CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarises the findings of the study derived from the field survey along with suggestions and conclusions.

Even after 66 years of independence a large number of people are employed in the degrading occupation of manually removing night soil. This is despite the introduction of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993 enacted by the Parliament on 5th June 1993. Manual scavengers are found in most parts of the country.

Manual Scavengers belong to different sub-castes of Scheduled Castes. These include Bhangi, Balmiki, Dhanuk, Mehtar, Paki, Thotti, Masiga, Mira, Lalbegi and Sikkaur in different regional and language groups in India. They are placed at the very bottom of the caste hierarchy and even in the hierarchy of Dalits (disadvantaged groups). The social stigma of untouchability continues to haunt them because of the unclean nature of their occupation.

The actual number of manual scavengers reported from time to time varies. For instance Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (the Nodal Ministry for the National Scheme for Liberation & Rehabilitation of Scavenger) in the Ninth Five Year Plan proposal submitted to the Planning Commission in 1996-97 reported 7.87 lakh manual scavengers. As per the audit of the National Scheme for Liberation &
Rehabilitation of scavengers for the period 1992-2002 by the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment reported 801839 scavengers. As per press release of the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on July 22, 2005, the total number of manual scavengers in the country was 6.87 lakh. The largest number of scavengers was in Uttar Pradesh (1.49 lakhs), followed by Madhya Pradesh (80,000) and Gujarat (64,000). As per revised survey reports submitted by states to National Safai Karamchari Finance Development Corporation (NSKFDC), there are 7.70 lakh scavengers (as on December, 2006).

Working and service condition of scavengers had received the attention of the Nation immediately after independence. Various programmes and committees were appointed by the Government to tackle problems of scavengers, their liberation and rehabilitation in a fixed time frame. It is the sad experience that our people do not generally move with the time spirit unless some pressure is brought to bear upon them. Unfortunately the development of civic consciousness among our people is not of a commendable nature. Unless some force or coercion is brought upon them, they will not readily carry out instructions and moral obligations aimed at their own benefit. Moreover, our people are always in the habit of clamouring only for their privileges without at the same time realizing their duties and responsibilities.

This study found that majority of the sample respondents are female because of requirement of this occupation viz., female are dominant in sweeping and cleaning of night soil with patiently as compared with male workers. In this situation, most of the uneducated Dalit women would be forcing to involve in this work. Majority of the
sample respondents were above 40 years who have engaged in this occupation. And also they were start working from their twenty age of the life. They were working with physically hard even now are carrying the tri-cycle (like bullock cart) with overloaded of garbage which are collected from various streets in ups and downs.

Majority of the sample respondents are Scheduled Caste. Since the occupation is filthy and indignity work, other caste people are not willing to do this work. If it is treated as Group IV category and other state government work which may attract by the other caste people to join this work but unwilling to do manual scavenging work. Whereas the dalits are forced by the administration do this work by using their hands (removal of night soil and removal dead animal and manhole cleaning). Majority of the sample respondents are illiterate because of their parental poverty and illiterate.

Most of the sanitary workers are migrated from Andhra before three generations. This study also provident fund that majority of them are belong to Scheduled caste people who have been followed the Hindu culture but those are Adi–Andhra which are like to follow the Christianity, equal percentage of both religious are taken. Most of the Telugu people can easily learn the Tamil language but as much as could not be learned by Tamil people can lean the Telugu.

It is understood from the study that among the widows most of them were due to involving their husbands in this filthy occupation. Majority of the sample respondents would like to live as nuclear because what they think that if either son or daughter gets married immediately they want to live with separate family. Parents also let them as separate for take over their responsibilities
The sample respondents’ family dependents are four to five because of these workers may not knowing about the awareness of family planning and believing on cultural trend which are the favour of vital role of male children. It is found that majority of the sample respondents are required to do cleaning of night soil on the administration is forced them to do cleaning the night soil in open places and inside and outside of the toilets in many parts of the city.

Majority of the sample respondents are working in direct corporation control including (20 respondents who were working in temporary base) corporation contract. Because there are seven zones are undertaken by Chennai corporation and remaining three zones have given contract to private authority (Ramkey). Since the private contract was entered in the solid waste management works in Chennai Corporation (from Onex, Neelmetal, now Ramkey) those working in these three Zones as temporary sanitary worker which are still as temporary base not to make as permanent.

