

# A City for Whom? Marginalization and the Production of Space in Contemporary Bangalore, India

# 15

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## 15.1 Introduction

“Mary is an unlucky name.”

Standing outside her makeshift dwelling—a patchwork of tarpaulin and rags jostling for space with a dozen or so others, Mary tells her story over a cup of black coffee, brewed on a small open fire. Five years ago the bulldozers came. Her husband has gone, most of her children have gone, except her daughter who lives in a tent across the road with her infant child. During the eviction she lost most of her possessions and has been living on the pavement ever since. She was promised refuge, but after her life savings were given in the hope of resettlement, the men she gave the money to never returned.

Mary is one of Bangalore’s pavement dwellers—her living situation not uncommon as the pace of urban development in the last several decades in India has created an increasing gap between the rich and poor. As sprawling IT campuses, multi-story shopping malls and luxury residences have dotted the skyline, informal areas such as the slum formerly known as Ejipura where Mary and over 1000 other families used to live, have become increasingly dissonant with the imaginary of the modern Indian city (Fig. 15.1).

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Based on a period of empirical research, this chapter explores the multi-layered and rapidly shifting complexities of city-making and urban regulation in Bangalore through one specific case study: the Ejipura slum eviction. As its key question, this chapter asks what the case of Ejipura can tell us about the way urban development is being carried out in Bangalore; specifically—who are the actors, what are the governance instruments and broader structures, and how are they used by various actors to control, produce, negotiate and contest urban space.

We approach quality of life and sustainability in an urban context, focusing primarily on the socio-political dimension. Various frameworks are offered in the literature for conceptualizing and measuring quality of life in cities. Serag El Din et al. (2013, p. 89) group aspects of urban quality of life into seven main dimensions: (1) environmental, (2) physical, (3) mobility, (4) social, (5) psychological, (6) economic and (7) political. From these, recommendations are provided to improve quality of life for communities, for example “promote social justice and equity by providing equal access to affordable housing, economic activities, services and facilities”. The *World Bank* (2002) takes an urban poverty-based approach, grouping features into four main brackets: (1) income and social poverty which includes lack of access to job markets and lack of access to governance and decision making; (2) environmental poverty which describes risk of disasters and inadequate



**Fig. 15.1** A tent dwelling in the Ejipura eviction site (Source: Author 2017)

housing; (3) education poverty; and (4) health poverty. A livelihood approach can also be taken to understanding urban quality of life in terms of capital—human, social, physical, financial and natural, which includes labour resources, social networks, access to institutions, infrastructure, and natural resources (e.g. Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones 2002). This framework is particularly well suited for a community and household level analysis, for example toward investigating household coping strategies.

Whilst the above conceptualizations can provide practical methods of operationalizing urban quality of life dimensions, this contribution takes a broader approach based principally on Lefebvre’s Rights to the City (RTTC) (1972) and his thinking around the Production of Space (1991). Moving from these foundational theories (described in greater depth in Sect. 15.2.3), a good urban quality of life can be interpreted to rest upon the ability of urban dwellers to control and produce space to fit individual and community needs. This approach is deliberately

non-prescriptive with regard to what features a good urban quality of life might consist of. Rather, it focuses on power relations within urban development and asks whether individuals have capabilities to shape those subjective features of life in the city which may be important to them.

Intimately related, is governance (instruments and structures) which mediate control over space and quality of life features. Instead of understanding governance and participation as one aspect of urban quality of life (as in the urban poverty and livelihoods approach for example), participation is seen as a priori—necessary for empowering individuals to achieve their own conception of a good urban life (Purcell 2002). This does not ignore the negative constraints on individuals, for instance poverty and discrimination, but acknowledges that inclusive governance can be a mechanism for addressing and ameliorating these barriers. Gaventa’s (2006) distinction between “closed”, “invited” and “claimed” spaces in governance processes will help us to

understand political space for participation; in particular, to understand possibilities for engagement with decision making in the Ejipura case.

Following Lefebvre, sustainable urban development within a RTTC conceptualization of urban quality of life therefore entails an inclusive governance which allows various groups to engage in decision making to co-create a city that serves all urban residents. Within this framework, the study provides an exploration of linkages between social, spatial and discursive processes of marginalization, asking who holds the power to shape processes of urbanization, and how. This combination of analytical lenses responds to an exciting but underexplored area of research in urban development; while there is a rich body of academic thinking looking at the intersection between social and spatial dimensions in the city—mainly stemming from Lefebvre, adding a discursive lens permits a deeper analysis of social dynamics and their influence on the production of space.

This chapter first provides thematic context, giving an overview of housing, slum policy and shifting rhetoric towards slum dwellers in India. Next, relevant literature is described to frame the study, centrally around the production of space (Lefebvre 1991, 1972) and scholarly thinking around subaltern urbanism and informality. Presentation of findings is separated into three main sections: (1) background of the case, (2) actor blocs and discursive framings, (3) tactics and governance: instruments and structures. The discussion section focuses on understanding mechanism of marginalization through these interlinked social, spatial and discursive lenses. In the conclusion we take a step back from the case, returning to the main question of the characterization of urban development in Bangalore, before a final reflection on limitations and directions for future research.

## 15.2 Background

### 15.2.1 Housing and the Urban Fabric

As processes of accelerated urbanisation create radical spatial, demographic and social shifts

across the Global South, cities are playing increasingly dominant roles as centres of production, consumption and power. Yet, they are also serving as sites of magnified inequality as development occurs alongside the deprivation and marginalization of certain groups. One of the most important units of urban capital, and an essential component of quality of life, is decent housing and access to basic services. In its most foundational sense, this means a secure structure sheltered from weather, affording a sense of personal security and privacy (Streimikiene 2015). Yet as a dimension of urban quality of life, housing is much more than this. It is also a node in the complex urban fabric which facilitates mobility, livelihoods, identity and sense of place, neighborhoods and social connections (Serag El Din et al. 2013).

Housing determines the mutual relationship between every human being and surrounding physical and social space. This involves degrees of exclusion or inclusion in terms of collective and civic life, which together with socioeconomic conditions, are the essence of urban dynamics. This is why the fate of housing will largely determine the fate of our cities (UN Habitat 2016, p. 49).

In developing country contexts, the urban poor often rely on informal strategies to gain access to housing or land on which to construct dwellings, or reside in low-income state sponsored housing. These housing areas can be integrated to varying degrees, but often emerge as “ghettoized” low-income or slum areas, as shanty-towns in city outskirts, or in the case of Ejipura, as pavement dwellings, erected in the wake of an eviction.

