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LOCAL INHABITANT PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS PHYSIO-SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS OF MIRPURKHAS CITY, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Housing is one of the most basic human needs, profoundly affecting human life and the environment. The population of rural and urban areas is growing exponentially, putting a strain on the economy and infrastructure. However, this burden is directly affecting the human lifestyle. People in rural areas are looking for job opportunities, high-quality jobs, healthcare facilities, and a variety of other services. People move from rural to urban areas, putting a strain on towns, which causes them to grow in an unplanned manner. The same situation is creating in the MirpurKhas city because it is the central city of district people from rural areas are migrating towards the city due to this city is overburdened with the population as a result of this city is expanding towards outskirts areas along with major roads.

However, this research is focusing on “Local inhabitant perspective towards Physio-social conditions of informal settlements of MirpurKhas city, Pakistan”. Eight informal settlements identified in Mirpurkhas city to carry out this research work and to achieve the desired results research objective of this research is to investigate the physio-socio-economic problems of informal settlements in Mirpurkhas city through a closed-ended questionnaire survey. The results showed that people living in informal settlements face several issues, which are linked to inadequate infrastructure and a lack of social amenities and basic services, placing them in a dangerous situation. According to the perspective of local inhabitant absence and poor availability and lack of access towards basic services and social amenities deteriorating their lifestyle because not any regulatory authority is working to improve their living condition or enable to live in formal residential areas.

INTRODUCTION

According to the most recent data from (HABITAT III, 2016; Habitat, 2017), nearly 54% of the world's population lives in cities that account for roughly 80% of global GDP. About 1.5 billion people live in the Pakistani urban centers. Nearly half of the world's population lives in cities, which account for a quarter of the global economy. About a third of the world's population is expected to live in Pakistani cities by 2025. The number of people living in slums rose from 767 million to 828 million in developing countries between 2000 and 2010 (Habitat, 2008; Kamalipour & Dovey, 2019), which is expected to hit 889 million world slum residents by 2020. The living conditions of slum dwellers worldwide have been described as one of the most severe global issues (Khadr, Dein, & Hamed, 2010), although slums are home to an estimated 32.7 percent of the world's population (Habitat, 2008). There is a phenomenon known as 'Informal Settlement,' which happens when housing is constructed in a city without the authority's approval (Han, Sahito, Thi Nguyen, Hwang, & Asif, 2019; Huchzermeyer, Karam, & Maina, 2014).

Continued urban growth, poverty escalation, and degradation of the developed urban climate, including a lack of basic infrastructure facilities in fast-growing informal settlements, have raised concerns about an urban crisis that may be of poor quality due to continued urban expansion, poverty escalation, and deterioration of the developed urban environment, including lack of basic infrastructure facilities in fast-growing informal settlements (Kombe & Kreibich, 2001; Manzoor, Wei, & Sahito, 2021; Sinharoy, Pittluck, & Clasen, 2019). Informal Settlements are a broad category of residential areas made up of communities living in self-built shelters that are considered informal due to their legal status, physical conditions, or both (Nassar & Elsayed, 2018).

As the urban population continues to expand, informal settlements are becoming more entrenched. Informal settlements are related to an increased risk of illness and ill-health due to inadequate living conditions and insufficient facilities (Thuy Van Thi Nguyen, Han, Sahito, & Lam, 2019; Weimann & Oni, 2019). Formally, a squatter colony is described as a group of people occupying land illegally or squatting. This may be due to a planned invasion, but it is more likely due to the settlement's steady growth as people travel about (Memon, Kalwar, Sahito, Qureshi, & Memon, 2020; Willis, 2009). Upgrading is a term for initiatives aimed at improving housing standards and providing housing-related infrastructure and services to settlements deemed (or officially designated as) 'slums' or illegally constructed (including squatter settlements) (Thuy Van T Nguyen, Han, & Sahito, 2019; Satterthwaite, 2012).

