Chapter-1.

Introduction and Literature Review

India is a nation of ancient and firmly entrenched tradition and culture. For thousands of years, religion, geography and the necessities of a rural agrarian society have sculpted a complex caste system based on status, hierarchy, and above all, strict division of labour. As India is becoming increasingly urbanized, and her people are leaving their traditional rural communities and entering into an environment marked by fluidity, changes and drastically different technological and physical conditions, traditional division of labour and living habits forged in rural settings are increasingly out of step with contemporary conditions. Yet, Indians continue to draw upon caste based division of labour, often causing great problems, especially for the poor. In the last decade issues related to the inhuman, undignified practices of manual scavenging*2 in urban India and plight of scavengers has got some visibility (TISS Report: 2005).

Historically, when one initially looks at manual scavenging community in India, it is quite observed that over the generations, inhuman work is done exclusively by Dalits across the country. The practice of manual scavenging expanded phenomenally under the British rule that both legitimized and systemized by setting up army cantonments and municipalities. After British period, manual scavenging has been prevalent in rampant manner through sprawling urbanization process. But there is no evidence that urbanization has improved the status of Safai labour in India. In many ways what they are employed to do in the urban context is worse than traditional role of the *Bhangi* in the villages.

Pune City based NGO like Shelter Association (2001) revealed in Pune Community Toilet Project a vivid picture about present miserable and non-hygienic working conditions of the Safai and sanitary workers even though PMC has more recently launched sophisticated and mechanized modern sanitary technologies to minimize Safai workforce in general and eradicate worker’s physical and narrow risky sanitary tasks for saving their lives in particular. Furthermore this research also shows that due to the recent administrative ward formations, the Safai workers would have to undergo enormous adverse changes into their assigned routine tasks into their ward
areas. It blamed that PMC pretends unprecedented ways by withdrawing basic health related precautions and equipments for workers. This has resulted in many sanitation discrepancies for sanitary and scavenging workers who are employed to get into the city sewers to unblock them, which means descending into a manhole and completely submerging themselves in the sewage. Once the superstructure and slab of the old blocks had been taken apart, the old tank of partially decomposed and recent raw sewage was revealed. The stink is as bad as one can imagine. It’s at this point that Safai-kamgars were brought into clear it all out. No one else would touch it, but the Safai-kamgars traditionally dealt with shit and are expected to continue doing so.

Additionally, another scientific research on working condition of PMC sanitary workers was brought out under the School of Health Science, Pune University (1999), is entitled ‘Risking Lives for Cleaner Pune’. This research reveals major findings especially on the working conditions of health hazard related chronic physical complaints and a deep sense of shame for the PMC sewage workers due the chemical gases (such as exposed every day to toxic combination of hydrogen sulphide, ammonia, methane, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide) generated from spoilt household wet garbage and storming industrial waste the into drainage chamber lines.

According to obtained research facts, the highest risk hazard is faced by 50 young sewage workers between 30-40 years old who are working under the kasba, vishrambaugwada and dhole-patil ward in Pune city. Those workplaces included sanitation* line which have low oxygen level as well as where the level of hydrogen sulphide a potential killer in confined spaces is above five parts per million. The research claims a miserable working condition of sewage worker and inefficient training about modern technology for the prevention of deaths, “At none of the sites do the workers carry out pre-entry checks before entering the manholes that lead acetate strips and gas detector bought by PMC after two workers were killed when they inhaled methane gas, are still languishing unused in the ward offices” (Indian Express: 1999: 1). The research also carried out scientific tests while reporting horrendous facts about long-term health diseases on workplaces; 78 per cent of PMC sanitary workers are suffering from respiratory disorders, 74 per cent from musculoskeletal problems (after lifting the manhole lid weighing 100-150 kilos), 66 per cent have eye problems and 12 per cent have skin infections. Therefore most prefer private doctors to the PMC hospital for curing treatment. Drawing upon above two scientific health research, the present proposed research would empirically
accompany processes of plight of sanitary health degradations of workers into sociological perspective.

In regards to Safai and scavenging practices in Maharashtra; especially scavenging labour processes in Pune, scholars and activists like Sunanda Pathavardhan’s (1973) and Thakurs and Parmar’s (1996) survey studies traced back migration connections and stories of inhuman occurrence of manual scavengers under State local bodies and Central public establishments. With arguing along the same theme, reports made by SNDT and All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG) has highlighted recycling labour processes and State intolerances for many traditional Dalit communities in large cities like Pune and Mumbai. Additionally, Dr. Ambedkar Chair and Ambedkar Study Centre, University of Pune conducted a study that underlines the caste composition of sanitary workers into Sanitation Departments of Pune Municipal Corporation. To a holistic manner, a significant report prepared by TISS’s study of Mumbai, that investigates socio-economic condition of Safai workers who are traditionally engaged in practices of manual scavenging in Maharashtra. In details, the study intentionally sought to identify invisible categories of manual scavenging or raising the question that who should be called manual scavenger in contemporary technological advancement of sanitation labour (mostly scavengers attached with human excreta in large part urban areas). The study precisely discussed consistent failure and wrongdoings of local bodies, State administrations, Gram-Panchayat for non-implementing the central government’s commissions, committees, schemes to be proposed long-term rehabilitation plans for scavengers, the demolishment of labour contracts and modest wage increments.

According to National Commission for Karmacharis, the reasons for unsatisfactory progress of various schemes appear to be inadequate attentions paid by the State Governments who routinely deny the existence of manual scavengers. Part of the reason why such rehabilitation schemes failed is the state’s complicity in the whole process. Many government offices and buildings still have dry latrines\(^5\) and municipalities employ the manual scavengers to clean these latrines. In addition, National Center for Advocacy Studies, Pune (NCAS: 2007) shows in report titled ‘Manual Scavengers in Jharkhand’, with taken support on the basis of government’s act; ‘The Employment Of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act’-1993. The report sought that the act became failure in all over the
states of India due to the unconscious efforts by civic officials, politicians, civil society bureaucrats of government and constant changes or delayed declaration of concerned headed authorities of commissions, committees, programmes policies or acts on Safai-Karmachari/ Safai kamgar* since the post-independence India. Even after sixty years of independence, India still has close to three lakhs people working as manual scavengers in provinces. Particularly in state of Maharashtra, there are total 64,785 identified manual scavengers under the resurvey of ‘National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their Dependents’ as shared in the Monsoon Session, 2005 (Page. 10 Parliament Digest, NCAS Publication). In addition, there are other active working organizations fighting on the issues against manual scavenging practices in India, like Navsarjan Trust in Gujarat, Safai-Karmacharis Andolan-SKA, Andhra Pradesh, Social Development Foundation-SDA, Uttar-Pradesh, Safai-Kamgar Parivartan Sangh, mumbai, National Campaign On Dalits Human Rights (NCDHR), New Delhi, Adharshila, Lucknow, Jan-Kalyan Sansthan, Uttar-Pradesh, Trust for Community Development and Research, Ranchi, reviewing judiciary practices and government’s decision, lodging complaints under PIL, rampant atrocities and malpractices while implementing taking place for rehabilitation and liberation.

This located the issue within an interactionist frame and drawing upon these efforts, this research seeks to build a case for comparative work but before that a review of more contemporary literature.

1.1. Reports, Films and Autobiography: A Review

There are some popular documentary films, autobiographies, Dalit theatre dramas which narrate issues of hygiene in the living and working condition of scavengers. First one is “India Untouched”, “Lesser human” for scavenging in Gujarat and another one is “Kachra-Kondi” on Pune. The film Kachra-Kondi comes with critical and complex high-tech age, the film tries to look at the lives of conservancy staff including sweepers, garbage lifters, toilet cleaners and people who dispose unclaimed bodies. It is ironical that a municipal sanitary worker in Pune has to still step into overflowing severs (down manholes without an oxygen mask and go underwater in contaminated sewage to remove debris with his bare hands. The film narrates the problems of housing accommodation in the city like Pune, and also pinpointing failure of PMC to resolve it. Another documentary film ‘Lesser Human’ also
underlines the caste discrimination of Dalits or converted Dalits through concrete based unequal religious orthodoxy of India, where the film also tried to show several changing forms of untouchability all over the country. Dalits have remained the integral part of discrimination in all religions; Hindu, Muslim, Shikhs and Christian. In addition, Sister Clare Marie Therese based in Tamilnadu, and associated with New-York US based Toplab Organization which stands for Theatre of the Oppressed Laboratory (TOPLAB) has initiated a movement for social change through short documentary on Dalit manual scavengers in Tamilnadu. It mainly focuses on city based scavenging, sweeping condition of municipal city employees; especially Dalit women scavengers under municipal corporations. The documentary is named as ‘Shit: Entitled Stuff’ has portrayed the forms of scavenging work’s stuff as human faeces and related mental and physical discriminations. Sister is a theatre activist, resource person and practitioner of Dalit Theatre NYC which includes altogether activities like “street theatre”, “playback theatre”, “theatre of the oppressed”, “children’s theatre”, “puppet theatre”, and “mass theatre”. Interviewing woman, who is cleaning human faeces reveals that she has been doing such inhuman work since past 25 years, she is a municipal employee and she is using her hand with the things; tin bucket and the broom. While working, she is putting the bucket and that is carried to the truck, all work is manually handled, thus called as manual scavenging. Sister Clare Marie further narrates, “In order to eliminate prejudices threat, conformist attitude among scavenging communities, theatre become the handy tool because while working with them, being an activist, illiterate masses; especially women, talking with, giving the reading material, it didn’t reach to them. So I felt, through theatre expressions through culture, this media which will very much powerful because they would sit and watch and something is an inside their mind and heart. The aim of the theatre is to social change in society conscious. We show how the common people they suffer like. Our theatre drama has a mouth to mouth publicity empowering the Dalit community, who oppressed then rise up. Dalit themselves are not challenged by their own reality because they are conformist, fatalist. One side, other one those who have taken part as a normal course of life, never questioned when during the theatre workshop, it is the process where we don’t only give them a skills of theatre, but it is a social analysis. We have lot of songs, theories gives along with the skills through the games, through exercises. After every exercise, we sit and we discuss, so people come to know ugly face of them.”
Autobiographies like ‘Joothan’ written by Omprakash Valmikis, shows Dalit writing demands a new dictionary, for the word its uses are as new as the objects, situations and activity. The author describes the Hindi world ‘Joothan’ literally means food left on an eater’s plate, usually destined for the garbage pail in a middle class, urban home. However, such food would only be characterizing ‘Joothan’. If some else besides the original eater were to eat it. The word carries the connotation of ritual, purity and pollution. Joothan’ means polluted Joothan is associated more with pigs than the humans. The title encapsulates the pain, humiliation and poverty of valmikis community, which, not only had to rely on Joothan but also relished it. The valmikis gives a detailed description of collecting, preserving and eating Joothan. While summing up to whole narrations on Joothan as an autobiography, he said- valmikis like many other Dalit writers, demands the status of truth for their writing, taking issue with those who find Dalit literature lacking in imagination. Valmikis insistence that all persons and events in Joothan are true poses a considerable challenge to ‘postmodernist’ critics who propose that autobiography’s truth is ‘constructed’ the autobiographic narratives shapes a presentable self by reprocessing his/her memories in order to fit the present. Dalit autobiography claims the status of truth, of testimony. Naming people and places by their real names is one of strategies through which valmikis establishes the status of ‘Joothan’ as testimony, and it gives Joothan the status of documented Dalit history. An author’s primary intimation manifests a twofold task of celebrating and honouring Dalit assertion, and attacking and dismantling anti-Dalit hegemonic discourses. First, author tries to highlights that the Dalit within Dalit castes such as scavengers sweepers. Mehtar’s life is excruciatingly painful/charred by experiences that did not mange to find room in literary creations, they are grown up in a social order that is extremely cruel and inhuman- the writing is completely self-reflection of untouchables in caste pyramid. An original theme is “Ek Dalit ki Atmakatha” has also contributed to my understanding of the “sufferings of untouchability”. The experiences manifested at surface details author’s own childhood and adolescence in a small town in northern India where casteism and untouchability were normal, where untouchable cleaned latrines and carried away the excrement on their heads. Joothan is story of Dalit writings, his life story of being born in Chuhras caste of Punjab. Therefore, Joothan emerged as a first Hindi Dalit literature in post-independent India. This is an autobiographical account of valmikis journey from his
birth and upbringing as an untouchable in the nearly independent India of fifties to his present as a Dalit. Dalit constitutes about 16 per cent of India’s population.

Dalit autobiographies could provide inspiration to future generation. Their low status is emphasized by forced, unpaid labour, their vulnerability to atrocities to such as savage massacres and gang rapes; and pervasive discrimination on the basis of associations of impunity, pollution and untouchability in a society that is organized by caste and kin networks. Quite prominent throughout Joothan is Valmiki’s documentation of how his struggle gets from efforts to claim on achieved rather than an ascribed identity. The narrations note that valmikis autobiography highlights an important paradox of modern Indian life. On the one hand, it shows how an expansion of post independence opportunities has enabled the emergence of articulate Dalits and the florescence of their achievement, on other hand, Joothan witnessing of life’s harsh realities and persistently degrading stigmatization expose serious imperfections in India’s practice of grassroots democracy (Valmiki: 2003).

