

AN EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSFORMATION OF INDIA

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Today more than half of the world's population reside in urban areas which contribute for more 70% of global gross domestic product (GDP).¹ In past few years an upwelling trend of urbanisation has been observed. The old cities are growing and new urban centres are being built every day to meet the needs of growing population. It is expected that by 2050, about two-thirds of the people will be living in urban areas across the world.² To meet the

¹United Nations Human Settlements Programme. 2015. "INCREASING SYNERGY for GREATER NATIONAL OWNERSHIP UN-HABITAT GLOBAL ACTIVITIES REPORT 2015".

www.unhabitat.org

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1726Habitat%20Global%20Activities%202015.pdf>.

²Shlomo Angel et al., "The Dimensions of Global Urban Expansion: Estimates and Projections for All Countries, 2000–2050," *Progress in Planning* 75, no. 2 (2011): 53–107,

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.progress.2011.04.001>

needs of the today's and future population, it is very important for countries to be more sustainable in every possible way. Keeping this in mind, United Nations developed 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) which were adopted by all the member states in 2015.³ Amongst them, SDG 11 focuses on creating sustainable cities and communities. Its goal is to make every city and its human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.⁴

India has about 4400 recorded urban areas and many more are in the formation.⁵ As one of the fastest growing economies of the world, the country has been grappling with the challenges that come with rapid urbanisation. Some of these challenges include congestion, water scarcity, pollution, climate change effects like heat, drought and flood, waste management, urban poverty, and inclusivity amongst many others. To cater the current and future needs of the nation and its citizens, it is important for India to adopt a sustainable urban development pathway that comprises of economic growth, social justice, and environmental protection.

India has a three-tier government to support urban development in the country. The three tiers include central, state and local governments. Central or union government develop policies and provide finances that are crucial for pan India urban transformation. State government's role is to design strategies to support regional implementation. Lastly local governments (here urban local bodies) role is on-ground implementation of the policies. This system was established under the 74th constitutional amendment in 1992 which recognises the importance of local self-governance in bringing government and citizens together in urban transformation.⁶ Despite all the goal settings and structural transformations, Indian cities are grappling with many challenges mainly due to lack of appropriate resources and human capital.⁷ Appropriate human capital includes both quantity and quality. Urban local bodies (ULBs) of the country often suffer with limited human resources with increasing work burden. Along with this, there is a lack of diversity in the existing work force in these local government bodies which further hinders the holistic development of a city.⁸

In general, the employees of ULBs are instituted through ad-hoc hirings or sometimes even through compassion. Usually there are appointments made by State Public Commissions through group D examinations which has same pattern for all the employees. The eligibility criteria for all the employees in ULBs is usually a graduate in any specialization.⁹ The human resources placed through such criteria and examinations

³United Nations. 2015. "The 17 Sustainable Development Goals." United Nations. 2015. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

⁴United Nations. 2021. "Goal 11 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs." Sdgs.un.org. 2021. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>.

⁵"LGD - Local Government Directory, Government of India." n.d. Lgdirectory.gov.in. Accessed August 2, 2022. <http://lgdirectory.gov.in/>.

⁶"FOURTH SEMESTER COURSE-424 LOCAL GOVERNMENT and POLITICS in INDIA.. UNIT-III." n.d. https://cbpbu.ac.in/userfiles/file/2020/STUDY_MAT/POL_SC/73rd%20and%2074th-converted.pdf

⁷ Review of Approach towards Establishing Municipal Cadres in India. 2014. Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India and The World Bank. February 2014. <file:///C:/Users/wishp/Downloads/Final-Report-30-09-2014-submitted-M%20Cadre.pdf>.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

