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Socio-spatial Segregation in Bengaluru A Case Study of Malleswaram

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Abstract. This paper discusses the socio-spatial segregation in Bengaluru, India, with particular emphasis on the erstwhile Brahmin-planned locality of Malleswaram. It uses the history of urban planning, census statistics, and recent scholarly and media research to analyse the long- term effects of caste-based zoning, economic liberalization, discriminatory real estate policies, and policy deficiencies. The paper aims to illustrate how these forces have created fractured urban geographies that concentrate privilege and marginalisation along lines of caste and class. Drawing on the example of Malleswaram, the paper attempts to bring to light stark inequalities in access to housing, infrastructure, education, and public space revealed through analysis. Even with its upscale amenities, Malleswaram is demographically homogeneous and socially exclusionary. The research suggests urban planning measures such as mixed-use development, enforcement of affordable housing percentage requirements, participatory public space retrofits, and participatory planning to promote increased integration. Finally, it contends that disassembling fixed segregation necessitates intentional policy change and inclusive design interventions towards a more equitable future city for Bengaluru.

Keywords - Historical & Planning Context, Malleswaram planned suburb 1897 Bangalore plague, Colonial grid planning caste segregation Bangalore, Low-elevation land informal settlement Bengaluru, Caste-based residential layouts Malleswaram

I. Introduction

Bengaluru, formerly Bangalore, is India's fastest-expanding city, having evolved in recent decades from a royal garden city into a worldwide IT centre (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018). However, its development has been characterised by glaring socio-spatial cleavages. In a general sense, socio-spatial segregation is the geographical separation of social groups by caste, class, religion, and so on, in a city, resulting in privileged and marginalised concentrations. Residential segregation in Indian cities is usually tied to centuries-old hierarchies of caste (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019) (Vaidya, 2024).

These trends have continued but endure today in Bengaluru, despite dreams of urban modernity. This paper examines how past planning and present-day processes have created caste and class-based enclaves in Bengaluru and how this restricts access to housing, education, infrastructure, environmental commodities, and upward mobility for marginalised communities. This paper concentrates on Malleswaram, one of Bengaluru's most established planned neighbourhoods, initially planned in 1889, following a plague that devastated the area. Malleswaram was particularly planned as

a Brahmin residential colony (Ravi, 2021). To this day, it is synonymous with upper-caste culture and tradition, housing numerous temples, heritage cafes, and high-end schools. Employing Malleswaram as a case study, this paper explores how its genesis led to a culture of exclusivity, how its populace continues to be skewed, and how public spaces and property markets still evidence entry barriers for lower- caste or Bahujan families.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban segregation has been researched within sociology and urban geography for a long time. Classical urbanists formulated segregation indices based on income or ethnicity. In India, researchers have written about how caste traditionally organised urban space despite the growth of cities. Early ethnographic writings recorded village and city quarters separated by caste. Bengaluru's Cantonment, built by the British, has separate Anglo-Indian and European enclaves, whereas the older Mysore city had caste and religious neighbourhood divisions (Hazelhurst, 1970). Later research emphasises enduring segregation (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018), for instance, demonstrate that in Bengaluru, caste-based residential segregation occurs in clusters, creating fractals, where prosperous, upper-caste neighbourhoods are encircled by intense lower-caste settlements (Vaidya, 2024) (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018). They point out that merely applying rough ward boundaries underestimates the actual segregation: even nearby streets can vary by caste composition (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018).

Planners and anthropologists further examine how the political economy enhances segregation. Middle-class elites have benefited unequally from liberalisation and deregulation, spatially embedding inequality (Shaw, 2012). Informal housing (occupations) create and are created by power gradients (Benjamin, 2008). An examination of Bengaluru slums reveals that social mobility is very low and often takes generations (Krishna, 2013) (Ravi, 2021). In this manner, segregation diminishes access to city resources cumulatively.
Also, lower-caste and minority groups in cities like Paris and Mumbai tend to see their mobility held back to peripheral enclaves, even when formally integrated (Tonnelat, 2017).

