

A study on urban homeless of Kerala

The Socio-Economic & Health research study has brought out certain findings that bear witness to the status of homeless in Kerala. In the state of Kerala, the number of homeless and people sleeping on the streets are increasing. In the past many people think that it is the hitch lone in big cities. But many researches found that such issues are present in urban, semi urban and rural India. This is most certainly true in India. The question then becomes, what do we do about it?

Kerala has a large growing urban populations spread across in 93 urban local bodies. Health condition of the homeless deteriorates and the risk of victimization and exploitation intensifies, making it severer and harder to escape homelessness.

This report is the culmination of the critical medical anthropology of the homelessness in urban cities of Kerala and delivers an intuition to the authority to initiate holistic interventions to rehabilitate to those sleeping on the streets. The goal of this survey is to develop a more coordinated and integrated system in response to the homelessness in the state.

Conducted an extensive survey exercise during July 2017, every nuke and corner of the limits of the urban cities (93 cities) were explored by teams consisting of Junior Health Inspectors (JHIs) of Health Department and the Managers / Community Organizers of City Mission Management Unit (CMMU) of National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). This in-depth study led by the NULM's Resource Organizations (CDS) in all urban cities of the state. Interviews were conducted with 3195 homeless across the state. This report presents the findings

from the research and recommends a solution to lessen / evaporate the plight of a burning issue, which the city as well as the country is experiencing.

The study findings show that the majority of the respondents are male 82.1 % (2625) and 17.6 % are female. Surprisingly 0.2 % (6) respondents are from the Transgender community. This community is not coming out due to various reasons including stigma and discrimination. This study revealed that, all the respondents are working in the unorganized sector - from construction to street vending and begging.

While analyzing their level of income, it was found that 96.2 % of the respondents' income is less than Rs. 10,000 per month and unaffordable to pay rent for their stay forces them to sojourn in the streets. Out of the total respondents, majority of the respondents 85.1 % does not possess any of the valid ID cards. The data shows that the respondents faced practical difficulties in getting services provided to their citizens from the respective Governments.

The study highlights that the highest number of homeless concentration i.e. 60 % of homeless identified are from 17 cities. The study suggests that the timely and thoughtful long-term interventions especially in the 17 cities are needed to provide shelter for the urban homeless. The social security, social entitlement, civic identity programs are needed to improve the quality of life of the urban homeless.

The United Nations Declarations and the different Acts introduced by the Government of India stress a human rights approach but not a charity mode in offering services. There is an urgent need for special attention to endorse

effectual policy for program operation mechanism for those cannot afford to access shelters for their secure and dignified sleep.

Highlights of the study

- Kudumbashree CDS has been entrusted the survey in all ULBs.
- Identified 3195 street dwellers as homeless
- 82 % of the total population are Male street dwellers
- 65 % homeless are from among 40 to 80 age category
- 17 ULBs reported highest number of street dwellers where urgent attention is required
- 60% of the homeless are migrants
- 65% of the street dwellers have been staying in the same location for more than one year.
- Ernakulum district registered as having the highest number of street dwellers (510) whereas Idukki district reported (38) having the lowest number homeless population
- Kozhikode corporation registered the highest number of street dwellers (294)
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Components of National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM)

NULM programme consisting of 7 major components as the following

1. Social Mobilisation & Institution Development (SM&ID)
2. Capacity building and Training (CB&T)
3. Employment through Skill Training and Placement (EST &P)

4. Self employment programme (SEP)
5. Support to Urban Street Vendors (SUSV)
6. Shelter for Urban Homeless (SUH)
7. Innovative programmes

Scheme for the Shelter for Urban Homeless

The National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy (NUHHP), 2007 aims at promoting sustainable development of habitat in the country with a view to ensuring equitable supply of land, shelter and services at affordable prices to all sections of the society. However, the most vulnerable of these are the urban homeless. The Urban homeless persons contribute to the economy of the cities and thus the nation as cheap labor in the informal sector; yet they live with no shelter or social security protection. The urban homeless survive with many challenges like no access to elementary public services such as health, education, food, water and sanitation. National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) aims at providing permanent shelter equipped with essential services to the urban homeless in a phased manner under the Scheme of Shelter for Urban Homeless (SUH).