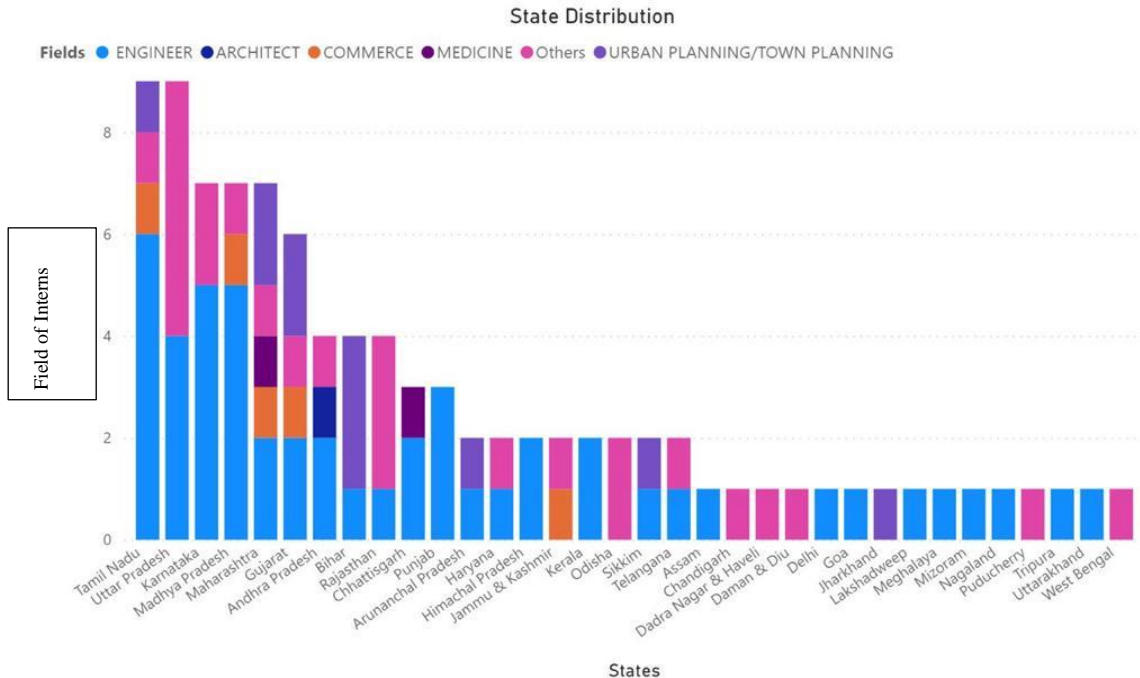
will not be useful for the work that requires a specialist knowledge. Thus, often cities rely for resources on private organizations' such as consultancies which come at a very large cost and vested interests. Lack of specialist knowledge in these organizations create void in keeping checks and balances thus causing difficulties during crisis management. In the past few years, the havoc created by the knowledge and capacity void in urban governance has been very evident. Some of them are observed during the handling the impacts of climate change such as repeated flooding, heat waves, social inclusion, etc. In addition, almost all the ULBs have been constantly complaining about the shortage of human resources to handle tens to hundreds of projects handled by them every day.

To solve these problems, Indian government started a program called TULIP (The Urban Learning Internship Program). This program envisages on bringing youth of the country from various backgrounds into the urban governance to enhance innovation and skill development for the future at a low cost.¹⁰ This program was jointly launched by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and Ministry of Education (MoE) on 4th June, 2022 using a digital platform designed and run by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). This program allows all the 4700+ ULBs to hire students and fresh graduates as interns for a period of anywhere between 2 to 12 months to work with them. Usually, the hired interns are familiarized with the processes and structures in the respective organizations' while allowing them to utilize their academic learnings on ground to support the city's development. This program provides ULBs with an opportunity to hire short term employees

Since the launch of the program two years ago, more than 2000 urban governance organizations (includes ULBs, parastatal bodies, central ministries etc) across the country adopted and implemented this program where more than 4700 students were offered internships to work on various projects across domains.¹¹ Some of them include road construction, building design, sanitation, planning, digitalization of resources amongst the many.

¹⁰ "Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs - TULIP." 2020. Aicte-India.org. 2020. https://internship.aicte-india.org/module_ulb/Dashboard/TulipMain/aboutus.php#partnership.

¹¹ Ibid

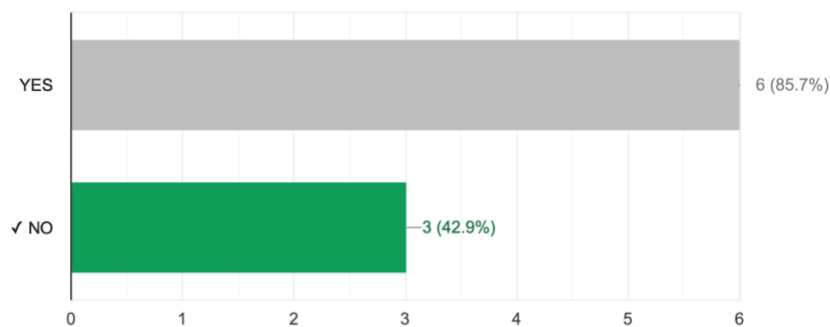


Graph 1: Hirings of interns in each state according to their qualifications

Further, seven smart cities (Special Purpose Vehicle of India namely, Rajkot, Varanasi, Jabalpur, Srinagar, Salem, Chandigarh and Nagpur) were surveyed during this research to understand the contributions of interns hired under TULIP. These cities were selected on the basis of quantity of interns hired so far. Each of these cities provided more than 100 internships to the youth of the country in past two years. They are also the cities which were proactive in deliberating, designing and implementation of the program. Upon talking to the managements of these cities to understand their support for the program, it is understood that they believed bringing the specialized youth into the urban governance would support sustainable transformation of the city and thus the country. Other than this, it is observed that most of the youth hired in these cities are the residents.