India contains a large population of slum<sup>1</sup> dwellers—approximately 17% of urban

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note the sensitivities associated with the nomenclature around such settlement areas. Gilbert (2007) has problematised usage of the word “slum” due to its negative connotations, which can in turn legitimise the demolition of slums in order to “help” inhabitants. However, following Kuffer et al. (2016), we utilise the word as the term slum explicitly expresses physical characteristics such as high density and/or irregularity, as opposed to other popular terminology such as ‘informal settlement’ which also implies the legal tenure status of an area. Said physical characteristics follow the UN Habitat definition of slum, which includes inadequate access to safe water, sanitation and other infrastructure, poor structural quality

households in 2016 (MHUPA 2016). While the Indian state previously played an active role in generating housing for low and middle income households, since the mid-1990s, housing for the poor has been de-prioritized and the private sector has tended to target the more lucrative middle and upper classes (UN Habitat 2016; Kundu 2011). Along with this decline in state patrimony, larger roles have been carved out by market forces, including the advent of public-private-partnerships (PPPs) as an urban development prerogative (Batra 2009; Burra 2005). These economic shifts have coincided with social shifts: an emergent middle class and a new mentality—as Ong (2006, p. 6) describes, an “infiltration of market logic into politics.” With this, economic productivity comes centre stage as a new political culture is cemented based on middle class consumption (Fernandes 2004).

Accordingly, rhetoric and popular sentiment towards slum dwellers has shifted. A landmark court case in Bombay 1985 ruled that “[...] the right to livelihood is an important facet of the right to life...” and “the eviction of the [slum dwellers] will lead to deprivation of their livelihood and consequently to deprivation of life”. Since then, a new lexicon has emerged. Bhan (2009, p. 135) charts this change, noting that by 2000, in the case of *Almitra Patel vs. the Union of India* in 2000, it was ruled that Delhi should be the “showpiece of the country,” yet “no effective initiative... has been taken for cleaning up the city.” Slums, in this case, were described as “large areas of public land, usurped for private use, free of cost”, and slum dwellers framed as “encroachers” (“rewarding an encroacher on public land with an alternative free site is like giving a reward to a pickpocket for stealing”). According to Bhan (*ibid.*), from this point on, the courts

continued to refuse to hold the government accountable for its failure to provide low income housing and to erode the right to resettlement.

Several national drives have attempted to tackle the “problem” of slums, beginning with the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM) which was launched in 2005, the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) in 2010, and most recently the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) which replaced RAY under the government of Narendra Modi. In 2010, the mantra of RAY was boldly pronounced—to achieve a “slum free India.” Yet, although the state line was “inclusive and equitable cities in which every citizen has access to basic infrastructure, social amenities and decent shelter” (MHUPA, p. X), the reality entailed widespread evictions, demolitions and the creation of resettlement sites often located on the outskirts of cities, far away from the livelihood networks slum dwellers depend upon (Arabindoo 2011; Sheth 2013; Chaturvedi 2013; Dupont 2011; Alberts et al. 2016).

### 15.2.2 Bangalore: India’s New Silicon Valley?

The city of Bangalore in many ways epitomizes such phenomena. Aided by India’s IT revolution, Bangalore is now nicknamed India’s “Silicon Valley”—a city at the forefront of the India’s “World City” visions (Nair 2005; Benjamin 2008). Between 1992 and 2017, Bangalore’s population doubled from four million to over eight million, and between 2001 and 2011 it was the fastest growing city in India (Bangalore Development Authority 2017). This rapid growth has placed massive stress on infrastructure. Water scarcity, congestion and pollution are among the challenges currently facing Bangalore’s policymakers and urban planners.

One of the most pronounced problems Bangalore is facing is a shortage of housing for low income groups. Estimates of the number of people currently living in slums vary from 10 to 26% of the total population (HLRN 2017, p. vii). Despite this, unbridled commercial development

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of housing and overcrowding (UN Habitat 2003). “Slum” can also be an empowering term, in a similar sense to how the word “Dalit” has been reclaimed. As Rao (2009, p. 1) explains, “to call oneself a Dalit, meaning ‘ground down,’ ‘broken to pieces,’ ‘crushed,’ is to convert a negative description into a confrontational identity and to become a particular sort of political subject for whom the terms of exclusion on which discrimination is premised are at once refused and reproduced in the demands for inclusion.”

has produced an excess of high-end housing, exacerbating the gap between supply and demand as many luxury properties lie vacant. With the expansion of the IT industry, specially designed enclaves have been formed such as Electronic City—a vast, self-contained industrial park for residents to live and work, based on the original Silicon Valley model (Dehejia 2011). Enclaves such as these emerged mostly in the city's peripheries, but gradually as the city grew, became part of its sprawl (Sudhira et al. 2007).

Meanwhile, governance strategies have entailed an increasing popularity of PPPs as a method to expedite developments. A draft housing policy from Karnataka in 2010 stated that there is a need for the government to act as “facilitator” instead of “builder and provider” to achieve the goal of housing for all in the state (HLRN 2017, p. 8). These trends have led critics to claim that the paradigm of development visible in Bangalore is one of “exclusion and profiteering with the state relegating its welfare function to private actors,” whilst forced evictions are carried out under the guise of beautification, urban renewal and slum free cities (HLRN 2013, p. vi).

Institutionally, there are deep inefficiencies in city administration and in-fighting between departments. Roy notes that, “most road and rail links that the government had promised to build to the airport have been delayed or scrapped, in part because lawsuits over acquiring the land and in part because they involve 32 government agencies” (Roy 2011, p. 78). In a master plan for 2031 produced by the Bangalore Development Authority (2017), despite a strong focus on transport, water, solid waste management and electricity, in the 30 page document, housing is mentioned just once.

### 15.2.3 Theoretical Grounding

The groundwork for this study rests upon the thinking of Marxist scholar Lefebvre. His hugely influencing writing on the Production of Space (1991) conceptualised space not just by its materiality and physicality, but on its inherently social nature, making a distinction between “perceived

space”—the intuitive, concrete space that people encounter, “conceived space” referring to the subjective representations of space, and “lived space”—a person’s actual experience of space in everyday life (Purcell 2002, p. 102). According to this definition, Purcell (ibid.) argues that the production of space necessarily involves “reproducing the social relations that are bound up in it.”

Lefebvre’s earlier 1972 work on the Right to the City (RTTC) argued that “urban citizenship” is formed by two basic principles: the right to participation and the right to appropriation. The right to participation holds that citizens should play a central role in any decision that contributes to the production of urban space. The right to appropriation entails the rights of citizens to physically access, occupy and use urban space according to individual and community needs (Purcell 2002, pp. 101–102). Lefebvre insists that inhabitation in a city alone ought to be a basis for these rights rather than any formal status. Utilising a rights-based approach to urban development can provide a strong moral and institutional imperative for equitable growth with a focus on the most marginalised in the city (Parnell and Pieterse 2010).