The programme is being implemented in all 93 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across the state. Most ULBs have come up with the demand for new construction as well as for the refurbishment of existing homes. To ensure the availability and accessibility of the urban homeless population to permanent shelters the state level project sanctioning committee has accorded sanction for the construction of twelve new shelter homes in seven ULBs and refurbishment of another eleven shelter homes in five ULBs. Rs. 2233 Lakhs and Rs. 401.76lakhs have been

approved for new construction and for refurbishment of shelter homes respectively, during 2015-16.

During 2016-17, nine ULBs submitted 13 DPR for construction of shelter homes as well as for refurbishment of existing shelter homes with an estimated cost of Rs. 15.32 cores. This is to provide shelter for about 1170 urban homeless. Old age and destitute homes are proposed to be constructed as most of the urban homeless are either destitute or aged people. Shelter homes are also proposed for physically and mentally challenged and for terminally ill persons. However there are good number of shelter homes approved under NULM for construction and refurbishment still there are a lot of urban homeless staying in the street/ footpath/ railway station/ bus stand/ in the premises of worship places without proper shelters.

Methodology of the survey

A survey of urban homeless has been scheduled to be conducted in all urban local bodies during July - August 2017. The ULB with the support of City Level Federation had to undertake the survey. City mission management unit, NGO/ CBO/ Police Dept. Merchants associations, residents associations, trade unions etc are part of the survey. Since the homeless are visible in the street mostly in the late night probably after 10.00 PM, it has been suggested to conduct the survey after 10.00 PM. Survey teams were asked to conduct repeated surveys in alternate weeks/ fortnightly to ensure that no beneficiary/ homeless is excluded in the survey. ULB were directed to make necessary arrangements like vehicle, support from police and other line departments, trade unions, health squad merchant association etc. for the smooth conduct of the survey.

State Urban Livelihood Mission is conducted a pilot survey among urban homeless in Kalpetta. The ULB has already conducted a homeless survey during 2016-17 covering almost 38 urban homeless staying in the street. City Mission Mangers were entrusted to in analyze the data and to generate the report. Based on the report, action plan prepared to accommodate the urban homeless to the existing shelter homes within the ULB. If required, DPR for the construction of shelter homes to be prepared by ULBs considering new inclusion in the next 20 years.

Survey techniques

1. Interview schedule
2. Transit walk
3. Snowball technique
4. Key informants Interview (Police, Auto taxi drivers, night street vendors, porters etc.)
5. Group Discussion with Secondary stakeholders

Data validation

1. Data validation by conducting another round of survey in the same spot within 10/15 days
2. Issue a token / card which has to be verified during the second round of survey (If the card holders being get registered in ULB they would be provided with shelter, health insurance, Aadhaar card etc.)
3. Discussion with key informants/ secondary stake holders before finalizing.

Data Collection Team

1. CMMU team
2. ULB Health wing

3. NGO/ CBO/ Residents association/youth club/ Merchants association
4. Field survey with the support of District administration and Police dept.

Typology of street dwellers

1. Dwellers of permanent nature (staying in a same spot/ location)
2. Seasonal dwellers (persons coming for seasonal job/ business) stay for a particular time
3. Highly mobile street dwellers (they are highly mobile population) eg. People find shelter in bus stand and railway station.

Tools

1. Transit walk
2. Field survey
3. Key informants interview/ Group discussion

Challenges/ Limitation

1. Night survey- Survey can be done only after 10.30pm
2. Street dwellers stay in isolated area – difficult to identify
3. Various typologies – difficult to identify the real beneficiaries who need shelter
4. Persons afraid of giving personal information
5. Language issue (enumerators should be multi lingual)
6. Deaf and dumb
7. Psychiatric patients
8. Drug addicts/ drug peddlers/ Mafia (baggers)
9. Change in stay/ location.

