Chapter II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Marginalization refers to a social process of becoming or being made marginal (especially as a group within the larger society). It is ‘a process by which a group or individual is denied access to important positions and symbols of economic, religious, or political power within any society’ (Marshall 1998). Marginalization became a major topic of sociological research in the 1960s, particularly for the Marxist theorists, who argued that the phenomenon was related to the World capitalist order and not just confined to any particular society. The concepts such as marginality, marginalization, and the marginalized together formed a conceptual alliance, which can be called an “axis of exclusion”.

Marginality is a position or a location of a person, a group or a community generally on the border or on the fringes or outside the mainstream of a society. It refers to a state or a social condition or a situation in which important needs are not met for the people excluded from the economic, political and, cultural life of any given society. It is a state of vulnerability where one is treated as of lesser importance. One’s “life chances” are largely governed by position in the society. A marginal man, or a group, or a community located at the periphery is practically deprived of all resources and opportunities including the prestige esteem (Kananaikil 1983; Oommen 1986).

Marginalized refers to not being a full member of a community, those who are relegated to a lower or outer edge, as of specific groups of people. The people and groups that fail to integrate within general social structures and customs are referred to as marginals, the "excluded population". Marginalized (marginals) are those individuals or social groups who, as a result of their position(s) in society, economy, politics, have been or are being transformed into groups with little or no political power in their interactions with the mainstream cultures, dominant state and market structures (Cox 2001).

The theoretical framework of ‘social exclusion’, which is popularly used for understanding the multidimensionality of marginalization in modern societies, captures all three dimensions of the axis, viz. the process (marginalization), the position (marginality)
and, the population (marginalized). This study takes the assistance of the theoretical framework of social exclusion to understand the community of scavengers in urban India, who fall on the “axis of exclusion”.

In the first part of this chapter, I discuss the origin and development of this conceptual framework. The second part attempts to contextualise the concept of social exclusion and caste-based marginalization in India, which is central to this study. The third section of this chapter discusses the methodological framework adopted for this study.

THE FRAMEWORK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

As an analytical concept, the term “social exclusion” was originally coined in France (attributed to Rene Lenoir, 1974), referring to various social categories of people, such as mentally and physically handicapped, single parents, substance users, and other groups unprotected by social insurance. As the use of the term became widespread in the 1980s, it came to refer to a whole range of socially disadvantage groups and became central to French debates about the “new poverty” associated with rapid economic transformations (IADB 2002; Estivill: 2003).

Over the last three decades, the language of social exclusion is increasingly used not only in Europe but also in other parts of globe giving comprehensive expression to the multidimensionality of marginalization mainly through the work of the International Institute of Labour Studies at the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Baviskar 2002). Since the early 1980s, the concept of social exclusion is used in national and international development debates as an important contemporary form of poverty analysis (Silver 1995).

Poverty to Social Exclusion

In the seventies, extensive dissatisfaction was expressed with the monetary approach to poverty in industrialised as well as developing countries (Saith 2001). The analysis based on concept of poverty concentrated on economic dimensions was not able to capture the realities of marginalization in changing society. In general, in the concept of poverty there was an emphasis on economic exclusion or inclusion, largely based on the
notion of "absolute poverty" and sufficient attention was not given to the notion of "relative deprivation" of poverty. The popularity of the new term was partly the result of the unpopularity of the concept of 'poverty'.

Increased material poverty, leading to social exclusion, is only part of the extent of poverty. Social exclusion is also affected by massive inequalities in cultural recognition and social diversity, and by unequal access to information and education. People who are referred to as 'socially excluded' are not only financially poor, they are also from social groups, whose ethnicity, culture, and identity carry the least amount of recognition, influence, and power in society (Thompson 2000). Similarly, in development discourse and strategy the important and crucial themes of religion and ethnicity have been, if not entirely overlooked, at least subordinated to the material issues (Gooptu 1996: 222). Gooptu suggests that it is vital to take into account the ways in which poverty is conditioned by caste subordination.

It is in this sense that the notion of 'relative deprivation' is more closely related to a concept of social exclusion, and it is often noted that rising inequality in various countries has contributed to the popularity of the notion of social exclusion (de Haan 2001). Secondly, the broader concept of social exclusion, which 'refers not only to material deprivation, but to the inability of the poor to fully exercise their social, cultural and political rights as citizens' is preferred than the concept of poverty (Powell 1995: 22-23). Social exclusion is not coterminous with poverty, e.g. it is possible to be excluded without being poor (it is also possible to be poor without being excluded). It seeks to provide a broader view of deprivation and disadvantage than poverty. More specifically, social exclusion can be viewed as an analytical concept that directs us to the way in which social structures can generate poverty (Gore and Figueiredo 1997: 41).

Social exclusion also focuses more on the processes of impoverishment rather than on the characteristics of poverty, which allows for causal analysis. It directs the focus to the variety of ways in which people become poor and how their poverty becomes institutionalized, resulting in exclusion from active citizen participation. As in the basic needs approach, the analytical focus of poverty assessments in developing countries using absolute poverty lines is at the individual or household level. This is clearly distinct from a
social exclusion approach, with its focus on society, and the individual's ties to society (de Haan 2001). The concept of social exclusion has encouraged scholars to consider simultaneously the economic, social, and political dimensions of deprivation. As Bhalla and Lapeyre (1997) stress, this concept encompasses the notion of poverty broadly defined, but is more general in that it explicitly emphasizes poverty's relational as well as its distributional aspects.

There is now considerable consensus that the dimensions defining poverty need to be expanded to include powerlessness, insecurity, vulnerability, inequality, injustice, discrimination, marginalization and social exclusion. In the last two decades of the 20th century, development discourses shifted to accommodate views of poverty that were beyond merely economics, and have focused on dimensions of poverty such as inequality, human rights and entitlements (Parasuraman et al 2003: 3).

There has been a trend in recent years towards broadening the concept of poverty. The work of Drèze and Sen (1991) has been more influential, in particular the concepts of capabilities and entitlements. Amartya Sen's work on capabilities (1981) has stressed that capabilities are *absolute requirements* for full membership of society. He draws attention away from the mere possession of certain goods, towards rights, and command over goods, using various economic, political, and social opportunities within the legal system. Dasgupta (1993) uses indexes, which also include social and political dimensions of poverty, or rather of well-being. He provides an interdisciplinary analytical and empirical enquiry into "human well-being", through a study of destitution.