Another autobiography written by Hazari, titled “I was an Outcaste: The autobiography of an untouchable” in India. It focuses on same life experiences of untouchable manual workers. Hazari argues that autobiographies and novels are also an important means of understanding the lives and the ways of thinking of the ‘outcaste’ bhangis. Such above autobiographies have portrayed the real life of manual scavengers in which experience of authors reflects mental and physical discrimination by upper caste orthodoxy. It classified into the sets of work experience such as degrading cleaning, removing human excreta, entry into manholes, safety tanks results sometimes the end of lives in an early ages due to the scanty water, infecting diseases, breathe blocking inside Nullas or sanitary drain/manholes and so on. Thus the lives of scavengers seem social suffering by genres of autobiographies.

There is a paucity of existing published and unpublished reports; some are quite superficial level for their findings and empirical study. In last decades, several studies also have tried to review the changes in the lives and labour of scavengers. While referring post-independence situation, the state and union government have been set up numbers of Safai Commissions and Committees to look after the rehabilitation of scavengers.
1. The Government of Bombay appointed the scavengers living condition enquiry committee headed by V.N.Barve in 1949, which submitted its report in 1952. While studying the living condition of sweepers and scavengers and make suggestions to improve them, the committee submitted its report titled- ‘scavenger’s living conditions enquiry committee’ in 1952.

2. *N.R.Malkani Committee* was appointed by 1957 by the central advisory board of *Harijan* welfare, to suggest ways to abolish the practice of carrying night soil as a head-load and the committee submitting it findings in 1960.

3. National commission on Labour 1966 headed by *P.B.Gajendragadkar*, was appointed by the Government of India, dealt with questions of unorganized labour, working condition of sweepers and scavengers, housing and wages for the sweepers and scavengers. In its report submitting in 1969, the commission noted that social stigma of untouchability continued to be attaché to this category of workers.

4. *N.R.Malkani Committee* and *Bhanuprasad Pandya Committee* (1969) were appointed by the Government of India one headed by *N.R.Malkani* to study the customary right scavengers and sweepers. This committee also submitted their own suggestions in respect of pay and allowances, weekly-offs, leave facilities etc.

5. *B.V. Lad committee* (1973) appointed by the Government of Maharashtra. The committee was to study service and working condition of sweepers and scavengers in the state of Maharashtra. The committee submitted its report in 1974, with numerous recommendations.


7. In 1969, the Union government took up special programs for converting dry toilet into water-pour flush latrine; Bindshwar Pathak’s *Sulabh International scheme*, which means ‘simple latrine’ initiated in 1974, heralded a low change in the system.

8. A decade later, in 1983, the Government of Maharashtra appointed committee, the *Mehtar Committee* to go into the feasibility of implementing the recommendations of the ’Lad Committee’.

9. *Task Force* (1989) constituted by the planning commission of India submitted its report in March 1991 suggesting measures to abolish scavenging in India with particular emphasis on the rehabilitation of scavengers. On the basis of the report “*National Scheme of Liberation of scavengers and their Dependent*” was framed by
the Government of India, Ministry of Welfare Government has declared its intension to implement the scheme.

10. The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act was passed in 1993. It was believed that the practice of 'Topli-Sandas' has been banned and wiped out. It means provides for the prohibition of employment of manual scavengers and construction and maintenance of water seal latrines and the scheme for rehabilitation of manual scavengers. This is the only uniform legislation for the whole of India for abolishing manual scavenging by declaring employment of manual scavengers for removal of human excreta and offence and thereby bans the proliferation of dry latrines in the country.

11. National Commission for Safai Karmacharis Act, 1993, provides a study and evaluation of policies and Programmes relating to the safai-Karmacharis (scavengers) and recommend to the central government specific programmes of action towards elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities for safai Karmacharis under a time bound action plane.

12. National Safai Karmacharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) was formed in 1997, are to promote economic development and self-employment for the economic rehabilitation of Safai Karmacharis or scavengers besides providing training in technical and entrepreneurial skills and extending loans to students from community for pursuing higher education. The NSKFDC also co-ordinates and monitors the schemes and programmes implemented through authorized state financed by it and it is an apex institution for channelizing funds through state agencies.

13. There is also scheme called the Centrally-Sponsored Rural Sanitation Program (CRSP), which strives to provide more and more sanitation facilities to the rural population and generates awareness about health, education and eradicates manual scavenging by converting all existing dry latrines into low cost sanitary latrines.

14. National Committee on Scavengers: several committees have been constituted to study the working and living conditions of the scavengers in India- Barve Committee, Prof. N.R.Malkani Committee, National Commission on Labour*9 and Task Force.

15. The Pre-Metric Scholarship Scheme for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation like scavenging. The objective of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to enable the children’s of scavengers of dry latrines, tanners, flayers and sweepers who have traditional link to scavenging to peruse pre-metric education.
16. The National Human Commission (NHRC) has also introduced manual scavenging eradication scheme in 2 October 2002 (Ramaswamy). The Indian state through the constitution and specific development activities efforts has sought to me from modernization in occupational dealing such as by providing modern technology in order to avoid direct physical contact to total detachment from the caste occupation by arranging alternatives. Yet in Post-Independence India, the relation between scavenging labour and caste hierarchy continues to be socially reproduced. Dalits as landless communities have migrated ever last 150 years or more; performing scavenging labour in towns and cities.

In general, the scavengers from cities and metropolises continue to be identified by different castes names which occupy the lowest position in the Jati-hierarchy; the lowest among 'Untouchables' too. We prefer the term 'Safai-Kamgar' a term indicating a labour process as against caste-laden terms 'Bhangi', 'Mehtar, Jamadar', 'Zaduwala', which are value laden and often-abusive terms. Within the academia, we have several reports by states and NGOs on the status of scavengers have focused on the issues in states in North-India, Andhra and recently TISS shows for Maharashtra. There seems to be no study at all on those engaged in sweeping and scavenging in Pune, in recent times. The most recent work is done by Ambedkar Chair “A Study of the sanitation Department (particularly Safai-Kamgars) of Pune Municipal Corporation from caste perspectives”.

In doing so, I look beyond the environs of Pune city. Since 1980s, it is generally observed that couples of reports and studies have committed scavenging communities in India. These studies make important inroads into:

- The persistence of manual scavenging
- Delineating the degrading condition of scavenging labour in private and public sector
- Mapping colonial social history of sweeper community.
- Drawing liberating action frame/ plan for abolition of scavenging in India.

While delineating the issues of caste, gender and scavenging labour locates through “Poverty and Women’s Work: A Study of Sweeper women in Delhi” by Malvika Karlekar was appeared in 1982. This research portrayed short but concise study of
sweeper women in the West Delhi Katra known as Sau colony. Malvika’s study of 80 married sweeper women in Delhi which depicts these women’s engagement into traditional scavenging occupations that underwent a fast changing environment. This is an outcome of a valuable monograph that links the forms of relationship among untouchable caste memberships, plight of male-female employment status, family, patriarchal structure within scavenging household organizations, and patterns of social mobility among sweeper women in DMC. The stress of this study is on women’s participation in economic activities. It also analyses how these women organize their time and combine the role of wife, mother, unpaid domestic help and economic provider. This study has been of significance for having used macro-level baseline data. While studying married women of Delhi belonging to Valmiki community- one of the major components of the section working as a sweepers and scavengers in Delhi, Karlekar observed that scavenging and disposal of human excreta are universally regarded as the most degrading of all jobs. Her work shows exposing the degrading condition of labour in private and public sector with special reference to women as manual scavengers (1982). The New Women Policy (2001), India puts forth action plan for economic empowerment of women. This work highlighted crucial role of mainstreaming for enhancing the growth of female scavengers’ economic empowerment because here scavenging work is predominantly found for women as a traditional hereditary occupation, in the villages mostly cities rarely; in both permanent and private sanitary work. This is the soft core work of the entire of liberation and rehabilitation.

Franco Fernando, Thekakara Marie Marcel and Shinoda (2000; 2003; 2005) have highlighted their studies for Gujarat, by showing that persistent manual scavenging and induced existence of old client-patron relationship even after 60 years of India’s Independence. Franco focused on cultural universe of Dalit women (‘Vankar’, ‘Bhangi’ and ‘Koli-Patel’ women) wherein tried to reflect Dalit women’s self-perception about themselves and the world around them. It also reveals caste and gender structure govern their lives construct their subjectivities with provide the tool of resistance: negotiation rather than confrontation. Franco emphasizes that Dalit woman’s whole cultural expressions as preserved in their cultural songs, oral tradition and stories explore ways in which cultural artifacts functions as normative prescription and expressive outlet. A thematic understanding of this work emerges
relating to family relationships, sexuality, life sustaining responsibilities and the presence of the mother goddesses, of particular interest in an exploration of work, indicating that women, however over-burdened appropriate it to recover self-esteem and assert identity. As far as `Social Space` they highlighted how women modify ‘Patriarchal Exclusion’ to curve out autonomous niches, which in turn excludes men-as being the vibrant world of these women. Importantly, this work employed some clarification and definition of some key concepts while understanding existing literature on Dalit women, and its relevance to their own reflections through oral histories/narratives. It reflects varied resemblances; `Spaces` ‘Woman’s Space’ ‘Exclusion’ ‘Negotiation’ ‘Power’ as a concepts. This study argues that exclusion, it is meant the description, which debars any groups from access to a `Physical Space` `Social Groups` or `social practices`. Confinement to a physical space also constitutes exclusion since it prevents the confined person from access to outer-world (Franco: 2000).

A second study on Gujarat by Thekakara (2003) narrates a tale of human waste and wasted humanity in the study titled “Endless Filth”. Thekakara argues deepen narrations of women’s life to have seemed arduous, miserable scavenging work attached within hierarchical Hindu caste system. This study also depicts ignorant attitudes toward education and severe health problems for traditional Bhangis due to persistence of the monopolized scavenging labour. Thekakara also put forth non-implementation of central government’s planning to eradicate manual scavenging activities among various states like Bengal, South India, therefore underlining how problems of rehabilitation are being often neglected by regional politicians as well as central governmental authorities. Third work on Gujarat by Shinoda Takashi (2005), a Japanese writer, has highlighted the issue of the socio-economic status of untouchables Bhangis with special reference to Gujarat from Western India, have unveiled medieval forms of labouring status of scavengers such relationship as client and patron. The core interest of the study is to identify socio-economic conditions of the sweeper’s castes as the reason for continued association with their traditional occupations. Adversely, compared to this to other untouchables castes have tended to abandon their occupation in the course of time, which is by and large beneficial for their socio-economic development. This research explores the monopolized works categories and why sweepers are continued with their association with sweeping and
how is the institutional change affect socio-economic life of sweepers. Shinoda critically distinguishes those continuities between miserable working condition in private and public sanitary workers despite of having various schemes, committees, commissions appointed by the central as well as state government. The whole study criticizes the rehabilitation agendas for scavengers due to capricious nature of state as well as central planning through appointing Safai Commissions.

Trivedi (1977); Pathak (1991); Sachchidananda (2001) and Poddar (2001) have focused their studies for Bihar State and the rehabilitation from Sulabh Movement, arguing that the socio-economic condition and the lifestyles of scavengers in general and women scavengers in particular are far from satisfactory. Thus above author’s detailed studies focus on women scavenger’s living and working conditions, their troubles and tribulation, their hopes and frustrations. One successful approach to the liberation of scavengers has been the one adopted by Sulabh International, a non-government organization that was registered by Dr. Bindshwar Pathak in 1970, with declared objective of converting dry, household latrines to hand-flush water seal latrines (sulabh sauchalaya system). The Sulabh Sanitation System is low cost, requires little space for the construction, one is which the night soil decomposes to become manure. Hence there is need for scavengers to remove the waste. The initial Sulabh complexes were built in Patna and the local municipalities gave the liberated scavengers alternative jobs such as sweeping, cleaning and garbage removal. By 1978, sulabh international (suitable flush technology) had converted about 10,000 latrines and the project’s success drew attention from the World Health Organization (WHO), which subsequently impresses its findings upon the Government of India. Since the sulabh international has moved into the second phase of constructing pay and use public toilets, which employ the liberated scavengers as caretakers. Today, sulabh international maintains about 3,000 toilet-cum-bath complexes in nearly 650 towns and cities across India and manufacturers some of the components parts. Such complexes are generally constructed after municipalities have approached it. The local governments then provide the land on which the complexes are constructed. Sulabh space and its construction has only capital costs and hence do not include maintenance, depreciation and operational costs. Sulabh International claims to have found new jobs for more than 40,000 scavengers and has established a school for their children in New Delhi. Sulabh has also implemented a somewhat novel approach to
overcoming the discrimination those scavenging communities suffer. A problem called “adopt a scavenger family” has been established to help them integrate into the mainstream of Indian society. There was ‘liberation’ of the estimated 7,00,000 scavengers from the task of manually removing night soil is fraught with difficulties. Even if they provided alternative jobs, they continue to face discrimination and exploitation because of their low status, their untouchablity. One of recommendations of ‘Scavenging Condition Enquiry Committee’ was that scavenging was very complicated socio-economic problem and that question is not (one) of finances alone but needs a radical change of metal outlook and habits arising therefore critics have viewed this scheme as mere *tokenism*, which fails to provide the educational and economical inputs that will bring equality for scavengers. Sulabh International still is the only organization that has made a significant contribution to national goal of eradicating scavenging.