From this foundational thinking, other scholars have examined space as it relates to politics and power. From the perspective of governance, Gaventa’s (2006) framework, defines “closed” spaces as those in which decisions are made by a set of actors such as the state or private sector groups behind closed doors. “Invited” spaces refer to those into which citizens, beneficiaries or stakeholders are invited by power holders (e.g. government agencies, international organizations) for consultation or into systems of participatory governance. The final category of “claimed” space refers to less powerful actors creating space for participation from outside of formal structures through mobilization or confrontational means such as protest.

In the Indian context, and incorporating a discursive lens, Fernandes (2004) examines discursive-spatial strategies which serve to render invisible marginalised groups from the dominant national political culture in what she terms a

“politics of forgetting.” This process entails a purification of space centring around middle class and aesthetic claims to space, which creates an “exclusionary form of cultural citizenship” (ibid., pp. 2416–2417).

A further realm of academic thought which delves into the power relations behind city-making has been termed “subaltern urbanism,” referring to tactics of the disenfranchised to claim and produce space. This can range from the “everyday appropriation of space” whereby land is incrementally adapted to fit uses (e.g. Lombard 2015; Benjamin 2008) to more active forms of spatial appropriation and/or contestation. Bayat (2000, p. 547) speaks of the urban poor in Cairo creating spontaneous communities housing over five million people, against formal laws adding rooms onto dwellings and forcing authorities to provide urban services by otherwise tapping them illegally. Benjamin (2008, p. 719) discusses systems of “vote-bank” politics which exist in India, when poor groups form blocs to lobby municipal agents for some specific demands, such as protection from eviction in return for their loyalty.

What these tactics largely have in common, is that they are informal. Space has not been given to the urban marginalised, rather they negotiate and maneuver for it. Some contend that such tactics show the capacity of the urban marginalised to incite change, constituting a subaltern form of participation, “deep democracy” or “democracy from below” (Benjamin 2008; Baviskar 2003; Lombard 2015; Bayat 2000). Yet, the embedding and normalisation of informal systems can also serve to weaken the position of the urban subaltern. Vote-bank politics has been described by others as “patron-clientelism” in which skewed power dynamic leads to so called “appeasement” politics (e.g. Singh 2012). Van Dijk (2011) highlights the insecurity of poor groups within this structure, arguing that they are more likely to rely on “clientship than citizenship.” Informality is also far from the sole realm of the poor. In India, in trying to push through urban developments, the state has in some cases created Special Economic Zones to overrule its own environmental protection and zoning

legislation (Roy 2011; Follmann 2015). The implications of such systems of informality as they emerge from the case of Ejipura impacting the quality of life of different social groups and the sustainability of urban development will be analysed and discussed in the course of this chapter.

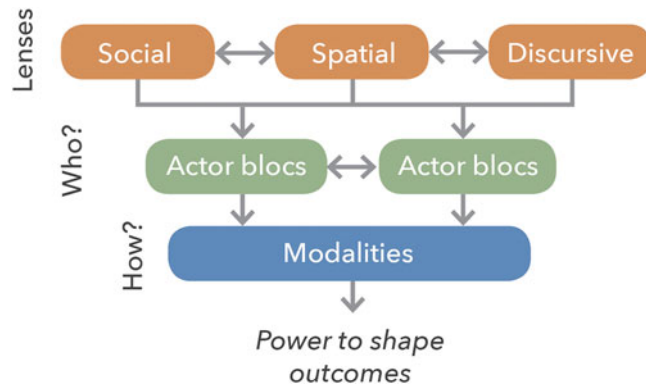
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### 15.3 Methodology: Researching Marginalization

From this theoretical exegesis and as a lens through which to view the events of Ejipura, three processes of marginalisation are researched—social, spatial and discursive—using different methods in the case study: qualitative data collection, spatial mapping and discourse analysis. We focused on social—due to deep-rooted class (and caste) discrimination; spatial, as the physical parameter, embedded in other forms of socio-economic power dynamics; and discursive—as language relates to power, and serves to legitimize actions from certain actor blocs via particular framings. The operationalization of these broad concepts is informed by Peyroux et al. (2014), who in their study of participatory governance in cities of the Global South, investigate spatial knowledge management, defining it as an “ensemble” of (1) discourses and framings; (2) actor coalitions and/or networks and their power relations in managing spatial knowledge; (3) main processes of knowledge generation; and (4) spatial knowledge platforms and products. Similar questions have guided this research process, with this study asking who controls space and how—what are their discursive tactics and framings, and what are the instruments and processes by which power is exerted. Figure 15.2 describes this process and the ways that the three analytical lenses (social, spatial and discursive) were used to examine the actor blocs and modalities which influenced outcomes in this case.

Data for this study was collected during a period of 10 weeks of fieldwork in Bangalore, India. The main method for data collection was semi-structured qualitative interviewing of a

**Fig. 15.2** Methodology process (Source: Author 2019)



range of relevant identified stakeholders, from evictees, the private entity of the partnership behind the development in the former slum site, government officials and NGO staff from organisations which were heavily involved in supporting evictees. In total, over 30 interviews were collected, including evicted residents (dwelling on the pavement or in the neighboring low income housing area), NGOs, representatives from the state (the Karnataka Slum Development Board, Bangalore Municipal Corporation- BBMP) and officials from the slum relocation site), and the private developer in the case. Participants were selected on the basis of being broadly representative of the identified key stakeholder groups. A snowball sampling technique was utilised, which involved identifying respondents who were then used to refer us to other respondents. This technique is well suited to accessing hard to reach populations such as in this case, vulnerable slum dwellers and evictees, as many people would not consent to an interview without having been referred previously by a trusted person.

The interviews were then transcribed and analysed via an inductive coding process to draw out and triangulate key themes and discourse. Material was first scanned for repeated themes and phrases, then findings analysed against literature and other relevant documents such as the HLRN reports (2017)—investigative reports on the events of the Ejipura eviction and impact on slum dwellers. In addition, we collected spatial data through field observations and Google Earth.

## 15.4 Findings

### 15.4.1 From Swamp to Shopping Mall: The Story of Ejipura

Prior to the 1980s, Ejipura, the site of the eviction, was a former water tank bed, at that time situated outside of official city boundaries. Gradually, the site was occupied and developed by low income residents, many of whom were migrant labourers from neighboring state Tamil Nadu (HLRN 2013, p. 10). By the early 1980s, the BBMP took control of the site to build low income housing. However, the apartments which were constructed were found to be seriously sub-standard. When allottees found the flats without water, electricity or sanitation, many instead sub-let the flats, or sold them via power of attorney deeds. A survey conducted in 2003 found that there were only 248 original allottees remaining in the flats. The majority of remaining sub-tenants were Dalits and other marginalised minorities (HLRN 2013, p. 11).

