Main Findings

From the analysis and interpretation chapter, the major findings of this study are extracted and furnished below.

Personal Background

- More than half of the manual scavengers (54.3%) are males and a considerable proportion of the manual scavengers are females (45.8%).
- Most manual scavengers (57.8%) are in the early middle age group of 33 years to 45 years.
- A significant proportion of the manual scavengers (58%) have not crossed the middle school education.
- All the manual scavengers belong to only one community (Sub Caste of SC) - Arunthathiyar community (Sakkiliyar community).
- A large majority of the manual scavengers (89.8%) are married.

Various Manual Scavenging Practices

- A considerable proportion of the manual scavengers (24.7%) are engaged in cleaning the drainage, next 21.1 percent of the manual scavengers in cleaning the toilets, 17 percent in cleaning the human excreta in the streets, 11.3 percent in removing the human and animal carcass, 10.8 percent in dumping the
wastages in the lorries, 8.5 percent in cleaning the septic tank, 2.6 percent in disposing the bio-medical wastages, 1.3 percent of the manual scavengers are engaged in removing the excreta from the railway tracks and 2.4 percent in other type of scavenging practices.

- Half of the manual scavengers as also engaged in removing the wastages, in addition to their regular scavenging occupation.

- In augment to the regular occupation, a considerable proportion of the manual scavengers (38%) are also engaged in sanitary work of cleaning the streets.

- Around two fifth of the manual scavengers are employed as sanitary workers by government.

- About 32 percent of the respondents are contract workers.

- A considerable proportion of the respondents (43.5%) have family members as substitute workers in the scavenging work.

- Nearly three fifth of the manual scavengers are first generation workers. The remaining two fifth of the manual scavengers are second and third or previous generation engaged in the scavenging practice.

**Family Data**

- The total number of family members is 1603. The mean family size is 4.01.

- The total number of children less than 5 years is 282.

- The total number of children between the ages of 6 -18 years is 422.
- The total number of children studying in government school is 216.
- The total number of children studying in private school is 149.
- The total number of school dropouts in the families of the manual scavengers is 67.
- The total number of child labour in the families of the manual scavengers is 20.

**Education and Economic Details of the Families**

- A large majority of the manual scavengers (91.3%) do not have any family member with graduation.
- Nearly three fifth of the manual scavengers do not have own house.
- Nearly two fifth of the manual scavengers have housing land in forest area.
- A good majority of the manual scavengers (84.5%) have monthly payment.
- A large chunk of the manual scavengers (92.2%) have income below Rs.100000.
- A good majority of the manual scavengers have no wetland(88.8%) and no dry land (98.8%).
- More than half of the manual scavengers (53.5%) have no saving.
- A majority of the manual scavengers (78.5%) are trapped in debt.
- Nearly three fourth of the scavengers have no livestock.
Working Conditions

- A quite number of the manual scavengers (45.3%) work between 6 hours and 8 hours in scavenging occupation. Around three tenth of the manual scavengers work between 8 hours and 10 hours.

- Most of the manual scavengers (91.75%) start off work around 5 am.

- A quite number of the manual scavengers (27.2%) are employed at drainage spots, followed by 23.7 percent worked at streets, 23.2 percent of the scavengers worked in common or school or hostel toilets and 11.9 percent of the scavengers worked on lorry spots.

- A considerable proportion of the manual scavengers (43.8%) have spouse engaged in scavenging occupation.

- Many scavengers (32%) feel that engaging in scavenging occupation is their destiny.

- A large majority of the scavengers (94%) are not interested in the scavenging occupation.

- More than half of the interviewed manual scavengers (53.5%) are not provided with safety equipments.

- A greater majority of the manual scavengers (90.5%) are not provided separate room for changing the dressesimplies the least importance given to the workers.
- Nearly two fifth of the manual scavengers are forced to work than the fixed work hours.

- About 28.3 percent of the scavengers expose that they are forced to work when not in a better health.

- Around two fifth of the manual scavengers have injuries during scavenging. Of whom a vast majority of them (92.7%) have not given any compensation for their injuries from the employers reflecting.

- Most of them (83.2%) have health problems due to scavenging practice.

- There are 7 percent of the manual scavengers revealed that the co-workers died during scavenging work.

- Most respondents (52%) are facing ill-treatment in the hands of their employers.

- A significant proportion of the respondents (53.3%) state that they have been engaged as manual scavengers based on their scheduled caste identity.

Behavior Pattern

- More than half of the manual scavengers are alcoholic.

- Most of the manual scavengers (72.2%) are forced to start consuming alcohol after entering into scavenging occupation.

- “Optic abuse” is felt as a ‘fate’ for three fifth of the manual scavengers.
• A majority of the manual scavengers (68.3%) consider the odour abuse as their fate.

• Most of the manual scavengers (71.7%) consume alcohol by using their own earned money.

• All the manual scavengers with alcohol habits spend minimum 10% for alcohol consumption.

• More than half of the manual scavengers (55%) express that their parents are alcoholic.

• Around three fifth of the manual scavengers reveal that their co-workers are alcoholic.