Similar study carried out in Gujarat and rest of country, says scavenging is a caste-based occupation and the state; *panchayat bodies* and the private sector* make sure that they only employ a particular sub-caste, the *valmikis* for their sanitation jobs even when *Valmiki* youth are better qualified and have applied for other jobs. Women, being unequal partners, and further lay down on ladder of caste as a filthiest works. Yet, no woman’s commission in country has taken up the issue from gender perspectives. Most NGOs shy away from addressing it because their leadership structure is parallel to caste discrimination. *`Shameful`, `degrading` `dehumanizing`, `disgusting`, `obnoxious`, `abhorrent`, a blot on humanity* these are some of words used to describe manual scavenging which is plain language means people lifting human excreta by their hands and carrying the load on their heads, hips or shoulders (Frontline: 2006). Even today unimproved sanitation in India may lead to uncured diseases. In many rural areas and slum areas in cities for scavengers, there are inadequate and or inconvenient of facilities for excrements to a sewer or septic tank system, a pour flush latrine or a ventilated. Due to severe degrading work condition of scavengers are suffered from many dangerous communicable diseases such as diarrhea which together with malnutrition endemic *Malaria’s* the main cause of deaths among infants and children in development (Vishwanathan: 2006).

Scavenging demands high cost on health, statement reveals in most municipal bodies only archaic equipment and implements are provided to *Safai-Karmacharis*, which
includes simple brooms, baskets, and spades. In general, gumboot, gloves and masks like essentials are not made available by PMC for almost all cases. Thus safai-kamgars who live and works to protect health of others are themselves exposed to serious health hazards to want of modern implements and protective working gear, constant poor health status continuous. As many as like 49.3 per cent scavengers were examined had respiratory complaints, 12.5 per cents had skin diseases, 55.9 per cent had orthopedic complaints, 7.2 had eye diseases, 7.2 had fevers, and 26.3 had gastro intestinal problems, 11.8 suffered from mental and alcoholic addiction (Aloysius: Dalit and Globalization; Reports of Occupational Health and Safety Center, Mumbai: 1996). As far as death average rate of sanitary workers in Pune city more than 107. It clarified that mortality rate is high because of more degrading unsafe sanitary works. However the scavengers also become a part of garbage (Sakal Daily: 2007, Oct-23). Thus, manual scavenging becomes caste and class issue. Unfortunately, government authorities tend to ignore sanitation because it does not bring voters wrath upon their heads as urgently, assay water and power supply (Frontline: 2006). Privatized contract labour of sanitation works have been rapidly increasing by government of India, promoting private contraction in almost municipal corporations. It could be easy way out for the government to escapes its constitutional responsibilities in order to abolish the system of manual scavenging. But in contrast, privatization of sanitation work ensures the perpetuation of the practice of manual scavenging, without any legal protection of Safai-Kamgar’s socio-economic status. Thus government has exempted from the Contract Labour Act-1970, which ensures minimum wages to contract workers, allowing, the contractors to pay much less wages. In addition globalization promotes concentration of assets and labour in urban areas-thereby also promotes manual scavenging. The process of globalization is characterized by decreasing government’s role in economic governance and expenditure on social welfare, and by the exclusions of non-educated and non-skilled persons from diversified job opportunities, the compulsion of scavengers to stick to their only profession is going to increase, as happen in case of sweepers, therefore untouchable’s traditional function, namely evacuating waste to give them a near monopoly on certain salaried jobs (Aloysius: 2005).

The Safai Karmacharis Andolan brought out survey findings for India, especially Tamilnadu state, shows forms of practices of manual scavenging into various parts of
private and public service areas. It reveals that nearly 80 per cent of manual scavengers in government, local bodies or contractors and private houses are women. The scavenging was rampant all over the state. The main government institutions railway has the rampant manual scavenging all over the states of India. The physical public domain is thus not recognized as a realm of order or accountability and becomes instead one of the dirt and danger who copes with it. That such coping is ordered by caste and gender is the stuff of life in India. The honour and status of household is in part expressed in the management of waste, rubbish marks the boundary between the domestic interior, which is considered the realm of women, ‘outside’ which is used to be considered a male realm, though it is now increasing open to women too, women invest in their security in their patriarchal households by ensuring clean inside the space. However ensuring clean outside space brings no benefit and falls into public domain of men. However caste males do not handle waste in either realm. In the household, this service work considered demeaning is done by women, though it is first task to be shed by them, being shifted when possible to paid female domestic waste workers for ‘inside’ and male sweepers for outside’. Solid waste disposal is done by Dalit workers employed by local municipalities often supplement their relatively low wages with private contracts (and by supplying waste as raw material recycling firms and waste pickers). By focusing upon urban services into wealthy areas the local state reduces the cost of redemption of local capital, and by depriving working class areas of waste-disposal services, it adds to low status and stigmatization of sanitary workers invites abuse by officials in local state (who routinely appropriate their provident funds, delay paying their wages, and soon). This lower motivation leads to low-quality work and reinforces incentives for sanitary workers informally to privatize provision (Harris-White: 2003).

For the rehabilitation of scavengers through alternate non-caste based occupations, all reports, books even journal articles place the problem at the level of implementation of rehabilitation by government, civil societies. When the government has made attempts through various schemes offering loans and subsidies, setting up the national commission for Safai-Karmachari Financing and Development Corporation, they have not succeeded. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in its affidavit, claims that 1.56 lakhs people trained and 4.08 lakhs were rehabilitated until 2002, and that Rs.712.14 Crores has been released to the states. It also says that there were only
about four lakhs scavengers in 1989, conveniently omitting to mention more recent statistics. Interestingly an audit of National scheme for liberation and rehabilitation of scavengers for period 1992 to 2002 by Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) threw up a maze of conflicting data in fact, the CAG report on the audit said the Rs.600 Crores grant given by the center to state had ‘gone, literally, down the latrine’. The latest scheme is National Action Plan (NAP) for total eradication of manual scavenging by 2007, under which the responsibility for liberation and rehabilitation has been shifted to the ‘Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation’ which is a nodal ministry to seal with issues, but central backwardness of government can explore through wide gap between the release of funds and the actual expenditure incurred by agencies implementing the national scheme. The difference between release of funds and the expenditure incurred during 1992-93 to 1994-95 was as high as 44.72 lakhs, indicating that the bulk of funds for the eradication of manual scavenging lie unutilized. These facts best indicate the lack of interest in the welfare of Dalit Safai-Karmacharis, if not sheer negligence on part of the government (Frontline: 2006; Aloysius: 2005; Sinha-Bakshi: 1990; Pathak: 1997; Chandra: 1999).

Ironically, that is considered illegal manual scavenging is forced onto Dalits by caste pressure. Scavengers earn anywhere between Rs.20 to 160 a month and are exposed to the most virulent forms of viral and bacterial infections that affect their skin, eyes, limbs, respiratory and gastrointestinal system. The official figures show that there are still 3.43 lakhs scavengers in country (India Together: 2007; Ramaswamy: 20; Sachchidananda: 2001).

Shyamalal (2006) and P.S.Vivek (1998) have focused the persistence practices of caste discrimination and politics for Bombay. Shyamalal shows a typical advancement of ‘Raigar’ as an untouchable caste from Rajasthan Northern India, settled in Bombay. Here is seen a systematic and comprehensive picture of traditional, transitional and emerging pattern of dominant scheduled caste-Raigars in Bombay (Dadar). The elites from Raigar produced their status in traditional construction business and also demanded for political participation or affiliation from regional parties in Bombay. The study shows occupational, social, political, mobility and the emergence of the untouchables on the socio-political scene is one of significant events of the twentieth century India. This pioneering study traces the history (with agitation 1940 to 2004) of this phenomenon in the form of the rise of the Raigars community as a socio-
political awareness and the appropriate migration movements to other parts. The emergence of the untouchables on socio-political scene is one of the significant events of the twentieth century India. This pioneering study traces the history of this phenomenon in form of rise of the Raigars community as a social political force from 1940 to 2004. Focusing on eight states of northern India Rajasthan, the author traces the genesis and development of the raigars movement from its early days of self-reform through the successive agitations, formations of the organization and their active participation in freedom struggle. He also provides the traditional account of socio-religious, educational and economic disabilities imposed on untouchables in traditional Hindu society. The author analyses the ‘Dalit movement’ as a part of broader socio-religious and educational reform movements. In this process, Raigars sought to transform their socio-economic life, while opposing the caste system. The book also discusses the gains and failures of the movements in the pre-and the post-independence periods. But here, author focuses on the Raigars, an untouchable community, and their associations in different parts of India, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar-Pradesh, to bring out the regional variations in the pursuit of diverse programmes to fight against the different kinds of discrimination. In spite of the notion of ‘purity and pollution’ and they had their own traditional occupations like skin and leather-dyers and their products were the economically necessary to villages. After the advent of British rule, likewise the other communities of chamars, meghawal, bhambhis, and balais during the 1940s had not produced a leader with education, political skills of status; however the Raigars organizations developed the confrontational ideology and strategy. The ‘Dharmgurus of Raigars Samaj’ called upon their community fellows to initiate a process of self-reform and modernization, to clean themselves of baneful social practices and above all to educate themselves.

Akhil Bharatiya Raigars Mahasabha (ABRM), as a political movement, brought major shift through upward social mobility, the growth of elites, who reinvented the business of building construction which brought about changes among political representation, socio-economic, and cultural lives of the Raigars community in the Rajasthan in general leading to constant migration toward Mumbai’s suburbs especially in Dadar-Chembur. As a result of political transformation, they have been able to lift themselves up from the positions of the untouchables. They have achieved
equality of opportunity in several spheres of social life starting from a position of all-round severe deprivation. They have attained a higher status in the ritual hierarchy compared to other untouchable castes/communities by a series of positive measures. They have also achieved equality of opportunity of regard to modern education, government employment (non-regarded status of SCs in Maharashtra state), and representation in legislatures, parliament, and right of entry into caste Hindu temples, through a series of agitations. On the other hand P.S. Vivek (1998) studied the Safai-Kamgars in Bombay as professional workers, attempting to find out the reasons for their social segregation in urban areas, traces the impact of migration and urbanization on scavengers and highlighted the effects on their working condition in absence of leadership, hidden tension between and contradictory tendencies in their socio-cultural fabric. Vivek explores the issue of unions of safai-kamgar, union’s resistance against removing social discrimination and existential system, work nepotism by administration. The study also attempts to construct socio-economic characters of scavenger communities and identities and process of change taking place among the political affiliation, cultural religious belief and personal and psychological factors.

Vijay Prashad’s significant study titled “Untouchable Freedom” purports to be social history of Chuhras sweepers of Delhi from 1850 to 1960. Chuhras were inhabitant from Uttar Pradesh and Punjab as an agriculture labourer. Urban sanitation jobs were more plentiful under the British rule. In the beginning in 1912, because land law for the Punjab lefts artisans and menial caste become landless, chuhras began migrating to Delhi where they joined the municipal sanitation crews, so that by 1921, 82.5 per cent of DMC sweepers were chuhras, but his opinion on the migration about chuhras catch in contradiction. Vijay Prashad (1995:1) has pointed out that the colonialism’s simultaneous appreciation of the fastidiousness of South Asian hygiene habits and abhorrence of the diseases and dirt to which they were a response. This ambivalence to the `social body` of colonial India, he has characterized as `nation dirt and imperial odour`. In this book, Prashad has amply demonstrated, settling of the Valmikis in the city as sanitary workers, and moulding them into accepting this work has been one of the major achievements, first of colonial administration, and latter on, of state and political parties. They have become indispensable in all public places, institutions, factories hospitals, cinema houses, business and NGO offices, anywhere where there are latrines to be cleaned. They live in the urban slums, ghettos constructed by the
municipalities in order to ensure an available labour force that is ready to continue cleaning the excreta and the dirt generated by all of us. He clearly writes on sanitation and sweepers in colonial Delhi, he broadly concurs with a constructivist stance, arguing that, the logic of capital during colonial rule produced a municipal sanitation regime which relies upon the control over the labour of manual sweeper’s mediated through jobbers, overseers, and contractors. Far from being embodiment ‘tradition’, the sweeper since colonial India bear on their bodies the marks of the capital demonstrating the integral relation between the logic of capital and barbaric colonial rule. Prashad sought interface between caste and valmiki consciousness with proving social history of Dalit in the colonial counterpart. His work focuses on the pressure exerted by those Dalit of Delhi, not only to the agrarian struggles but also through the demands for social equality in ritual and market terms under the colonial mass developments, and its environ who are now known as valmiki, particularly in period for the 1860s to the 1960s (at present) in terms of the institutional and ideological incorporation of these Dalits into the maelstrom of ‘Militant Hinduism’. It offers a view of work processes that entraps these Dalits into the sanitation industry. Presently, the bulk of valmiki community’s labour as sweepers hired by the municipality of Delhi where they work under the close supervision of Hindu overseers and Jamadar. The British hired a set of castes into the sanitation department due to the dominant belief that ‘caste’ especially for the Dalits, had something to do with occupation. Vijay Prashad emphasizes an extended social history of the valmiki to demonstrate how their space for political maneuver was restricted so that the politics of ‘Hindutva’ can appear too many valmikis not only as their politics, but as one of the few available avenues for their (often) individual or (sometimes) collective advancement. Historically, scavengers were deprived of their human rights therefore their stigmatized caste based traditional occupational hereditary leads to close use of opportunities in education, dishonour culturally among other upper castes and untouchable castes. There are four factors which operate into combinations to deny human rights and dignity to scavengers; they are inequality, discrimination, exclusion and stigmatization which conjointly contribute to the utter marginalization of scavengers in India, as well as their unions are shifting welfare to profit-making, negligence to solving problems, and the continuous process of ‘Hinduisation’ of valmikis by enforcing power through Hindutva militant movements or organizations (Singh & Gadkar: 2004; Franco: 2004).
1.2. Pune City and engagements with Safai-labour: reflections of the making of my research topic