While urban informality is more common in global southern cities, poor living conditions and housing informality can also be found in developed countries (Kalwar et al., 2019; Sandoval & Sarmiento, 2020). Population growth, rural-urban migration, a shortage of affordable housing, poor governance (particularly in policy, planning, and urban management),

economic vulnerability and low-paid jobs, marginalization, and displacement caused by conflict, natural disasters, and climate change have all led to the development of informal settlements (Habitat, 2015). It is generally agreed that upgrading informal settlements by tenure regularization and infrastructure provision is preferable to relocation (Devas & Amis, 2004; Gibbs, Jewkes, Willan, & Washington, 2018), assisting in preserving social and economic networks that are essential to people's livelihoods. In informal settlements mostly issues are related to the provision of water sanitation services which makes the poor physical condition of these settlements and various health hazards and diseases (Clasen et al., 2015; Sinharoy et al., 2019; Troeger et al., 2017; Wolf et al., 2014).

Materials and Methods

Study area

Mirpurkhas city is selected as a study area. It is the capital of MirpurKhas district and the District's DHQ town in Pakistan's Sindh province. It is the fourth largest city in Sindh and Pakistan's 33rd most prominent city, with 189,671 people in 1998, with an annual average growth rate of 2.51%. However, by 2017, the town's population had risen to 233,916 people, with an annual average growth rate of 1.11 percent (census, 2017). MirpurKhas city contains 233,916 and 41,022 households with 5.7 household sizes. Below fig 1 is showing the location map of the study area MirpurKhas city. Fig 2 is showing the location of eight identified informal settlements in the study area.