Status of the Children of the Manual Scavengers

• Most of the respondents (64.5%) have no child under 18 years and 35.5 percent of the respondents have children below 18 years.

• Of the respondents having child(ren), all of them along with their spouse are engaged in scavenging occupation.

• Of the 142 respondents having children, 23% of them express that their children are not engaged in cleaning the school toilets, but 12.5% of the respondents state that their children are engaged in cleaning the school toilets.

• A vast majority of the respondents (90.2%) opine that their children shouldn't engage in manual scavenging practice.
Attitude of the Society towards Manual Scavengers

- Majority of the manual scavengers (64.5%) disclose that other caste people do not sit along with them in the public transport.

- There is no respect for scavenging occupation by other caste people as perceived by almost all (99.8%) the respondents.

- Around two third of the manual scavengers have no respect from the society.

Forced Labour and Menial Practices in the Living Area of the Manual Scavengers

- Most respondents (59.8%) express that they or their family members performed funeral rites of the deceased body of the upper castes.

- Of the 400 respondents, 36.5% of them state that they or their family members cleaned the graveyard path of the upper castes.

- A majority of the respondents (67.8%) articulate that they or their family members cleaned the streets of the upper castes during festival times.

- Of the 400 respondents, 96 respondents convey that they or their family members mended the slippers.

- More than half of the respondents avow that they or their family members forced to tell the death message of the upper castes to their relatives who don’t have communication facilities.

- More than half of the respondents state that they or their family members cleaned the animal carcass.
• Around two fifth of the respondents who are engaging in various menial labour practices haven’t received any pay for their work.

**Discrimination faced by the Manual Scavengers in Public Places**

• Of the 400 respondents, 32.2% of them express that they are ill-treated by tea shoppers by maintaining two-tumbler system.

• More than half of the respondents are not allowed to take water from common tops in their living areas.

• A majority of the respondents (71.7%) are not allowed to sit in public bus stand in their living areas.

• Of the 400 respondents, 67.8% of them are not allowed to drink water in cup.

**Prevention of Dignity and Self-Respect**

• More than three fourth of the respondents express that they or their family members are not allowed to wear town on shoulder and to sit along with the upper castes.

• More than 50 per cent of the respondents are not allowed to wear cap after shaving the head, to own a motor cycle, to drive cycle or motor cycle in the streets of upper castes and to take bath in common lake/pond.

• Around two fifth of the respondents state that they or their family members are not allowed to enter into upper caste areas with slippers.
Preclusion in Development Aspects

- More than half of the respondents disclose that they and their family members are scolded malignly in caste name by the upper castes.

- Of the 400 respondents, 64% of them state that their family members are allowed to go for higher studies, 36% of them have experienced denial to them or their children to go for higher studies.

- Around one fifth of the respondents experienced the suppression from the upper castes for them or their family members going for government posts other than scavenging.

- More than half of the respondents are not ill-treated in hospitals while going for treatment.

Extent of Awareness on Entitled Laws

- A sizeable proportion of the manual scavengers (47.8%) are not aware on Employment of Manual Scavenging and Abolition of Dry Latrines Act, 1993.

- Most of the manual scavengers (73.3%) are not aware about the Draft bill on Manual Scavenging 2012.

- A quite number of the manual scavengers (23.8%) are not aware about the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act.
Weighted Scores of the Major Items

- Of the 400 respondents, 64% of them have worse working condition in their manual scavenging employment, 22.3% of them have worst working condition.

- Most of them (64%) have experienced higher level of forced and menial labour practices.

- A majority of the respondents (68%) are discriminated in public places to a higher level.

- Of the 400 respondents, 273 respondents (58%) have disrespect by the upper castes to a higher extent.

- About 50.5% of them are prevented from development to a lesser extent.

- A good majority of the respondents (81.8%) have lesser awareness on entitled laws to protect and restore the rights of the manual scavengers.

Memberships

- A greater proportion of the manual scavengers (96.5%) are not a member of SafaiKarmachariAndolan.

- Nearly two third of the manual scavengers are not members of any association.
Hypothesis Testing

- **Significant Mean Difference between Extent of Working Condition and Personal and Economic Variables**
  - There is a significant mean difference between the extent of working condition of the respondents and the age group of the respondents at 0.05 level.
  - There is a significant mean difference between the extent of working condition of the respondents and own house of the respondents at 0.01 level.
  - There is a significant mean difference between the extent of working condition of the respondents and the yearly income of the respondents at 5% level.
  - There is a significant mean difference between the extent of working condition of the respondents and the land entitlements of the respondents at 1% level.

- **Significant Mean Difference between Level of Forced and Menial Labour Practices and Personal and Economic Variables**
  - There is a significant mean difference between the age group of the respondents and the level of forced and menial labour practices at 1% level.
- **Significant Mean Difference between Level of Discrimination in Public Places and Personal and Economic Variables**
  - There is a significant mean difference between the level of discrimination faced by the respondents in public places and gender of the respondents at 1% level.

- **Significant Mean Difference between Level of Prevention of Dignity and Self-Respect and Personal and Economic Variables**
  - There is a significant mean difference between the level of prevention of dignity and self-respect and the age group of the respondents at 5% level.