Are the hired TULIP interns from the same city?

1 / 7 correct responses



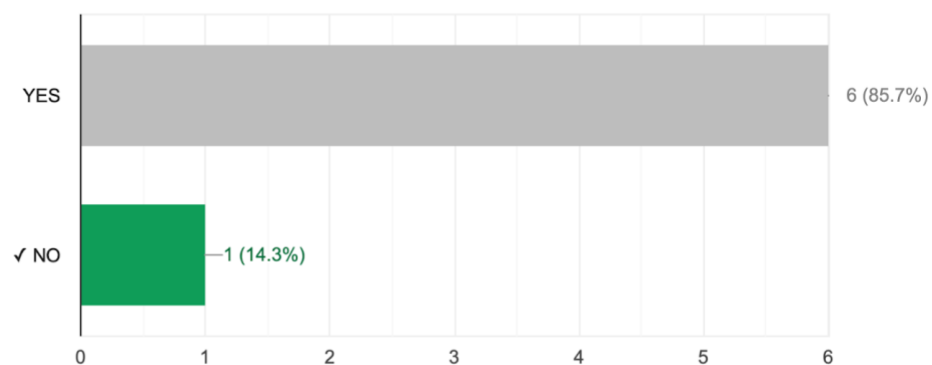
Graph 2: Hirings of interns in each city on the basis of their domicile

The reasons behind this is said to be the availability and understanding of the resident about their own city and its intricate problems faced.

With this program, cities were able to identify the capacity gaps focusing on the skills and qualifications before hiring the staff. Only in few cases such as graphic designing, social media management etc., the interns are hired specific to skills rather than the academic background they possess.

Are the hired TULIP interns from the required academic/professional background as field of engagement?

1 / 7 correct responses



Graph 3: Hirings of interns in each city according to their academic/professional background

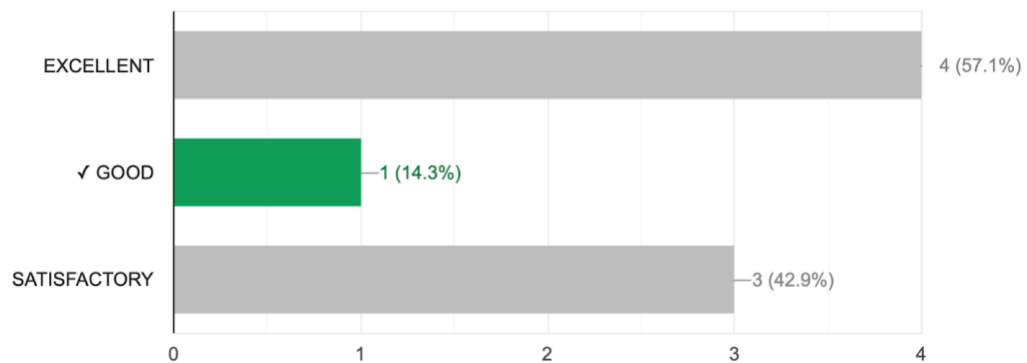
During the survey it is also identified that the pace of work in the cities increased from before the implementation of TULIP due to increase in capacity number. The cities also emphasised that interns brought fresh ideas into the system where they were able to weave new technologies with existing structure thus adding a new flavour to digitalisation of urban governance in particular.

Cities observed that the youth who availed this internship and entered into the work force brought alterations into the public private engagements of nation development. Their learnings transformed from academics to field knowledge. Although this is at nascent stages right now, it is expected to show large outcomes in future.

Overall, the city managers expressed their satisfaction with the passion and work brought by the youth into urban governance thus allowing the enthusiasm of work to keep intact.

How is the performance of the TULIP interns overall?

1 / 7 correct responses



Graph 4: Performance rating of interns in each city

Youth participation in urban development initiatives has a big impact on how cities transform. Through a youth peer-to-peer strategy, which involves young people engaging other young people, TULIP has included this young population in urban transformation. Peer-to-peer interaction has a multiplier effect that can help programmes and projects for urban development swiftly justify even a small amount of investment. TULIP gave interns, the chance to work on pressing problems in urban local government and to publish research papers and reports. The internship's next goal is to gather a group of young people so that they may learn about problems with urban governance and develop their ability to advocate for reforms. Gaining comprehension and the capacity to integrate academic experience and practical knowledge into projects is the overarching goal. The interns also become proficient in programme design, implementation, writing research papers, compiling and analysing data, and core engineering tasks. The internship structure also ensured that the interns learn everything there is to know about the research topics or actual projects, working on in-depth.

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