Abstract of Dissertation

A Framework for Inclusive Urban Growth:
Analysis of Urban Policies in the Domain of Dynamic Urban Governance in India

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An advanced estimation by the United Nation predicts 61% of the world’s population to be in cities and towns by the year 2030. Most of this urban expansion shall take place in the emerging economies of Asia and Africa. India manages to achieve “rapid growth” in the past two decades. But even this enhanced growth for couple of decades has not enabled significant impact to mitigate the plethora of challenges faced by the country. Still, chronic poverty, inequality, housing shortage, inaccessible health facilities, and absence of basic minimal infrastructure are synonymous while perceiving the state of India. The deficiencies are omnipresence throughout the country irrespective of spatial distinction between urban and rural or regional. Earning in terms of Gross National Income per capita in cities is much higher than that of the villages; and incomes in metropolitan cities are much higher than the non-metropolitan cities. But urban centres also have its fare share of problems. Urban India faces the difficulty of poverty, housing shortage – slum breeding, inequality, crumbling physical and social infrastructure, pollution and environmental degradation and so on. So far, many conventional techniques were applied in many ways to decipher the shambles but with very little success in resolving the misery.

India has adopted socialist approach in her process of growth and development. At the time of independence back in 1947, the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) was leading ahead rest of the world as a leader. India readily emulated the socialist principles in a democratic realm. Since then India’s approach to economic development and policy planning is more of pro-poor and extremely pro-poor in nature. India adapted the “Five year plan” principle as the main mechanism of policy planning with Planning Commission at the helm of affairs. Till now eleven Five year plan has been implemented and presently India is going through 12th Five year plan which commenced its term in 2012. Unfortunately, urban policy was never in the foray of principal planning sector rather was seen as an outcome of social and economic activities. The state of urban affairs began to deteriorate immediately after the independence, with rural-urban migration and huge refugee influx after the partition of the country. From then on, the approach to urban planning became “problem oriented planning”, which was circumstantial induction to solve the existing problems like poverty alleviation, housing shortage and slum breeding, institutional set up for development activities, legal framework for supply of land, and income generation activities. In short terms the approach may look eminent but in medium to long term the approach lack visionary aspiration important for development of cities. The beginning of the 1990s, India experienced two major reform in economic
development and urbanization process; Firstly economic liberalization in 1991 and secondly, 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1992 (which decentralise spatial planning power to Urban Local Body). The first major comprehensive policy for the metropolitan area came a decade later in 2005, in the form of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM). By then, India have acknowledged the importance of urban centres in her development and identified cities as the engine of growth. The biggest shift in entire perspective of planning approach came with the 11th five year plan in the year 2007. In a stark difference to the past, India officially adopts Inclusive Growth as the fundamental of its planning approach. Along with all the other ministries, Ministry of Urban Development and Ministry of Housing adopts this policy immediately. The immediate query came to everyone's mind is that, Will Inclusive Growth be able to change India's fortune?

Policies are the single most influencing factor in the analysis of any government actions and urbanization has been one of the most important government actions. Urban policies are the government's response in understanding the urban problems, approach to the remedies, visualise the urban future and development of the society. Therefore, its assessment can reveal many concerns related to this specific field. Accordingly, the journey of my research started with the hunt to unravel the puzzle of Inclusive Growth, its definition and characteristics, its inferences in urban policy, and to establish a logical analysis framework to analyse inclusive Growth. India is the largest democracy and a federation with a parliamentary system. The Government of India is officially known as the union government (or central government). India consists of 28 states and 7 union territories. Union territories are administered directly by the union government. State governments are the governments which are ruling the states (or provinces). Delegation of administrative power is separated between the central government and the state governments. Local government form the third tier of the governance structure which administer spatial planning along with few additional responsibilities.

I visualise my dissertation as an analytical relation between Inclusive Growth as the Research Theme (RT); and urban policy as the Research Context (RC) in the dynamic domain of Indian governance. Additionally, I introduce theoretical support to establish research (and analysis) methodology. I term this theoretical support as Research Analysis Theory (RAT). I articulate these three terminologies (Research Context, Research Theme and Research Analysis Theory) as three traits of my research. So, the research can be described as an outcome of interaction between these three traits. I initiated the study of Inclusive Growth in chronological order starting from the global dimension to its subsequent adaptation in Indian national planning system to its implementation at the state/local region. The study assisted me in identifying the dimensions of Inclusive Growth, as the first major step in identifying the indicators to analyse the urban policy inclusiveness. The five dimensions of Inclusive Growth are; equality of opportunity, participation in growth and decision making, benefit sharing, productive employment, and welfare.

