the family fraudulently deprived the innocent and weaker members, like the widows and old women among others, often in connivance with corrupt officials.

**Wet, C. De. (2001)** Points out that once a plan for land acquisition is announced, the government reduces or even stops investment in most of the infrastructure and development programmes of that area. This may be termed as 'Deferred Investment'. As a result the affected people are made impoverished before they move to the new place. Due to delayed payment of compensation and resettlement their conditions go from bad to worse.

**Mathur, H.M. (1990)** has analysed human suffering due to relocation caused by development from an anthropological angle. Scudder (1997) has analysed a number of social impacts consequent upon the construction of large dams. "Health Impact Assessment (HIA) does not form a part of policy for the DP / PAR 'However, the focus on health problem - of both the displaced and those who will continue living in the areas next to the dams seems to be almost diffused in the public debate. Large and small dams not only cause displacement but they also impact the health of the displaced as well as those who live in the vicinity. A good example can be found on Senegal, where the construction of dams and the ensuing transmission through fresh water snails led to a massive outbreak of schistosomiasis. A study (near Bhopal) shows that cases of malaria went up in the vicinity of medium-sized dam after the construction was completed". (Ahuja, A. 2007, p. 3581)

**Desai, K. and et at (2007)** on the study of Indira Sagar Pariyojana report that displaced people suffered from number of health problems due to lack of clean drinking water and health service facilities. Children have dropped out from middle and high school as schools are not located at convenient distance from their resettlement site. Economic hardship has become another compulsion for withdrawing children from school, especially among the landless and small farmer families.

**Mohanti (2000)** in the study of Tribals for Struggle, Survival and Development is of the opinion that land has been acquired by government for industries, dams etc. in return for meagre compensation which the tribals spent in no time. The non-tribals gain in terms of power, irrigation and job opportunity. The withdrawal of the provision of one job to one member of displaced family in Feb. 1986, has hard hit the displaced people. The existing bureaucratic arrangement has favoured the contractors and middlemen .15

**Bhumik, S. (2005)** on the problem of displacement in the north-east states of India is of the opinion that the construction of Gumti hydel (hydro) project is likely to displace 35,000 to 40,000 people. This displacement is going to aggravate the degenerating ethnic relation between Bengali migrants and ethnic tribals. The urban and rural Bengalis are benefited from the project whereas the tribal people lost their land and with it the only source of their livelihood.

**Pai, S. (2007)** in her article 'Janadesh 2007' on the land questions states; the unequal and unjust development model has adversely affected the displaced, landless dalits and tribals. To pressurize the government of India, to form a National Land Commission and formulation of a reformed land policy, over 25,000 tribal, dalits, and activists of over 15 states and 19 countries led by Ekta Parisad an NGO working in Madhya Pradesh, were able to arrange a long march from Gwalior to New Delhi over 400kms for 26 days. It is the culmination of many years struggle, despair and hopes. The loss of land, forest and livelihood can be linked to the emergence of Naxalite (Arm Revolutionary) in India.

**Jha, R. (1999)** suggests that the impact of deforestation due to the creation of large water bodies is adverse in nature upon the village life of the people, especially the people of the forest, whose life is a part of the forest. In addition to these, a number of studies have covered resettlement aspects and the problems in resettlement sites. A strong approach to the recovery aspect of economic studies have been made in China by Shi Xun & Yu (1996) Wu and Shi (1996) and Shi (1996, b). These studies emphasized the restoration or recovery of displaced people to the predisplaced economic status.

**Iyer, R. (2007)** points out that in the 19th century or the early part of 20th century, it is evident that they were essentially engineering undertakings: there were no environmental impact assessments or rehabilitation policies then and the precise environmental, social and human impacts of those projects were undocumented and unknown, though retrospectively some studies have been attempted in some cases. Lip service continued to be paid to environmental and social or human concerns, but with no real conviction. The preoccupation with "development" over-shadowed everything else. The violation of environmental laws, rules and procedures comes from the proponent of such laws and finds serious limitations and inadequacies in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)."

**Cernea, M. (1999)** states that Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) justifies a project economically when the sum of project benefits outweighs the sum of project costs. But CBA overlooks distribution patterns - distribution of both costs and benefits. It does not ask who is paying the costs, who is specifically getting the benefits, or who is losing. It only assesses the "total" effect of the project design to determine how it stacks up relative to other investment alternatives.

**Mohapatra, P. (1998)** a prominent Indian Administrative Service officer of Orissa cadre and Member of Parliament (after retirement) candidly admits, little attention was given to the adverse affects of displaced people over their social, economic and community disruption, although they have sacrificed for the building of the nation. The bureaucracy or the civil servants obstructs in the implementation of any beneficial schemes announced even by the Chief Minister of the state. In the case of Rourkela steel plant land acquisition and allotment of surplus land the displaced suffered because the land has been allotted to outsiders and employees at a price 100-400 times more than what the Government paid as compensation to the displaced people. The displaced people were deprived of land and commercial complexes by the authority.

**Pandey, B. (1998)** has observed out that regarding the policy or legal framework to deal with the problem of displacement it has been pointed out that, no specific policy was ever formulated either by central or the state governments to address the issue of involuntary displacement of the people that could take people, when the Indian state initiated development projects in different parts of the country soon after independence .

**Dhagamwar, V. and et al (2003)** over the study Industrial Development and Displacement, the people of Korba, have made vivid analysis of the project area and for them displacement due to industrial project is also a part of development and in no way it is less important than the displacement caused by dam projects. Further, they have analysed the impact of industrial displacement in the economy, land ownership, social organisation, migrant population, and laws relating to displacement.

**Hussain, M. (2008)** in his study "Interrogating Development" State, Displacement and Popular Resistance in North East India, points out that it is the unique historic move by the state Government of Arunachal Pradesh to oppose projects, although fully financed by the Government of India, and the state Government decided to respect the voice of the people. But subsequently the State changed its stand and supported the central plan to make North East India as the power house of India, through building larger number of dams across all major rivers. In spite of aberrations by the state government the anti dam movement continues.



Resistance at the grass root level against population displacement is gaining momentum in the entire North East region of India.

### FINAL OUTCOMES OF THE REVIEW

Thus the forgoing review of literatures brings the following salient facts to the forefront.

- Many intellectual efforts are geared towards establishing clarity on rehabilitation and resettlement policy for the displaced women of the country. But the existing researches about the context speak about various issues relating to problem of resettlement, compensation, recovery of economic and social status, women status, employment and income, livelihood, health and sanitation, environment and tribal's problems etc.
- The review of literature points out that inadequate, inappropriate and unjust treatment to the displaced people has resulted in man-made economic and social distortions. It also reflects that inadequate resettlement is the result of inappropriate implementation of the policy. Therefore it can be inferred that policy for the displaced people suffers from "lack of human touch" from the implementing agencies.
- It is also found that deterioration of the displaced people's economic and social conditions is mainly due to inadequate compensation and inappropriate rehabilitation measures undertaken by the project authority. The resettlement of oustees as a by-product of development was externalized from the construction of projects. This has negated the very objective of development. It is also seen that displacement due to development is a process which begins with the announcement of the project and Continues even after the completion of the project.
- There is a dearth of literature on the Resettlement and Rehabilitation of displaced women with socio-political harmony. Seldom, this aspect is addressed by the studies.
- Impact of R&R Policy on displaced people's life and society are touched upon by many literature.
- Finally, R&R Policy relating to displaced women in India are very limited. Socio political Harmony of displaced women as a focused area has got very limited intellectual treatment.

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