With this development in mind, questions have been asked how the concept of social exclusion is different from the discourse on poverty and does the social exclusion as an analytical tool contribute substantially than the concept of poverty? In this respect Abbey (1999) argues that, while social exclusion is not identical to poverty, once poverty is considered as multidimensional and not restricted to income poverty, there is a significant overlap between the two terms. Sometimes exclusion is seen as a facet of poverty and at other times the reverse is observed and poverty is seen as a facet of exclusion. An individual can be excluded without being counted among the poorest: for
example, certain minorities who may be, in fact, relatively rich. Yet exclusion can be part of a poverty trap and can imply a higher probability of sinking into poverty.

While analysing the relevance of the concept, Sen (2000) critically examines the idea of social exclusion, particularly in the context of deprivation and poverty. He is of the opinion that if poverty is seen in terms of income deprivation only, then introducing the notion of social exclusion as a part of poverty would vastly broaden the domain of poverty analysis. However, if poverty is seen as deprivation of basic capabilities, then there is no real expansion of the domain of coverage. He explains that, social exclusion has been placed within the broader perspective of poverty as capability deprivation, which helps us to extend the practical use of the approach.

Prasad, while describing the strengths of the concept of social exclusion, distinguishes it from the concept of poverty by stating that ‘even though the concept of social exclusion overlaps with poverty and marginalization, it also explicitly embraces the relational as well as distributional aspects of poverty’ (Prasad 2003). The concept of social exclusion also goes beyond the economic and social aspects of poverty and embraces the political aspects of poverty such as political rights and citizenship, which outline a relationship between individuals and the state as well as between the society and the individual. ‘Political’ aspects of exclusion include the denial of political rights such as political participation and the right to organise, and also of personal security, the rule of law, freedom of expression and equality of opportunity (Bhalla and Lapeyere 1997: 420). The notion of social exclusion as a multidimensional concept becomes more comprehensive and is useful to analyse broader and fuller context of marginalization in any society.

Defining Social Exclusion

The ‘official’ French definition of the concept defines social exclusion as a rupture of social bonds – which reflects a French emphasis on the organic and solidaristic nature of society. It is defined as the opposite of social integration, mirroring the perceived importance of being part of society, of being ‘included’ (see de Haan 2001). It is broadly defined as ‘the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially
excluded from full participation in the society within which they live (European Foundation 1995: 4). It is also seen in relation to the barriers or processes by which people are prevented from exercising rights. Social exclusion is also conceptualized as a state of social or normative isolation from the wider society (Marshall 1998).

Essentially, social exclusion analysis is seen as a way of examining how and why individuals and groups fail to have access to or benefit from the possibilities offered by societies and economies. In this respect it is essentially a multidimensional and multidisciplinary concept that links together both social rights and material deprivations. It encompasses the lack of access to goods and services, and also exclusion from security, justice, representation and citizenship.

Exclusion has to do with inequality in many dimensions – economic, social, political, and cultural (IADB 2002). In most circumstances there is an underlying power hierarchy among the groups, in which group closure goes along with resources allocation, institutionalized inequality in the distribution of wealth and scarce goods (Giddens 1997: 248). The phenomenon of social exclusion may then be understood as one where there are sections of the population whose entitlements are limited or negligible (Nayak 1994).

Robin Peace (2001) finds the definition posited by Burchardt et al. (1999) very useful. These writers suggest a restricted, two-point definition: “An individual is socially excluded if (a) he or she is geographically resident in a society, and (b) he or she does not participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society”.

They identify five dimensions that constitute “normal activities” in which participation is arguably important for individual (and group) well-being. These dimensions include:

1. Consumption activity: (which) relates to traditional measures of poverty
2. Savings activities: (that) includes pensions, savings, home ownership
3. Production activity: defined in terms of “engaging in an economically or socially valued activity, such as paid work, education or training, retirement or looking after a family”
4. Political activity: defined as "engaging in some collective effort to improve or protect the immediate or wider social or physical environment"

5. Social activity: defined as "engaging in significant social interaction with family, or friends, and identifying with a cultural group or community".

Peace mentions that the elements of this definition that have particular value are twofold. Firstly, the dimensions specify the multidimensional nature of social exclusion and extend the reach of the definition beyond factors related to production and/or income. Secondly, they provide a very broad interpretation of the productive, political and social aspects of exclusion (Peace 2001).

In the most significant effort, Hilary Silver (1995) has delineated three different paradigms, each based on a different notion of integration: solidarity, specialization and monopoly.

- **Solidarity**: The bond between individual and society, individual and individual is referred to as social solidarity (collective consciousness). The rupture of this solidarity is known as exclusion. Thus, the individual or ethnic groups are excluded from the process of integration with the mainstream of the society. Exclusion threatens social cohesion and 'moral integration' is required to overcome the problem. Integration implies assimilation into the dominant culture.

- **Specialization**: Exclusion that arises from the inadequate separation of social spheres, un-enforced rights and market failures, and can be seen as 'disaffiliation' and 'disqualification' (Silver 1995: 542). Specialized social structures are comprised of separate, competing but interdependent spheres. Exclusion in this case comes from the application of inappropriate rules and barriers to free movement among different spheres of life. To the extent that group boundaries impede individual freedom to participate in social exchanges, exclusion is a form of discrimination. The state is required to intervene to ensure integration.

- **Monopoly**: The third major paradigm is that of monopoly. Exclusion arises because particular social groups monopolise the use of public resources. Exclusion from the perspective of hierarchical power relations can be seen as a consequence of group
monopoly. It serves the interest of those who are included in the monopolizing group. "The excluded are therefore simultaneously outsiders and dominated. Exclusion is combated through citizenship and the extension of equal membership and full participation in the community to outsiders" (Silver 1995: 543).

**Characteristics of Social Exclusion**

The discussion above proves a point that the concept of social exclusion is broad and each definition add a nuance to its understanding. Seen in this framework it provides a comprehensive conceptual mechanism to analyze society. Social exclusion as an analytical tool consists of a number of defining characteristics. Saith (2001) provides five important features that are discussed in the literature as characterising 'social exclusion'.