While highlighting the issue faced by the community of safai-labour, this research intends to underline specific characteristic of the research locality of Pune or PMC areas so that the general understandings of its history and changes can help the issue historically. Pune is one of the most modern cities in India, also called Oxford of the East. According to the Environment Status Report (ESR), published for 2007-08, of PMC, which says Pune `s per-capita income is Rs. 46,000 which is 50 per cent more than India’s per capita income, is also much higher than Hyderabad and comparable to Bangalore IT export, education sector and economic growth etc. The report also tried to analyze ward wise income growth through octroi, property tax, cess and city garnered (Express: 3/2008). In accordance with Pune heritage, the city produced many social, reformers, revolutionaries, political leaders, researchers, scientists, educationalists, and sports people. At presently in Pune, though a modern city quaint old values and traditions are retained. It is one of the fastest growing software industrial center of India with M.I.D.C, IT hub and the center of learning. Due to the inclusion of some extra outskirt villages and towns, Pune encircled with IT companies like Infosys, IBM, Wipro and some international schools and deemed universities since the past five years; it undoubtedly is a city on the move. PMC Mobility Plan (2007) reveals that the city has been growing towards city towns like Hinjewadi, Pimpri-Chinchwad and Chakan. Mass transit systems have to be provided for these places. The master plan also says that the inner-ring road, connecting the peth areas should be improved. The numbers of malls in the city are on the rise and the city is fast becoming a shopping destination. Pune as a satellite town and newly emerging as a mature chamber of commerce and flourishing stock exchange and the educational and cultural capital of the state of Maharashtra. Pune is 120 miles away from Mumbai and has a population of approximately 30 lakhs; of whereabouts 40 per cent live in the slums.

Pune city has a long history of over 1000 years or more. Pune’s history supposedly begins from 1630 and 1680 with the Bhonsle family (The Shivaji Period); the Peshwas followed on their heels, and finally the British made their mark and remained there until 1947. In 1918, the British territory as well as the principal cantonment in the Deccan Poona city municipality (old name) was established in 1857
as an experiment in local-self government. During the second of the 19th centuries, Pune city has been recognized as a cultural capital of Maharashtra, and has earned a reputation as a prominent educational center in our country. After independence, it has developed into an industrial city during the period of 1961 to 1980, ranked on 44, after Bombay’s 43 ranking due the dissemination of household industries, manufacturing units, construction industries, transport services and other social services (ICSSR-JNU, Report: 1980).

Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) came into being in 15th of February and is in charge of the administration in the city of Pune. The municipal corporation of Pune provides numerous services. These services can be broadly categorized into obligatory and discretionary services. The obligatory service of the department includes construction of schools, health centers, ensuring sufficient water supply to all. Its discretionary services include maintaining public spaces like parks, museums and community halls. Apart from these, PMC also works for the rehabilitation of slums and downtrodden areas. In general, my focus is on most neglected essential service like ‘sanitation and solid/wet garbage disposal management’. A Survey published by the Forbes Magazine lists (2007), Mumbai along with Pune city and Delhi among the world’s 25 dirtiest cities, because it has turned out the rapid slums with open sewers and garbage dumps etc. Cities have grown in size- areas as well as population over years but Pune’s urban planning has failed to match the growth. Planning is such an elaborate exercise in Pune with specialized bureaucracy, that it looks great on paper. People in Pune are producing and consuming more goods than ever. There is massive increase in the volume of waste as well, therefore its big problem arise in front of urban planners and civic officials of PMC. As result, PMC could begin by revamping health and sanitation services. There is a need to infuse the latest technology in these services. Most of sanitation workers in PMC work with broom and bare hands, which explain the high rate of morbidity among them. Basic equipments like gloves and gumboots should be made a must for workers while vacuum cleaners and mechanized dumpers should replace brooms and push cards.

My standpoint and support to the issues of scavenging or sweeping communities or the sanitary workers in both organized and unorganized sectors emerges from my life-experiences and observations and close interaction with them. To my personal view, the initial observation related to social deprivation and exclusion of sanitary workers
and waste cleaners came into existence at two different moments. In the beginning of time, when I was serving as a Maintenance Fitter for industries; respectively Zenith Steel Ltd and Bajaj Tempo Ltd since the period from 1999 up to 2003. During this period, I had been visibly observing many incidents related to sanitary and housekeeping cleaning works. Their living and health conditions were dismal despite having adequate implements and equipments provided by company management authority. By and large most of workers who used to clean the flush-toilets and handle several cleaning related works who undoubtedly belonged to lower castes background due to their intimacy over traditional hereditary occupational and professional skills of removing human or an industrial filth. In such industries, the earnings of sweepers and cleaners by their permanent service nature are more or less equal to other blue collar workers as per industrial wages acts; but there are ways in which their work is arduous and regards low prestigious among all labour processes. Additionally, the labour which is on contract or casual status are working in same establishments are facing or lacking incalculable health and socio-economic equities or facilities. Their miserable tasks and unlimited working hours which are also neither restricted by factory management and nor concerned by housekeeping labour contracts. During the period, from a humanitarian point of view, there were lot of questions in my mind that I urged to contribute something for this underclass labour, while understanding the existence of old caste-based divisions of labour order and contemporary trajectories into the present sanitary/scavenging/sweeping castes and communities.

In the second moment, observation/interaction and close dialogue was made possible with scavenging communities during the period of M.Phil course in Department of Sociology. Under Earn and Learn Scheme for students, runs by University of Pune, I was given the work as ´sanitary supervisor´ on particular assigned departments under the Estate Department. During that period, I used to fill up daily report for the given duty hours or timing of the workers. My job had involved daily writing a report sheet concerning their attendance and muster, to lodge complaints about the daily work load, repairing sanitation drainage line, to warn or give suggestions for their poor working progress, to provide equipment for implements for daily works. During these work periods, I became closely acquainted with them. Similarly my earlier experience and observations into industries did make me committed personally to understand severity and rigidity in sanitary works. Sometimes I had to negotiate with both those
conservancy staff and university sanitary officials to resolve misunderstandings as well as abusive behaviour among workers. While undertaking a pilot study with Safai workers in Pune Municipal Corporation, I met some young boys and married women who were third generation workers, working on contract basis and belonging to ‘traditional’ scavenging castes such as valmikis, bhangis, mehtars, mahars, matangs, neo-buddhists, muslims, halalkhors and lalbegis etc. Though there were some workers belong to Other Backward Castes (OBCs), Nomadic Tribes and Hindu-Marathas from Maharashtra people who have taken up some forms of Safai and cleaning works, but among most of them were not found as regular as the traditional Dalit caste workers on workplaces. Moreover, Brahmin-Rajputs/Bhumiyar castes from Bihar in particular are worked in the Sulabh Sauchalaya/International.*16 Most of these third generation workers continue do same tradition of caste based occupational jobs due to their low educated status, persistence of abject or chronic poverty, guarantees of customary job as IV grade employees; especially sanitary workers those getting Ghan-Bhatta (Unclean allowance) by government rule and lacks of modern basic skills for their domestic subsistence and ensured accommodations and other facilities. Although I was assigned duty for monitoring their activities; that seemed very hard to do for me, my interest in their personal everyday lives was growing through worker’s lived experiences, their perceptions against other upper castes and dominant ex-untouchable*17 castes too, community and family ties on practices of marriages and religious rites, achievement of the community or panchayat’s main offices in Pune, their history and migration in past generations, their voluntary and involuntary participation in safai-kamgar unions in PMC, their movements against private money-lenders, indebtedness and local politics, their approach toward sulabh international, because emergence of rampant thekedari or contractual system, gender-bias at workplaces as well as in families, invisible discrimination by other civic officers or an administrative staff, and great desire to provide education in English medium for their children like other castes do and so on.

Day by day, I noticed that their social and occupational recognition in the government establishments somehow disappeared by the entry of other touchable castes and implications of advance mechanized sweeping,*18 cleaning and removing sanitized drainage technology launched by every public civic/local bodies like municipal corporations, military cantonment boards and Zilla-Parishad. Consequently, these
castes have been always claiming their own caste monopoly over scavenging labour. Eventually, as part of my investigation using selected qualitative and quantitative research methods and tools, (for example; as an ethnographic participant observation, case study, an interview and questionnaire), I could even realize that the research topic was viable and grapple with dozens of problematic issues in scavenging and sweeping.

As in the research process, my supervisor suggested literature on globalization, social exclusion and existing work on scavengers/safai-kamgars/sanitary workers engaging in municipal corporations. During this period, I also had an opportunity to go to Indian Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS) to learn SPSS package that enabled me for the extensive field work and statistical analysis. The research process enabled my interest areas when connected with prominent activists, sociologists and their consistent struggles for elimination of manual scavenging labour across India. I surveyed books, journal articles, chosen documentary films and novels, national and international reports, occasional papers on the issues of historical exclusion of scavengers and sweeper’s document reports as also policies and committee reports. While critically conceptualizing the globalization process, I sought to map the consequences for India’s deprived and marginalized castes or communities. The effects were adverse as most of the Dalits with special reference to scavengers and sweepers in India have been excluded from globalized essential force of science and advanced technology, erosion of characteristic of welfare state and grown passivity in labour laws and social security. These external forces, consequences of globalization or development create livelihood insecurity, incapability of basic survival, and mandatory exclusion from the citizenship right, right to education, under-represented political right and violation of human rights (existing changing forms of the visible and invisible caste-based discrimination, atrocities or oppression by majority upper castes over Dalits, especially on Dalit women).

The third moment of comparison came when I was selected for the Erasmus Mundus PhD fellowship and researched the issue of social exclusion of Roma Gypsies in Spain. Importantly, the Durban Conference had inaugurated a debate on Caste and Race, the forms of exclusion faced by Safai-Kamgars and Roma Gypsies provided an important point of comparative understanding.
1.3. Rationale and Outline of the Study

After understanding, on the one hand, globalization and its creation of extensive labour processes through the ethnographic works by sociologists and anthropologist like Michael Burawoy’s “Global Ethnography” and Jan Bremen “Down and Out” and on the other hand, my modest commitments toward India’s untouchables within untouchables - the Dalit scavenger, my study came to focus on processes of sanitary or conservancy workers of PMC as a huge labour force of unit in Pune city.

While observing their daily morning labouring activities (for example, collecting sweeping in huge volume of garbage to loading on the garbage vehicles such as BRC, DP, Compactor) under persistent pressure of each ward office authorities, I had to become more familiar with concerned commendable hierarchical positions in a ward office (Please see appendix graph 1.1) under total 14 wards of the PMC. There are high authorities on the top such as chief PMC commissioner and (vishesh)/sub-additional commissioner, chief engineer, followed by additional commissioner (Solid-Waste Department), then is Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and four Zonal (Kshetriya) Additional Commissioners (Solid Waste Management). The zones are further divided into 14 wards for daily reporting and supervision. The next level of authority is ward officers and sanitation engineers. Subsequently, the major working and monitoring authorities are DSI (Divisional Sanitary Inspector) and their assistants SI (Sanitary Inspectors) with help of mokadam/supervisors with assigned particular attendance Arogya-kothi for daily monitoring of cleaning and other scavenging works of safai-sevak drawn from ward-haddhi/ward fields.

It is also noted that there have been hundreds of other unrecorded daily sub-labour processes for scavenging and sweeping under PMC Conservancy/Health Department within officially recorded labour categories such as sweepers, mehtars, bigaries, operators, mokadam (assistant mokadam). Such classifications of the labour processes would bring in focus by next chapter on social exclusion and its operationalisation with the reference to scavenging and sweeping communities spreading overall on 14 wards of PMC. The PMC unit and its conservancy/health or sanitation departments are known for huge and efficient army of sanitary workers or Safai-Kamgar have engaged to clean the whole Pune city, its recently additional merged villages, and its dynamic feature of urban planning development. PMC has total 25 offices, including the headquarters, 14 Ward Offices, and 10 Sampark Offices. But here, my effort is to
understand and pinpoint the macro and micro processes of social exclusion and deprivation through classifying the diverse stigmatized traditional labour activities of sanitary workers under PMC.