Between 2003 and 2007, three of the blocks had collapsed, prompting the BBMP to move residents to tin sheds on the land, under the promise that the land be maintained for low income (or “Economically Weaker Sections”—EWS) housing as they are commonly referred to). However, in 2004, the BBMP also decided, “unilaterally and without consultation with present residents” (respondent interviews) to enter into a PPP arrangement, awarding the contract to a

Bangalore based company already implicated in controversy over construction violations. Under the terms of the deal, 50% of the land should be used to construct flats for EWS, and the other 50% free for commercial development, upon which the private developer proposed to build a shopping mall.

In 2011, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was brought to the Karnataka High Court on behalf of the evictees. An interim order was passed, holding that the BBMP should not be allowed to enter into any third party contract for reconstruction of flats as the land had previously been earmarked as “public purpose.” However, just 15 days later, another judgement came, reversing the earlier decision and stating that the current residents were “encroachers, non-original allottees” and the site ought to be cleared.

Between the 18th and 21st of January 2013, the slum was forcefully evicted and 1512 homes bulldozed. Of the approximately 1200 families evicted, 900 of these were promised alternative housing at a site near Sarjapur, around 18 km from Ejipura. However, this resettlement site was not to be completed for several years, only nearing completion by late 2017. The in-situ housing to be built would only be for original allottees. In the absence of alternative housing or provision or relief to the evictees, some found shelter elsewhere, many moved to other slum sites in the city, and others remained—setting up shelters in drain pipes and along pavements, a number of whom remain to the present day.<sup>2</sup>

From an analysis of aerial photographs from Google Earth (Fig. 15.3), we can see a stark difference between the affluent area of Koramangala adjacent to the site, the National Games Village (NGV)—a gated housing area constructed in 2003 (shown in green) and the eviction site (in red) and surrounding EWS area (in orange). In Koramangala and the NGV, houses are larger and formally laid out with trees and green areas. In the EWS area, houses are dense and clustered tightly together with few green spaces. The sharpness of this contrast is striking, with the road serving as a physical

barrier between deprivation and affluence. Although this area was formerly on the outskirts of the city, as Bangalore expands, the site has become increasingly central causing land value to rise rapidly.

## 15.4.2 Actor Blocs and Their Discursive Framings

In this section, the main actor blocs as emerged from this case are described and their discursive framings analysed. Actors fell into two broad camps: (1) Evictees and the NGOs that supported them, and (2) private and state actors—namely the private developer, the BBMP and the Legislative Assembly.

### 15.4.2.1 Evictees and NGOS

The majority of the evictees were from minority groups: around 75% Dalits, Other Backwards Caste (OBC), or religious minority—mainly Christians and Muslims. Many came to the city as migrants, often due to agrarian crises in neighboring states. Settlers of the site at Ejipura had a varying relationship with the site depending on the length of time they had lived there; those who had lived there the longest were far more likely to take part in protests, while those who had recently moved were more willing to move to the proposed relocation site. In general terms, the dominant concern of the evictees in relation to the space, was in terms of its economic potential—with for example many women working as housemaids in the wealthy houses in Koramangala nearby. Most evictees were concerned about finding jobs and the costs of bus travel to and from the relocation site.

Critical in supporting the evictees were several local NGOs, specifically Action Aid, the Alternative Law Forum and the People’s Union for Civil Liberties. Notably absent in this case were Dalit political groups such as the Samta Sainik Dal (SSD) which historically have played a strong role in supporting slum dwellers. For example, Vanka (2014) describes how SSD supported the weaver community who typically traded on the sidewalk from eviction from local authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Correct at time of research (June–August 2017).





**Fig. 15.3** Aerial view of eviction site and surrounding area. Images (top left to bottom right): JnNURM blocks beside private houses, BBMP fence, NGV gate (Source: Google Earth 2017, fieldwork data)

Respondents from the NGO bloc speculated that in this case these groups were bribed to stay away. Their absence was most likely a factor in the failure of mobilization.

In terms of discourse, there was no distinct strategy from the evictees themselves, other than speaking of the injustice of the eviction. However, from the testimonies gathered from evictees in the HLRN report (2013), insights can be discerned:

This place was like a jungle. We made this place better; we made this place our home. If we go elsewhere, what will we do? [...] a whole village is wiped from the face of the earth, our community has also been erased from existence (2013, p. 60).

What is important to note here is the meaning of place and the way in which powerful actors can

reframe, and redefine place. The slum community created Ejipura as it was formerly known, transforming the meaning from “jungle”, i.e. uninhabitable, to “home”. Under the opposing conception of the space as “illegal” by the power holders, the place meaning was subsumed and a different conception cemented—a recreational site for middle and elite classes. Under Lefebvre’s contention (ibid.) that the production of space reproduces social relations, we see here the social parallel with spatial change as the slum dwellers themselves are castigated as illegal and occupying space that local authorities and the private developer had envisaged as a lucrative site for gentrification.

Respondents from the NGO bloc frequently employed a lexicon of theft, using words and

phrases like “land grab”, and “looting”. The title of the initial influential investigatory HLRN report (2013) is “Governance by denial: forced eviction and demolition of homes.” A petition which was started at the time of the eviction ([change.org](http://change.org)) was entitled “Garuda Mall: Don’t steal the homes of the poor in Ejipura!” One respondent stated “today the corporate houses grab the public commons”. The idea of theft emphasizes the legitimate ownership of the land by the original inhabitants, and the vulnerability of the poor in the face of large corporations. It is a powerful message, which was used by the NGO bloc to garner public support, and rally various other groups to protest the eviction in the months preceding it, including students and other low-income urban residents like street hawkers.

#### 15.4.2.2 Private and State Actors

The second bloc was constituted by private and state actors, the interests of whom were mostly intertwined—raising serious concerns around corruption and proper democratic process. The private developer involved was a Bangalore based company fronted by a CEO who was also an active member of one of India’s ruling political parties, and ran as a candidate of the legislative assembly in a constituency in Bangalore. His father formerly served as a Police Inspectorate General, an influential position in India. At the time of the concession agreement for the mall development being signed, the company was already embroiled in an inquiry regarding the construction of another mall, specifically relating to the construction of seven extra floors (having only been granted permission to build a parking area on the land).

While the position of the private developer was at the outset pragmatic—focused on the lucrative nature of the site—in later interviews, a senior member of the company stated that the eviction was necessary for the “betterment” of the people due to their “squalid” living conditions. The deal was framed as a “win-win”, benefitting both the company and the BBMP, as under the terms of the deal, the private developer would provide relocation housing to the evictees on behalf of the BBMP.