**Multidimensional**

'Social exclusion' is clearly broader than income poverty. Thus, emphasis began to shift from 'income' poverty to broader multidimensional (including social, political and cultural dimensions in addition to the monetary dimension) approaches to poverty. The concept of social exclusion encompasses a variety of dimensions for understanding the various notions of discrimination, deprivation and poverty. It inter-relates the material and non-material (institutional) aspects of deprivation (Rodgers et al 1995). Madanipour asserts that, social exclusion is a multi-dimensional process, in which various forms of exclusion are combined. Different sorts of groups and institutions can exclude people often at the same time. When combined, they create acute forms of exclusion (Madanipour 1998). The multidimensional aspect of 'social exclusion' is not just about looking at a number of dimensions individually, but also looking at the relations between them (Clert 1999).

**Relational**

The 'social exclusion' concept is argued to have shifted the focus in industrialised countries to social relationships. The vulnerability of an individual or household to 'social exclusion' is seen to depend not just on their own resources but also on the local community resources that they can draw on (Room 1999) e.g. ties with family members, local traditions of mutual aid, self-help organisations and the state. Social exclusion
implies a focus on the relations and processes that cause deprivation. The concept takes us beyond mere descriptions of economic deprivation and focuses attention on social relations, the processes and institutions that underlie deprivation (de Haan 1998).

**Relative**

The analytical focus of poverty in traditional poverty assessments using absolute lines has been at the individual or household level. ‘Social exclusion’ involves the ‘exclusion’ of people from a particular society. One cannot look at them in isolation but has to look at their circumstances in the context of the rest of the society they live in, to judge whether a person is excluded or not (Atkinson 1998). ‘Social exclusion’ thus incorporates a relative element.

**Dynamic**

Earlier, both in industrialised countries and in developing countries most poverty studies were static, relating to ‘outcomes’. In parallel with a move to the multidimensional nature of poverty however, the importance of the time dimension increasingly became obvious. The concerns of ‘social exclusion’ have been with long-term consequences of a phenomenon, which then leads to multiple disadvantages and exclusion from society over a period of time. For example, people are considered ‘excluded’, not just because they do not have a current job or income, but also because they have few prospects for the future (Atkinson 1998).

**Emphasis on process**

The ‘social exclusion’ approach originated in relation to concerns regarding the welfare state. The approach therefore from the start was concerned with institutions and their role in the processes leading to poverty, causing a shift in emphasis from outcomes to processes. It looks at the ‘causal analysis of various paths into and out of poverty, getting beyond the unhelpful lumping together of diverse categories of people as “the poor”’ (Gore and Figueiredo 1997:10).
CONTEXTUALISING SOCIAL EXCLUSION: INDIAN CONTEXT

One of the major criticisms of the concept of social exclusion is that it is yet another ethnocentric approach to poverty and development, which has its intellectual and policy roots in European context (de Haan 1995). A number of authors have argued that the concept needs to be embedded in particular context in order to be relevant. Gore (1995) recognises the need to modify the use of social exclusion analysis to take account of regional differences and global dimensions of processes of social exclusion. Many authors demonstrate that the concept of social exclusion does provide the basis for context-specific analyses (see de Haan 1998; Sen 2000).

Given the obvious difficulties in transplanting the concept of ‘social exclusion’ to developing countries, attempts have been made to modify it to suit particular contexts. For example, Appasamy et al (1996) in an ILO study in India, define social exclusion in terms of exclusion from a few basic welfare rights. They concentrate on the dimensions of health, education, housing, water supply, sanitation and social security. Nayak (1994) in his study on India focuses on a) exclusion from basic goods; b) exclusion from employment; c) exclusion from rights and d) exclusion on the basis of caste, which the author recognises as an exclusionary dimension of central importance in India (Saith 2001).

Sukhadeo Thorat (2005) explains that in India a number of social groups undergo deprivation on the basis of groups’ characteristics like caste and ethnicity. However, there are differences in sources and processes of deprivation. The exclusion and deprivation of Scheduled Caste, for example is closely associated with institution of caste and untouchability. The exclusion on the basis of caste is of central importance in India, as it is perceived as the fundamental form of social exclusion in Indian society.

Alam explains that the vulnerable sections in India comprise those who are exploited and socially oppressed. These two categories ought to be treated as distinct. For example, a person who is exploited, say, an upper caste worker, is not necessarily socially oppressed; while an OBC peasant may not be exploited, but that the person has been historically oppressed. In the case of Dalits they are simultaneously exploited, oppressed
and brutalised (Alam 2004: 28). In Indian context, deprivation and discrimination based on caste adds to the problem of poverty with persistent and multiple disadvantages, especially for the most marginalized caste groups.

This theoretical framework recognises the fact, that in any society there are vulnerable individuals and groups who have little power over events that affect them and have little power in social and cultural relations. A vulnerable population experiences a variety of dimensions of deprivation that are beyond those arising of income or consumption poverty (Chambers 1989). However, although the experience of marginalization is fundamentally common to all vulnerable individuals and groups, marginalization is understood always in a context, i.e. one may be marginalized in one context and may not be marginalized in another. The following section makes an attempt to contextualise the concept of social exclusion in the Indian situation.

The Institution of Caste

Every society in the world is socially stratified, dividing a population into two or more layers, each of which is relatively homogenous and between which there are differences in privileges, restrictions, rewards and obligations (Lundberg 1968: 361). However, modern societies are not all stratified in the same way or to the same extent. In all societies there is social differentiation based on roles and status. Thus, there are no purely equalitarian societies. Societies differ in the distance between the top and the bottom ranks, and in the number of ranks in between (Beteille 2002). The institution of caste as graded system of hierarchy (Varna ideology) is a unique character of the stratified Indian society.