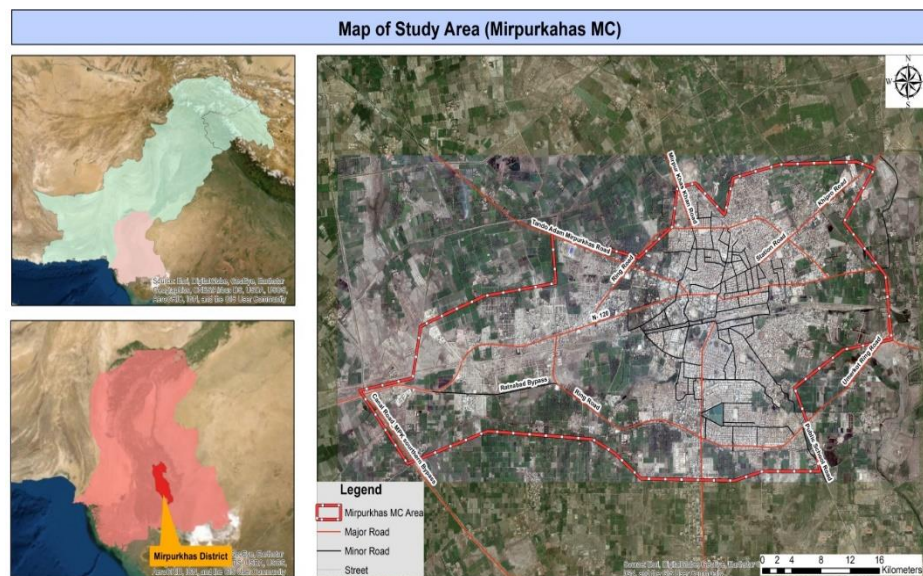


Fig 1. Location Map of Mirpurkhas city
Source: Generated through GIS Software

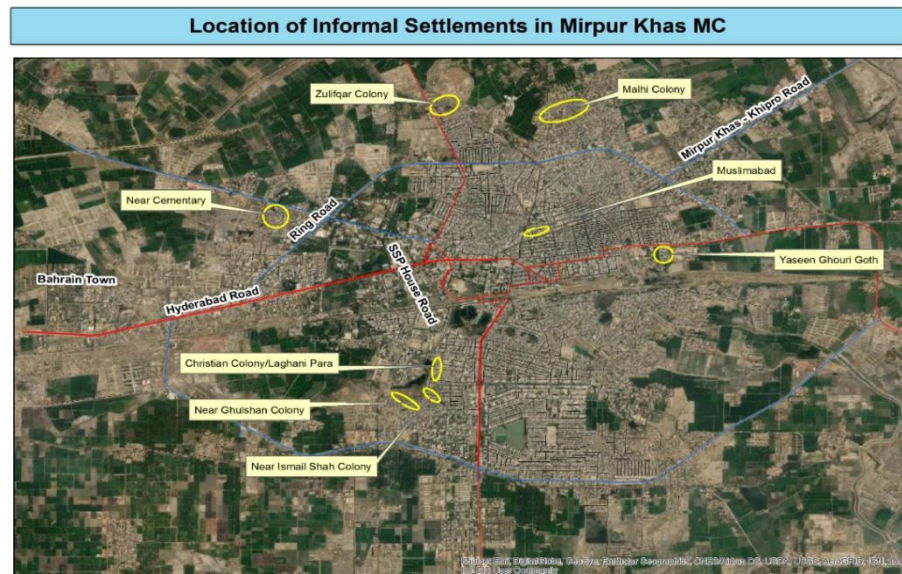


Fig 2. Informal settlements in study area Mirpurkhas city

Source: Digitized on GIS Software

Method for data collection

To identify the physio-social problems of people living in informal settlements of MirpurKhas city close-ended questionnaire was designed and filled from the local inhabitants by giving the questionnaire with appropriate options concerning the research. Likert scale questions are also the major part of this questionnaire which includes the question regarding basic services and social amenities. Basic services include sanitation services, tap water, drinking water, electricity, gas, and telecommunication services. Whereas, social amenities include accessibility towards schools, health facilities, proper roads, parks, and playgrounds, and accessibility towards shopping and busines. A total of eight informal settlements were identified from the Katchi Abadi Authority Mirpurkhas in the study area and a sample size of 64 was taken by using quota sampling technique according to the number of housing units in each settlement (Chua, 2012).

Method for data analysis

Data collected through a closed-ended questionnaire survey was analyzed by using SPSS Software (Statistical package for social sciences). Descriptive analysis was done and data is presented in the form of graphs which show the percentages of responses to highlight the physio-social problems of informal settlements in the study area.

Results and Discussion

Data obtained from dwellers regarding basic services and social amenities to investigate the physio-social problems in informal settlements of MirpurKhas

city based on various variables which are presented in the form of graphs and showing the scenario of each settlement.

Availability and provision of basic services

Results related to the availability and provision of basic services are presented in the form of graphs which are showing the detailed results obtained from each informal settlement.

Fig 1 Illustrate the responses obtained from the inhabitants of informal settlements. To identify the availability of sanitation services in different eight informal settlements of MirpurKhas city. Results show that there is a fair availability of sanitation services in near Sementry colony. 33.33% of respondents said that in Zulfiqar colony availability of this service is good and 33.33% of respondents said that this service is fairly available. In Muslimabad 28.57 respondents said that fairly available and 28.57 respondents said that poorly available. However in Cristian para and Langhani para, near Gulshan colony, Yaseen Ghouri Goth, Malhi colony near S.L.D factory and Near Ismail shah colony highest percentage of responses indicates that sanitation services are poorly available to them. Garbage is openly thrown in the streets. Due to this reason, their streets are not in good condition which creates a smell and unpleasant environment for the people.

Fig 2 indicates the availability of tap water in informal settlements. The results revealed that in near Sementry, Zulfiqar colony, Muslimabad, Cristian para and Langhani para, near Gulshan colony, Yaseen Ghouri Goth and Malhi colony near S.L.D factory tap water is fairly available. Whereas, in Near Ismail shah colony 50% of respondents said that the availability of tap water is poor.