As per Census 2011, there were 1.77 million homeless people in India, or 0.15% of the country's total population is homeless. There is a shortage of 18.78 million houses in the country. Total number of houses has increased from 52.06 million to 78.48 million (as per 2011 census). The rise has happened because of the liberal loan given by the banks. The census figures of 2011 show that in total India has 78.87 million households in the country against which it has 78.48 million houses which means there is a shortage of just 0.39 million houses in the entire urban area.

However, it still ranks as the 124th wealthiest country in the world as of 2003. More than 90 million people in India make less than \$1 USD per day, thus setting them below the global poverty threshold. The ability of the Government of India to tackle urban homelessness and poverty may be affected in the future by both external and internal factors. The number of people living in slums in India has more than doubled in the past two decades and now exceeds the entire population of Britain, the Indian Government has announced. The number of people living in slums is projected to rise to 93 million in 2011.

Problems

Some of the problems leading to homelessness include: disability (either mentally, physically, or both), lack of affordable housing (considering that a basic apartment in India costs approximately Rs. 10,000 per month, unemployment (either seasonal or through economic hardships), and changes in industry.

A growing concern

An increasing number of migrants looking for employment and better living standards are quickly joining India's homeless population. Although non-governmental organizations are helping to relieve the homelessness crisis in India, these organizations are not enough to solve the entire problem. Attempts at gentrifying India's problematic neighborhoods is also bringing homelessness levels up. Laws passed by the Municipal Corporation of Mumbai during the 1970s and the 1980s were held by the Indian Courts to be violations of people's right to life in addition to their right to a decent livelihood. A landmark case in 1986, however, would result in the favor of the homeless masses of India. The first decade of the 21st century would see 75,000 people kicked out of Sanjay Gandhi National Park with the government using a massive military force of helicopters and heavily armed police officers.

About 78 million people in India live in slums and tenements. 17% of the world's slum dwellers reside in India – making 170 million people "almost homeless. More than three million men and women are homeless in India's capital city. There were still 1.77 million people living without houses in roadside, railway platforms, under flyovers in India in 2011. However, the number of homeless people in India declined in 2011 even as families with no homes saw a rise in numbers, Census data released today showed.

In 2001, 1.77 million people were houseless. The proportion of homeless people to total population declined to 0.15% in 2011 from 0.19% in 2001 during this period.

However, there was a pick up in the number of homeless households as 0.449

million families in 2011 were without any shelter compared to 0.447 million households in 2001. But the share of such families compared to total families in the country declined from 0.23% in 2001 to 0.18% in 2011.

Definition of homeless

According to Census definition, houseless households are those which do not live in buildings but stay in open or roadside, railway platforms, under flyovers, etc.

In absolute terms, urban population saw a rise in homeless population from 7.78 lakh people in 2001 to 9.38 lakh people in 2011, but rural areas witnessed a decline from 11.6 lakh people to 8.34 lakh people. Apparently it is due to migration but a significant decline in rural homeless population was encouraging.

"This is a result of programmes such as Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) Delhi and Rajasthan were among the top five states where the proportion of houseless people to their overall population was huge. In Delhi, 0.28% of the total population was homeless and in Rajasthan, it was 0.26%. However, Uttar Pradesh had the highest proportion of homeless people in the country. Of the total homeless, 18.56% was in in UP, followed by Maharashtra (11.9%) and Rajasthan (10.24%).

The literacy rate improved from 27.5% in 2001 to 39.2% in 2011. However, more population with no homes withdrew from the work force in 2011 as 51.9% people were a part of the work force against 55.6% in 2001. This was witnessed both in the urban and rural parts of the country.