In the Indian subcontinent, the structuring of society is based on the caste system, which derives its origin from Hindu social philosophy. The original myth describes primeval sacrifice and the emergence of four groups, Brahmans (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors and aristocracy), Vaishyas (cultivators) and Shudras (servants), which were

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1 It is in this context some scholars make a clear distinction between two popular definitions of "Dalit". They prefer to use word Dalit strictly for ex-untouchables and not the inclusive class definition propagated by the Dalit Panther Movement (Vivek 2003) as the context as well as the experience of marginalization differs for those ex-untouchables and those others - poor and marginalized.
subsequently called the four *varnas*. *Jatis* (castes) are not mentioned until the later part of the corpus (Thapar 2002: 63). These castes in turn are divided and subdivided into a variety of sub-castes, which are hereditary occupational groups. The castes in first three *varnas* were considered the *dwija* (twice born castes) and the fourth one i.e. the *Shudras* were *dasas* (Thapar 1966) composed of numerous occupational castes were not regarded as untouchables. Entirely apart is the group of Outcastes, called *Panchma*, the fifth major category in which all untouchable castes were placed together.

Although, Hindus all over India accepted this classification, within this general framework of the *Varna* system there were regional variations. Each regions having it’s own caste groups, each fitting into one of the five major categories (Dube 1955). M.N. Srinivas while describing the Indian social structure mentions the institution of caste as a typical example of the paradox of unity and diversity that characterizes the Indian society. ‘Each caste stands for a way of life that is to some extent distinctive, but at the same time the castes of a region form part of a single social framework’ (Srinivas 1991). Today, caste regulates the daily life of the entire Hindu population and is also found among the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Jews. Over a period of time, strict rules of endogamy reinforced and perpetuated caste; and as the hierarchical structure became rigid, the inter-dinning as well as inter-marriage relations became difficult (Puniyani 2005: 93).

There is a consensus among scholars that ‘while caste was a concrete structure that guided social relationships, hierarchy was its ideology’ (Jodhka 1998). ‘Most sociological writings on caste conclude that *homo hierarchicus* is the central and substantive element of the caste system which differentiates it from other social system’ (Shah 2002:7).

Dumont’s influential work, *Homo Hierarchicus* attributed centrality to the principles of purity and pollution in the framework of hierarchy, ‘which is linked with the opposition between the pure and the impure’. He places the *Brahmans* or Priests at the top of the traditional hierarchy of the four *varnas* who are the ‘purest’ and to whom power is subordinated. *Brahman* and Untouchable are thus two conceptual poles of the system, each of which symbolizes the values of absolute purity and pollution respectively. Therefore, ‘the principle of opposition of the pure and impure underlies hierarchy, which is the superiority of the pure to the impure; underlies separation because the pure and impure
must be kept separate; and underlies the division of labour because pure and impure occupations must likewise be kept separate. The whole is founded on the necessary and hierarchical coexistence of the two opposites’ (Dumont 1970:43).

Although, general discussions on caste take Dumont’s work as a major point of departure, there are many critics of his views as well (Beteille 1991; Gupta 1992). Many scholars have rejected the concept of hierarchy represented by Dumont. Dumont relies, says Berreman (1979), heavily on some classical Sanskrit texts, mythology and genealogy and pays surprisingly little attention to the extensive empirical literature on village India and on caste in India. The result is that he conveys a view of caste, which is artificial, stiff, stereotypical and ideologised. Actually, Dumont’s view of the Indian caste system is exclusively brahminical, which has no relation with the lives of many millions of Indians (Bhattacharyya 2003).

Many researchers found that ‘there were important points on which their local experience was at variance with Dumont’s interpretations. Another criticism, which is also being presented today, is that though the ideology of caste system is hierarchy, it was not a passive hierarchy. Division of people under this hierarchy also invested power, privileges and position to those at the top of the structure and denied all these to those who are placed at the lower order (Louis 2003:52-54).

Some scholars argue that ‘the popular impression derived from the idea of Varna that arranged groups in an order with Brahmins at the top and Harijans at the bottom was only partly correct. The empirical studies pointed out that, in fact, only the two opposite ends of the hierarchy were relatively fixed; in between, and especially in the middle region, there was considerable room for debate regarding mutual position’ (Jodhka 1998: 321).

Caste and its Marginals

When viewed from below, from the point of view of the historically marginalized caste communities (the ex-untouchables), the phenomenon of caste appears different. In the past, these castes were called achut i.e. ‘outcastes’ or ‘untouchables’; antyaja, atishudras or avarna, placed outside the Chaturvarna system. Gandhi called them ‘Harijans’ meaning ‘the people of God’ with the borrowed name from Narsinh Mehta.
reformers like B.R. Ambedkar used the term ‘Depressed Classes’ which was then used by
government administration. The term was later replaced by ‘Scheduled Castes’, a British
bureaucratic invention which became an official identifier of the ex-untouchables
transforming them into a special legal class of citizens for certain purpose of the state
(Oliver and Marika 1998). Thus, the ex-untouchables scattered all over the country and
who were never one single homogenous community were put under one list (see details
Louis 2003a).

A historical perspective (see Guru 2000) indicates that the traditional caste system
entrusted the “untouchables” with service and excluded them from holding any worthwhile
assets in land. The hierarchical social structure barred them from the more dignified
occupations and bonded them to occupations, which were considered defiling. They were
confined to fixed boundaries, ghettoized in space at the outskirts. The religious sphere
debarring them from entering the places of worship as they were considered polluting. They
were kept away from education (knowledge system). The field of politics and entry into
the power structure was not accessible to them. They were subjects only to have an attitude
of supplication and subservience to their patrons. The exclusion and marginalization of the
subordinated caste communities at the bottom of the hierarchy continued for ages.

The caste-based discrimination, economic and political injustice and exploitation
gradually gave rise to strong organized movements among the lower castes led by Jyotirao
Phule in Maharashtra, Ramaswamy Periyar in Tamil Nadu, Narayanaswami Guru in
Kerala, Achutanand in Uttar Pradesh, Mangoo Ram in Punjab and many others throughout
India. Although at different places these movements provided a distinct identity to the
lower castes and challenged the dominance of the higher castes. Similarly, the political
mobilization led by Ambedkar through the establishment of the All India Scheduled Castes
Federation brought sharpness and intensity to their self-definition and consciousness
(Mohanty 2002; Vivek 2002). Over the last three decades the question of caste has come
back into the Indian political and economic life, defining differently the significance of
caste for social change in Indian society.