It is important finding is that majority of the sample respondents’ income range was from 5001 to10000. In private contract, zones is serviced by only on temporary basis and they may not afford to make permanent and increase the salary because the company fixed their salary when they were appointment to this work, but in case of corporation zones the worker who were working on temporary basis they will be chance to make permanent and to some extent to increase their salary if they would been working number of years on temporary (contract) basis. Corporation contract workers also faced the problem of getting the salary on time and their supervisor or authority was not given right salary to them because they are also exploited and them and threatening them that they
will not work as continuously if they are refuse to co-operate with them. Nearly 70 percent of the respondents were working as minimum 10 to 15 years on temporary basis with below the minimum wage level and worked with very hard.

In the case of corporation undertaking zones where 90 percent of the workers are from second and third generation which means the job came as a legacy - passed on from the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law. But in contract zones (Private running the zones 9, 10, 12) most of the workers are the first generation. Majority of the sample respondents involved this occupation due to poverty and they were not provided any other workers. Moreover they are dalits, so they were denied to other alternative occupation. If they are in search of job in other fields, immediately employer can raise the question as that what is community that they belong.

This study was found that majority of the sample respondents are working as manually with using some little instruments like broom, steel plate, aluminum basket, malaram, mukarandi, rack, brush and shawl. One of the respondent have interestingly stated that actually he was wearing gloves but it was not provided by authority he had avail from the dustbin when he was collecting the dust. In the case of corporation workers were not provided protective cloths or gears regularly even if they provided less quality of gloves and mask and other safety gears on occasionally because of the administration of the corporation is not working as properly, The administration is involving inefficient administration.

Important finding of this is that most of them were not cleaning septic tank but in which 50 percent of the workers to hesitate to reply to this question because they were
threaten by higher officials. It is clear from the table that majority of the sample respondents were affected due to bad respiration problem and body pain because they are working without wearing any safety gears and bad smell from night soil, urine and during removal of dead animal. Usually they have started the work from early morning 6.0 ‘clock to 1. 0’ clock as continuously without taking breakfast. So these are the reasons for affecting the sanitary workers. When compare the intensive of affecting health problem of contract workers, they are not as much as in the case of corporation workers (private contract) because most of the contract workers are not doing unhygienic work such as cleaning of latrines, sweeping of open defecation and cleaning of manhole or drainage or septic tank except one or two case.

Usually they have started the work from early morning 6.0 ‘clock to 1. 0’ clock as continuously without taking breakfast. So these are the reasons for affecting the sanitary workers. The administration has refused to provide compensation for their injuries or disease cause by involving filthy occupation. Only they provide leave sanction but not provide leave salary if they find the case which is very serious were provided leave with salary otherwise that most of them are not provided even necessary medical facilities in general hospital though the corporation have deducted the certain amount from their salary for providing medical assistances. The researcher has found a critical issues regarding to sanitary workers that a respondent whose name is Ravi he was working in 8th zone as a sanitary worker was affecting by kidney failure, he went to General Hospital for treatment but the doctor had refused to give treatment despite having his NGO Certificate provided by Conservancy Inspector, because of their medical
allowance amount for the past ten years (from 2001 to 2011) was not reach to health department. So these essential workers should be provided proper medical facility.

Most of the respondents are facing problem which is by the administration and public, public threaten the workers when they were involving the work and cleaning the rubbish from one house to other  public may call them as Eay Kuppa Vaa Enga Ethai Edu (Hi,Garbage come here and to take away this garbage like ordered them) it is to male, if the female they may called as “VadiKuppakari” and also scolded with vulgar words. Some of the respondents are facing financial problem like they may not give financial help when they were affecting during their emergency. The administration also treated as irrespective manner with dominated and scolded in vulgar words.

It is found that majority of respondent’s problem were not redressed but they also stated that to clear the leave and surrender, the leave and avail loan they need to obtain sign of their children for getting any privilege given by the both government. They also have to fight with official as they are uneducated and ignorance of their rights and human dignity. . It is clear from the table that majority of the respondents are using bus service because of available of bus service in nook and corner of the Chennai city, but other service not available. Only three percent are using train service because of the workers might not be work at same place at all frequently they will be transfer here and there in Chennai zone control.