The state actors primarily consisted of the BBMP—the city’s administrative body, the Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) at the time and members of the judiciary. The notion of “win-win” was echoed by a respondent from the BBMP who spoke of the need to provide adequate housing without significant financial input. Here it is important to note that the BBMP functions under severe constraints: one single corporation administrates a city of nearly ten million, and the state respondent emphasized insufficient funding coming from central government. This means that methods such as PPPs for the provision of infrastructure at little upfront cost are an attractive solution. However, before the 32 year concession period is completed, apart from a small quarterly management payment, the state will not receive any revenue from the site. A respondent from BBMP cited the main motivation for the PPP as social benefit: “the profit is that we’re doing good for the people.” Yet, considering the eviction of over 1000 families, the failure to provide adequate transit accommodation and the relocation site only due for completion late 2017, some 5 years after the eviction itself, the legitimacy of this sentiment can be called into question.

The role of the MLA in this case was highly significant. The former MLA had promised all residents of the site housing in-situ, regardless of whether they were original allottees or informal subtenants. The MLA at the time of the eviction promised residents the same thing, yet later reneged on the promise. One respondent from the NGO bloc stated:

Here nobody cares. He came and stood there and made sure the slum was cleared completely. . . the same people who voted for him, with what trust?

The judiciary were uncooperative in participating in this research, hence data is limited to secondary sources. Allegations were made against them suggesting a degree of questionable practice: the judge who delivered the verdict in the PIL had been promoted by the time the case was appealed, so the case was again rejected. When the case was appealed to the Supreme Court, after being heard for several hours, it was

decided they did not want to take it further. No reason was given for the rejection.

Despite the assertion of concern for wellbeing of the slum dwellers, the dominant usage of language within the state and private actor coalition concerned the framing of the people of the Ejipura slum as “cheating the system”. They were described repeatedly as “encroachers,” on “public” land, and the disparity between them, and those who could lawfully pay for their houses emphasized. One state actor denied that people were poor, stating that they were living on the pavements and “faking it” to get attention and subsidies from the state. Another described resettled slum dwellers as “pampered”. In a letter written in response to the HLRN report, the CEO of the private developer stated:

As for the allegations that the encroachers have been injured in the eviction, they are fake. They are all acting, they are very good artists. . . . They are all staying in dwellings of their own in nearby localities.

A respondent from the private firm criticized the word “eviction” itself, stating that it was for the purpose of misleading the public as the land never rightfully belonged to the slum dwellers in the first place.

#### 15.4.2.3 Public Interest and the Role of Citizenship and Identity

To surmise, both of these discursive framings (from the NGO-evictee bloc and the private-state bloc) draw on the same theme—that of stealing and cheating from the public, but with each case resting upon a different understanding of who the public really refers to. From the state and private sector bloc, the “public” is predominantly framed as the middle and elite class—those with the ability to rightfully own property. On the other hand, “public” within the NGO framing refers to the lower socio-economic strata of society who need to be protected by those who would exploit them.

Within these framings there is an important underlying resource to citizenship and identity, with in each definition the individuals who are outside of the public framing cast as “other”. This can also be understood as a challenge to their

urban citizenship, as contrary to Lefebvre’s contention that inhabitation in a city alone should be basis for citizenship, the outsider group is villainized, and particularly in the case of the slum dwellers, pushed not only outside of the former slum site, but outside the city boundaries (the relocation site 20 km from the city).

The discourse which prevailed (or was “institutionalized” following Hajer 1993), was that of the slum dweller as encroacher, particularly as it was decreed in the court judgment and further exemplified by the way slum dwellers were talked about by middle class residents.<sup>3</sup> This discursive framing was a vital tool in legitimizing the eviction, and influencing the physical division of legitimate vs. illegitimate urban citizen, this tying into broader national rhetoric as described by Bhan (2009).

The bloc with the greatest ability to manipulate outcomes was the private developer, enmeshed in a web of powerful connections with state actors. The intertwining of private/elite interests with actions of the state—crucially, involving the judicial system—has been called “elite capture governance” by respondents from NGOs, referring to the extent to which elite and private sector bodies can influence governance decisions. These connections within the judiciary were a vital tool in pushing through the ruling of the slum dweller as encroacher. This judgement, and the corruption

<sup>3</sup> Represented by residents of the NGV opposite the site, the middle class occupied a distinct positionality, separate from elite and private sector interests on one hand, and the EWS on the other. Respondents were mistrustful of the state, private parties and the slum people. Their concern lay mainly with themselves, stating “we need to fight for the right people,” the right people being the “common man—the common citizen,” i.e. them, the middle class. They were against the construction of the mall, primarily as they anticipated extra people trying to park in their streets. Whilst displaying some sympathy with the eviction, they were also indignant, asking “why should people [the evictees] get compensation? The government cannot provide houses for everyone,” and “[. . .] even I need a property.” Following the idea of the slum dwellers as cheating, a common opinion was that slum people were receiving subsidies from both, their own states and from Bangalore. Regarding the state, they astutely noted that “the politicians are not bothered because of vote-bank (“they give the slum dwellers false promises”).

which has been implicated in the case, has severe implications for the integrity of rule of law in Bangalore. One respondent from the Alternative Law Forum predicted that:

Ejipura can expect a mall and high-end residential complex. The promised houses for the original allottees are not going to be seen through. Just like the mall case where parking was never delivered. . . the original allottees will be forced to move out of the houses. . . they will create hassles such as water or electricity issues. The profit will go back to the builders and houses will be given for rent or re-sold to richer people.

### 15.4.3 Tactics and Governance: Instruments and Structures

In this section, the tactics, governance instruments and broader structures through which the actor blocs sought to achieve their goals are examined, and analysis provided as to what this can tell us about the current characterisation of Bangalore's urban development and its impact on marginalized groups.

#### 15.4.3.1 Tactics

##### 15.4.3.1.1 Tactics from Below

Initial tactics taken by the slum dwellers centred on legal judicial action in court. When their claim was quashed, they resorted to more confrontational methods of protest. One respondent tells of how together with other slum dwellers, she burned her biometric ID (*aadhar*) card in protest at the court premises in order to draw attention to the issue (the cards being the manner through which resettlement houses are allocated). A petition was also circulated by NGO staff calling on Bangalore's residents to boycott the other mall owned by the private developer.

There were also tactics of desperation: one respondent talked of a woman pouring kerosene over herself to try and self-immolate, having nowhere else to go with her children. Reportedly, it was due to this woman's actions that the remaining community members were allowed to stay camped around the periphery of the fence.

This indicates that forcing the issue into the public sphere in such a prominent way was an effective method of invoking response, yet a strong sign of the dysfunctionality of the political system and lack of safeguards that vulnerable urban dwellers feel forced to this extreme.

##### 15.4.3.1.2 Tactics from Above

During the eviction and in the days and months preceding it, strategies used by state and private actors included brutality, intimidation, and crucially—keeping slum dwellers un-, or misinformed about eviction proceedings. Slum dwellers were repeatedly told by officials including BBMP commissioners some days before that they would not be evicted, or at least not until the end of the school year, a promise which was not kept. Another respondent describes a public meeting held between the evictees and the MLA in the days prior to the eviction in which residents were asked if they had objections. This respondent said that the MLA—their elected representative—said:

Your answers should be you shake your head like this. . . if anyone dares to nod your head, just take it from me, your head will no longer be on your body.