A number of recent studies in different parts of India provide a comprehensive
picture of how castes are valued phenomenologically from diverse standpoints (Gupta
There were some who argued that caste operated differently at the local level than the way it was fixed in the framework of *Varna* system and that mobility was possible in caste through the significant role played by the secular factors (Srinivas 1976). Gupta, for example, through a number of field-based studies demonstrates a different conceptualization of caste – ‘one that would take into account the need for caste assertion and dignity as well as notions of hierarchy’ (Gupta 2004). In contemporary India, he argues, castes are proud of their identity, regardless of where textual traditions place them on the ‘purity-pollution’ hierarchy. And the orthodoxy of hierarchy is openly challenged by the once-subjugated castes through their identity assertion (see Jodhka 2004; Karanth 2004).

**Castes and the Question of Untouchability**

The assertion and identity factor of the marginalized castes explains the significance of caste partially as the conditions of the marginalized have not transformed as they expected. “Social inequality”, inherent and perpetuated by caste, continues to haunt the social system in India tangibly in the practice of untouchability. The question of untouchability is inseparable from the caste system. In the Hindu context untouchability is the consequence of the concept of purity and pollution. I.P. Desai (1976) defined the practice of untouchability as the avoidance of physical contact with persons and things because of beliefs relating to pollution.

Untouchability conveys “a sense of impurity and defilement. It implies certain socio-religious disabilities. It includes customs, practices sanctioned by the rigid Indian caste system whereby persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes – the ex-untouchables were debarred from entering Hindu temples, public places, streets, public conveyances, eating places, educational institutions, etc” (Mathew and Chacko. 1996). There are other disadvantages - segregation in colonies in the village, denial of land rights, low wages for manual work, denial of access to services, e.g. by barbers and washermen, to health care and education.

The most common idea supporting the principle of purity and pollution was attributed to professional activities traditionally carried on by the ex-untouchables,
implying regular and close contact with polluted materials. According to some scholars it was thought that by abandoning certain “polluting” professions the “untouchable” caste, after a few generations would get rid of their previous stigma (Srinivas 1955). Even after abandoning and diversifying from pollutant traditional professions the stigma of untouchability remains indelible to a large extent from the ex-untouchables (Hutton 1946; Bailey 1957; Lynch 1969; Wiser and Wiser 1963; Cohn 1969). However, as restrictions on movement and on entry into superior occupations have declined, at some places ‘the practice of untouchability in its traditional form has declined significantly, even though it has not disappeared’ (Jodhka 2000).

Understanding the social complexities of caste system Gandhi and Ambedkar brought the question of untouchability into the political agenda (Nikam 1998). For Gandhi the pernicious custom of untouchability was rooted in the minds of high caste Hindus for centuries. Its removal was possible only by peaceful persuasion and change of heart (Gandhi 1954:11). Ambedkar on the other hand, stressed political rights and economic well being of the depressed classes as the only available best possible way for the eradication of untouchability (Ambedkar 1943 (1972).

Article 17 of the Constitution abolished untouchability. In accordance with the constitutional provisions the government has initiated a number of measures for providing protection to the ex-untouchables. In the protective sphere, untouchability was legally abolished and its practice in any form forbidden by the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955. Nearly two decades later, in 1976, the Act was reviewed in order to make it more stringent and effective, and was re-enacted as the ‘Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955’ (see Krishnan 2002). An official enactment abolishing untouchability gave the status of ex-untouchables to untouchables but the ground realities did not change. The ‘attitudinal conversion’ as perceived by Gandhi among the caste people did not occur nor did the annihilation of caste as envisioned by Ambedkar.

The wide ranging socio-cultural changes accompanying modernity, has provided the impression that untouchability as a practice had passed into history. However, many empirical studies indicate that untouchability continues to be an important component of the experience of dalithood in contemporary India (Mander 2004). P.K. Misra explains two
dimensions of the concept of untouchability i.e. one connected with rituals and the other its use-value (Misra 1999). The concept of purity regulates inter-personal and inter-caste behaviours and shapes the worldview of individuals, which he calls the relational aspect. The use-value aspect of the purity manifests itself in economic exploitation and political dominance. He demonstrates through autobiographical descriptions of how in modern secular India the concepts of purity and pollution remain very much intact. The contradiction of policy and practice is well documented in a number of inquiries conducted in different parts of India.

In his classic study on the practice of untouchability in the 1970s in Gujarat, I. P. Desai had observed that with the process of modernization and development even in rural areas a new ‘public sphere’ of social interaction had emerged where the practice of untouchability was quite low. The norm of caste and untouchability had begun to be violated in the economic or occupational sphere as well. This included seating arrangements in schools, traveling in buses and the postal services. However, when it came to traditional relations that included the domestic and religious life of the people, untouchability was highly practiced. Untouchability continued to be a major disability for the lower castes as far as water facilities were concerned (Desai 1976).

A repeat of the study was done nearly 25 years later, when Ghanshyam Shah visited the villages of Gujarat again with a similar set of questions, he found that with the exception of admission of ‘untouchables’ into temples and houses of upper castes as well as access to barbers’ services, the practice of untouchability had declined in most areas of everyday life. It was in the ‘public sphere’ which, are directly managed by the state laws and which have a relatively non-traditional character like schools, postal services and elected panchayats that untouchability had considerably declined. However, as Shah notes, “one would have expected by now, complete disappearance of untouchability in public transport and post offices as it was not widespread in 1971. But it has not happened. The proportion of the villages observing untouchability in these spheres has, in fact slightly increased” (Shah 2002a: 145).

The report of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (April 1990), in its sample survey of a number of states found that untouchability prevailed
in various forms in different places (see S.P. Srivastava 1997). The Ambedkar Centenary celebration committee of Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh conducted an elaborate door-to-door survey in a *padayatra* to 249 villages to assess the prevalence of untouchability (ACCCR 1991). The study obtained similar findings to that of I.P. Desai. The study found out that along with other restrictions in at least 16 of the villages visited, members of Scheduled Castes were not allowed to walk with any type of footwear through streets used by non-Dalits.

In towns and cities there is far greater anonymity and occupational mobility, which enables blurring of caste identities. But untouchability continues to be practised widely in cities in the domestic spheres. The study mentioned above, notes that even in major cities like Chittoor and Tirupati, a person known to belong to the Scheduled Castes community is not permitted entry into the houses of non-Scheduled castes (Mander 2004). Mander found out in a number of cities in Madhya Pradesh that urban scavengers continued to be victims of untouchability, precisely because they were denied access to caste anonymity as they continued to adhere to their traditional ‘unclean’ occupations.