- **Significant Mean Difference between Level of Preclusion of Development Aspects and Personal and Economic Variables**
  - There is a significant mean difference between the level of preclusion of development aspects and the age group of the respondents at 5% level.

- **Significant Mean Difference between Level of Awareness on Entitled Laws and Personal and Economic Variables**
  - There is a significant mean difference between the extent of awareness among the respondents on entitled laws and the marital status of the respondents at 5% level.
• Significant Mean Difference between Extent of Working Condition and Occupational Related Variables
  
  o There is a significant mean difference between the extent of working condition of the respondents and the respondents’ generation involved in scavenging occupation at 5% level.

  o There is a significant mean difference between the extent of working condition of the respondents and the alcoholic habits of the respondents at 1% level.

• Significant Mean Difference between Level of Discrimination in Public Places and Occupational Related Variables
  
  o There is a significant mean difference between employment type of the respondents and the level of discrimination faced by the respondents in public places at 5% level.

• Significant Mean Difference between Level of Awareness on Entitled Laws and Occupational Related Variables
  
  o There is a significant mean difference between the level of awareness among the respondents on entitled laws and the employment type of the respondents at 5% level.
Suggestions

For Government:

- The Government of India has passed the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act 2013 but the rules and regulations need to be established. Thus, the Government has to speed up to frame the rules and regulations to prevent manual scavenging and punishing the persecutors.
- Appointing Special Officer at District level to monitor the manual scavenging practice.
- Eradicating the complete practice of manual scavenging along with demolition/conversion of all dry toilets, construction of dry latrines and individual dry latrines.
- Introducing technology and mechanization in underground drainage system and railway train toilets.
- Emancipating the persons engaged in manual scavenging with release, immediate relief and alternate and dignified rehabilitation programmes with education, skill up gradation and entrepreneurship development programme including the family as a unit.
- Conducting trade skill assessment and enabling the scavengers to have to alternative and viable employment that provide sustained source of income.
- Providing affordable housing to all the scavengers without own house.
- The manual scavengers are having health problems that aroused due to occupation hazardous and there are even killings of manual scavengers when they are engaged in cleaning of manholes, septic tanks, etc. Hence the Government should
take into consideration the risk and stigma involve in the occupation and accordingly the salary should be elevated. Only then they will be in a capacity to restore their physical and mental health.

- The Central and State governments need to allocate internal reservation for the manual scavengers belonging to scavenging caste communities to avail government employment other than scavenging occupation.
- The National Commission for SafaiKaramcharis, has to branch out at State and district levels to monitor the eradication of manual scavenging practices.
- The Government need to allocate adequate funds for mechanizing the system to abolish the manual scavenging practices in any form.

For Civil Society Organisations/Community Based Organisations:

- Integrating the families of the manual scavengers with mainstream society without discrimination and exclusion.
- Mobilising and organizing the manual scavengers across the State to ensure strict implementation of all the legal provisions.
- Imparting political trainings for the manual scavengers to build their capacities to promote advocacy and lobbying of claiming their rights.
- Strengthening the collaboration of the community based organizations, non-government organizations and trade unions to address the issues of the manual scavengers.
- Facilitating the child labourers or the school dropouts to continue their school education.
- Promoting Adolescents Clubs to ensure the safety of the adolescents as well as to enable them to continue their education and find a better employment.
Social Work Implications:

- Manual scavenging practice is one of the worst occupations that affect the quality of life of the manual scavengers. Through community organisation strategies and programmes for protection and restoration of rights of the manual scavengers to be developed.

- Social Workers have scope for practicing community organisation and social work research methods in the scavenging occupational settings. The public need to be motivated strongly to pressurize the policy makers to eliminate manual scavenging practices.
Conclusion

Manual scavenging practices exist in many forms and the people belonging to scheduled caste communities are engaged in such practices. The Arunthathiyars who are engaged in manual scavenging, do not have alternative employment to renounce the scavenging practices. Though in the modern times, the occupational mobility has increased for the rural caste suppressed masses to find out alternative employment to have dignified life. But less education, controlled occupation mobility and restricted association of the focused manual scavengers and the poor inertia of law to abolish the manual scavenging have pushed them to continue in the manual scavenging practices.

On the other side, based on their caste identity, the manual scavengers are forced to do other menial jobs in their locality. They face various social discriminations primarily due to their birth in lowered castes. The Civil Societies need to strengthen the organisation of the manual scavengers to emancipate themselves from domination and oppression of the manual scavenging practices. There is an encouraging note that 2015 is declared as the year ‘Free from open defecation’ by the Government of Tamilnadu. This declaration need to be done in full vigor and trigger so that in could pave way for eliminating and / or reducing manual scavenging practice in India. Moreover the new scheme named ‘NirmalThittam’ (Nirmal plan) is also introduced in various parts of the State Since June 2014. (The Hindu 29th July 2014) curtailing the menace of open defecation. The only concern is that these type programme and schemes must be implemented in letter and sprit to achieve the objectives. Hence, the Government’s benevolent role is more essential for the emancipation of manual scavengers.