In further reports of intimidation, the respondent who mobilized slum dwellers to burn their *aadhar* cards said that during these days she was attacked by *goondas* (thugs), leaving her partially blind and with vertigo.

When the court case failed, every day residents would go to the BBMP to protest, and every time the BBMP would agree to their demands. But, in the early morning as they slept, trucks would come and carry out the demolition. As this continued, respondents say that the people finally gave up. Accounts describe that over 500 police accompanied the bulldozers, with residents beaten and women reportedly dragged into police vans by their hair when they refused to leave their dwellings (HLRN 2013).

When historical tactics of state and private actors are considered, what also emerges are accounts of thinly veiled corruption and bribery. One respondent described a former slum leader who ran a welfare association, and who claimed

to represent the evictees. Everyone was asked to pay 500 rupees (approximately US\$7) to fight the case and get proof of residency for the sub-tenants. Yet, the respondent claims that the private developer had a secret understanding with this individual, who has since disappeared and who the respondent believes is responsible for the attacks on residents. Another respondent says that some youths from the slum were bought off—given money in return for discouraging protestors. Many accounts implicate the local MLA; in addition to his threats at the public meeting, one account recorded in the HLRN report (*ibid.*, p. 57) claims he promised 15,000 rupees (approximately US\$200) to those who will leave, then used *goondas* to threaten residents, saying that they would harm their daughters if they did not move out.

#### 15.4.3.1.3 Fragmentation of Solidarity and Withholding of Space

From the analysis of the tactics from below (judicial action and protest) and above (information delivery, intimidation and bribery), returning to the conceptualization of closed, invited and claimed spaces by Gaventa (2006), at no point were the direct stakeholders of the eviction plans (the slum dwellers) invited into decision making. Moreover, plans set out by public officials regarding the eviction was retracted and changed without notifying slum dwellers and information delivered under thinly veiled threats. The evictees attempted to claim space in formal decision making processes within the judiciary system, and when this failed via confrontational means of protest with the support of civil society groups (NGOs). These methods also failed to affect the eventual clearance of the site. The tactics and outcomes of the case demonstrate the active withholding of space by the public-private bloc, with solidarity among the evictees deliberately fragmented, de-escalating possibilities for mobilization and subverting their capacities for appropriation and participation.

#### 15.4.3.2 Governance Instruments

In addition to these tactics, claims to the space were also controlled via certain instruments—

namely, the “list,” i.e. allocation of relocation housing, and the biometric ID *aadhar* cards entitling evictees to allocation. As instruments of governance, these are highly important methods through which the state can keep track of citizens, and as citizens, provide access to schemes and benefits. However, getting onto the list is a complex and bureaucratic process which slum dwellers found difficult to navigate.

What seemed to be required is:

- A biometric ID (*aadhar*) card showing that the individual is below the poverty line and providing that they are residents of the slum; and
- A contribution of 10% of the cost of resettlement housing.

However, during the eviction, many evictees had lost their belongings as they were not given time to gather their possessions. Additionally, some who were involved in the struggle against the eviction were denied cards. The respondent who had burned her card said that some of those who did the same either had another family member in possession of a card, or managed to bribe officials to get the cards, a situation she was unaware of. Without a card, this respondent was not entitled to resettlement housing, leaving her with no other option than to remain on the pavement.

An account from a member of NGO Lifeline Foundation published in the HLRN report (2013), stated that people were falsely told that these biometric cards would serve as their guarantee towards rehabilitation in roughly a year, describing this as a “means of distraction from political mobilization.” Consequently, just like the strategies of intimidation and misinformation, the ID cards and systems of allocation might also be understood as instruments of manipulation—persuading people that unless they behave, they will not be given cards and thus excluded from resettlement. Even for those who were in possession of the cards, some simply could not afford the down payment. Additionally, there were accounts of exploitation from fraudsters, extorting money under the pretense of providing

resettlement housing, such as those that targeted Mary.

Indeed, the entire process has been fraught with corruption, not just from opportunists, but also from the inside. One story relayed by multiple sources concerned the way in which people got on the list, with spaces often being given to party members of the congress or their supporters. Respondents claimed that this was the case with the original allocation of the apartments at Ejipura prior to demolition; many of the residents were not actually EWS, rather the apartments were owned by those who had connections with political agents who could pay the deposits and secure the flats. When the apartments were found to be low quality, allottees instead rented them out to the poorest who had no other option.

#### 15.4.3.2.1 Cooption of Governance Instruments

To summarize, governance instruments—the *aadhar* cards—identity cards showing that the individual is below the poverty line and residents of the slum, and the “list”—those entitled to relocation housing—were manipulated by power holders to achieve their own ends, despite being originally designed as methods of safeguarding the poor. This outcome is not an isolated incident: in another case in Bangalore described by Dhananka (2016), after a slum community was informed that housing would be delivered in-situ to their slum, the local slum leaders took control of the negotiation process. However, after 1500 units were promised, only 850 were constructed and the interiors not finished. Additionally, over 170 names were missing from the list of beneficiaries and there were reports that outsiders had been included instead. Processes were kept opaque, and slum dwellers were discouraged from coming forward out of fear of losing housing.

Through this manipulation of governance instruments, we can see further modalities through which the public-private bloc is able to maintain control over the production of space. In the case described by Dhananka, although initially it seemed the slum community was able to claim space in the decision-making process,

corruption prevented the positive outcome of this case for the slum community.

#### 15.4.3.3 Governance Structures

A final layer to consider comes from the wider governance structures exemplified by this case. Firstly, systems of vote-bank politics, and secondly, the PPP arrangement itself.

Regarding systems of vote-bank, one respondent described how “someone will come and do a favour, and loyalties will be won.” However, promises are not always kept, as was the case in Ejipura with the former MLA stating that the land belongs to the poor and promising that houses would be built for them there. When the current MLA was elected, reportedly he came to the area asking for votes, also pledging to build them all houses in the site. However, later it transpired that the houses would be built for original allottees only, and not the subletters. One respondent described how:

These spaces [for corruption to take place] exist because of the informal arrangements from vote-bank politics.

Within a structure of vote-bank, a patron-clientelistic relationship emerges whereby the political leader faces a lack of accountability due to the extreme power imbalance preventing residents from holding them to account. Where such a system may afford slum people a stronger voice in some cases, in Ejipura it seemed to work against them. Although initially it might seem unwise for an elected representative to betray a vote-bank in such a major way, with the clearance of many of these slum dwellers outside of his constituency, there would likely be few repercussions for these broken promises. One respondent speculated that Ejipura is simply a case where “money won over votes.” Ultimately, one must question how this sort of relationship has emerged whereby poor people are reliant on a local “don” to provide protection.