For field study, I selected the Vishrambaugwada Ward Office (Kshetriya Karyalaya) which is known as old main building of Poona Municipal Corporation in colonial period. Vishrambaugwada Ward is local, central, and highly dense and populated area among PMC Wards. Consequently, the Vishrambaugwada area has reported several routine problems due to huge garbage production, collection (near about, 10 to 12 tones garbage on daily routine), and its hectic transportation despite of executing advanced garbage vehicles such as BRC, compactor, D.P and Jet sweeping machines. It is also caused to remain degraded working conditions of these Safai and sanitary workers due to huge crowded popular red light area, crowded, central business hub of city with huge traffic commercial markets, daily commuters for the purpose of purchasing or buying goods, stationary material or other commodities, the close existence of old Mahatma Phule vegetable market, located old slaughter/mutton and fish market, great numbers of ancient religious temples with long queues. Most serious problems are related with old structures in the ward; congested sanitation drainage lines, manholes, chambers, underground *kundis* of 10,000 old wada etc and pumping station and filtration plants that go back to 250 years of *Peshwas* and British rule.

As far as rich and varied architectural legacy in Pune is concerned, the British colonist came with technological developments and different aesthetic senses. They built residential, institutional, religious and public buildings in especially this concerned old ward office of greater Pune and showed their superiority by imposing structures and infrastructure of sanitation with underground drainage lines. In the old city, most of the stately British structures still stand tall and are in use today. At presently, the Vishrambaug wada *Ward-Haddhi* covers total 3865 drainage chambers and maximum length of chamber is nearly 9.5 meters. PMC is also haunting severe problems due to its less visionary built sewage treatment plants which resided at *kasba*, *wanwadi* and *mangalwar peth*. Pune is situated along the banks of the *Mutha River* and population is more than 30 lakhs. It needs 800 million liter a day (MLD) drinking water, 640 MLD which amounts to 80 per cent of sewage water is created each day. Only half of this treated. The remaining water which is highly polluted is dumped into the river.
The problems for the sewage bigaries/workers are becoming more hazardous over the years and years. On other hand, there are total 28 Sulabh Sauchalaya with 260 toilets and 86 latrines in a ward area. For such a big ward, there are only 381 sanitary worker’s engagement are offered to perform sweeping and scavenging works on daily basis by office itself in spite of newly merged kasba ward office in Vishrambaugwada ward office. Due to exhausted loading and unloading everyday tasks and vast pressure of PMC corporators, mokadam S.I, D.S.I and complaints, abusing, beating of sanitary workers by public. Half of them are absent or missing on daily duty hours. In the whole PMC ward offices, there are at present 8,000 conservancy staff engaged into various departments. Over 5000 people work in unorganized sector and are hired by contractors. This is a section that remains neglected by the society. They are termed as uncivilized only because they dispose the garbage generated by the civilized society. Municipal Corporations have Conservancy Departments whose duty it is to clean and maintain toilet blocks, drains, and streets and so on. In this high-tech age, it is ironical that a municipal sanitary worker in Pune has to still step into overflowing sewers (down manholes) without an oxygen mask and go underwater in contaminated sewage to remove debris with their bare hands. Consequently, there have been more than 107 deaths of sanitary workers each year, in last year recorded due to extreme degradation of work condition and asphyxiation. The Pune Municipal Corporation’s garbage staff has to clear over flowing garbage containers, which could contain anything from rotting food to used sanitary napkins and dead animals, with their bare hands. PMC’s women street sweepers have to sweep human excreta every day, come rain or shine, and the PMC sanitary staff has to dispose of unclaimed bodies from the general hospital morgue (Times of India: 12 Feb.2008). The figures have been revealed for Pune, in the household census conducted in 2000, which studied houses, household amenities and castes, the city like Pune has just 352 public urinals for a 30 lakhs population.

In the present scenario, the global population has doubled from 3 billion in the early 1960s to 6 billion by the end of 20th century. Estimated global population in 2000 was 6055 million. In 2001, India’s population reached 1027 million; about 742 million live in rural areas and 285 million in urban areas. An increase of 2.1 per cent points has been recorded in the population of urban population during 1991-2001. The percentage of the urban population to total population of country stands at 27.8 per
cent as compared to 25.7 per cent. In 1991 census, by 2011 and 2021 India’s urban population is estimated to be 366 million and 459 million respectively, showing an increase of 81 million and 174 million as compared to 285 million in 2001. Nearabout 9 per cent of the total population of India lives in million plus cities. It is evidently looking at the past five decades of India, and the empirical evidence around the world, that future of India is inescapably urban, but the effects and the responses to these urban phenomena have been varied in many cities but with certain commonalities. This means most of mega and big cities have problems with provisions of the urban services such as water supply, drainage, sewage, solid waste disposal, transportation, healthcare etc. all of which make the city life very frustrating. Pune is India’s largest and fastest growing city and exemplifies many of these problems as traditional, rural culture in counter the reality of conditions in the modern mega city. Over half of Pune’s residents live in poorly serviced slums marked by overcrowding; pollution, poor sanitation and the host of other problems shared by urban poor the world over. Forty per cent of Pune’s population, an estimated 14 lakhs people, live in slums. Over 1 billion people worldwide live on less than $1 a day, and nearly half the world’s population lives on less than $2 a day. This epidemic of poverty spans across the globe. Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) estimates that some 88,000 people migrated to the city in 2006, of which 45,000 settled in the slums, every year, number of people are migrating to city will continue to multiply, therefore in future the Pune might be known fast gaining another epithet, that of a city of slums. Pune’s slum population has grown by 176 per cent since 1991, caused by constant migration. Town and Country Planning Organization (TCPO), the technical arm of the ministry of urban development, government of India, ranks Pune third in the cities with the largest numbers of slums in India. Although under schemes like JNNURM and SRAs (Slum Rehabilitation Authority) arrival, state and central government might spending or throw up 200 Crores on slum rehabilitation as the decisions of municipal standing committee (TOI: 18 Dec. 2007). Of particular concern in Pune is the problem of human waste. The lack of clean and adequate toilet facilities, the lingering rural customs of relieving oneself outdoors, and deeply entrenched attitudes and taboos preventing most slum dwellers from cleaning up human wastes. For that, municipal corporations in India are usually entrusted with their responsibilities to implement city’s plan.
According to All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG: 2004), solid waste management, disposal human waste (sanitation) are most essential services; and it is an obligatory duty to municipal bodies to arrange for daily cleaning, waste collection, transportation, processing and disposal of waste proper discharge of this services are essential to public health, a clean environment and good healthy living. It is estimated that about 1,00,000 MT of municipal solid waste is generated daily in country. Per capita waste generation is major cities range from 0.20 kg to 0.60 kg. Generally waste collection efficiency ranges between 70 to 90 per cent in metro cities, whereas in several small or medium sized cities the solid waste collection efficiency is below 50 per cent for these large disposal of waste, local bodies needs huge network of uneducated urban poor who belongs to the SCs or lower caste backward categories especially ex-untouchable castes and mainly “untouchable within untouchable castes”.

1.4. Caste Safai Labour: The Need for Exploration

Historically, hereditary occupations like removing or carrying human excreta on head manually into *wada* of upper castes, dragging dead animals from public places, cleaning dry-latrines and manholes, and other filthy assigned obligatory duties by upper castes and other service provider castes under the feudal *Jajmani* system\(^24\) were imposed by and through the caste hierarchy. The forms and obligation of caste discrimination appeared differently in the different states of India. In contemporary India due to the attractive opportunities, abject poverty, and social security in employment or jobs available in field of conservancy departments of varies Government local bodies such as the municipal corporations in metropolitan or mega cities, under the *Panchayat samittees* and *gram panchayat’s*, Z.P in villages or town levels, in the airports, railway services, private hospitals, and government or semi-government’s establishments and offices. Caste based occupation is being recast and reiterated in diverse ways. For instance; PMC employed sanitary based works employed belong to majority of *Mahar, Matang, Neo-Buddhists* from Maharashtra and to “*Hindu-valmiki*”, constituted by *mehtars* (an officially recognized designation/post while recruiting), *muslims* castes such as *lalbegis* and *halalkhors*. The *hindu-holler, bhoi, vadari-kaikadi, dhanger, marathas-kunabi* as a heterogeneous caste groups from Maharashtra, are in numbers and are recruited in these sanitary services only for the sake of entry in government services. In fact these castes do not
engage in such labour, but pay some petty prices to the poor untouchable sanitary workers by substituting them for their daily assigned sweeping, grooming and drainage cleanings. After a few years, they shift their services toward other non-scavenging departments either by help of their caste colleagues or under nepotism or “Vashila-Paddhat”, who are employed in the administration. Unequal distance based on nature of works is maintained the designation of work by diverse caste and religious identity of safai-kamgar consolidates and rigorous reproduction of caste identity in contemporary Indian society. By and large, officially approved posts of Safai-Kamgar are not strickly attached to same scavenging works in the PMC Health Department. But these are subsumed under the range of conservancy or sanitary supervising categories such as assistant mokadam, office attendant, peon, epidemic surveyors, inspectors who maintain the records of domestic animals, birds etc. under each ward office of municipal authority.

While seeking secondary literature on PMC and its labour functioning management into different wards offices, I started by collecting books, journal articles, booklets, PMC annual reports, union’s pamphlets of unions, novels and autobiographies related to sweeping and scavenging labour in Pune. Ever since, I tried to organize the available and the eclectic literature over the genesis of scavenging labour, their nomenclature, colonial history of scavenging labour, debate between Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R.Ambedkar against abolition of scavenging labour and thoughts on their emancipation in modern India, review of Safai-Karmacharis commission recommendations, provisions or suggestions made by reports, committees appointed by central and state government, role of civil society for liberation of these communities and findings of academic institutions like T.I.S.S and S.N.D.T for liberation of scavengers. I then obtained data on population of scavengers or sweepers in India in general and Pune-Maharashtra, in particular and also more focused data on total 14 wards. Further the ward-wise data on sanitary worker’s population was obtained. I started visiting the field in informal visits and focus group discussions in PMC colonies and workplaces, ward offices, ward medical officers, their daily attendance kothis as well as formal visit to kamgar kalyan office (Employee Welfare Office) in mid 2007. Interviews with Right to Information Office, Additional Commissioner Office, and Health officials under main PMC building were conducted.
1.5. Population and Sample of the Study
At present, the State of Maharashtra does not have concrete information on numbers of scavenging populations. There seems a dearth of academic literature on sweepers and scavengers and past history of hereditary engagement, their socio-economic condition, caste and gender-based occupational duties. With the reference to scavengers and sanitary workers of Pune as well as Pune Municipal Corporation, there is neither qualitative nor quantitative research material available. There have been few studies available on slum-dwellers or as migrant labourers, but those studies do not provide complete information on PMC Safai and scavenging workers for their persistence deprivations by continuous lack of access to income earning capital assets (agricultural land and non-agricultural assets), heavy dependence on the wage employments, low education, and less diversification of employments.

In Maharashtra, primarily the migrant social groups that perform this scavenging labour is usually known as valmikis, mehtars, meghawal, vankar, rukhi, madgi, mala, lalbegi, dom-halalkhor and bhangi. Apart from them, there are other social groups from Maharashtra such as mang-garodi, mahars, neo-buddhists (traditionally known as a mahar) also performs these manual labour traditionally on some part of Maharashtra, especially in Pune or PMC. Earlier this labour was performed by migrant castes like mehtars, bhangis, lalbegis, malkanis, meghawal, and rukhi etc. from outside state such in U.P, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Haryana etc. It is said that the scavengers and their forefathers and mothers in Maharashtra have migrated from different states of India and two neighboring countries namely Nepal and Pakistan. Apart from these above scavenging castes, majority of matangs, mahars, neo-Buddhist castes have been performing these scavenging tasks in PMC. The scavenging communities migrated nearly 100–150 years back during Peshwa state. As a result, many members of their present generation even don’t know their place or region of origins. If we go through both academic and non-academic literature, we find reference to `Bhangi` as occupational form of labour, which eventually become caste. In colonial period, they were brought into urban areas or commercial market cities in India to perform manual scavenging and sweeping and became semi-urban and urban community. But settled Valmikis in Maharashtra believe that their ancestors migrated from northern India and largely settled in big towns. According to the 1981 census, their total population together with its notified
sub-groups is 133,386. Among them, 119,545 persons (89.62 per cent) live in urban areas. There are nine sub-groups of *Valmikis* namely interchangeably called as ‘mehtar, olgana, rukhi, malkanis, halalkhor, talbega, valmiki, korar or zadmilli and hela’ distributed throughout the state.

This research wishes to explore the questions related to historical notion of manual scavenging as an old phenomena and its continuous change over an era of globalizations and privatization fostered contractualisation, casualisation and unregularization of daily-wage services. The focus is on new forms of exclusion in public-sector and private sector rapidly with collaboration between government agencies, contractors- subcontractors and private employers. The problems concern insecurity of jobs, unhealthy conditions and sheer crisis of social reproduction of migrated *bhangis, valmikis, mehtars* in Maharashtra in general and Pune in particular. It also tries to understand ways in gender and caste mediate in process of scavenging works and exclusion of scavengers from economic, social, and political participation as well as cultural exclusion in political organizations of scavengers.