Several recent case studies centred on Bengaluru give a master history, charting how successive regimes like the Wodeyars, the British, and post-independence, planned out neighbourhoods along caste lines (Nair, 2005) (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019). NGOS and citizen journalists have also mapped segregation. A CitizenMatters series includes interviews and data demonstrating that older Bengaluru areas like Malleswaram, Basavanagudi, and so on, are dominated by the so- called upper caste, and that Dalits/Bahujans are effectively excluded from many apartment rentals through caste-profiling questions (Ravi, 2021). Competition for public space exists in Bengaluru, showing how the middle class and lower-caste groups compete to have access to sidewalks, parks, and schools (Vanka, 2014). These studies authenticate that

segregation is not just a relic of the past but an ongoing part of Bengaluru's urban texture.

Recurring themes emerge: spatial planning in Bengaluru has traditionally conformed to social hierarchy; economic development has produced new enclaves, but too frequently for the affluent; government policies like housing schemes have failed to correct inherent biases. This paper draws on this literature by combining new census-based mapping with recent reporting to connect causes and effects within a single framework.

III. CAUSES OF SEGREGATION IN BENGALURU

Segregation in Bengaluru has profound historical origins, exacerbated by economic transformation and policy inattention. Four key drivers can be observed:

Historical Caste-Based Planning

The pre-colonial and colonial city was distinctly divided by caste and occupation. During the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, Bengaluru, then the capital of Mysuru, had the Old Fort or petes, and subsequently the Cantonment. The petes themselves were further divided. For instance, Nagarathpete for weavers and merchants, Ganigarapete for oil-pressing castes, Kumbarapete for potters, and so on (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019) (Ravi, 2021). Early planners and surveyors confirmed this compartmentalised plan (Nair, 2005) (Buchanan-Hamilton, 1807). Following the British conquest in 1791, two distinct areas developed – the native city and the Cantonment, which existed side by side. The Cantonment, established in 1809, was home to European soldiers and Anglo-Indians, and was maintained both socially and physically insulated from the old city (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019).

In 1898, the post-plague city further formalised caste enclaves: newly constructed suburbs such as Basvanagudi and Chamarajapete set apart different zones by caste – Brahmins in one area, Lingayats, Dalits, and Muslims in others (Ravi, 2021). Malleswaram was planned in 1889, after the great plague, mainly for the Brahmin migrant populations (Malleswaram, 2025). A new study observes that Bengaluru's grid-like road infrastructure is linked with caste and topography, indicating that even street grids were confirmation of status. Low- lying, unhygienic localities match Dalit settlements. While organised colonies such as Malleswaram (on higher ground) accommodate upper castes (Vaidya, 2024).

Economic Liberalisation and Urban Inequality

Bengaluru's economy has dramatically changed over the 1990s. As the city became India's IT and biotechnology hub, huge amounts of money came in, and the population boomed – a 46.7% increase in population between 2001 and 2011 (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018). New satellite townships like Electronic City and Whitefield, and gated communities were constructed for professionals. The benefits, however, accrued mainly to middle-class, higher-caste migrants.

Research indicates that Bengaluru's software workforce continued to be overwhelmingly dominated by the urban middle class and higher castes (Krishna, 2013). Consequently, migration based on employment retrenched existing hierarchies: those who migrated for public sector and IT sector employment were predominantly from elite castes (Krishna, 2013) (Ravi, 2021). Numerous lower caste villagers and irregular migrants were excluded from formal-sector jobs and instead stayed in poorly remunerated construction or service labour, frequently as domestic help, chauffeurs, and manual labourers. This rising inequality meant new housing and services concentrated in already privileged areas. For example, resurgent neighbourhoods and high-end apartments spread where rich Brahmins and others could purchase them, while old Dalit settlements continued to be underserved.

Real-Estate Market Bias

Segregation is also sustained by private housing markets. Surveys and anecdotal evidence from Bengaluru suggest that landlords typically caste-screen tenants. Applicants are covertly caste-profiled via harmless questions like surname, diet, and so on. Owners delicately backtrack when a Bahujan applicant becomes apparent, de facto evicting or rejecting them (Ravi, 2021). Likewise, cooperative societies and new apartment complexes usually exclude lower castes through indirect networks. Practitioners note that close-knit upper caste neighbourhoods such as Basavanagudi contain mutual networks of Brahmin suppliers and landlords, for example, a common milkman network, which are resistant to outsiders entering them (Ravi, 2021). In this way, even in the absence of formal zoning, market practice enforces de facto segregation.