In this period, the overall population saw more participation in the work force

from 39.1% to 39.8%. The proportion of homeless population employed as agricultural labourers also declined to 17.7% in 2011 from 24.5% a decade ago. This trend is again opposite to what was seen on the national level where there was a rise in share of agricultural labourers from 26.5% to 30%. On the other hand, people without homes were getting more employed in household industrial activities as 5.6% of homeless population were household industrial workers compared to 4.9% a decade earlier.

Government of India launched Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) in 23 September 2013 and introduced scheme of shelter for Urban Homeless (SUH) as one of the components. Many urban poor are living without shelter and amenities. Homeless persons are subject to violence and abuse, living in the open with no privacy and protection. They are also prone to chronic diseases, ill health conditions, psychiatric disorder, criminalization, drug addiction, exploitation, malnutrition and irregular food habits.

A large majority of the urban poor work in the informal sector. One of the problems confronting the informal sector enterprises is the access to premises and supporting infrastructural facilities. A related problem is their access to suitable location within city. Also, the unorganised sector has low productivity and offers lower wages. This sector is characterized by excessive seasonality of employment and preponderance of casual and contractual employment. In the absence of social security measures and welfare legislatures propagation of social standards and workers' rights and denial of minimum wages.

Gender dimensions as such in different spheres have been receiving attention only in the recent past, with very limited understanding of their concerns. Women

in our society face inequalities stemming from their gender roles emanating from natures based on the traditional division of labour. Even though third gender is recognized in terms of gender dimensions, their experience in accessing proper shelter is a major issue of concern. There is hardship for women, who sometimes have to travel a lot from the place of stay to workplace. Women of migrant households who supports the family needs by employment needs safer place for their family including children. The income they earn provides very little to fulfill their shelter needs.

There has been a steady rise in the population of older persons in India. The number of elder persons has increased from 76 million in 2001 to 100 million in 2013 and expected to 198 million in 2030. The traditional norms and values of the Indian society laid stress on showing respect and providing care for the aged. However, in recent times, society is witnessing a gradual but definite withering of joint family system, as a result of which a large number of parents are being neglected by their families exposing to lack of physical and financial support and were out of their families without any shelter and earnings.

As defined in Directive Principles of state policy, article 41 of part IV which is particularly relevant with regard to persons with disabilities have right to work, education and public assistance. The state shall within the limits of its economic capacity and development make effective provision for securing the right to public assistance in shelter, employment, sickness and disablement.

To address occupational and social vulnerabilities faced by the above categories particularly the homeless Government of India has formulated shelter for urban

homeless (SUH) scheme under NULM. The homeless in the state survive with no shelter or social security protections and face many challenges like no access to public services such as health, food, water and sanitations. They were forced to live and sleep on pavements, at parks, railway stations, bus stations and places of worship, outside shops construction sites, under bridges and other places under the open sky. Some of them live in temporary structures, which are unfit for human habitations. For the care and protection of these categories of people, the state proposes to provision of SUH under NULM to access shelter to the services to safeguard human right to life and dignity, by providing shelter with essential services.

As part of the mission NULM to draw up a sustainable housing programme for the homeless in the state, it was decided to identify the homeless in the state. Therefore Kudumbashree Mission, by entrusting Kudumbashree CDS (City Level Federation) conducted a survey from 15 July to 10 August 2017. A team, comprising members of the city mission management units of National Urban Livelihood Mission, corporation, municipality, health department and the police, conducted the survey with the assistance of concerned Community Development Societies (CLF).

During the survey, 3195 people were identified as homeless from 93 Urban Local Bodies of 14 districts. Out of them, 2625 were gents, 564 were ladies and 6 were transgender. Kozhikode Municipal Corporation is the urban local body and Ernakulam district having the highest number of street dwellers among urban cities and administrative districts respectively. Out of the identified street dwellers 61 % are from the 17 urban local bodies, Kozhikode, Kochi,

Thiruvananthapuram, Sulthan Bathery, Kannur, Kollam, Thrissur, Kottayam, Palakkad, Thalassery, Vada-kara, Kunnamkulam, Alappuzha, Chalakkudy, Kalpetta, Kazargode and Angamaly.

