

URBAN AGE MEXICO CITY CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 2006

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Informality: Problem or simply a reality



Linkages between formal and informal processes

Urban Age Mexico City 2006

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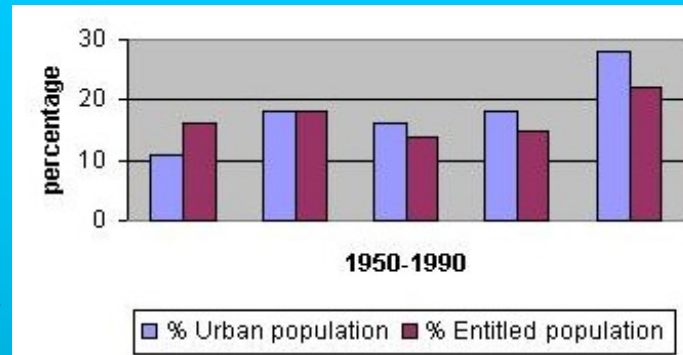
*Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme
Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi*

“Informality” an imposed definition?

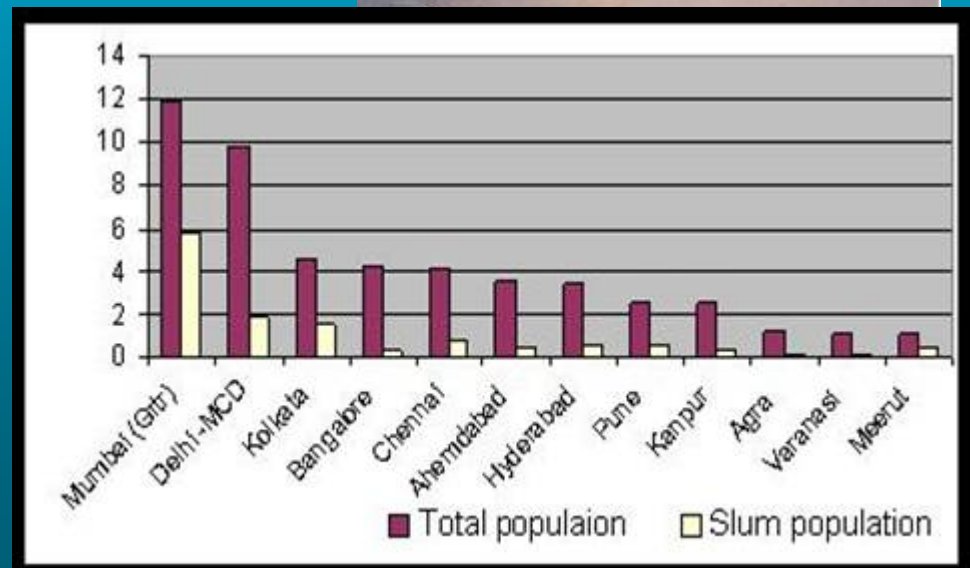
- Performance & growth of city economy depends upon heterogenous employment opportunities and labour market.
Free market demands street hawking outside malls our definition of legality does not permit it therefore no ‘formal solutions’.
- GDP of Mexico city equals Thailand, Mumbai generates 1/6th of India’s GDP, *could this be possible without the contribution of informal sector?*
 - *60% housing*
 - *60% jobs*
 - *25% of taxis*
 - *25,000 street vendors*

Urbanization in Asian countries

- CHINA
- 'Planned urbanization 1950-70
- 'permit holders' vs floating population, informal service sector small
- 1980-90 growth of informal economy, street shops etc.



- INDIA
- 30-50% slum dwellers, 'unauthorized' self constructed dwellings, close to work
- **Growth of informal sector often faster than formal sector**



Social Morphology of City

- Traditionally depended on the division of labour – *heterogeneous labour force*
- Result of treating informal as problematic has resulted in lower social mobility. *Cost of providing high skills are high.*
- Social and physical polarization between rich and poor. *Long commuting distance increasing time and economic poverty*

Urban Streets and captive users

- Understanding of use of streets, or urban plans are limited by the definition of legal.
- Urban streets offer opportunities for range of human activities
- Since many of these activities are necessary for survival, the physical framework influences their incidence only slightly.
- The participants have no choice.
- *Focus on captive users of bicycles(.7% -??)*
- *Pedestrians (PT commuters)*

