

Is Slum Settlement an Evidence of Poverty? The case of Old Fadama, Accra, Ghana

Eunice Yorgri¹, Leng Hong²

¹SDD University of Business and Integrated Development Studies

²Harbin Institute of Technology

Abstract

Slum has become a household name in developing countries. Urban slums constitute one-third of the population in developing countries and the absolute number of slum residents continue to increase. Slum is a complex phenomenon and differs in magnitude and level of deprivation from country to country. Ghana has experienced unprecedented urban growth in recent years hence the emergence of slums in cities. Slums are characterised by poor housing, poor sanitation, and other social amenities or services. Can poor housing, sanitation in slums be associated with poverty? This study tried to answer this question by conducting a survey in Old Fadama, a populous slum area in Accra. In all, fifty questionnaires were administered through purposive sampling and analysed using SPSS. The results show that poverty contributes not much to slum conditions. Considerably, other factors such as failed government policies, change in government, and the prioritization of government agenda, among others also account for the state of slums. Governments seldom pay special attention to slum settlements although they play an enormous role in the economic prosperity of urban areas. We therefore suggest that government's social policies should be geared towards economically empowering slum dwellers so that through individual growth and contributions, slum settlement may also ultimately be upgraded.

Keywords: government policy; migration; slum settlement; slum upgrading; urbanisation