Another study conducted in Karnataka in 1973-74 in 76 villages and 38 urban centers confirmed the widespread practice of untouchability. The magnitude of the problem was less severe in urban centers, but even in urban areas for example, 15 per cent of the respondents were not allowed to draw water from public water sources (Parvathamma 1984). Ramesh Kamble’s study of Dalit social experience in urban setting of Mumbai shows that the social discrimination and economic exploitation they face have not changed in the metropolis like Mumbai. Rather, it has assumed different forms (Kamble 2002).

Even among Dalit groups, those at the bottom of the caste hierarchy like the Bhangis, experience untouchability and discrimination from those above in the Dalit category. Moffatt argues that even the untouchables, the bottom-most stratum of Hindu society, accept the cultural principles and concede the definition of purity and the caste system which defines them as the ‘archetype of impurity’ (Moffat 1979). And what Desai had observed a quarter of century ago still remains a social reality that “there is untouchability among the ex-untouchables themselves” (Desai 1976). Among Dalits the
scavengers are the most oppressed and disadvantaged section of the population (Human Rights Watch 1999). There is evidence that manual scavengers are considered untouchable by other ex-untouchables (NCDHR 2000).

The stigma and the practice of untouchability resulting from association with permanent specialized pollutant profession has remained an indelible stamp with the scavengers for example, more than any other ex-untouchable caste group. Anthropological studies at village level have also showed that from ‘occupational standpoint, one is forced to conclude that untouchability exceeds the scope of professional activity’. Shalini Randeria (1992) is of a view that the practice of untouchability with the Bhangis is not due to his work as a scavenger and remover of night soil as is usually thought to be the case. In her opinion the association of the Bhangis with human death in their role as cremation ground attendants relegates them to the very bottom of the caste hierarchy and renders them untouchable to the untouchables as well, as death is a much more powerful source of pollution than are bodily emission.

Caste and Social Exclusion

In India, caste as a system of stratification is not merely a principle of social division but a comprehensive system of life dealing with food, marriage, education, occupation, association and worship (Nayak 1994). Similarly certain traditional practices of the system based on the principle of purity-pollution causing social inequalities are inherent and perpetuated in society. Thus, a section of the society, especially those located at the lower strata are marginalized and deprived in many ways.

The idea of social exclusion described above exists with its various dimensions in the caste-based deprivations. The structural basis of caste, in practice provides conducive environment for “exclusion” to percolate in every aspect of socio-economic and political life. The notion of “caste-based exclusion” does witness most of the defining characteristics of “social exclusion” enumerated above.

- The caste-based exclusion is multidimensional. It encompasses the entire gamut of reality that goes beyond just statistical calculations in purely economic sense, covering the full range of every domain of social life. Those belong to
marginalized social group in traditional caste-based social order are excluded from access to property rights, civil rights, economic rights and human development.

- Another important aspect of such exclusion is that it is not only multi-dimensional but many of these dimensions work at the same time, making it extremely difficult for one to get out of this form of exclusion. This type of multi-dimensional social exclusion affects the life-chances of the one excluded in different ways at the same time.

- The caste-based deprivation basically deals with the institutionalized form of social exclusion, which attempts ‘to segregate a group of people from the social, political, economic and cultural domains of social life’ (Louis 2002). Further it receives its legitimacy from religious values making it an acceptable way of life for both, those who exclude and the excluded. This form of institutionalized exclusion gets legal sanction through unwritten social laws and norms to which one is forced to adhere and if not one is severely punished for diversion.

- Social exclusion based on caste creates ‘natural’ inequality and vulnerability; it creates systems of domination and oppression (Appaswamy et al 1996). One who is higher up and superior in social order holds the position of domination and rights to oppress and one who is lower down and inferior is obliged to accept the discriminatory treatment in the hands of the one above. Thus, the system of inequality, based on caste gives rise to inflexible deficiencies. It is rigidly hereditary; life chances are based on hierarchy. It generates gradations of ritual impurity. These inherited hierarchies and inequalities defy every norm of democratic justice (Alam 2004: xvii).

- One’s caste influences life-chances depending on where one is located in the system. The practice of untouchability for instance, restricts social interactions and scuttles opportunities for fuller participation in society because one belongs to an untouchable caste. Thus, one remains “a marginal” even though one may not be economically poor. A few among the marginalized caste groups have managed to get out of poverty (economic sense) but still find it extremely difficult to get out of
social marginalization based on caste (socio-political construct). It makes one vulnerable to the processes of exclusion in society, marginalizing an individual or a group for a long time to come.

Over the last three decades, castes have provided positive impetus to various caste groups, especially the marginalized communities to become a force in the socio-political milieu of Indian society. The emergence of Dalits as a socio-political category is an indication of such significance. However, the functioning of caste underlines the fact that one's position (marginality) in social hierarchy does matter in the process of marginalization as well as in the process of social change.

Within this conceptual framework, the study explores the socio-political and economic life of the scavengers; unfolding the significance of caste and its intertwining with modernization processes in determining the life-chances of the historically excluded caste groups in urban India.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The empirical investigation undertaken among the community of scavengers in the city of Ahmedabad consisted of four phases of fieldwork, stretched over a year. A number of methods viz. areal survey, baseline household survey, scheduled interviews, in-depth case studies, and informal discussions were used to collect quantitative as well as qualitative data. This section describes the methodological framework and process of data collection.

Data Collection and Methods Used

The areal survey

An areal survey was an ad-hoc way of collecting preliminary information. The main purpose of the survey was to identify and locate the residential localities where the scavengers lived in the city. It listed the approximate number of households in the locality, estimated total population, types of housing and the description of physical conditions of the housing. The survey identified approximately 9,456 households distributed in more
than 150 residential units where scavengers lived, scattered all across the city (see table 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Housing categories</th>
<th>Total HHs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mohallas</td>
<td>Quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I - Central Zone</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>1575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II - Semi Periphery Zone</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III - Periphery Zone</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No of identified HHS</td>
<td>577 (6.1)</td>
<td>2700 (28.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey revealed two important characteristics of the population of scavengers living in the city. They were largely concentrated in clustered residential units consisting of specific types of housing categories distinguishing one from the other. These housing units were of different sizes and were located in different geographical zones all over the city (see Appendix: 2.1 – Details of the Identified Residential Units).

