

## SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT OF MADINAT AL-HIKMAH

Syeda Humera Arif\*

### *Abstract*

*The research conducted to find out the effects of the establishment of Madinat al-Hikmah, in the social life of the population living around. The study also indicates the rise in literacy rate, income opportunities, provision of water supply and electricity, construction of road, school and hospital for the welfare of the poor people living in the Goths around.*

*The data is analyzed in the form of frequency tables and then represented in graph to have clear picture of the facts. The socioeconomic indicators, most frequently used in social researches, education, profession, and income were used to evaluate the role of Madinat al-Hikmah. Hamadard village school and Siafa ul Mulk hospital for eastern medicine are the significant services being provided by the Madinat al-Hikmah.*

**Keywords:** *socioeconomic, impact, health awareness, education level, life style.*

\* A Project of Hamdard Foundation, Karachi

**Introduction:**

In Pakistan, the development process have been gone through different stages from first fifth year plan to seven fifth year plan and many other development schemes. The heavy amount were spent on the execution of which made improvement in providing the basic needs of the under developed rural area. Many areas were provided with the water supply, sewerage system, establishment of schools, vocational training centers, etc to flourish the opportunities to raise the income opportunities and other welfare works to ease the public. As development means not only the rise in income but the development means, to upgrade the living standard and to improve the local infrastructure thus facilitating the local community. The role of non-government organization in this regard cannot be subsided. The NGOs play a vital role in socio-economic development at present, due to their main objective which is the social welfare.

To define the role of voluntary organization, Jones specifies the persons or organizations needed for such roles as, “change agents, change catalysts and peacemakers”. According to Jones, the presence of all of the above roles is needed at various stages of a planned change. (Jones, 1969)

Using the above mentioned model for the slums and community development as described by the Jones, Dr. Sabeeha Hafeez, investigated the roles of voluntary organizations and the change or the social development resulted as consequences in Lyari – one of the urban slums of Karachi. (Sabeeha, 1985)

The relation among the development, change, and change agents is again very clear. The socioeconomic indicators such as education, occupation, health etc are directly linked with development or the rate of change, measured after a planned, unplanned change, or project can easily be graphed through these indicators.

Social development indicator selected by the SPDC for measuring the development, are education, health, demography, labor force and employment, and real per capita government expenditure in selected social sectors. (SPDC AR 2005-06)

The term socio economic status is frequently used, but in general variables conventionally used to evaluate social standing are education, occupation, and income, supplementary measures include employment status and possessions. (Powers, 1981).

Much of the research work has been done using the socioeconomic indicators or one of these indicators to demonstrate the change or illustrate the development.

To gain firsthand information of the sphere of the community which requires to be improved is the foremost criteria of planning and development. Thus recognizing the need, many NGOs, e.g., AKRSP, NRSP and other voluntary organizations uses the survey techniques from the available sources or conducted the surveys their-selves.

A study conducted in N.W.F.P to inspect the socioeconomic factors affecting the education system. The authors Mr. AttauRahman and Salahuddin analyzed that there are various socioeconomic factors, as Parents' education, Father's Income, Parents Attitudes towards education and Present education system and curriculum. (Rahaman, Salahuddin, Spring 2009)

Other such studies also show that developing one of the social factors may raise the other. This can be understood by the example that if a community required to improve the infra structure, the local people can be trained, can be equipped with the modern tools and with financial aid in shape of micro-credits. This not only will provide the employment, giving economic activity and as a result will ease them up to improve their living standards.

This highlights that the education, occupation and health are related with the living standards and an improvement towards the development can be achieved through, the planned strategies, with a careful check on the outputs. Therefore, this paper will highlight the impact of the services provided by Madinat al-Hikmah taking together the socioeconomic indicators i.e., education, income, profession of the people of Deh Band Murad Khan as variables.

### **Hamdard Foundation Pakistan**

Hamdard was established in 1906 as an institution committed to bring relief to the sufferings by late Hakim Abdul Majeed India. After him, his son Hakim Mohammad Said migrated to Pakistan in 1948 and laid down the foundations of Hamdard on Aram Bagh Road Karachi. Hamdard Foundation Pakistan began its services in the educational, scientific, cultural and Islamic fields in 1953. Working for the betterment of every aspect of life generally, Hamdard has practically discharged its role in the awakening of an awareness regarding health and Tibb (Traditional medicine) and education. Hamdard Foundation is now recognized nationally and internationally. (<http://www.hakim-said.com.pk/foundation.html>)

### **Madinat al-Hikmah: a project of hamdard foundation**

Madinat al-Hikmah the city of knowledge and wisdom is located at the periphery of Karachi some 40 km from the city centre, established in 1983, and spread over an area of 350 acres. When this project was started the neighborhood areas were undeveloped and even the basic facilities like roads, electricity, water supply was not available. In order to set up the basic infrastructure, a lot of efforts and huge amount was spent by Hamdard.