Urban Planning and Policy Deficits

Lastly, government policies have traditionally been caste-blind and inadequate to foster integration. Affordable housing quotas and slum upgrade schemes in most cities are short of their targets or neglect caste requirements. In Bengaluru, housing boards and NGOs offer some subsidised flats, but waiting lists and eligibility barriers are high for Dalits and Adivasis. More importantly, none of the master planning laws call for mixed neighbourhoods or retributive design on caste lines. Reports deplore that approaches to urban housing or policy making are often caste-blind (Ravi, 2021).

Former chief plans, such as the 2007 Comprehensive Development Plan, paid no heed to enduring social fragments. New infrastructure, such as roads, metros, malls, and so on, tends to benefit wealthy neighbourhoods with political influence. Although India's Real Estate Regulation and Development Act 2016 mandates developers to make anti-discrimination declarations, enforcement is weak, and rental markets are opaque (Vaidya, 2024). In short, the absence of pro-integration policies, combined with lax enforcement of current building and zoning regulations, has allowed historical trends to fossilise into present-day urban life.

These four forces engage with each other. Historical planning created caste enclaves; economic liberalisation increased income disparities along caste lines; private markets gave preference to "insiders" in existing places; and public planning did little to end this cycle. The result is an extremely uneven city. In-depth Census analysis reveals that around 8% of Bengaluru's enumeration blocks (neighbourhood sub-units) have virtually no SC/ST population, while there are others with very high

concentrations (Ravi, 2021). (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019). Malleswaram and surrounding wards, for example, continue to be solidly upper-caste, while slums hold nearly all of the city's SC/ST population. This paper expands on how this segregation translates into real-life experiences in the following section.

IV. EFFECTS OF SEGREGATION ON ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

The socio-spatial rifts described above have real effects on citizens' lives. Major areas affected are:

Housing Quality and Access

Segregation strictly confines marginalised groups to the city fringe areas, typically slums or peri-urban settlements. As observed, nearly a third of the population in Bengaluru resides in slums, covering merely 2% of the land area (Vaidya, 2024). The slums are predominantly occupied by SC/ST and minority populations. Houses in these settlements are generally informal, congested, and sans services. In contrast, middle and upper caste dwellers have well-planned colonies, luxury apartments, and gated housing. It is reported in Bengaluru that Dalit applicants are rejected for rental and buying offers, which compels them toward self- constructed tenements or low-cost hostels at the fringes (Ravi, 2021). Additionally, network connections allow elite natives to locate housing in their enclaves, whereas outsiders, even other castes, cannot. The consequence is that several low caste households are priced out of city centres, relegated to outlying districts with substandard amenities (Ravi, 2021).

Education and Social Services

Segregated neighbourhoods tend to have uneven school and health amenities. Affluent areas, such as Malleswaram or Jayanagar, possess well-endowed public schools, ancillary coaching institutes, and supportive parent communities. Conversely, Dalit-majority settlements are usually segregated and possess poorly equipped government schools with bad sanitation and teacher absenteeism. Specific Bengaluru statistics are limited, but more extensive research indicates that students from lower caste slums in Indian cities have increased dropout rates and experience discrimination at school. It becomes a vicious cycle: better academic qualifications come from higher caste areas, paving the way for high-wage employment, and hence the possibility of remaining there (Ravi, 2021) (Vaidya, 2024).

On the other hand, marginal groups continue to be trapped in low-education niches. Likewise, social facilities like health clinics, welfare offices, etc, tend to be sited in or close to upscale centres. Residents of slums might lack convenient access or feel excluded by linguistic and caste prejudices. Even in cases where citizens from the lower caste areas manage to break out of the cycle and move to upper caste areas, the government policies and existing bias within the populace reduce the chances of these outliers remaining there.

Infrastructure and Utilities

Urban infrastructure, like drains, roads, electricity, and water, is also unequal. Elite wards typically have timely city maintenance and clean water. However, most peripheral areas experience broken roads, blocked drains, and erratic water. Citizen reports comment on the broken governance of municipal services for poorer areas (Ravi, 2021).

Less affluent areas usually have no parks, sidewalks, or streetlights, and so are less habitable. Even air and noise pollution follow caste/class lines: factories or dump yards are located in proximity to cheap land at the outskirts of cities, where lower-caste people live. The sociolegal review mentions that low-lying, unsanitary areas coincide with Dalit settlements, implying that environmental costs like floods, waste, etc, are borne by marginalized communities (Vaidya, 2024).