As for the PPP itself, although not new, the prevalence of these deals in Bangalore and across India’s urbanities, are indicative of a changing balance of power from state managed to private-led development. Despite this, many respondents

described the PPP deal as a “smokescreen” for corrupt practices and “land-grabbing”. One respondent from the NGO bloc describes this process as: “corporatization of the commons” whereby land is sold off to the highest bidder. Similarly to vote-bank systems, a serious lack of accountability emerges when PPPs become the main avenue for infrastructural development and service delivery. Private entities bear no formal responsibility to citizens, thus citizens cannot effectively hold private entities to account. In the case of Ejipura, one main problem was the lack of provision of transit accommodation after eviction. Although it was required in the court order which permitted the site to be cleared, when questioned, the BBMP claimed that the developer was responsible for providing sheds, yet the official from the private developer denied this. Indeed, both the respondent from the developer and from BBMP denied that people were still living on the pavements, the respondent from the developer claiming that they had been given wrong information. One NGO respondent argues that if it was indeed the developer’s responsibility, then the BBMP ought to have:

“[. . .] pulled up their [the developer’s] collar” and asked why they had not yet provided sheds; it was their responsibility as they are accountable to the people.

#### 15.4.3.3.1 Accountability Deficit within Governance Structures

To conclude, while the growing popularity of PPP deals certainly gives a cause for concern, what the Ejipura case demonstrates is that there was a distinct lack of accountability to begin with. From the substandard dwellings initially built, to the broken promises from the MLA, channels of effective formal participation between urban disenfranchised and the state had long been broken. Slum dwellers were not able to take part in decision making processes, their only avenues of participation via the organisations such as the NGOs that represented them and vote-bank politics that allowed political actors to garner support, while later renegeing on promises. Via tactics of contestation, slum dwellers could protest, but ran

the risk of brutality and intimidation. Meanwhile, individuals with money, power, and influence (including slum leaders) were able to manipulate these arrangements to their own advantage, seeing the extortion of slum dwellers and widespread practices of corruption. A key informant described this as:

“Non-coordinated space” which is “almost capillary,” in the way that “calculated practices of corruption become the norm and even small scale builders face a network of agents who take money here and there.”

This description is interesting under Gaventa’s (2006) framework of closed, invited and claimed space, as this informal or “non-coordinated” space through which corruption can manifest falls outside of the framework. It is a space used by both the power holders and the urban vulnerable in the city (e.g. street hawkers violating zoning laws), yet one in which the urban poor are clearly losing ground.

## 15.5 Discussion: Mechanisms of Marginalization

Bringing these different elements together, we can see how various actors have utilised governance instruments and structures, and discursive framings to control and produce space in a way that contributes to social marginalisation. The tactics of intimidation, corruption and deliberate fragmentation of solidarity, facilitated by instruments of allocation, were arguably only possible within the broader governance structure of the patron-clientelistic vote-bank system, and the corporate dominated developmental space of the PPP—both structures which facilitated informal maneuvering and manipulation by powerful actors. These dynamics are perpetuated and legitimised by a monopolisation of the definition of “public interest” by political and corporate power holders, which also serves to mould the definition of urban citizenship according to these emerging norms.

These elements are also mutually reinforcing: as the urban poor are pushed to the peripheries, their claims on space further weaken as critical

livelihood opportunities and social networks are lost, and their ability to engage in (formal and informal) governance structures weakens. In such a way, we can view these different processes—discursive framings, governance structures and production of space—as both mechanisms *and* outcomes of marginalization. Cumulatively, these processes have a severely detrimental effect on quality of life as capacities for social mobility are limited through insecure tenure, discrimination, and associated implications for other features of quality of life such as secure work, education and neighborhood identity.

### 15.5.1 Situating Findings Within Theory

With regard to discourse, the discursive framing of slum dwellers as “other” aligns with Fernandes’s (2004) hypothesis that discursive-spatial strategies employed by dominant groups have led to an exclusive form of cultural citizenship. Following from this, and considering the evolving court rulings as highlighted by Bhan (2009), Ejipura brings to light the shifting parameters of citizenship to a definition based on the ability to “buy-in.” While corruption and motivations of personal gain may have had much to do with this particular case, the eviction was arguably only successful due to this discursive framing, creating legitimacy in their removal. Fernandes’ (2004) hypothesis of the “politics of forgetting” via which marginalized groups are rendered invisible is applicable here, but arguably insufficient—as the poor in this case are not being forgotten—but actively excluded; not just from the city, but also from any legitimate claims to it.

Accordingly, viewed within Lefebvre’s wider theory of RTTC, the residents of Ejipura have been able to claim little, if any shaping power over the processes of urbanization—either through participation, excluded and deliberately uninformed during the eviction process, nor appropriation—their right to physically access, occupy and use urban space. Returning to the case highlighted by Dhanaka (2016, p. 2), she states that: “The housing outcome [whether

slum dwellers are successful in protesting their eviction] is heavily shaped by relations within the community and the inhabitants’ capacity to navigate through networks of power and stealth”.

Specifically, in the failure of mobilization, she argues that this shows how an urban poor community living in a “locality saturated with patronage networks limits insurgent performances” (ibid., p. 10). Strong unity within the community creates the means to resist informal oppression (ibid.:13). However in the case of Ejipura, deliberate moves were made to fragment possibilities for unity within the slum community, contributing to the failure of the protests.

### 15.5.2 Shifting Power

From an analysis of the actor blocs involved in the land dispute, we see a strong overlap between corporate and elite political interests and cooption of government actors and structures, or so-called “elite capture governance.” In India, Patel et al. (2016), in exploring local governance in Asian cities, note that while in some cities the poor have successfully engaged with elected representatives through clientelism to negotiate their needs, in Ahmedabad (their site of study), that platform is “captured” by the elite middle class. The phenomenon of elite capture is also mentioned in literature in other country contexts. For example, Lemanski (2017, p. 29) notes that the spatial and socio-economic inequalities entrenched in urban spaces and social fabrics after apartheid permit elite residents to use their connections and expertise to control access to local resources in low-income areas situated close to affluent suburbs, diverting public funds to support their own interest and activities—for example golf clubs and horse riding. This echoes broader trends in Bangalore, for instance with the rise of organisations such as the Bangalore Agenda Task Force, Janagraha and the Namma Bengaluru Foundation—“non-profit” political interest groups with powerful elite and corporate individuals on the board who are able to lobby for land. One respondent described the Namma Bengaluru Foundation as a “vehicle for right-



wing propaganda” and “front for the BJP [which has] monopolised urban causes and become the champion of the middle class.”