Half of the identified homeless are between the age limit of 41-60. It is understood that 2106 had been dwelling in the street for more than one year. 1465 are coolie workers, 221 people are street vendors and 679 people are beggars. 1125 people have income less than thousand rupees. 309 are persons with disabilities. 1527 people became homeless while searching for their livelihood. 1159 people have their own houses. Idukki district has the lowest number of urban homeless. There are only 38 street dwellers in Idukki. Pathanamthitta and Kasargode also hold comparatively lower number of Street dwellers. There are only 59 & 68 street dwellers in Pathanamthitta and Kazargode respectively.

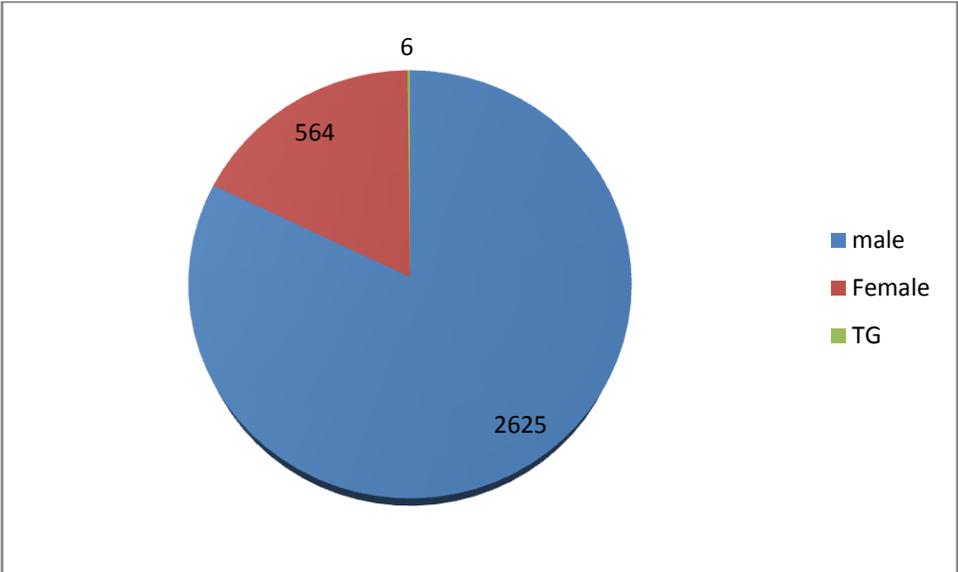
The survey collected information about their age, marital status, income occupation, native place, health issues and problems faced by them during the late night hours. The identified homeless will then be provided with round-the-clock shelter homes equipped with essential services.

Sustainable shelter homes would be built in each urban centre across the state, according to the number of homeless identified in the survey. The shelter homes would provide adequate security, sanitation facilities and drinking water for the homeless people.