Environmental Quality

Environmental amenities like green cover, clean water, and low pollution are also unevenly distributed. Survey and satellite records, like Air Quality Index maps, tend to indicate that central or upmarket Bengaluru has cleaner air and greenery compared to peri-urban slums. Segregated settlements hardly ever possess parks or stormwater lakes, creating heat islands and flood risk. For instance, Malleswaram itself boasts a few parks like Sankey Tank and broad tree-lined avenues, while surrounding slum enclaves may have none. Even water quality varies: most slums use shared taps or boreholes, while upscale zones enjoy a piped supply. Even though Bengaluru's current clean air measures encompass the entire city, class- caste segregation results in divergence in compliance and enforcement across zones.

Social Capital and Mobility

The most deep-seated impact of segregation is on social mobility. Upper caste enclaves have close social networks: referrals to jobs, credit circles, and shared kitchens, which enable quick circulation opportunities within the group (Ravi, 2021). Low caste slum residents, on the other hand, typically do not have such capital. A movement activist notes that a Bengaluru slum Dalit could only advance their situation through infrequent government connections – otherwise, mobility was very low and often takes generations (Ravi, 2021). Residents of slums infrequently transition into formal employment (Krishna, 2013). Moreover, location itself restricts mobility: isolated neighbourhoods tend to be far from job centres, enhancing commute expenses and diminishing access to employment. The pushed to the margins scenario results in most being able to take only informal, low- income jobs like driving, construction, and domestic work. This lock-in mechanism – whereby segregation results in inferior schooling and networks that in turn decrease prospects – is a vicious cycle and obliterates any hope of class mobility across caste boundaries (Ravi, 2021).

Overall, segregation in Bengaluru is a multi-dimensional inequality. It restricts where
individuals can reside, what amenities they can access, like schools, healthcare, and transport, and how they engage in the economy. Each consequence feeds into the nextone. Lower caste areas tend to have poor quality housing and infrastructure, which compromises health and learning, which in turn hampers economic progress. By contrast, upper caste enclaves have high-standard buildings and high social capital,

protecting citizens from much of the urban difficulties. This is consistent with cross-national research, which establishes that segregation deepens urban inequality (Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998), but in India, the superimposition of caste and class brings a particular severity to these divisions.

V. CASE STUDY – MALLESWARAM

Malleswaram (Malleshwaram) provides a realist perspective into the ways in which segregation is created and recreated. Established by H.V. Nanjundaiah in 1889 as a reaction to a plague, Malleswaram was among the very first planned suburbs in Bengaluru (Malleswaram, 2025). Its initial design included wide north-south and east-west streets like Sampige Road and Margosa Road, delineating a well-planned grid – a marked contrast with the crowded petes of the pre-municipal city. Notably, Malleswaram was specifically designed for Brahmin households. Malleswaram and a few other areas that came up later also came to be populated mostly with Brahmin residents, as the community was among the first to migrate to urban areas (Ravi, 2021). The naming conventions of the city betray this plan: while places such as Nagarathpete were reserved for certain trading castes, Malleswaram (from Mallapura) was identified with Brahmin social life – temples, Vedic schools, elite homes, etc.

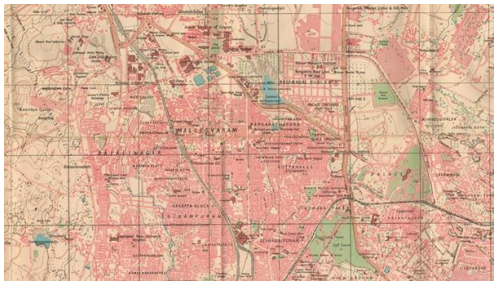

Fig. 6.1: Survey of India map showing Malleswaram, 1969 (Muralidhara, 2025)

Malleswaram continues many of the characteristics of its history as an upper caste enclave today. Recent ward-level data demonstrates nil SC/ST presence demographically. Several older wards like Malleswaram have zero blocks with SC/ST population, highlighting the exclusionary impact of caste-based planning (Ravi, 2021). In reality, it is possible to find hardly any Dalit or Adivasi families in Malleswaram; rather, Saraswat, Hoysala, and other Brahmin sub-groups are the majority. This is attested to by local oral history as well: numerous Brahmin families can look back several decades, handed down through social networks. At ground level, Malleswaram's surroundings are of superior quality compared to adjacent slum areas. It has several well-manicured parks like Sankey Tank and Sampige Park, broad tree-lined roads, and low-rise family houses. The area also features prominent temples like the Kadu Malleswara Temple, and cultural centres like Garudanahalli Temple and temples of all major sects, following its heritage function. Infrastructure is strong: paved pedestrian paths, streetlights, and municipal water/sanitation systems are standard. The area is also a commercial centre. Two major shopping centres – Mantri

Square and Orion- are on its outskirts (Malleswaram, 2025). High-end educational boards and institutions – the State Pre- University Board, Mysore Education Society, Wood Science Institute, and IISc (Indian Institute of Science) – are concentrated here (Malleswaram, 2025).