**1.6. Caste and Scavenging Labour: A Historical Review of Categories**

There are diverse arguments about the historical origin of scavengers. Some argue in the past and persist even now with the same argument that restoration of human rights and dignity to Dalits is a valid proposition. A first argument is that the Dalits and ex-unntouchables were Buddhist in past and hence they enjoyed dignity and human rights. A second argument is advanced with special reference to scavengers. Some of them have argued that scavengers were of upper caste origin. They have been relegated to the position of lower caste due to the suppression mounted on them by the powerful elements in society. It is well known that upper castes oppressed all the Dalit castes, but all the Dalit are not scavengers. The argument that scavengers are of upper caste origin falls in line with the numerous familiar myth of origin associated with all lower castes (including some above the ritual pollution line) which imparts only symbolic satisfaction about their higher status in the past. A third argument is that those who were captured as a war captives were forced to become scavengers were war captives and/or all war captives were forced to become scavengers, because scavengers as an occupation did exist independent of war. All that these arguments suggest is that scavengers were drawn from both upper and lower castes. Even if one accepts this
argument, the fact remains that dry-latrines existed and those who cleaned them were treated in most inhuman manner. (Oommen: 2004:16-17).

The genesis of the caste hierarchy and scavenging system has established that for human beings in small conglomerates of township and cities disposal of night-soil became a problem and methods have been evolved since then to the present age in accordance with geographical limitations, culture and tradition. Beside the authentic records of the two Chinese travelers who visited India during the reign of mauryan dynasty clearly indicate that a group of people known as ‘Chandals’ stayed outside the city and were engaged in scavengers activities. Some anthropological and ethnological25 inferences try to indicate that the aboriginal groups were the ancestors of the present ‘Bhangi’ or the untouchables. During the medieval period under Mughal rule, sale of the Hindu prisoners was common and the Hindu prisoners were reduced to the rank of untouchables and were even forced to work as scavengers. With coming of the Islamic Sultanate- due to burqua (veil) system of the Muslim women, who were not allowed to defecate in open, the bucket privies were designed for women’s defecation in pardah. After the Hindu captives were released, they were not accepted by their caste men and hence they formed a separate caste called bhangis. Later, some of them also embraced Islam whom were called ‘Halalkhor’ and ‘Lalbegi’. During Akbar’s time these Halalkhors were called Mehtars. Thus the process of de-Sanskritization has been going on since ages and is still on (Oommen: 2004:17-18).

There are very few sociological or anthropological studies available on the nomenclatures of scavengers such as halalkhor, chuhras, hari, mehtar, lalbegi, hella, hadi, valmiki, thoti, or madiga etc. though the preceding account reveals some perspective to historical speculation on what at led to emergence of hereditary occupational class with a fixed role and status Indian society known as ‘bhangi’ or ‘mehtar’. It is quite clear that there is an absence of sufficient anthropological and sociological literature tracing the origin of these caste groups. Thus one has to depend upon the existing research studies done by various social researchers in India to grasp the essence of this category of people with special reference to Maharashtra. (TISS Report: 2005). The Bhangis or scavengers do not have any written history. In the absence of authentic history about origin, functions and features of scavengers as a sub-caste among untouchables, there are different self-contradictory interpretations
and viewpoints about them. All the same, it is apparent that there are different speculations which explain the origin of the Bhangis or traditional scavengers. Some attempts have been made to identify a set of explanation based on works done by different scholars (Lal: 1992). The Bhangis are scattered throughout the country and are known by different names in different parts (Fuch: 1981).

Historically, the word Bhangi derives from Bhanga or Broken implying a community which character is a broken or destroyed. In essence Bhangi describe a community of untouchable, a specific segment of Dalit who, on account of their birth, are assigned a particular occupation. This word, therefore, contains an entire world of meaning-untouchable community, nature of work that they do, and in colloquial usage, the word turns to an insult. It is also explained that the name Bhangi might have come from their habit of taking Bhang, the intoxicating hemp plant. The Bhangis are the descendents of the chandala, who is said to have begotten by a Shudra and born to a Brahmin mother. It means another explanation is that the Bhangis are the offspring of Chandala (Born of the union between the Brahmin women and a low caste man).

Some scholars argue that Bhangis are lower caste who had the habit of taking ‘Bhang’ because they were worshippers of Lord Shankar (Kailash). Lord Shankar would identify for one of his habit taking bhang on whole day. These people were remained addicted. The addicted people were compelled to clean remove human excreta by upper castes. For this upper castes had cultivated the field of Bhang. They used to exchange Bhang for this undignified, degraded work. Consequently, group of people who remained engaged in scavenging, those were called as a Bhangi. Subsequently, the Bhangi people constituted a low place in the ‘Hindu Social Order’. These groups made Bhangi as an abusive word (Chaudhary: 2001, Mari: 1999, Chauhan: 1967). The most common name for them is Mehtar, which literally means ‘prince’ or ‘leader’. It is not known how this name has been acquired through though they are considered the lowest and most despised caste of north-India. Too some Bhangis are those who were expelled from society and it is therefore, derogatory in meaning. The title ‘Bhangi’ is now generally employed and has therefore, been taken as the designation of caste. By other title in which the bhangi today chooses to be called Valmiki, is derived from the low caste creator of the epic, Ramayana, who was, in fact a tribal (Chaudhary: 1998; Lal: 1999; Prashad: 2000).
In Ambedkar’s words, scavengers are the lowest in a system of graded inequality (Ambedkar: 1969). Scholars drawing upon Ambedkarite perspectives argue that India had covered drains and toilets with water as far back as 2500 B.C (Harappa). The Vedic times brought changes. It was witnessed that one of the fifteen duties for slaves enumerated in the Narada-Samhita was the disposal of human excreta, in India, since excreta avoidance is ritualized, Hindu Caste Society, not surprisingly, found the solution in the ‘polluted castes’. (Ramaswamy: 2005). The phenomenon entrenched itself under the British rule, particularly in the migration that accompanied the industrialization and urbanization in the subcontinent which should have rationally led to scientific sewage practices-Hindu society found Bhangis into manual scavenging (Ramaswamy: 2005).

A generally agreed upon assumption is that their present position in the caste hierarchy is a result of defeat in ancient times; the captured soldiers were given the work of slaves and made to do inferior jobs as a punishment imprisoned in a separate residence under supervision and separated from the other communities so as to render them permanently weak, they were kept ignore and left intellectually underdeveloped. This had the desired effect of cutting off scope to organize and offer resistance. Forced to stay away from the general class of people, they were not considered as ‘Savarna’ (that is with the caste`) but as `Avarnas` without caste, or outside the caste system altogether. To doubly ensure that no other social group mixed with them, they were stigmatized as untouchable, lagging behind any social development that might be taking place victims of ignorance and a deliberately socially imposed systems, they became untouchable permanently. In the course of time, anyone violating religious tenets was also considered an untouchable. Another school of thought maintains that these groups were formed with the decline of Buddhism and the revival of Brahmanism (Franco: 2000:247).

There has been debate on the state accorded nomenclature; there is some controversy on Definition of Scavenger. A term Scavenger is used in government records and has gained official legitimate use. The scavengers is defined as a ‘person engaged in or employed for manually carrying human excreta or any sanitation work’. It is an occupational category. The perspective therefore, is that scavengers are a functional community recruited from different social groups performing these occupations. As an occupational category, they are lowest in hierarchy of stratification according to
class system, the word ‘Safai-Kamgar or Safai-Karmachari’ refers to those members of Valmiki community, who were working as sanitation workers for state. For practical purposes it is translation of term scavenger and it carries along urban or semi-urban character. These four terms Bhangi `Mehtars` `Scavengers` and `Safai-Karmachari` have been used synonymously and a clear-cut distinction is avoided to retain the ambiguity of the term (D’Souza, Paul: 2004:179-180). The practices of manual scavenging were extended phenomenally under colonial rule. The British both legitimized and systemized it, as while setting up army cantonments and municipal corporations ties, they created official posts of manual scavengers, rather they intervened specifically to institutionalize it. In colonial India, we see two perspectives and ethical debate between the nationalist and social reformers on the practice of manual scavenging in the ideology of Dr. B.R.Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi. The quotations concerned with scavenging issues and its emancipation. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar differed radically from Gandhi on the question of `reforming hinduism`; whereas Gandhi believed in the removal of untouchability through penance and acts of social services by caste Hindus, as opposed to mandated changes in laws, Ambedkar used the language of rights and legislated remedies. Similarly, while Gandhi and their congress leaders thought in terms of temple entry and inter-dining. Ambedkar linked untouchability to the economic destitution of the untouchables, constantly reiterating how they were denied access to education, ownership of lands and jobs above level of scavenging, sanitary and other menial occupations and were also forced to provide their labour against their will and without any control; over their wages as calling. As far as caste structure and identity for Dalits are concerned, Ambedkar found the term `degrading and contemptuous` and suggested several alternatives for it, such as `Non-Caste Hindus`, `Protestant Hindus`, `Non-Conformist Hindus`, `Excluded Castes` and `Exterior Caste`. Nevertheless, in his own writing and speeches, Dr. Ambedkar continued to use `Depressed Class` and `Untouchable` interchangeably. In opposite, Gandhi replaced the term `Untouchable` with `Harijans`, he explained in Harijans of 11 February 1933. `Asprishya` means literary untouchable. Gandhi adopted the name `Harijans` on strength of its having been used by first known poet-saint of Gujarat.

Proclamation toward improving work condition and development in degraded scavenger’s occupation through the Bhangi Mukti Movement have been incomplete
and remained a utopian transformation promised by national leaders, state machinery as well as civil societies. The political will remained negligible, but if one look at the last decade, some non-governmental organizations and activist groups like Navsarjan Trust at Gujarat, associated with N-CAS from Pune, Safai Karmacharis Andolan-Hyderabad and National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights Ahmadabad known as International Dalit Solidarity Networks (shows official figure about 1 million Dalit manual scavengers in India) and their effort to campaign for abolition of this inhuman practice emerged as an important issues in Durban Conference in south Africa-2001 and the World Social Forum, Mumbai-2004.

1.7. Revisiting Durban Conference: Making a Case for Comparative Work

Highlighting the plight of cosmopolitan social and marginal ethnic and racial and interracial groups and communities across world, I would preliminary touch upon two vulnerable groups; such as caste-laden Dalits and race/ethnic based persecuted Roma gypsies in this matter. According to Narang, in terms of Roma Gypsies, racial discrimination directly or indirectly prevents groups that are discriminated against from getting equal access to essential services- housing, education, employment, health facilities, marriage, across the line of discrimination. In addition to blatant and covert acts and denials, racism can be manifested in attitudes, opinions and stereotypes, ideologies, interpersonal relationships, social practices and institutions. Institutional racism, in which patterns of discrimination, marginalization and disadvantage become systematic and self-sustaining, is particularly problematic in that it is often considered simply “the way the system works-which is at once the truth and obfuscation of both the underlying problem and the possible solution”. There were Asians, Africans and other groups including Roma/Gypsies/Sinti/Travellers from all over the world. These conferences had integral focus on right to equality and challenge to the discrimination, marginalization, violence and injustice in their daily life (Narang & Lennox: 2005).

On the other hand, issues of persistent and perennial racial discrimination are based on descent affirmation are more important for the Roma/Gypsies/Sinti/Travellers across European countries. It is significant that this conference named two groups; one is migrants and second one is indigenous people and subsequently, an ethnic minority, new immigrants, illegal alien, urban poor and colour blindness. Europe's
Roma also face a complex challenge of discrimination. There are many reasons for this, not least the fact that so many gypsies live in poverty; the public perception that associates them with a high incidence of crime; and their separate ethnicity, often manifested in their darker skin colour.

For Dalits, the debate between the Dalit activists and the government initiatives on the approval or existence of caste-based discrimination and violation of human rights in India since during the time of Pre and Post-Durban is crucial. In the wake of the Durban conference perhaps for the first time since independence the problem of caste discrimination was discussed so intensively in the international context particularly in relation to racial discrimination and led to an enriching discussion among the academics, activists, and the government bodies. To ascertain public opinion on the question of including caste in the agenda of the United Nations world conference on Racism being held in Durban, South Africa, the Prime Minister headed by Rangnath Mishra, former chief justice of India, constituted a national committee. The chairman of the scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribe’s commissions and of the minority’s commission were its members. All organizations, except the few chosen ones, told the committee that caste must be allowed to go on the UN agenda. Unfortunately, officially chosen and invited organizations had no idea about the Durban conference and what it would be all about. Only organization went on in order to get informed and forceful presentations. Several mass organizations gave concrete reasons for why caste should be in Durban conference. The conference at Durban is against race, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Only third world countries asked for a debate on race sharing moral agony of the blacks. It was argued that whereas in case of caste and kind of atrocities, ignorance and poverty the lower castes suffer, the capitalist West too owes moral responsibility to uplift them as much as the upper castes of India do. The colonial world benefited from the cheap labour of the Adivasis, Dalits, and OBCs. “If the union government does not even concede existence of caste, how could these communities be able to raise globally relevant questions to compensations?” The masses that are victims of caste system would thus lose confidence in India’s democracy.