It is also worth mentioning that the significant of the site of this project lie in the fact that Mohammad bin Qasim the young general came from Sheraz for the conquest of Sindh. (Jang, Karachi. April 27, 1988. Pg. 1)

Hamdard University is a part of the project, and besides the institutions of the university, it also include Hamdard Garden, madina masjid, sport stadium, scholar's house, eastern medicine hospital, Bait al-Hikmah library, Hamdard public school and college Hamdard research institute, international conference center and Hamdard university town.

Under the same project, Shifa-ul-Mulk memorial hospital and subsequent services of mobile dispensaries for the people of surrounding 38 villages with free medical camps is a milestone towards meeting the challenge of human ailments peculiar to our socio-economic set up. For the downtrodden and poor villagers of the vicinity, this hospital for eastern medicine is providing the best health care services in just for a token of money. (Khabarnam e Hamdard, July 1998. pg.38)

The hospital is providing round the clock services and equipped with modern technology i.e., laboratories, for all types of tests, operation theater, emergency unit, consultant clinics etc.

Hamdard village school, established by Shaheed Hakim Mohammad Said in 1997 for providing education to the children of the villages around Madinat al-Hikmah with the enrollment of mere 67 students. However with tremendous efforts it has grown into a full fledged school with an enrollment of more than 500 students. A vocational training center was also set up where a workshop for training in electricity wiring and another for training for tailoring were fulfilling the needs of the skilled people. The school charges no fee from the students and from uniform to stationary, everything related to studies are provided free.

### **Deh band murad khan**

In any locality, the small or large Goths are collectively called “Deh”. And the area which comprises many “deh” is called “Tappa”. Karachi West, included 11 union councils and 09 “Tappas”. These union councils are further divided in “Deh” and then in “Goths”. (Ajaml Kamal 1995)

Deh band Murad Khan is located on the boarder of Sindh and Balochistan, registered under the union council 08, Manghopir, Gadap Town. It is further divided into “Goths” which are scattered on a vast area. The population of these Goths ranges from few households to hundred of households.

It was clearly a very poor area, whose population lives at minimum subsistence level. It was then realized by Shaheed Hakim Mohammad Said, to take measures to enable the poor local villagers to earn additional income.

Like other Goths of Karachi this are also lack the basic facilities i.e, water supply system, electricity, gas and sewerage system, roads and public transport. These villages lack basic health facilities and the state of roads, canals, schools, building and other infrastructure is also deteriorating. There is only one government primary school, where the school was working in papers only.

Situated on the main avenue, a historical significant route of Sindh and Balochistan, at present an increase in the mechanical workshops, spare parts business and service stations can be observed

easily. Some provision stores are available for daily use items but no proper shopping center is available.

It was thus logical to include in the planning of the education and training centre of Madinat al-Hikmah, a unit dealing directly with the particular needs of the surrounding population, and which may be able to contribute to an improvement in the living conditions of the villagers. (Hohnholz 1997)

### **Research Method:**

A field study was done. Twelve goths of the area around Madinat al-Hikmah were selected as sample and a questionnaire comprised of 42 items was asked from the selected sample population of Deh Band Murad Khan. Informal interviews were also conducted randomly from the Waderas and literate people of the area. Data is analyzed and represented through frequency tables and bar graphs.

### **Findings:**

Deh Band Murad Khan, located in the periphery of Karachi consists of 28 small Goths. The establishment of Madinat al-Hikmah, at Deh Band Murad Khan, has a direct impact on the development, not only on the infrastructure but also on the social life of the people of the area.

Young population of the area has a keen interest in the development and betterment of the area. Before the establishment of Madinat al-Hikmah, the area lacked all the basic facilities, but at present the inhabitants are facilitated with electric water supply. The use of home appliances, i.e., washing machine, refrigerator, television and mobile shows the living standard of the people of the area which is not only the result of the interaction of the natives with the educated crowd of the Madinat al-Hikmah, either employees or the students.

Majority of the villagers owned their houses, the modern construction style of the houses, with large courtyards, shows the change in the life style of the people of the area. Proper and separate kitchens and bathrooms show the reflection of urban home style. Although the kitchens in hut shapes were also found in the courtyards, with traditional village style stoves of mud but the reason is absence of gas line in the area.

It has also been noted that interest to get their children educated, increased among the villagers, after the establishment of Madinat al-Hikmah, which motivate the psychology of the people of the area to understand the need of the hour. The reason for not been educated in the past, was found lack of resources. There was only one government school, where teachers seldom visit. Villagers did not agree that, parents' ignorant attitude towards education and non-educational environment were the causes of illiteracy in the area.

The study results that professional profile of the people of the area has a combination of jobs, they have been doing or compel to opt. The reason is obvious. According to the qualification, which is just primary level, they have to choose the labor work as profession. Although the people are also employed in higher grades, or got employment somewhere can be count on fingers. In Madinat al-Hikmah, the local villagers have also got employment as peons or gardeners, according to their knowledge and skill they just can do it. However, in past, before the establishment of Madint al-Hikmah people were engaged in labor work mainly. The reason to opt the profession is low education, or illiteracy.