Such amenities – plazas, cafes, institutions – stand in stark relief against the adjacent slum settlements like Kurubarahalli and Sankey Road slums, where such facilities are non-existent or in deficit. Property markets in Malleswaram reveal the exclusionary dynamics. Land and house prices are among the highest in northwest Bengaluru, frequently out of reach even for the richest. Cooperative housing societies in Malleswaram, like Canara Union, have traditionally imposed membership requirements that privilege Brahmin applicants (Harshitha, 2013).

Fig. 6.2: A photo of old Malleswaram market taken on September 5, 2013 (Ravi, 2021)

Instructive realtor networks affirm that hardly any OBC or Dalit family ever moves into Malleswaram blocks. In fact, as one activist highlighted, areas like Basavanagudi and Malleswaram are exclusive as they welcome only other Brahmin households via social invitation networks (during festivals and by sharing food) that outsiders are unable to penetrate (Ravi, 2021). Even during the lockdown for COVID-19, such community networks made essentials like milk and groceries available at Brahmin homes but left others dependent on far-flung supply chains (Ravi, 2021).

Malleswaram's public space design also speaks of its character. The area has spacious streets and large open spaces like Shankar Mutt Square and Khade Circle, where there is a gathering of families. They are, however, informally controlled by the local Brahmin community; religious processions and festivals like Rath Yatras have free access to them, while local vendors in the evenings or youth playing cricket are uncommon here. In contrast, kids in slums in other areas nearby play in insecure open lots or auto yards because they do not have local parks. Hence, the public space in Malleswaram is of high quality but narrowly accessible due to social norms. Sanitary, elevated, and planned colonies like Malleswaram accommodate upper castes (Vaidya, 2024), implying that well-maintained public spaces in these areas cater essentially to one group. In brief, Malleswaram is the archetype of Bengaluru's segregation pattern. Its origin legend is caste-coded, and that heritage lingers. The area is wealthy, with excellent infrastructure and services that the original settlers established and preserved. Individuals outside the Brahminsegment have had very little presence or ownership here. For instance, an analysis discovered that 10% of Bengaluru's enumeration blocks do not have any SC/ST residents whatsoever,

including Malleswaram and Basavanagudi blocks (Ravi, 2021).

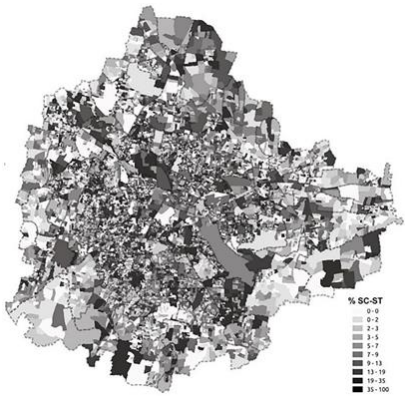

Fig. 4.1: Bengaluru enumeration block level SC+ST population variation (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019)

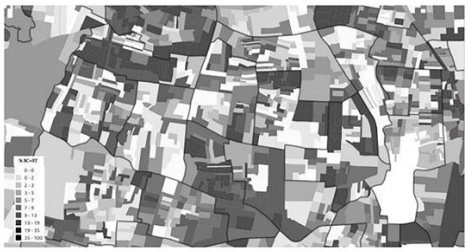

Fig. 4.2: Variation of population within wards in Bengaluru. This figure simply magnifies a particular portion of Fig. 4.1 to better illustrate ward boundaries and thus intra-ward variation in populations (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019)

The case illustrates how public space, demographics, and spatial design converge to form a self-sustaining enclave: outsiders who belong to the inside group are socially and economically unable to settle, and hence the enclave is demographically homogeneous. Any future development in Malleswaram – redevelopment of old buildings or provision of amenities – will have to deliberately work against this exclusivity if integration is sought.