It is known that at all levels of government the upper castes, so called “Dominant Castes” hold the positions of decision-making whether in civic, judicial or public services. The representatives of the victim communities who get an opportunity to sit
on such committees may be made to endorse decisions. By setting its face against a
discussion on caste-based oppression (That haunts the political discourses in India
even now) at world conference against racism in Durban, the union government has
indeed ignited a debate. There may be some truth in an official view that notion based
on caste identities cannot be equated with racial discrimination. It may also be true
that the oppressive caste order that prevails in large parts of the Indian countryside
(where the Dalits have to face atrocities at the hands of man from other caste groups)
cannot be equated with apartheid or Zionism. In that sense, Durban conference may
not be place to discuss caste-based oppression that prevails in India today. (Kancha:
2005; the Hindu; August: 2001). Durban conference brought into discussion several
themes on caste and race. First, this UN framework related to the issue of
discrimination was inadequate to include the discrimination based on categories other
than race and colour, such as caste, social origin and other forms and thereby by-
passed and also failed to address problem of discrimination of large sections of
discriminated groups from Asia and Africa by being narrow in its philosophy and
operational mechanisms. Secondly, there were similarities and differences in nature and
source of discriminations based on race, colour and one hand and those caused by
other categories such as a caste and social origin and other forms on the other.
Thirdly, the discussion on basis of participation and representation of caste based
discrimination at local and international level. India’s attempt to keep casteism
outside the purview of world conference on racism held in Durban, South Africa in
August 2001 occasions a review of sociology that has sprung up to by examining a
debate between sociologists in India (Thorat; Vishweswaran: 2004). Durban
represented a moment of historical reckoning for the modern Indian state, though the
latter has avoided coming to term with this fact. The persistence of untouchability at
all levels of society and polity in India evidence for which was amply available at
Durban, has tarnished India’s vanguards reputation amongst post-colonial nation-
states and dulled its righteous shine. At the same time, it seems important to ask what
Durban means for future of unsociability of Dalits and other lower castes in India.
Geetha (2003) looks at the following deliberations:

- A globalized economic present, marked by an increasing erosion of state commitment
to Dalit and lower caste welfare.
• A growing ideological anger and despair amongst Dalit intellectuals and community leaders about possibilities of the larger horizontal alliances-with other lower (but untouchables) castes.

• The emergence of a Dalit will to economic and political power, at a time when political sphere is vitiated by violence and corruption.

• The near death of social radicalism and its implications for the Dalit life and culture, especially at a time when the Hindu right is intent on extending and deepening its hegemony hold over social and cultural institutions and practices.

An article entitled “Caste is India’s Hidden Apartheid” reviews Durban conference and argues that caste is still frequently used as a cover for exploitative economic arrangements. Even today most Dalits are not permitted to cross the invisible pollution line that divides their part of village from that occupied by higher castes. And yet a Dalit woman, whose very shadow is polluting, is allowed to massage the body of upper-caste men, goes unpunished raping Dalit women or consorting with the lower caste prostitutes, even though touching them by accident in the street is punished. The Indian diplomats worked overtime in Durban to eliminate references to work and descent and succeeded to some extent. Therefore it is likely that there will be some rejoicing in New Delhi’s official circles. But it is victory of diplomatic wheeling and dealing really victory for India? Just because the word ‘caste’ has not been included in UN lexicon, is it really a vindication of government’s position that caste is no longer problem in India? One has only read today or tomorrow’s newspaper to realize that caste is alive and well “kicking, beating, raping, and murdering Dalits with impunity” (Guru & Sidhva: 2001).

Despite the world leaders buckling under pressure from India, the INGOs point of view articulated through National Dalit Human Rights Campaign (NDHRC) has much to celebrate. Against all odds, it took the issue of caste to Durban and got whole world to sit up and take notice. The need for and relevance of doing that has been hotly debated. The point is, for India, caste is a something we take for granted. The average, middle class city dweller doubts that atrocities exist in this day and age. They think reporters and activists exaggerate and make up the stories. In any daily newspaper, there are news item about Dalits raped, murdered, humiliated or molested and reader’s eye, sated and cynical, passes over it in search of something different,
something appealing. Just before Durban Conference, National Human Rights Commission admitted that situation for Dalits was intolerable and lent its support to the NDHRC, men and women of integrity and honour dropped out of the official government delegation chosen to go to Durban. Their consciences won. Whether the government of India decides to admits the fact or not, the Dalits took caste to center stage at Durban. Their cultural troupe in somber black epitomized the mood of India’s Dalits. Durban conference proved that racism was alive and well. This conference grabbed the headlines of every Indian newspaper and TV station and brought caste back into news with a vengeance. Dalits have made a new beginning because they have seized the opportunity. Most importantly, throughout country, the Dalit campaign has created a new awareness about human rights in states such as Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. Prominent journalists, artists, poets, writers, and academicians have joined Dalit activists to mobilize people to rise and fight for their rights. At every point, Indian government hides behind the fact that there has been reservation and radical legislation for 50 years and the world’s most powerful constitution (Guru: 2000; Thekakara: 2004). Martin Macwan, convener of National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights argues that like racism, caste discrimination is based on descent. Their demand has sparked off a national debate about the nature of caste discrimination and whether other countries should be allowed to interfere in what Indian government considers as an internal matter. The government has opposed the inclusion of caste on the UN conference’s agenda on grounds that caste and race are not synonymous. “race and caste are distinct”, insist Soli Sorabjee, India’s attorney general and a member of the UN sub commission on prevention of discrimination, he agreed that including caste discrimination in the conference’s final resolutions would be only a symbolic victory, changing nothing in reality. The only solution is to change people’s mind. Ironically, the plight of India’s untouchables and regular human rights abuses against them elicits shot-lived public outrage, leaving the state under little pressure to engineer large-scale social change. This is why coalition of Dalit groups and activists has lobbied hard for their plight to be on the agenda of UN world conference against racism.

1.8. Why Compare Safai-Kamgars and Roma Gypsies?

This study tries to draw upon and take ahead some of the insights from Durban by attempting a comparison of safai-kamgar and Roma gypsies. Especially exploring the
model of labour inclusion of Roma/gitanos in Spanish society, and drawing upon a thread of one perspective that links the exclusion of Roma Gypsies in then origin in the caste system in India.

The quest for comparison of the study of Dalit Safai-Kamgar with Roma Gypsies emerged when I was reading the pieces of Indian writings and media interviews from S. Shashi, Ranjit Naik, and Jai-Bhim Network led activist P. S. Attri (Presently working with Hungarian Roma Gypsies) in general and watching movie documentary like *Latcho Drom* on the journey of Indian Banjara tribes (so called ’gypsies’) abroad and writers like Greiman, Habeeb, Brearley, Villanueva, Etxeberria, Hitchcock, and Arayici for their cross-cultural comparison of Roma Gypsies in particular. The question is why and how can one bring into a single study into Roma Gypsies as an inter-racial ethnic minority because of their consistent movements of migration from India to across European countries. Nothing had been reliably known about the origin of Roma until the middle of eighteenth century. Then, not having enough historical documents as a base for explaining this issue, scientists started research physical characteristics, customs and language of Roma, enable them to affirm their origin. In what follows I try to present a rationale for comparison.

1.9. Socio-Anthropological Observations

Several issues of Roma Gypsies in Europe have similarities in dialect, language and origin and nomadic way of practicising non agricultural labour with Indian nomadic and lower caste groups. For Roma, they are not only one of the largest ethnic minorities but also the most visible one. Ethnicity, as a process of social construction, consists of a set of constitutive factors. The experience of being Roma is determined by the convergence of factors such as ancestry, mother tongue, neighbourhood, and social bonds. The comparison on this study is related to caste discrimination/exclusion within the caste and race system and the synonymous featuring of race/ethnic discriminations regarding intensity of stigma, labour market participation, educational status and life chances across numbers of other indispensable domains.

1) Evacuation of Roma from Ancient Caste System

Firstly, S.S. Shashi (1990) wrote the book ‘Roma: The Gypsy World’. Shashi’s study explores numbers of significant socio-anthropological evidences which showed that how Roma have migrated from Indian Northern Part and then their mass exodus
through Persian countries and eventually to Europe. The issue of Roma gypsies as the European diaspora was a pioneer research addressing the origin and identity based research in India and resulted in founding an Institute for Romani in Chandigarh. His first Gypso-Anthropological study of Roma is the result of an extensive Socio-Anthropological Survey covering twenty five countries of Europe, America and USSR. This is a vivid account of the Banjara and other nomadic communities of India and the world. His work is based on his 11-year long research centered on Roma - the Gypsies who have preserved and lead their nomadic or semi-nomadic life throughout the world even in advanced countries. This is a study in depth in the context of Indian nomads who migrated from their motherland, wave after wave to other parts of the world- carrying with them the culture of their times with the inter-mingling of local traditions and customs. Various authors scientifically prove that the transnational Roma gypsies have had their antecedents from Banjara tribes of India.

Secondly, German scientist Grelman was the first who arrived to a conclusion:

"Roma come from India, having researched physical similarities, analogies in customs and identities in roots of some words and grammar structures. His assumptions were correct, and they were later quite affirmed in the studies of Pott, Paspati and Mikloshic, so that we can now quite surely claim that Roma are of Indian origin. Romi are similar to Dravidians. It is known that this ethnic group lives in the plateau Deccan, in the south part of peninsula in India. According to some ancient Indian sources, Dravidians were in captivity in the Indian peninsula during the invasion of the Aryans. At that time assimilation of dark-skinned Dravidians began. Thus is how, allegedly, Hindu-Aryan society was formed, and later Hindu traditional caste society. However those Dravidians, who were not assimilated, remained out of the caste zone. They were slaves, doing hard physical jobs, and they were in bad social position. Their destiny has not changed almost a bit during centuries and it is alike even nowadays. Their status of “untouchables” usually brings to mind a clear association to Roma’s destiny all over the world. Their inferiority, fear and resourcefulness speak in the behalf of conclusion that Roma are direct descendants of the Dravidians. Ancient Indian sources contain information about which show us that many conquerors of the Indian peninsula used Dravidians as labour even outside this area. They were taken to the Persian Gulf in galleys. Then they were sent all over Persia and later to the coasts
of Africa and Europe or to Afghanistan and across Bosphorus to the Balkans” (Haliti: 2004: 5-7).

Thirdly, several ethnologists and linguists continue to study Roma who live in contemporary India. Thus under the name “Gypsy” they comprise the following tribes: Bamti, Beldari, Dom, Garodi, Gasai, Gulgulia, Kandzari, Kolhati, Ladi, Malari, Mianuali (or Lahari), Nati, Odki, Phendari, Sasi, Sikalgari, Banjara, Lamani, Shara Luri. The Roma in Europe - that have various names which can also be seen in Banjarasi. They also have a large number of names. They are in fact famous for numerous synonyms in different parts of India: Lambani, Lobani, Lobano, Brinjari, Sugali, Brujavasi, Kvangli, Shirkiban, etc. Their inconstancy and moving from one territory to another explain such variety of names-each environment gave them a new name.

Fourthly, according to Ranjit Naik, out of all groups of Roma that today live in India as aborigines, Banjarasi are the most related to Roma all over the world. It is confirmed that Banjara is one of the largest groups of Roma in India. They live in 21 states of India and their number is estimated to be about 60 million.” Naik studied anthropological literature and documents and stated the conclusions and findings conclusion that Banjaras and Roma have many common traits following:

1. Roma dialects have many words similar to Banjara dialect;
2. Both Roma and Banjarasi live as nomads and travel in caravans;
3. Roma do not assimilate in the environment in which they settle for a while, i.e. they remain separate and independent; Banjaras also live separately and build settlements called tanda. The word “tanda” is also used by Roma in the town Gnjilane (Kosovo), which is interesting and indicative;
4. Songs and dances of Roma and Banjaras are similar;
5. Banjaras do not follow any existing religion, but worship their own gods;
6. Roma have many customs and habits that are similar to those of Banjaras;
7. Basing his opinion on Rishi’s research, Ranjit Naik claims that Roma and Banjaras descend from the same group and that the ancestor of both preserved their traditions. He also thinks that Banjaras originated from Rajasthan and Radzput or Jatklan, as well as anthropological characteristics, way of living and folk culture are similar to
those of Roma in Panjab and Rajasthan. Naik Ranjit concludes: “Roma and Banjaras are members of the same group; one part of that group, Banjaras, stayed in India, and their relatives, known as Roma, passed through Khber and Bolan in the north-west part of India in order to avoid invasion of Muslim states and there from began to move all over the world” (Naik: 1967).