Based on the type of residence, the geographical locality and the socio-economic status of the residents, the identified residential clustered units were stratified into four housing categories. These housing categories were 1) traditionally excluded localities: mohallas, 2) localities with secular space: quarters, 3) localities in housing societies and 4) transit or periphery localities: slums (for details see chapter III). Another important revelation during this period of fieldwork was unfolding of different segments and social groupings among the scavenger population in the city that once looked a homogeneous community (for details see chapter VI).

It was observed that other than the clustered residential units a few households were residing in mixed localities (with other caste groups). However, it was not viable to consider the individual households located in different areas for practical difficulties of finding them and that their number was not very significant. Hence, scattered individual households were not considered in this list. However, at later stage, a number of persons from such households were included in case studies as well as informal discussions were held with them.

"Housing category" was considered an important and central variable in the study mainly for three reasons: 1) almost entire population of scavengers resided in clustered type of residential localities, thus as variable it would help in locating the community on the physical as well as social map of the universe; 2) "housing category" through its type, quality and locality would be an indicator to know the type of space shared by the household in the socio-economic life of the city and 3) movement of the respondents from one housing category to another would help in analyzing the intra-city residential mobility as well as the socio-economic mobility among the respondents.

At some places the quarters given to the permanent employees were too small. As years passed and the size of the family grew and the grown up sons got married it was a big problem as they could not have enough space for the entire family in the household and there were no financial alternatives to build or take another house. Some of them constructed Kaccha huts in the vacant space in the premises of the quarters. This sort of arrangement is almost observed in most of the quarters where a number of Kaccha huts have sprang up within the premises of the quarters. This has increased the household numbers but not counted in the official record.
Baseline household census survey

The baseline household census survey consisted of surveying of entire selected locality from the identified residential units. It was conducted with twin purpose: 1) to collect quantitative data on the socio-economic conditions of the larger community, and 2) to draw sample households for further investigation.

Along with the distribution of the residential units in different housing categories and geographical zones, two other parameters were considered for identification of the representative residential units. 1) It must be representative of the scavenger population considering their social, economic and other complexities that were identified during the first phase and 2) the selected unit must be of manageable size - not too big or too small in size. From around 150 identified residential units, thirty units were selected for the baseline survey (see Map 2.1 - Geographical locations of surveyed residential units).

For this purpose a baseline survey form was constructed consisting of basic household variables, like: demographic details, their religious and caste affinities, their marital, educational and occupational status, income levels, migration and duration in the city; the housing conditions and amenities where they lived (see Appendix: 2.2 - Baseline Survey Form). The total households surveyed in selected housing units were 1,185 amounting to around 12 per cent of the total identified households (see table 2.2).

| Table: 2.2 - Zone-wise distribution of (baseline) surveyed households by housing categories |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| I - Central Zone                | Mohallas | Quarters | Societies | Slums | Total Surveyed Households |
| I - Central Zone                | 75      | 138     | 41       | 55    | 309              |
| II - Semi Periphery Zone        | -       | 223     | 76       | 280   | 579              |
| III - Periphery Zone            | -       | -       | 52       | 245   | 297              |
| Total Surveyed Households       | 75      | 361     | 169      | 580   | 1185             |

Interview schedule and case study method

These two methods were used for more in-depth and focused quantitative and qualitative data collection. In view of this an interview schedule was developed, focused on the objectives and the research questions of the study (see Appendix: 2.3 - Interview Schedule). Thereafter, required changes were carried out in the interview schedule after pre-testing. Questions included in the interview schedule mostly covered the entire household. It was assumed that a household might be an individual, a family or a group,
residing at a place under one roof and having its own kitchen. Therefore, the respondent could be any adult and responsible member of the household and not necessarily head of the household. However, care was taken to include female members as respondents wherever possible. In the final list of interviews 93 (31 per cent) of the respondents were female. The interview schedules were implemented among 300 sampled respondents. The random sampling method was used to pick up the required number of households from the surveyed residential units (table 2.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Mohallas</th>
<th>Quarters</th>
<th>Housing Societies</th>
<th>Slums</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I - Central Zone</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II - Semi Periphery Zone</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III - Periphery Zone</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Sampled HHS</td>
<td>21 (7.0)</td>
<td>94 (31.3)</td>
<td>42 (14.0)</td>
<td>143 (47.7)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, in-depth case studies were conducted among wide range of respondents from the community. The case studies were focused on persons from community engaged in different walks of life like social, religious and political. A number of individuals from outside the community especially from the field of academic, government and NGOs were also included in the case studies. The total number of case studies conducted was fifty. For this purpose specific “talking points” (unstructured interview guide) were prepared before conducting a case study. The nature of “talking points” varied from case to case depending on the area of case study and the expertise of the identified respondent.

**Observations and informal discussions**

The interviews and in-depth case studies were supplemented with observations and informal discussion on many occasions. Similarly a number of key informants played crucial role in providing information as well as in crosschecking objectivity and validity of the information gathered from other sources.

In order to get the total picture of the reality under study other than the primary data collection from the respondents, efforts were made during the field trips to gather information from other secondary sources. Newspaper cuttings, information leaflets, handbills, court and legal records, periodicals, reports, seminar proceedings and some unpublished works, etc connected with the study were also collected.
Map: 2.1 – Geographical Locations of Surveyed Residential Units

1-43 Wards of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC)

◊ Nagar-Palikas under the AUDA

# Gram-Panchayats under the AUDA
Zonal Distribution of the Universe

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the study was carried out in the city of Ahmedabad, which included the old city, the new and extended city as well as the urban agglomeration. The wide geographical spread of the universe demanded that it be divided into logical zones that would help in carrying out the field work as well as in providing better socio-economic understanding of different regions of the universe.

Therefore, the city area was divided broadly into three geographical zones for the purpose of the study. The phases of historical growth of the city were the basis for the demarcation of the zones, indicating a fair degree of homogeneity within the zones and heterogeneity between the zones. The city area was divided into these three zones, firstly to classify the universe of study into demarcated geographical areas that could assist in the process of sampling and secondly to locate the socio-economic context of the scavengers living in the respective areas (see Map: 2.2 - Zonal distribution of Ahmedabad city).