VI. PROPOSED URBAN DESIGN SOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSIVITY

Making Bengaluru and Malleswaram more inclusive spaces demands conscious design and policy interventions. Crucial strategies informed by literature and practice are:

Mixed Income and Mixed-Use Development

Encouraging diversified land use can desegregate enclaves. Rather than exclusive residential zoning for one class, new developments ought to offer affordable housing units for SC/ST, OBC, EWS, combined with market-rate housing in the same block or building. Mixed land use, like residential buildings with shops, schools, or offices, attracts diversified social groups to the same space by enhancing opportunities for social and economic contact. Traditional urbanists such as Jane Jacobs have long contended that mixed communities promote social cohesion; in the Indian setting, planners propose allocating a portion of new developments to economically weaker sections (EWS). For example, the central government requires 10% of flats in multi-story buildings to be reserved for EWS families. In Bengaluru, requiring BDA (Bengaluru Development Authority) layouts and private developments to have mixed-income clusters may serve to break up caste homogeneity. But quotas alone will not work. Success in integration is achieved when shared public facilities like parks, community centres, and marketplaces are made available to all residents and not when EWS units are segregated in an outlying wing.

Stringent Implementation of EWS and SC/ST Quotas

Apart from mixed developments, current housing schemes also need to be strictly followed. Karnataka's recent decision to enhance housing quotas for religious minorities from 10% to 15% (The Times of India, 2025). Similarly, Maharashtra's RERA (Real Estate Regulatory Authority) regulations outrightly prohibit developer discrimination. Karnataka can also implement similar binding terms and conduct audits. For instance, the BDA might reserve more plots for low-cost housing, well above the minimum 10% EWS, perhaps using land cross-subsidy models. Cooperative housing societies and rental associations must be monitored to avoid informal caste-screening, reporting suspects to authorities according to anti-discrimination provisions. In Malleswaram, redevelopment could allocate some units to Dalit families to see the demographic mix of the area change gradually.

Pro-Poor Infrastructure and Participatory Planning

Inclusion involves as much process as policy. Structures like neighbourhood planning bodies, such as ward committees, under the 74th Amendment Act, should be strengthened to include Dalit and lower-caste residents in local-level decisions. For example, Bengaluru's ward offices may require representation of Dalit NGOs and slum leaders when making local park or road-widening designs. This will ensure that new sidewalks, playfields, or sanitation blocks benefit underserved populations instead of upscale neighbourhoods. In Malleswaram, a participatory approach would map forgotten corners such as the old market area for a retrofit, ensuring they are designed for all castes. In the city as a whole, such engagement facilitated Gurgaon's retrofitting of informal settlements into new urban villages by officially extending services while preserving mixed- income textures. Focusing on spaces managed by the community, like night shelters and collective kitchens, can also overcome social divisions.

Inclusive Public Space Retrofits

Even public facilities that already exist can be made more inclusive. Parks and playgrounds in Malleswaram, for instance, could have events that are accessible to all

castes instead of exclusionary temple functions. Metro station construction projects should include art and signage that is responsive to local diversity. Street hawkers on footpaths, usually belonging to minority groups, may be allocated controlled areas outside malls such as Mantri Square, alleviating tensions and making informal economies part of mainstream spaces. Further, universal design elements like ramps and public washrooms facilitate disabled citizens' entry into shops and transport. Installing rainwater harvesting or community gardens on abandoned land lots, usually found on the fringes, enhances environmental conditions where lower-caste inhabitants reside. Various social groups imagine public space differently (Vanka, 2014).

Offering diverse facilities like shaded areas for senior citizens, youth sports grounds, play area for kids, and so on, in every neighbourhood can assist in making people of all castes feel welcome in the public sphere.

Education and Community Programs

Apart from physical planning, coupling development with social programs is key.

Governments and NGOs must improve civic education among castes: for instance, anti-discrimination law workshops for landlords, interfaith cultural festivals at schools, and dignity of labour campaigns. Free legal aid can assist slum dwellers in availing RERA entitlements if refused shelter. At the workplace, corporate social responsibility can sponsor township schools that have a mixture of neighbourhood kids. With time, these efforts, along with desegregated education and training, will diffuse the hard lines of caste that zoning imposes. However, the implementation of these measures will not be straightforward. Mixed-use developments are met with resistance from developers, and NIMBY (Not in My Backyard) ism. Resident associations in Bengaluru often resist even modest low-income apartments on the grounds of planning. EWS quotas have been systematically subverted elsewhere by corruption and lack of monitoring. Participatory planning demands ongoing political will and capacity-building at the municipal level. However, examples like Sukhdev Vihar, a mixed community in Delhi, and Pune's redevelopment of slums indicate that improvement is attainable. In Malleswaram, small pilots like the redevelopment of one city park as a mixed community centre with subsidized shop plots could prove the social and economic dividends of inclusion.