They are not willing to do this work because of their health affected by this unclean and indignity work (removal of human excreta and urine, pulling the tricycle with heavy load of garbage). Though they are so but they have to maintain their family
and fear of officials moreover it is government job (job security). So, thereby they want to do continue this work. If they will give chance to work in any other department as any other designation other than manual scavenger, they are willing to do the work.

It is found that majority of them have stated that they have treated as friendly way but in real sense they did not like and they are discriminated by them (Sanitary Inspector, Mastry and Supervisor). The most of the respondents are not willing to continue their children into their occupation because they wanted to educate their children for getting good job structure (dignity) in the society in which the filthy job should end with them. The government did not provide any reservation in schools and colleges for admitting their children and also health facility.

Majority of them have preferred government job (not in corporation solid waste management department) because of job security, social status and abstain from doing a painful task. Almost all of the respondents were affected by malaria and typhoid duo to emergence of poisoners small while removing night soil and clean dead animals. The most of respondents have not availed any medical assistance and preventive health measures for being injury while involving in this occupation. Some of the respondent’s families are affected by malaria fever and skin diseases. It is due to non-availability of proper infrastructure and sanitary facilities in the residential area where sanitary workers are being engaged.

The study found that most of the Adi-Andhra respondents believe in the Christianity not as much as the Hindu god because they are felt that they are not discriminated by caste Hindus. However, they are not willing to identifier as the believers
of Christianity because they are fear of official and social structures in the Hindu society. Some of the respondents have given the reason that economic changes likely to help their children’s education and employment and for social and cultural changes which they would like to maintain their self– respect and discrimination.

Almost all Adi-Andhra respondents are migrated from Andhra Pradesh specifically from Gundur, Kadappa, Nellore and Ongole districts. It is found that from the second and third generation these workers are doing this filthy work in the corporation. Most of the sanitary workers are living in Korukkupet, Ram Nagar, Osankulam, Pullapuram near Chetpet, Saidapet Aduthotti, Perambapur and Royapuram and Vannarapettai all of them are came to Tamil Nadu for search the job.

The important finding of the research is respondents are not willing to say about their untouchability problem prevailing in work spot and in office and public place but in reality they are being discriminated in many circumstances such as public are not willing to give respect them and even if they asks for water while involving in this work the people did not willing to offer them with kind way, because of their engagement with unclean occupation and Dalits. So there by their official also showing discrimination on the Dalits workers and not on the caste workers though both are doing unclean occupation.

Most of the respondents reside in rental houses and they were not provided housing facility by government and very long back the RCC quarters were provided to sanitary workers at Korukkupettai, Pullapuram, Royapuram and perampur and Saidapet. But this was the people are occupied themselves while came there, then the government
was built Housing Board and Slum Board and given to less amount of rent. (M.G.R. is tenure as CM). After that both central and state government were not provided quarters to scavengers. Even rental house also are not available easily to them because they are doing unclean occupation. If the owner came to know about them sanitary workers as soon they are not willing to continue to live there. Majority of them are living in thatched and tiled house 75 percent of which were rental house.

They have not been provided BPL ration card but they have normal ration card. Most of the respondents were not provided proper medical assistance or medical check-up but the official have said that these workers are not show the interest on check-up their health even if they can arranged medical camp at where in the city. It is clear from the table that these essential workers should be provided proper medical facility and BPL card for getting government privileges.

The study found a critical issues regarding to sanitary workers that a respondent whose name is Ravi he was working in 8th zone as a sanitary worker was affecting by kidney failure, he went to General Hospital for treatment but the doctor had refused to give treatment despite having his NGO Certificate provided by Conservancy Inspector, because of their medical allowance amount for the past ten years (from 2001 to 2011) was not reach to health department. So these essential workers should be provided proper medical facility and BPL card for getting government privileges.
6.1 Conclusion

Sanitation is the basis of a healthy and civilized living and it along with access to safe drinking water, has been accepted as one of the components of human development. Absence of sanitation facilities lead to a large number of water-borne diseases. In India, as many as 36 percent of the households do not have sanitary toilet. Of those having latrines, nearly 20 percent depend on “Service Latrines”, also known as dry latrines which require the services of people who have to manually remove the night soil. Those who use dry latrines and those who are engaged in the demeaning occupation of manually removing human excreta are exposed to innumerable health risks.