I have tried to come up with an analysis strategy which would gratify the spirit of policy analysis; evaluate the policies with respect to identified Inclusive Growth indicators and help analyst/policy makers to understand the exact shortcomings or benefit of Inclusive Growth policies. I have put
forward an adaptation of Elinor Ostrom's analysis framework of Common Pool Resource (CPR) as the skeleton of analysis. I acknowledged her viewpoint of summery variables and situational variables and distinguish policy summaries as the summery variables and the Indian (dynamic and federal) governance structure as the situational variable. Individual Urban Local Body (ULB) would act as the internal world; and the state government and central government would act as shelter world (as against external world originally introduced by Ostrom). The central government accommodates state, and state government accommodates local government yet all three governments are constitutionally independent. The rules of analysis and levels of analysis have been determined (with modification) following the processes unveiled by Ostrom. Urban policy analysis has been confined at the central government level. State Government's role is visualised more like a facilitator and a mediator between the central and local government. The ULBs have no legislative/ordinance power to implement the programs. Acts related to municipality, urbanization, urban planning and development is administered by the individual state government. In order to evaluate the policy summaries exclusively on its merits; I have introduced Amartya Sen’s System of Utilitarianism as the theoretical analytical tool, which in turn have evolved from the premises of morality and ethics. The reason to adapt this analysis method is the significant moral and ethical connotation represented by the deep rooted values of Inclusive Growth. The starting point of the analysis is the factorization of Sen’s utilitarianism in three components; Consequentialism, Welfarism and Sum ranking. Consequentialism signifies rightness or goodness of actions (or rule or an institution) or the goodness of the consequences that follows from it by the freedoms enjoyed by the people. Sum ranking reflects the appropriate way of combining personal utilities (or combined as in this research) to assess goodness of society/individuals in judging the goodness of a social state. In the present dissertation “combine utility” or “group utility” of people according to their socio-economic position (slum, poor, and non-poor) have been examined as against the individual utility originally suggested in Sen’s method of utilitarianism.

Policy summaries of five major programs operated by the union government have been analysed. The policies are tabulated and categorised into its consequences, which would bring about goodness or welfare to the people. These welfares are summed up following a welfare opportunity function, which depends on three factors; types of welfare available to the population, how the welfare are distributed among the population, and how it complies with the Inclusive Growth indicators and Inclusive Growth dimension. A matrix has been developed to calculate the analysis. The analysis found significant shortcoming in the policy approach when it weighs against the Inclusive Growth dimensions. It can be said that the present policy will not be able to bring about Inclusive urban growth in the metropolitan cities of India. In the follow up to this study, I have further illuminated the likely reasons of non-inclusiveness of these policies. As discussed earlier, I have acknowledged the (dynamic and federal) governance structure and administration as the situational variables in the dissertation. In order to reflect the situational variance, I have identified two metropolitan cities in two different states of India – Chennai Metropolitan Area of the southern state of Tamil Nadu and Kolkata Metropolitan Area of the eastern state of West Bengal. Chennai and Kolkata are among the
four original metropolitan cities in India (Delhi and Mumbai being the other two) which have rich heritage and unique cultural, social and political background. Therefore it would be an interesting study to analyse these varied city governance framework. Going deep into the research I have identified two cities each in these metropolitan region for detailed analysis.

The traditional ways of analysing policy is by underlying its benefit in terms of economic, social or physical outcome. But the superior ethical dimensions of Inclusive Growth theme require much more than this standard mechanism. My interpretation of Inclusive Growth is that it is a combination of both *equity* and *justice* unlike the earlier development approaches (e.g. pro-poor growth, broad based growth). Inclusive Growth is not only about equity. The initial condition of deprived citizens has to be considered. After years of chronic deprivation, it’s unfair (and unethical too) to apply equity knowing that the non-deprived people would still be more benefited irrespective of the intended equity. But the question is how we can analyse the equity and justice? In order to response to this question, I have further introduced *Amartya Sen’s capability approach* as the theoretical analysis tool in the dissertation. I have sustained Sen’s vision of Capability as *substantive freedom* to achieve alternative *functioning combinations*. Concept of functionings reflects the various things a may value doing or being. I extended Sen’s theory from a personal choice to urban policy, to combined choice. In simple terms Capability approach would reveal the capability of people to actually have the ability to be benefited from the policies. My initial hypothesis is that, it always looks good to design policies but people may not able to get the intended benefit because of initial deprivation or absence of some required primary functionings. The analysis recognizes the needs of good data environment which is lacking in India very much. To nullify this deficiency, I have utilised an alternative combination of statistical data, interview and questionnaire survey to analyse this section of the research.

The dissertation is an honest effort to highlight the true essence of Inclusive Growth and its reflection in urban planning. The existing approach is found to be, an updated adaptation of pro-poor growth approach rather than inclusive. It is essential to plan the policies correctly to balance all the dimensions of inclusiveness. Governance plays a crucial role, therefore the power delegation, separation and citizen participation needs to be more simplified. Decentralisation needs to be a gradual process rather than sudden shift. The research has also argued to establish Capability and substantive freedom as the foremost indicator in analysing the policy inclusiveness. In a stark different to the existing research literatures, my research provides reference to the policy makers and fellow researchers about the necessity to enhance Capability of people (or ULB or city) to achieve inclusiveness of urban growth process. Otherwise, conventional method of policy planning would do very little in enhancing wellbeing of the urban India and its residents.