Zone I (The central zone—walled and old city)

The central zone consists of nucleus, which is the old city including the inner walled city. The zone consisting of 30 election wards of AMC is thickly populated as well as concentrated with the economic and political power. The central zone shows intermix of commercial and residential areas. The walled city is the central business district (CBD), where retail and wholesale trade have been traditionally concentrated. The residential buildings here are of traditional type known as “Pol” and chawls. Being congested and hub of commercial activities the well-to-do people have shifted from zone I to zone II and III in the new city.

Zone II (The semi-periphery zone-new and extended city)

The semi-periphery zone mainly consists of the new city on the western side of the river Sabarmati and the extension of the city on the eastern side of the old city. The entire area falls within the AMC limits but outside the walled and old city. A large number of industrial workers and those in service of commercial sector reside in the extended region
on the eastern part. The west part of Ahmedabad is predominantly a residential area housing middle and high-income groups. Today, this part of the city is economically vibrant and any space either for the purpose of business or residential complex is much sought after. This zone, especially low-lying areas towards river Sabarmati, has large slums, as it provides the residents space to live and proximity to the commercial locations to earn their livelihood.

**Zone III (The periphery zone–AUDA area)**

The periphery zone is the area outside the control of the Municipal Corporation, which includes the *Nagar-palikas* and *Panchayats* that come under the jurisdiction of the AUDA. This western periphery is the fast growing region with high density, multi-storey apartments and complexes. This is mainly a residential zone, housing the rich and the middle classes, which have shifted out of the old city. However, this zone includes many of the *Panchayats* and *Nagar-palikas* having rural character. A large number of poor people have found place to house themselves in slums and squatters on the fringe areas of this zone.

**Phases of Fieldwork**

The investigation undertaken in the field area of study was divided into four phases.

- The first phase (November–December 2002), preliminary in nature consisted of getting acquainted with the universe of study and establishing initial rapport with the population of the field.

- The second phase (March-April 2003) of the fieldwork focused on gathering preliminary information about the scavengers in the city. It was done in two ways. The first set of preliminary information was collected through secondary sources. A number of NGOs engaged with scavengers; various departments of the Corporation and the state government as well as other institutions that could provide information on scavengers were explored. The second set of information was gathered from the field through an areal survey of the residential areas in the city where scavengers lived.
Map: 2.2 - Zonal distribution of Ahmedabad city

1-43 Wards of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC)
○ Nagar-Palikas under the AUDA
# Gram-Panchayats under the AUDA
• The third phase (July–September 2003) was planned for collecting quantitative data on the socio-economic conditions of the community through baseline survey of sampled residential units.

• The fourth phase (November 2003-January 2004): After gaining the wider picture of the universe through the baseline survey, more in-depth and focused quantitative and qualitative information was gathered during this final phase of the field work.

Analysis of Data

After the fieldwork, tabulation of quantitative data and categorization of qualitative data was done on thematic level in order to draw upon common trends and patterns in the data. There were difficulties in using blanket categories, as there were contradictory pieces of information and practices in the field. Based on empirical context and information, specific categories were evolved in order to understand and conceptualize the reality under study. Some of the categories and definitions evolved in this study have been explained in relevant sections.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of the study arises out of the problem of categorization. The inter-changeability of the three terms, i.e. Bhangis, Valmikis and Scavengers in popular usages and sociological discourses leaves certain ambiguity. Although, attempts have been made to clarify the terminology in the introduction and details of their development have been described in various chapters, the dilemma of the proper usage of the terms remains unresolved. Taking into consideration a number of factors from the context of Gujarat and Ahmedabad in particular, the study focuses on the scavengers belonging to the Bhangi

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5 At this stage it was realized that some of the information gathered during the fieldwork was of sensitive nature. Some respondents had explicitly instructed 'not to use' the information for the public use; in some cases the officials had mentioned to keep the information 'off the record' and some respondents had requested not to mention the name. Similarly, some of the conflicting and contesting information had mentioned of instances and names that would harm the image and identity of the persons 'seemed' involved. On a number of occasions the problem of contesting and conflicting views on a similar social reality from different respondents depending on where the respondent stood in that reality posed problem in its presentation. The documentation of each of these perspectives although provided a comprehensive picture of the reality, it also raised doubts and confusion as which one of them was authentic and right. At some places it was difficult to handle the ethical dimension of the research. The problem was addressed by using the information discreetly and wherever necessary with pseudonym.
Caste. Hence, people belonging to the other caste groups, engaged in scavenging or sanitation work, have remained outside the preview of this study.

Second limitation of the study comes from its focus. The study deals specifically with the urban population of the Bhangis, leaving aside a large majority of the community which lives in rural Gujarat. If a study of rural population were included, data would have been different, providing a comprehensive picture of the community as a whole in the state of Gujarat. I have tried to gather and bring in as much information and perceptions as possible about the rural dimension of the community. However, the study remains focused on urban community and the non-representation of the rural community of the Bhangis is inherent.

Thirdly, the non-availability of the respondents in general and women respondents in particular was a major difficulty. As most of the respondents were scavengers and had to follow a different work schedule, most of them were available only in the evening. At many places women were found at home but they were less accessible. Younger women normally followed the practice of "purdah". Many women respondents found it difficult to assimilate the purpose of questions and some seemed reluctant to open up to a stranger, especially a male investigator. This was one major hindrance in gaining significant data, especially on women in the community.

This study deals with the entire community of the Bhangis, and does not have a specific section on the marginalization of women of this community. However, women are integral part of the community and thus, they are reflected in the study at various levels in every chapter that follow. Similarly, the study remained engaged with many dimensions of the composition of the community in urban area. This approach provided richness to the comprehensive understanding of the community in its multi-dimensionality, and hence, in-depth focus on one particular aspect was not attempted.
SECTION II

SCAVENGERS OF AHMEDABAD

Chapter III
SCAVENGERS OF AHMEDABAD – A PROFILE

Chapter IV
OCCUPATIONS AND OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY AMONG THE SCAVENGERS OF AHMEDABAD

Chapter V
SCAVENGERS IN URBAN LABOUR MARKET