The scavengers, also referred to by the more dignified term “sanitary workers”, come from the lower strata of society. Following the most un-cleanest of occupations they are the lowest stratum of even the scheduled castes. They belong to castes like Bhangi, Valmiki, Thothi, etc. and have the lowest earnings and live in abominable conditions.

The study concludes that most of the sanitary workers from Chennai Corporation are living below the comfortable life even they could not meet out the necessity of life. In this situation they are ultimately depend on the local money lenders who charges exorbitant interest rates with high interest rate as a consequence the scavengers live in debt trap. Moreover, they are working in unhygienic situation which invites severe health consequences to the workers. This leads to more spending on health care of the workers. The authority has not been following the working rules and regulations properly. These
are apparent problems faced by the workers both in working place as well as in society. Moreover, there is second opinion about the workers as they have been working in filthy occupation, which brings discontent in the minds of the workers. Therefore, the concerned authority must intervene or consider the above issues and make amicable living conditions to the sanitary workers.

6.2 Suggestions

- The law enacted by the legislation to be properly used in practice. Inhumane practice to be abolished.
- The government should identify those who are engaging in manual scavenging like cleaning drainage and cleaning of human excreta in open place, cleaning latrines which are lack of water facility and cleaning of manhole and septic tank (block) and they should be rehabilitated in a proper way and given to alternative job.
- They should be provided with safety instruments such as gloves, mask and head cover, boots and Rain Coats. The concerned authority should inspect whether workers are properly using the instrument and also make awareness about it uses.
- These workers should be provided proper medical facility viz., there is a need for a separate hospital and chronic check-up and providing injection in every month. It will be used for taking care of their dependents.
- The public cooperation is much invited in proper usage of public toilets and roadside nuisances which facilitate easy way of discharging sanitary work.
● They should be allowed to go for one (Biometric) signature in morning only as in the case of other departmental workers with six hour works a day. They should also be provided with the facility of bathing (bathing soap), toilet and dressing room with aprons inside their premises.

● Government should provide quality education to their children, who could not afford costly education in reputed institution. Free education should also be provided to their children in their respective filed of studies.

● They should be provided General Provident Fund loan during the emergency thereby they will be refrained from the torchers of money lenders. They should also be provided Pension after their retirement. The government should set up a specialised cell in TADHCO to assist the sanitary workers in completing the loan formalities and also look after the credit needs of the sanitary workers to provide concessional loan. There should be a proper monitoring mechanism in TAHDCO to take care of credit needs of the sanitary workers.

● They should free from removal of human excreta in many parts the city by building numerous toilets with proper water facilities. Apart from that this toilets should be maintained by a person who are appointed by the corporation itself. The service should be provided at free of cost to people (public) then only there will no possible to open defecation or people will not defecate near by the toilets or outside the toilets.

● Health care benefits are not fully reached to the workers. Steps to be taken for prompt delivery of the same.
- The manhole cleaning process needs to be automated with suitable technology to replace human intervention.
- Housing loans for the sanitary worker to be offered as par with other government sector workers.
- In order to relinquish the psychological stress of the sanitary workers, recreational clubs to be started.
- There is no uniformity in salary scale of the scavenger worker in the states of India. Therefore, the salary structure to be uniform in all the states.
- Job Promotion to be offered according the educational qualification of the workers and justice to be followed in the case irrespective of place of studying.
- Contract system to be abolished as it is essential work.
- All Public Sector Banks should carve out detailed plans to study the problems of Manual Scavengers and credit needs for alternative employment.
- The government should provide substantial compensation in case of death of any sewage worker or septic tank worker during work or under circumstances connected with their work, an amount of Rs.5 lakh shall be paid as compensation for the survival of the family and the State Government shall take over the education of all children of the family of the deceased by admitting them in residential schools.
- Monitoring committees constituted at the state and district level to comprise one or two members from the manual scavengers’ community.