Fig 3 shows the availability of drinking water in informal settlements. The highest percentage of responses indicates that drinking water is fairly available to the people in all informal settlements except near Sementry. But the availability of drinking water is not good in any informal settlement. There is no proper water supply system. Most of people cannot buy pure drinking water. Due to this reason, they are facing various health diseases.

Fig 4 illustrates the provision of electricity. In near Sementry 60% of respondents said that electricity is fairly available to them. 33.33% response from Zulfiqar colony shows that there is also a fair provision of electricity. While in Muslimabad, Cristian para and Langhani para, near Gulshan colony, Yaseen Ghouri Goth, Malhi colony near S.L.D factory and Near Ismail shah colony electricity is poorly provided to the people. As a result of this, they face many problems to perform their daily activities. Women who do the work from home face difficulty due to the poor provision of electricity.

Fig 5 shows the provision of gas facilities in informal settlements. Results revealed that in near Sementry, Zulfiqar colony, near Gulshan colony, Yaseen Ghouri Goth, Malhi colony near S.L.D factory and Near Ismail shah colony gas service is poorly provided. Whereas in Muslimabad and Cristian para and

Langhani para there is a poor provision of gas service. Due to the poor gas provision, people use clay stoves for cooking.

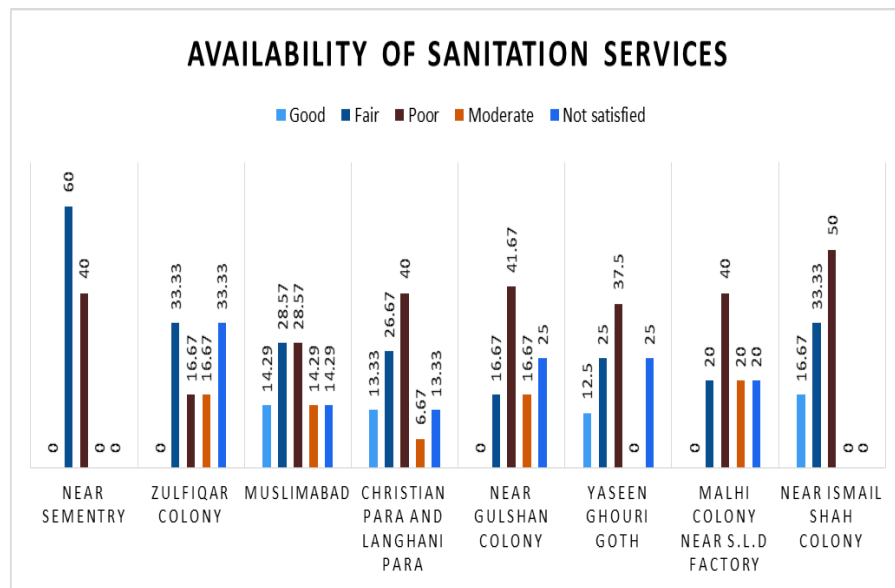


Fig 3. Availability of sanitation services

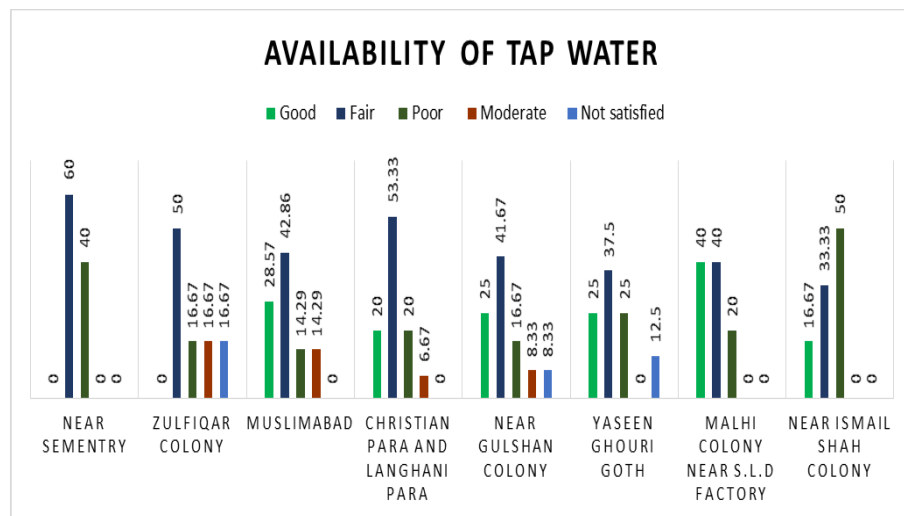


