

A Sociological Analysis of Scavengers (With Special Reference to Chitradurga District)

T. Shyamaraja*

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Government Arts College (Autonomous), Chitradurga, India

Abstract: Often said India is a country of contradictory. Rich and poor, low and higher ranking of the people based on caste system in India. This caste system divides the profession of the people also. Keeping this in mind the Present research paper studies the socio-economic condition of scavengers of Chitradurga district of Karnataka state. The practice of scavenging has been abolished by the law. “The prohibition of empowerment of manual scavengers and their rehabilitation act” was passed in 2013. Yet the practice remains same. Hence, the present research paper tries to enlighten the sociological life as well as economic conditions of scavenging workers in Chitradurga district.

Keywords: practice, scavengers, prohibition, socio-economic status.

1. Introduction

Scholars say India is a country of contradictory, divides people based on caste, the caste system often derived by Varna. This Varna system was based on people occupation. Hence, these scavenging workers belong to the lower caste or deprived caste of the society. These people called as Dalits also. Scavengers literally means the practice of manual cleaning carrying handling in many manners called scavenging.

The ILO (International Labour Organization) has form three types of manual scavenging works in India.

- Removal of human excrement
- Cleaning septic tanks
- Cleaning gutters and sweepers

In India manual scavenging is punishable offence. Act of 1993 banned manual scavenging and 2103 act provided punishment in engaging these activities. However, many sect of the Dalit community has been engaging in cleaning or handling human excreta in the society.

A. Importance of the study

In India the profession of scavenging mainly based on caste system. All types of sanitizing work considered lower among occupation Sometime Based on hierarchy some studies reveal Dalit Subcaste were Engaged in this work all over India. Even the law prohibited this profession many people in various states including Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Uttara Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and many more. Keeping this in mind the present study tries to throw light on the scavenger worker in Chitradurga district.

2. Objectives of the Study

The present study keeps the following objectives for the study purpose

- To analyze the social status of scavengers
- To assess the economic condition of the worker's
- To describe the health awareness among the scavenging workers.

3. Study Universe and Sample

The present study selects Chitradurga district. In which 10 respondents have selected in Chitradurga taluk choosing stratified random sampling method.

Chitradurga is one of the most backward district of Karnataka state. People of this district predominantly engaged in agricultural activities and huge number of people worked as agricultural laborers and lower social occupation such as cleaning, scavenging and many more.

4. Caste of the Respondents

As stated earlier the scavenging work mainly found in lower caste community of the country especially in Dalits. The following table shows that clear picture about what are the castes of scavenging worker's.

A. Caste of the respondents

Table 1
Caste of the respondents

Caste	Frequency	Average
Madiga	06	60%
Bhangi	03	30%
Others	01	10%
Total	10	100

Based on the primary data has given by the respondents, in the present study 60% of Scavenging workers are Madiga 30% of them are Bhangi, 10 % belongs to the other caste.

It clearly shows that the scavenging work mainly found in or performed by schedule caste or untouchable community of the society. As stated earlier scavenging work is a type of hereditary and most of them belong to the deprived community of the society.

5. Income of the Respondents

The below table shows the income group of the respondents. Naturally the low level income group people opt this profession for the livelihood purpose. Hence the present study indicates the income group of the respondents.

Table 2
Income of the respondents

Income	Frequency	Average
Below 10000	7	70%
11000- 25000	2	20%
26000 50000	0	00
Above 50000	01	10%
Total	10	100

The above table indicates that the majority of the respondents comes under low level income group. Which means the 70% scavengers have 10000 annual incomes 20% of the respondents have 11000-25000 income group and only 10% of the respondents have above 50000% annual income. Totally the respondents of the present study is suffering by absolute poverty. Low level income leads them economic disaster.

6. Health Awareness

Generally, the scavengers are doing cleaning of drainage, and may filthy work. This type work leads health problem. The present research paper is willing to find out the Health awareness among the scavengers.

Table 3
Health Awareness

Awareness	Frequency	Average
Yes	03	30
No	07	70
Total	10	100

The above table indicates that 70% of the respondents doesn't have health awareness among them. The social

background, illiteracy are the main reason for this. Engaging in dirty environment may cause health issues. While working, consuming level of oxygen can be reason for the health problems.

7. Summary, Findings and Conclusion

The present study finds that 80% of the scavenger workers are schedule caste people, especially Dalits or untouchable of the community. It shows that the Dalit or Untouchable people inevitably doing this job for their livelihood. More than 90% of the respondents comes under below poverty line. No property inheritance is the main set back to the scavengers. There are no ancestors or inherited property to these workers. 30% of the respondents stated that they have health awareness and rest of the 70% of them never thought about their health.

The aim of the present research paper was to find out the socio- economic status of scavengers of Chitradurga district. These people considered untouchable among the untouchable, deprived among the deprived with engaging distrusting work. The law abolished this profession, though in the many places many lower caste people work as scavengers. However, government and other concerned authorities have come forward to take valuable initiatives, and suitable measurement to rehabilitate these people, providing self-employment scheme, or financial assistance to lead dignified life

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