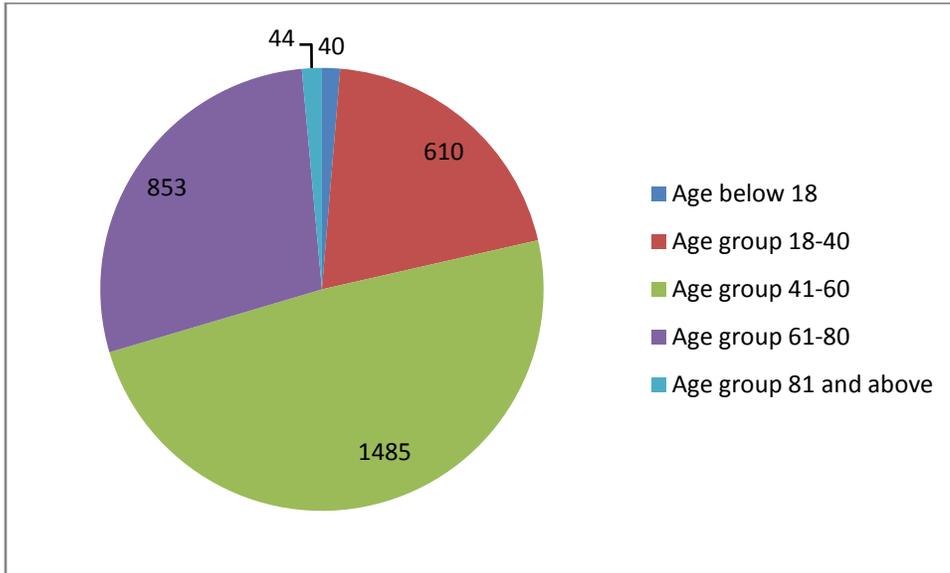
The 'Shelter for Urban Homeless' scheme is being implemented as part of the National Urban Livelihood Mission and Kudumbashree, the nodal agency of the program in the state. Inclusion cards were distributed to the people who were identified as homeless. The pilot study conducted to find the urban homeless had already identified 250 as homeless. Therefore, Homeless poor, wandering and sleeping in city streets, will soon get a shelter in Kerala.

The study findings with analysis have been given as follows.