Fig 4. Availability of tap water

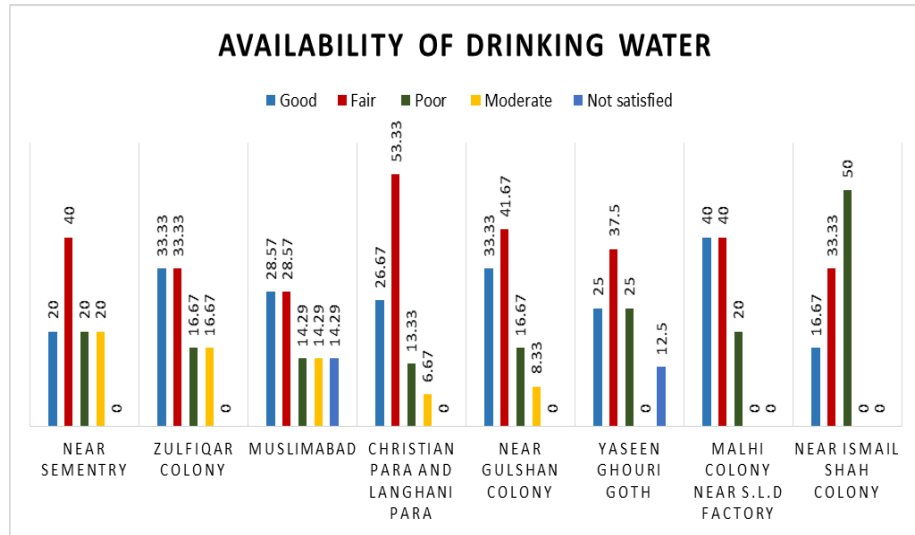


Fig 5. Availability of drinking water

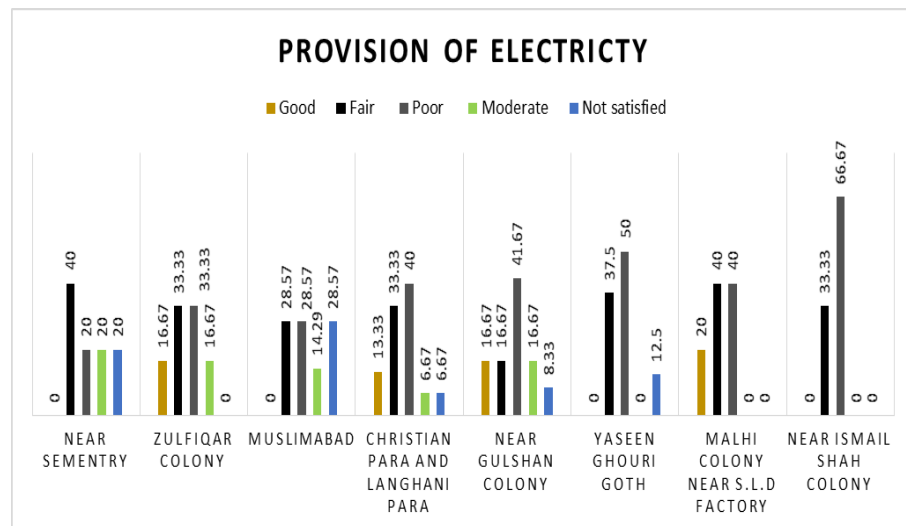


Fig 6. Provision of electricity

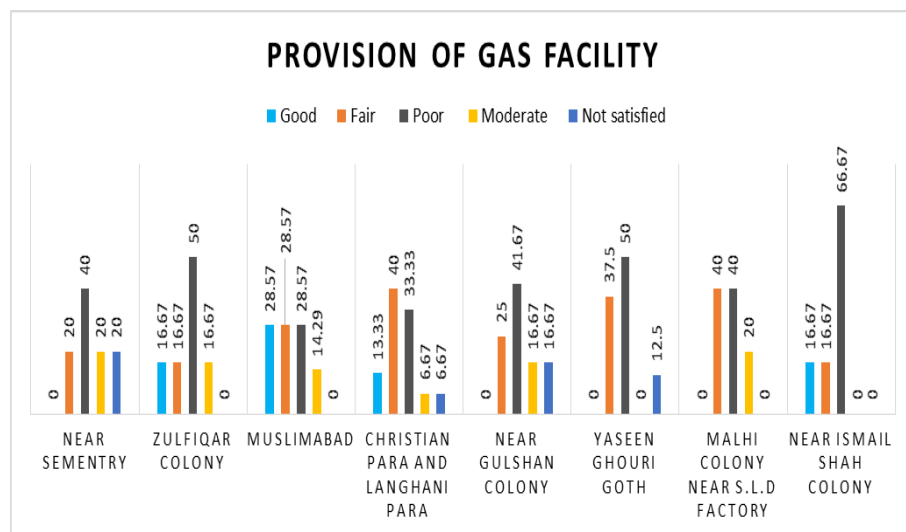


Fig 7. Provision of gas facility***Provision and accessibility towards social amenities***

To identify the provision and accessibility towards social amenities. Informal settlement dwellers were asked about the accessibility to schools, provision of health facilities, provision of proper roads, provision of parks and playgrounds, and accessibility towards shopping and business. Results are presented in the form of graphs. Graphs are showing the percentage of responses to indicate the existing condition of each settlement.

Fig 6 illustrates the accessibility of children to schools. In near Sementry, Christian para and Langhani para, near Gulshan colony and near Ismail shah colony people have poor accessibility towards schools. While, inhabitants of Zulfiqar colony, Muslimabad and Malhi colony have fair accessibility towards schools. Due to the poor accessibility towards schools their education status is low. As a result of a poor education system, they are unable to achieve a good lifestyle. This is because they are unaware of the ongoing trends.

Fig 7 highlight the provision of health facilities in informal settlements of MirpurKhas city. Results indicate that in near Sementry, near Gulshan colony, Yaseen Ghouri Goth and near Ismail shah colony health facilities are poorly available, whereas in Zulfiqar colony health facilities are poorly and moderately available. While in Muslimabad equal percentage of responses were obtained which means there is a good, poor and moderate provision of health facilities. However, in Malhi colony near S.L.D factory health facilities are fairly and poorly available.

Fig 8 shows the provision of proper roads. Results show that most of the people of informal settlements are not satisfied with the provision of roads and said that roads are poorly available. Mostly informal settlements are unsurfaced. This condition creates difficulty for the people to move and access other areas easily.

Fig 9 illustrates the provision and accessibility of informal settlers towards parks and playgrounds. Results revealed that people living in near Sementry are not satisfied with the provision of parks and playgrounds. While the settlers of the rest of the informal settlements said that parks and playgrounds are poorly provided to them. As a result of this they cannot enjoy the fresh environment their children cannot play freely. People are unable to do physical actives and make social gatherings.

Fig 9 indicates the accessibility of people towards shopping and business. Results show that in near Sementry and Cristian para and Langhani para people are not satisfied with the accessibility towards shopping and business. In near Gulshan colony and Yaseen Ghouri Goth respondents are moderately satisfied. Whereas respondents from Zulfiqar colony, Muslimabad, Malhi colony near S.L.D factory and near Ismail shah colony have poor accessibility towards shopping and business. They cannot access the market easily because they reside in outskirts areas of the city.