VII. DISCUSSION

Research reveals that Bengaluru's segregation is the result of a combination of long-standing legacies and contemporary forces. India's caste system tends to produce residential segregation (Hazelhurst, 1970) (Desai, 1994). In Bengaluru, this persisted through colonial urban planning and was later exacerbated by market forces. The application of fine-grained data reveals substantially higher segregation than coarse wards (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Residential Segregation Patterns in Indian Metros, 2019). Adding nuance, Malleswaram's design itself – wide avenues, colonial-era buildings, and large temples – was never intended to include lower-caste groups. Today, it is a microcosm of urban privilege, complete with top-notch amenities. Comparing this to other cities in India is revealing. Mumbai's chawls and Delhi's unauthorised colonies also reflect caste enclaves, but Bengaluru's petes and suburbs

uniquely mix planned layouts with caste sectors. Unlike Mumbai, where caste migration was more interwoven, Bengaluru's elites had space to create exclusive enclaves like Basavanagudi in the 1920s and Jayanagar in the 1940s that remain politically influential (Ravi, 2021).

The post-liberalisation boom could have dispersed wealth and opportunity more evenly, but instead followed existing patterns. Therefore, segregation in Bengaluru has continuity, in the case of historic caste orders, and change, in new economy fragments, in its genes. This resonates with international urban theory about how inequality gets mapped onto space. For instance, dissimilarity and isolation measures increase with segregation (Massey & Denton, 1988). Similarly, it can be observed that dissimilarity scores of about 0.5 for Bengaluru at the block level (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018), indicates that virtually half the SC/ST population would have to shift to attain equal distribution. Social isolation theory assumes that this segregation will result in parallel societies of minimal cross-contact (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018). In Bengaluru, residential proximity does not necessarily ensure social integration (Shaw, 2012). Communities may be next door and worlds apart (Bharathi, Malghan, & Rahman, Isolated by Caste: Neighbourhood-Scale, 2018).

The Bengaluru example thus upholds the general principle that social policy and urban design need to actively intervene between spatial form and social inclusion, not rely on market forces to do so. There are constraints to this study. Detailed ward or block-level census data for religion, caste, or intersections of caste and religion are scarce. Malleswaram-specific information, like village documents, is not in the public domain. Future studies could include GIS analysis of school quality by neighbourhood, or air quality readings by caste zone.

However, the intersection of several sources – historical evidence, census trends, and investigative reporting – makes this research secure at a general level: the segregation documented is undeniable in both its historical causes and current effects.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Socio-spatial segregation in Bengaluru is a multifaceted outcome of the past, economics, and policy. Through a consideration of Bengaluru's history of a close case study of Malleswaram, the fact that planning by caste has left deep imprints on the cityscape has been demonstrated. These imprints shape who occupies where, who receives what public amenities, and whose dreams can be fulfilled in the city. The implications are stark: decent housing, quality education, basic infrastructure, clean environment, and social mobility are all sharply stratified. This stratification will self-perpetuate. Segregated neighbourhoods create poor networks and low opportunities, particularly for Dalits and tribal groups. Yet, there are openings for change. Urban design does not have to be destiny. By conscious mixed-use development, strict enforcement of inclusionary housing quotas, participatory governance, and retrofitting of public space, Bengaluru can move towards a more equal city. The fact that Bengaluru is undergoing an evolution in terms of urban developments also shines a light of hope on moving towards economic, social, and spatial equity. Malleswaram may lead the

way with neighbourhood-level experiments, such as transformation of a temple land to community housing, which proves the worth of integration. City planners and activists must learn from the legacy of thinkers such as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to inform reforms. As this report demonstrates, data-driven and people-supported policy, informed by facts and citizen voices, can dismantle outdated habits. Ultimately, Bengaluru's destiny lies in connecting its fragments into a unified whole (Desai, 1994).

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