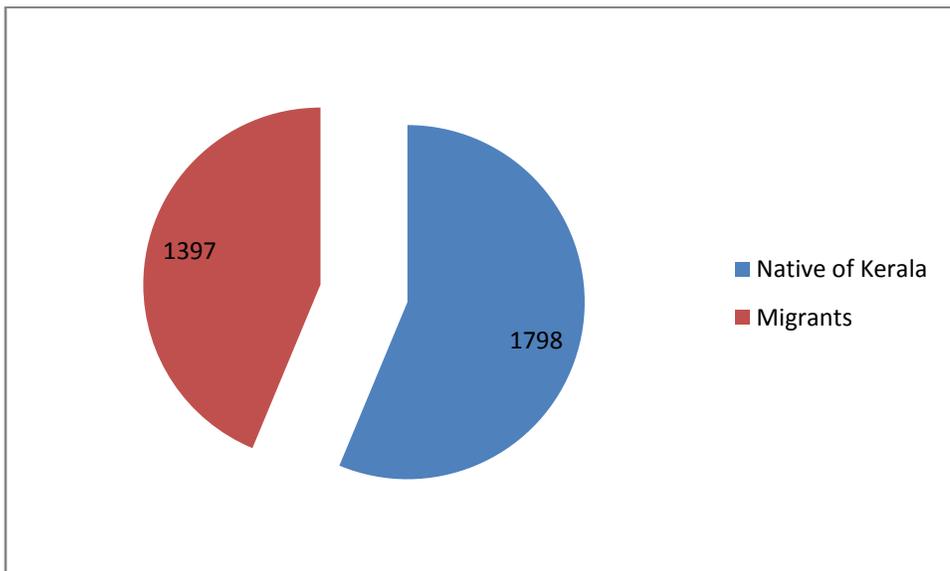
Gender distribution of street dwellers



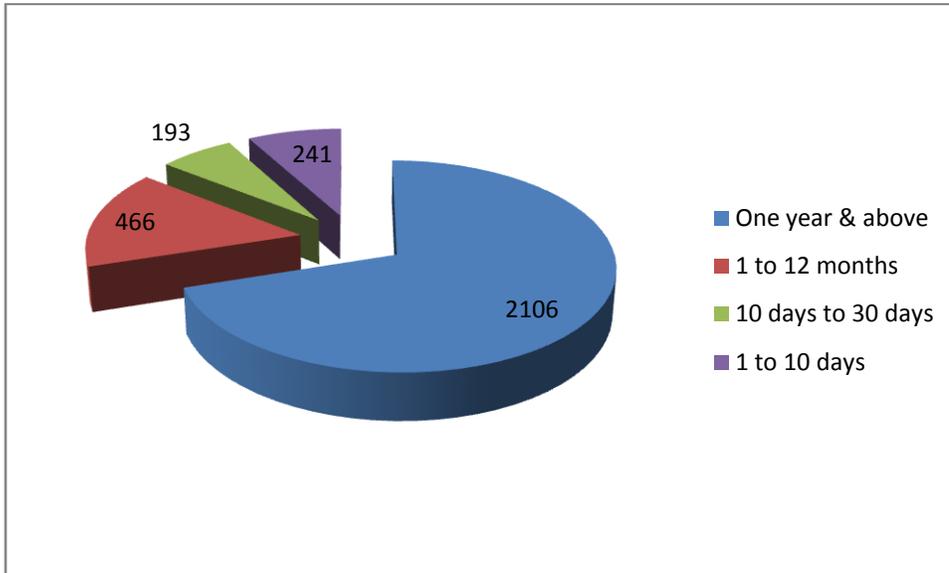
Age wise distribution



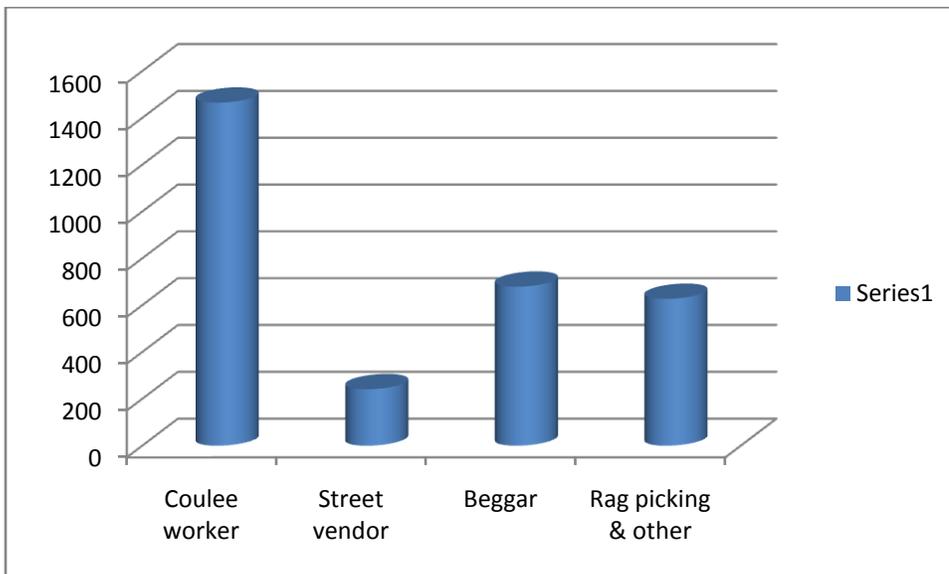
Nature of homelessness



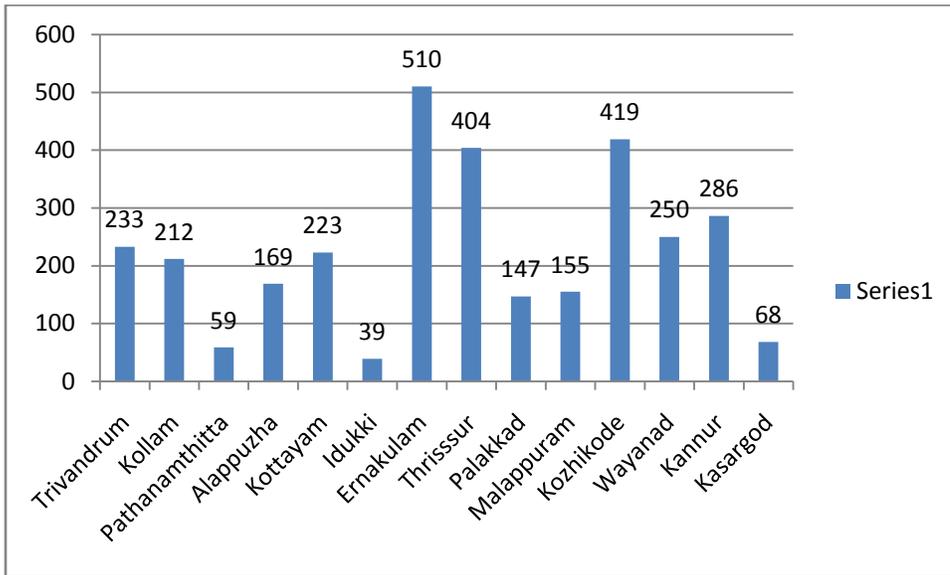
Nature of stay



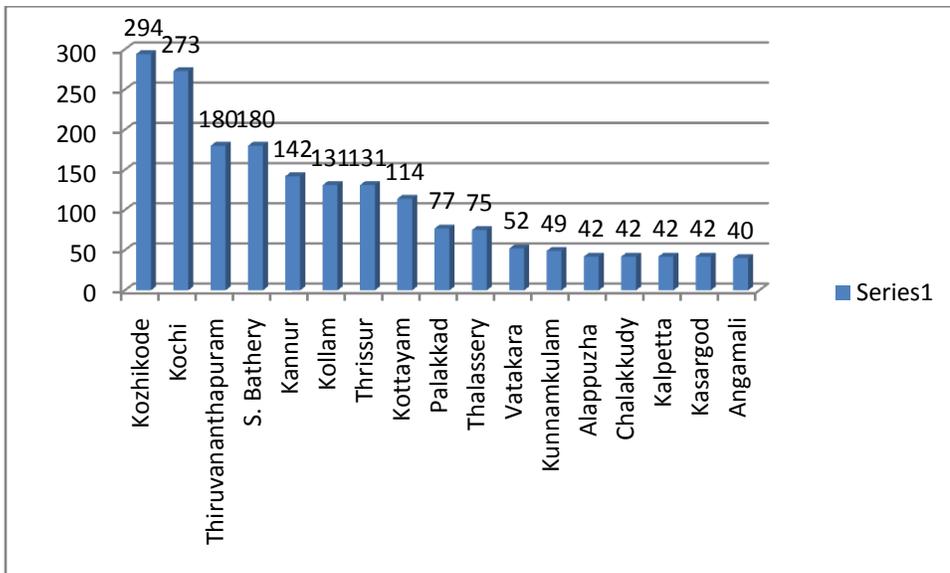
Job profile



District wise distribution of homeless



ULB wise distribution of homeless



Conclusion:

It is a broad misunderstanding that homeless populaces in the urban are involved in robbery, anti - social activities, they are unhygienic and menace to the society etc. Very little attempts have been made to understand the actual problem of these factions of people. Urban homeless are the most vulnerable section that represents unequivocal social marginalization. It is a universal understanding that homeless people in the city are intricate in robbery, unsocial activities, they are impure and risk to the society etc. Very little attempts have been made to comprehend the problems of these groups. These are the people who keep the city clean, make the city attractive, and provide us services at our doorsteps. However, for generations they lived in the streets and in complete uncertainty. One of the crucial needs of the homeless community is housing. Housing means a reasonably decent accommodation in peaceful vicinity, provision for lighting, safe drinking water and sanitation facility, a space where people can live without fear. It is the legal and moral responsibility of the Government to ensure that the human rights of all citizens, especially the most marginalized of which homeless constitute an important category are respected, promoted and fulfilled. The research study provided insights on the use of services by the homeless. It further revealed the intertwining of economic well-being and the state of homelessness uncovering how this affects the use of services. The urban local bodies should bring required number of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) for the construction of shelter homes to accommodate all urban homeless who are not privileged with safe shelters.