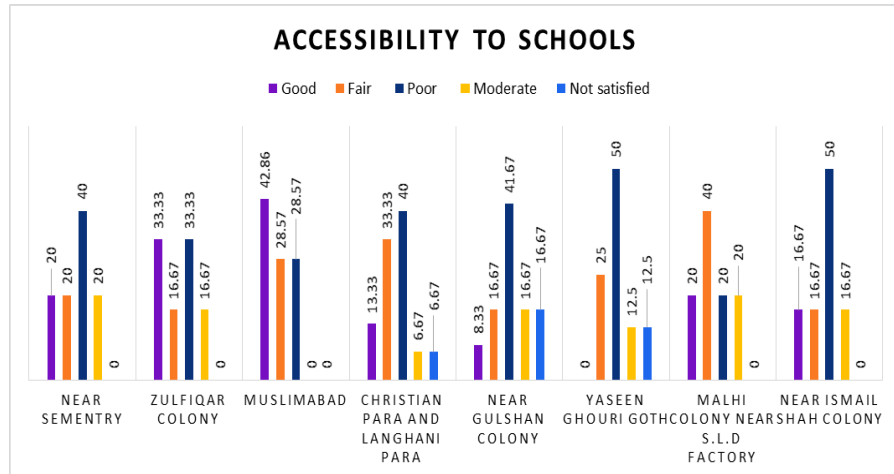


Fig 8. Accessibility to schools

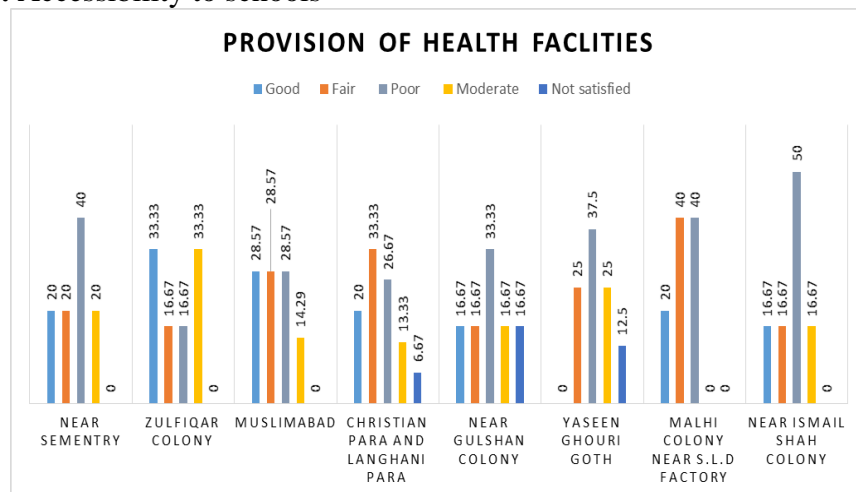


Fig 9. Provision of health facilities

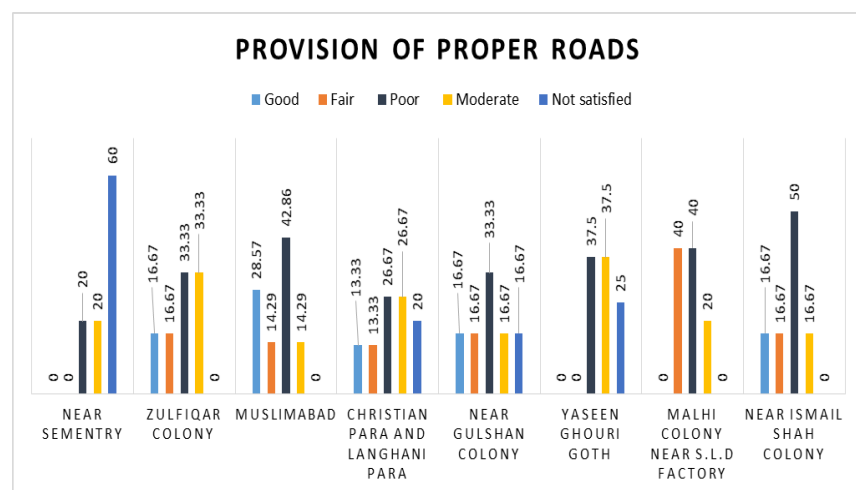


Fig 10. Availability of proper roads

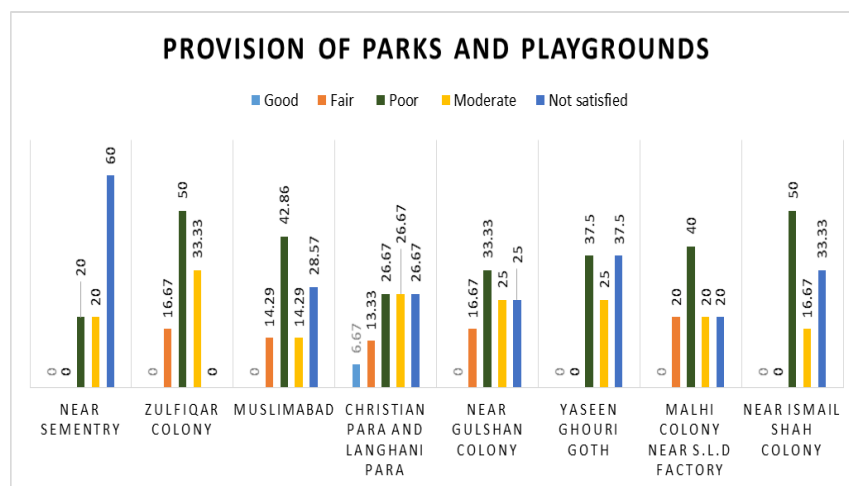


Fig 11. Provision of parks and playgrounds

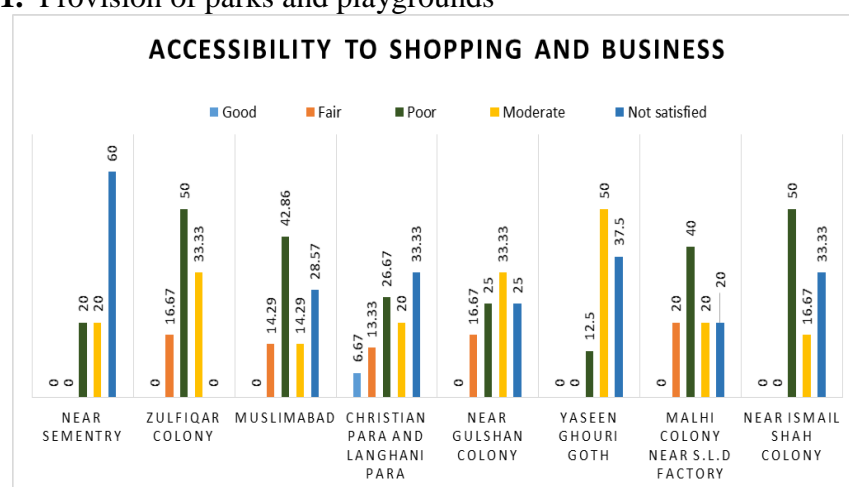


Fig 12. Accessibility to shopping and business

CONCLUSION

This research aims to investigate the physio-social problems of informal settlements based on data collection through a closed-ended questionnaire survey in selected site MirpurKhas city. Through which it has been derived that people who are residing in informal settlements are facing problems related to basic services and social amenities. Because these services and amenities are poorly available to them which is deteriorating their lifestyle day by day. Due to these issues, they are mostly uneducated and cannot do a good job or reside in those areas which formally made. It has been concluded that the overall condition of informal settlements of MirpurKhas city very poor which getting worst day by day that is harming the lifestyle of local inhabitants and destroying ability and lifestyle present and upcoming generation as well.

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