The findings of the study evaluate that absence of sewerage system, lack of opportunities, and non-availability of public transport are the main problems of the area.

The analysis of income table shows that mostly people earned Rs. 5000-10000, the increase in the income was made possible due to the extensive labor work offered by Madinat al-Hikmah in form of new constructions or extension of its various projects.

The inhabitants are in the opinion that medical facilities increased in the area due to the working of Shifa-ul-Mulk Memorial Hospital, where herbal treatment is used to cure and consultants for all kinds of diseases are available. Villagers also satisfied with the facility of free mobile dispensaries which provide the treatment with medicines at their door steps. And for all these services and no consultancy fee is charged and medicine is provided just for token of money. Free medical camps are also of great help.

The analysis shows that in this area, no health care facility was available before the establishment of Madinat al-Hikmah.

People of the area prefer to consult doctor in Shifa-ul-Mulk hospital and general OPD for the treatment. Workshops and free health camps proved to be the best way of enhancing the awareness regarding hygiene and immediate attention to attend the illness among the people.

Hamdard village school, especially set up for the local children is a remarkable service provided by Madinat al-Hikmah. In this school the students charged no fee, and everything from uniform to stationary is provided from the foundation. The medium of teaching is Urdu, although the mother language of the children is Brahvi. The students learned to read and write in Urdu and English with the passage of time. In response to the question as to what could be the possible cause of low literacy in the area, majority of the people said that it was lack of resources that the children of the area can not avail the opportunity to be educated. Ignorant attitude also counts, however, after the start of Village School the trend is changed. Madinat al-Hikmah proved a constant source of temptation to get education and providing an environment for study.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The use of socioeconomic factors i.e., education, income, profession has been found closely related to evaluate the results of any progresses plans and problems in modern sociological and epidemical research. Although there is no defined set of socioeconomic factors to be used in all such cases, however they are frequently used in researches. The use of all these factors or taking any one of them to be single effective element, researchers have discussed and assessed many results, to point out the problem and suggest the solutions.

All the five years plans from 1961-2003 for the development programs revolutionized and improved not only the infrastructure but also played a vital role in the economic progress. Billions of rupee have been spent on the implementation of these plans and progress was made in providing the basic needs of the under developed rural area. Many areas were provided with the water supply, sewerage system, establishment of schools, vocational training centers, etc to flourish the opportunities to raise the income opportunities and other welfare works to ease the public.



The population of Band Murad Khan has experienced the lack of basic human opportunities in health, education and employment before the establishment of Madinat al-Hikma.

Hamdard village school is continuously enhancing the lust for learning among the villagers and the local illiterat tribal men once thought the education wastage of time, are now aware of the importance of the education. Their children, whose mother language is Brahvi, can now read, Write and speak in English and Urdu. Establishment of Shafa ul Mulk memorial hospital have also proved to be remarkable service of Madinat al-Hikmah.

It is obvious that the development of the area is not possible through raising the income of the household, but efforts of the government and non-government organizations are also required for the provision of social services to improve the competence of individuals.

Tribal customs and traditions should also be given due importance while planning any development schemes and other welfare programs for the area. Community based involvement approach and training of the volunteers, will be helpful in this area.

Being the single philanthropic organization working for the betterment of the area, the services of hamdard foundation are noteworthy. Government agencies and other welfare organization should contribute for the provision and improvement of further social services and well being of the people of the area.

## References

- Ahmed Israr. (April 27, 1988) Jang newspaper, Karachi. Pp. 1
- Ajaml Kamal. (1995). Karachi ke Goth. Karachi publications. Karachi. Pp. 158-172  
<http://www.hakim-said.com.pk/foundation.html> Retrieved on October 04, 2011
- Hafeez Sabeeha.(1985). Poverty, Voluntary Organizations and Social Change. A study of urban slum in Pakistan. Royal Book Company. Karachi pp.15-16
- Jones N Garth. (1969). Change Behavior in the Planned Organizational Change Process. Application of Socioeconomic Exchange Theory. Philippine Journal of Public Administration. Vol-13. pp 1-23
- Khabarnama e Hamdard. (July 1998) Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. Karachi. pp.38
- Powers, M.G. (1981). Measures of Socioeconomic Status. Population Representation in the Military Services. Boulder Co. West view. pp. 1-28.
- Rahaman, Atta and Salahuddin.(Spring 2009). Statistical Analysis of the Different Socioeconomic Factors affecting the Education of N.W.F.P (Pakistan). Journal of Applied Quantitative Methods. Vol.4 No.1. pp. 88-94
- Review of the Social Action Program, Social Policy and Development Center. Research report No. 16. 1997. Karachi SPDC
- Hohnholz H. Jurgen. (1997). The Centre for Horticulture at Madinat al-Hikmat near Karachi, Pakistan". Hamdard Foundation, Karachi. P.05