What can be induced from this is a shifting balance of power from vertical, state driven development (as characterised the pre-market liberalization years in India), towards a nexus of power constituted by elite, middle class and corporate groups who withhold space. Building on this conceptualization, we might view the role of the state not as manager or developer, but as *broker*, auctioning land as its most valuable asset. Meanwhile, poor groups have seen their bargaining power stagnate, while channels of participation remain opaque and inaccessible.

### 15.5.3 Informality and the Agency of the Poor

From analysing the tactics, instruments and structures which served to allow certain actor groups to push through the PPP deal and subsequent eviction, and the recurrence of similar tactics in other cases in Bangalore, (Dhananka 2016), we contend that Bangalore is experiencing a democratic crisis in governance as elite capture prevails and poor groups are fundamentally and persistently excluded. A key characteristic of this has been “non-coordinated space”, in which informal tactics are employed by all actor groups; for instance, squatters moving into slum areas, state actors manipulating housing allocation, and private groups violating planning restrictions. These tactics also extend to the national level; Roy (2009, 2011) discusses cases in India where the state, in trying to push through mega-developments, created Special Economic Zones to overrule its own legislation protecting the area for agricultural purposes. Similarly, Follmann (2015) discusses the state intentionally empowering riverfront property megaprojects to bypass environmental regulations. These authors suggest that informality, from being the object of state regulation, when produced by the state itself undermines its legitimacy and creates a roadblock of effective governance (Roy 2005; 2009; Follmann 2015). In the context of Bangalore,

developers can leverage financial capital to achieve greater economic and political agency, and, although their strategies may align with governmental agendas for city modernization, they can also constitute an obstacle as the state is “outdone by developers ability to work through the intricacies of local land markets and bureaucracies” (Rouanet and Halbert 2016, p. 1401).

In the case of Ejipura, tactics of informality from above became a critical tool for powerful individuals who were able to circumvent laws and bend regulations to their own advantage, facilitated by a monopoly of the rhetoric which legitimises such moves—“informality” and “public purpose” defined according to these produced norms. Although the eviction site had previously been guaranteed for the usage of poor groups, this was revoked, the slum site becoming “informal”, while the mall, although flouting many building regulations and the actual terms under which permission was granted for its construction, accepted as a “formal” part of the cityscape. Returning to the earlier debate about the capacity of the poor to muster informal systems to their advantage, on the one hand, we might view the actions of the pavement dwellers in constructing their dwellings as such as an “everyday form of resistance” or “everyday appropriation of space” whereby land is incrementally adapted to fit uses (Lombard 2015). Yet, we question whether it can be seen as such in this case, because—crucially—these forms of subaltern urbanism imply a degree of agency. From the evidence from this case, it seems clear that the evictee’s habitation of the pavement comes from desperation, rather than in an active or politicized desire to subvert planning decisions. While perhaps the original occupation of the site could be described as appropriation of space, this claim to space was lost as they were pushed from the site and their capacity for resistance diminished.

Ultimately, in this case at least, embedded systems of informality and non-coordinated space create challenges for sustainable urban development as the poor are systematically excluded. Agents with money, power and connections are better placed to navigate these

informal structures and arrangements, undermining legitimacy in governance and leaving the poor in a weakened position, vulnerable to exploitation or eviction, thereby severely impacting their quality of life.

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## 15.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to examine the dynamics of the production of urban space in Bangalore under a Rights to the City (Lefebvre 1972, 1991) conceptualization of urban quality of life as exemplified by the case of the Ejipura slum eviction. It considered various processes of marginalization, examining actors, discursive framings, tactics, and instruments and structures of governance. Findings indicate a democratic deficit in governance characterized by endemic informality which is fueling and perpetuating socio-spatial polarization and severely impacting the quality of life of the urban poor. A powerful feature of these processes has been the discourse institutionalization of the poor as “encroachers” and the cooption of the definition of “public interest” by dominant groups, creating an exclusionary form of urban citizenship. In turn, this has entailed the definition of “informality” according to these emergent norms, with shopping malls flouting planning restrictions accepted as formal, while the semi-autonomous dwellings of Ejipura condemned as informal. Both of these framings—the dwellings as informal, and the dwellers as encroachers were key in legitimizing their removal.

While this case is a site-specific and small-scale qualitative study and so cannot be generalized to Bangalore as a whole, findings cohere with other literature; for example Dhananka (2016) and the manipulation of allocation of relocation housing in Bangalore, Bhan (2009) regarding the shifting rhetoric towards slum dwellers as a symptom of a shifting socio-economic fabric which includes rising middle class consumerism, declining state patrimony for the poor and increasing dominance of private and elite factions in controlling and producing city space, and Roy (2009, 2011), Follmann (2015)

and Van Dijk (2011) that claims of agency and empowerment within tactics of subaltern urbanism are misplaced.

In terms of methodological contribution, by combining social, spatial and discursive angles of analysis, and unravelling actors, tactics, discursive framings and instruments broadly following Peyroux et al.’s analytical categories (2014), a deep level of understanding of urban development was afforded, particularly with respect to linkages between the physical changes to the Ejipura site over time, and how these relate to the non-physical—the socio-economic and political dynamics which shaped the evolution of the site. The inclusion of discourse in particular was valuable in uncovering latent positions and agendas of actors and how these relate to broader national socio-economic shifts and sentiment.

In Bangalore, the developmental trajectory is likely to continue in an exclusionary path, unless the capacity of marginalized groups can be bolstered. While reliance on the market for urban development and the delivery of effective public services can no doubt be an effective strategy, it requires stronger channels of participation via invited space and transparency in governance to combat elite capture and meaningfully engage poor groups in decision making processes which would strengthen their capabilities to enhance their quality of life. Ultimately, a city that works for all requires co-creation from all urban dwellers, nurtured by inclusive governance. Following this line of thinking, a sustainable model of city development would be well framed within Lefebvre’s guiding principles of participation and appropriation under RTTC, but application of this model in cities such as Bangalore will require a fundamental restructuring of the power relations which currently govern the production of urban space.

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## 15.7 Limitations and Future Research

Key limitations of this study were time—specifically limiting the building of trust with evictees to explore more complex perceptions, discursive

framings and tactics. Furthermore, there was a limited number of respondents from the private and public bloc and no respondents from the judiciary (due to a lack of willingness to participate in the research). These limitations meant that secondary sources (such as the HLRN reports) were an important source of information, yet these have their own framings which needed to be untangled from the source material.

Further directions for research might focus on successful cases of contestation in the Indian context, examining in depth the actor networks, tactics, framings, instruments and governance structures which facilitated their ability to maintain, or gain control over the means to produce space in the city. Methodologically, techniques such as participatory mapping could be valuable in gaining a more complex, insider or “emic” understanding of slum dwellers’ capability to appropriate and participate in the production of space. However, in this study, considering the limited timeframe and extreme vulnerability of the pavement dwellers, engaging in this type of research felt inappropriate.

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