Fifthly, Ian Hitchcock, a professor of Romani Studies at the University of Texas, has written extensively about this large ethnic group. In his “Origins of the Romani People”; and “A Handbook of Vlax Romani”, he traces their origins to several different “non-Aryan” tribes in India. These tribes included the Lohars, Gujjars and Tandas as well as non-native Indians such as the Rajputs and the Siddhis from the coast of East Africa. Hitchcock explains that at the start of the 11th century, these groups of people were drafted into the Indian army to ward off the advances of the Muslim general Mahmud of Ghazni. The caste system of India relegated these various minorities to a lower standing. Because of this, they were viewed as a ready army and as dispensable. However, in order wage war against Mahmud of Ghazni, the non-Aryans were elevated to the status of “warrior” and allowed to don battle gear and die for their adopted country. This army of conscripts fought Mahmud's troops in a movement that took them across the mountains of India.

2. Linguistic Correspondence of Hindi/Sanskrit with Romani/Cálo
Sagredo-Krutwig (1986) introduced a list of words in the Basque gypsy slang. The Gypsies are split into three branches: those from the north (“manushes”), those from the center (“romi”) and those gypsies or “cants” that receive the name “ijitos” or “motzailes”. The language used by this last group is of Indian origin with quite a few Persian elements. The Basque Gypsy group “ijitos vasco” is called a Euskadi*29 nomads and their origin from North Part of India whose speaking language is quite similar and affiliated with Indian languages: Sanskrit, Hindi and Rajasthani dialects. In the Basque Case, various original Indian words, either from Sanskrit or Hindi, are found in Spanish Calo*30 of Basque gypsies. In a similar Angus Fraser’s account of linguistic parallel evidences, Fraser argues that the genealogical affairs and comparative linguistic do give us a wealth of information about the lineage of their dialects. It was first realized some 200 years ago that Romani must be of Indian origin, because of resemblances between its vocabulary and that of some of Indian languages and techniques of comparative linguistic aspects- sounds, structure and
lexicon. The resemblances between Sanskrit or Hindi and Romani in these examples of basic vocabulary are clear. The affinities between the accidence of Romani and of Sanskrit are immediately visible if one compares (Fraser: 1992; Sagredo-Krutwig: 1986). These authors show some pairs of linguistic resemblance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Calo/Romani of &quot;Ijitos&quot; or &quot;Motzailes&quot;</th>
<th>Origin languages Hindustani/Sanskrit/Persian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aka, jak</td>
<td>Ak (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jeka, eka</td>
<td>Ek (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalu</td>
<td>Kālā (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dik/dikh</td>
<td>Dekh (hindustani); Drksati (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sero</td>
<td>Sir (hindustani); Siras (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mangatu</td>
<td>Māng-na (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na</td>
<td>Nā (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manus</td>
<td>Manusya (hindustani); Manusa (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nazaro</td>
<td>Nāzār (Persian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panin/pan</td>
<td>Pānī (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pantxe</td>
<td>Panch (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piau-tu</td>
<td>Pī-nā (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trin</td>
<td>Tin (hindustani); Trin (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>txaripen</td>
<td>Châr-pai (hindustani/ Persian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>txor</td>
<td>Chor (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>txuri</td>
<td>Chûrī (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bal</td>
<td>Bal (hindustani); Vala (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>Main (hindustani); Maya (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhen/phen</td>
<td>Bāhīn (hindustani); Bhagini (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gra, goani</td>
<td>Ghorā (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nak</td>
<td>Nak (hindustani); Nakka (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elakri</td>
<td>Larki (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dui</td>
<td>Do (hindustani); Du (Persian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bokali</td>
<td>Bhûkh (hindustani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amaro</td>
<td>Hamara (hindustani); Asmaka (sānskrit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1783, the book titled “Cigani”, written by genealogist Heinrich Grelman, demonstrated that the Romani language is very close to Hindi. His research was followed by a manuscript by August Fredrik Pot, a Sanskrit expert. In his "Gypsies in the Europe and Asia", Pot examined the dialects of the Roma and clearly showed their affinity with the Hindi and Urdu languages. Four hundred years after first reports of their appearance in Eastern Europe, the roots of Roma were identified. They had originated from Northwestern India. Even more detailed studies would follow in attempts to pinpoint the exact location of the original Roma in Northwest India, as well as their immigration pattern. Later anthropological evidence, mythology and modern blood group associations have substantiated the Roma connection to India. Prior to this research, the Roma were rumored to be emigrants of Turkey or Nubia or Egypt. The appellation “Gypsy” came from the association with Egypt and even today,
is still wrongly associated with the Roma. Once the homeland of the Roma was identified, researchers began to investigate how and why the Roma resettled in the countries of Eastern Europe.

3. Consistent Traditional Non-Agricultural Labour and Practicing Nomadic Way of Ethnic Economy

While 1447 is the date recognized by most historians, Angus Fraser (1992) states that a safe-conduct dating from January 12, 1425, was the first document relating to Gypsies in Spain indicates the Gypsy’s existence in Spain from several non-European countries. It shows that they had darker skin, non-European features, different dress, and spoke another language, Romany. They generally belonged to nomadic, tribe-like groups, and had their own system of government. While traveling throughout the country, they carried on trades of metalworking, mule clipping, horse trading, fortune-telling, and performing song and dance. This could be an enough evidence for understanding the gypsy’s traditional ethnic economy. Similarly, Fraser (1992) studied the Indian Banjara and nomadic communities had had the same features of trade and self-employed manual works like emigrated Roma Gypsies in outside countries.

4. Historical Waves of Roma Migration Movements

Bajram Haliti, while talking with Banjara Times, contemplates a historical migration of Indian gypsies and their mass exodus from Indian land to abroad. He elaborates: “When Mahmud Gazni became ruler of the areas Panjab and Sind, Roma community actually disintegrated, and many tribes were outside India, the country that, as travel writers testified, had various names. Roma called it most probably “Baro than”, “Large country”, or “Romani phuv”, “Country of Roma”, which is expression found in some legends and stories. Roma were also leaving India because of invasions of other conquerors, especially those by Mahmuda from Gor and Genghis Khan. The tribes that remained in India went to the north and to the south, and they can still be seen in many parts of India. At last, it is necessary to emphasize some more reasons for migrations of Roma from their native country. Roma was the first on the way of Hun hordes that were, in their invasion from the north and northeast, destroying everything on their way. Since Roma were nomadic, without a permanent place of residence, they started moving toward different parts of India, looking for a way to rescue themselves from a total destruction. They moved toward west. The fierce Hun
hordes were after them. And when the first groups moved in that direction, there was no coming back. Other miserable Hindu joined them, too” (Haliti: 2004; Shashi: 2006).

“Some other reasons for migrations should be added to these historical ones, which altogether were sufficient for unbalance and shaping the psychology of escape. There might have caused the climate elements: disastrous droughts and floods; periods of wet, summer monsoon and period of dry, winter monsoon (the season of summer monsoon is from May till October, and it blows from south-west toward north-east; this wind comes from the Indian ocean and it brings heavy rainfall; winter monsoon blows from north-east to south-west, from land toward the sea, and it is dry). If summer monsoon is only fifteen days late, a drought starts. The drought destroys crops and the consequence is hunger. In 1943, the summer monsoon was late, and 3.500.000 died of hunger. The second natural disaster is flood in the Valley of Indian Rivers, after heavy monsoon rains. Floods destroy crops in the large valleys near the rivers. Both of these disasters result in death of population and force them to move away. It is known that even today this social evil is present in India. Plague, yellow fever, bilharzia, dysentery epidemics, virus hepatitis, cholera and other epidemics of dangerous diseases in this area of high temperatures, destroyed millions of people in some parts of India. The most exposed to diseases were surely people who lived in miserable unhygienic life conditions and bad nutrition, which means that Roma were the most affected. These diseases caused, and cause today, much panic among Hindu, so the diseases were one of important reasons for migrations in the past, i.e. for leaving their native county. Besides, in this county with millions of people belonging to different nations, they were, as it was already mentioned, divided in castes in the Middle Ages. The castes are characterized by big differences in way of life, language, belonging to religious sects, etc. Because of this there were conflicts and strife among castes, which led to extermination of certain groups of nations. In those conflicts Roma paid the highest price. The aim of religion and religious sects was assimilation, and this led to constants small wars of believers against each other. Modern India still carries that burden. Siki still confront other nations and state authorities. It is clear that these events caused migrations of Roma. All those reasons forced Roma to leave their native country and to start the life of constant migrations and suffering. Such hard way is still present in their travels. Eventually, nomadic way of life caused that Roma
were not nostalgically bound to some territory, as it was the case with the caste of soldiers and the caste of peasants in India. Wars, persecutions, nomadic way of life, which was the cause of specific professions among Roma, and economic reasons led to migrations of Roma to some parts of the world, and they have lasted till the present time”. It is also speculate that Sometime between the tenth and eleventh centuries, the largest groups of Roma left India and the main cause was invasion of the great emperor Mahmud Gazni, who led 17 raids in western India. Running away from terror, Roma first stopped in Iran, and then separated in two groups, the first moving toward Spain, and the second toward Byzantium and Greece” (Haliti: 2004; Zarine: 2009).

According to Margaret Brearley (2001), wrote an article “The persecution of Gypsies in Europe”, Roma migrated from India some time before 1000 A.D., moving slowly westwards. They settled in the Balkans by the 14th century and reached all major west European cities by the 15th century. The initial response to these dark-skinned and exotic nomads was often antagonistic but sometimes warm, both among the local populations and church and secular authorities. During the 16th century, however, attitudes hardened. The church feared the very popularity of gypsy fortune-telling and healing and began spreading anti-Gypsy propaganda. Early agrarian capitalism and war forced many non-gypsies to become homeless beggars; harsh legislation against all vagabonds was passed throughout Western Europe and has a major impact on Gypsies. They became outlaws. During the 18th century, efforts to exterminate or expel Gypsies were gradually replaced by forcible assimilation and eradication of the Romany language and identity. Measures were still brutal: forcibly settlement of nomadic Roma, forcibly seizure of children by the state, and imprisonment simply for being Gypsy. In Spain, all male Roma were sent to prisons or mercury mines for up to 16 years: many died. Their darker complexion and obesity renders them instantly recognizable, and they are often referred to contemptuously as “black.” moreover, they are always the poorest and most stigmatized minority, at the very bottom of the social spectrum, with consistently the worst housing, the highest rate of homelessness, illiteracy rates and life expectancy. During the 1990s, Roma have become a near-universal scapegoat for the ills of post-communist society.

The expansion in south-east Europe was gradual. It seems likely that it started as the result of a need to find new economic opportunities; the Gypsies also probably
wanted to escape the smouldering conflict between the Byzantines and the Ottoman Empire. It is known that there were Gypsies, blacksmiths and saddlers, in Serbia in 1348. Others had arrived in Wallachia by the middle of the XIVth century, only to be enslaved by the prince of that country. The Gypsy peoples spread across Europe in three great waves (Brearley: 2001; Arayici: 1998).

The first migration began with the journeys of groups led by young men who assumed the titles borne by the aristocrats of the day. In 1416 one such group arrived at Brasov, in Transylvania. The following year other groups crossed Hungary and Bohemia to visit the hanseatic towns and the cities in the centre of Germany. France was reached in August 1419. By the beginning of the XVIth century, Gypsies were moving freely around the British Isles and the Scandinavian countries. They came to Poland from two different directions. The first route, from the south, was followed by groups from Hungary and the Romanian principalities from 1428 onward. The second, from the west, was taken by other groups fleeing from Germany. Gypsies first came to Russia towards 1501, probably from Wallachia. Others left Poland some time later and entered the Ukraine (see map of Gypsy migrations). Repressive measures by governments were enforced very early in the West, and gradually spread to Central Europe. Bohemia, Hungary and Slovakia, which for a long time welcomed Gypsies, began to enact repressive legislation from the beginning of the XVIIIth century. Many Gypsies were deported as “new Hungarians” to Transylvania.

The second wave of Gypsy migration was linked to the gradual abolition of slavery in the Romanian principalities between 1837 and 1861. The nomadic Gypsies, notably the Kalderasha and the Tchurara paved the way for other Transylvanian Roms, in particular the Lovaro. The vanguard of this new wave arrived in Germany, Belgium and France in 1866, followed by Roms from the Balkans (mostly trainers of performing bears). All these groups travelled about for decades, meeting one another time and again along the routes they blazed for themselves, and spending longer periods in one or other country. In 1911 a further large-scale wave arrived, this time of Kalderasha Roms who, although originally from Romania, were culturally influenced by a long sojourn in Russia. Gypsy migrations thus came about both as the outcome of dynamic change in order to adapt to new circumstances and as a response to historical opportunities. They led those who took part in them to form a mosaic of
very different groups whose characteristic traits were acquired gradually and
haphazardly through repeated encounters among themselves or with other societies.

On third wave of Gypsy migration, the Gypsies suffered particularly in World War II. Because they were scattered throughout so many countries and were so diverse socially and culturally that their ethnic identity was unclear, and in the absence of any powerful pro-Gypsy lobby, data on the genocide of Gypsies are incomplete. But it is now generally agreed that between 500,000 and 600,000 Gypsies perished during the war. Some died in concentration camps (the earliest internments were in Dashau in 1936). Others died when they were deported, notably in Transnistria. Thousands were massacred in their villages— in Poland (at Wolyn and in the Carpathians), in the Ukraine, and in Croatia. In the Baltic countries virtually the whole of the local Gypsy population was wiped out. Of the Gypsies living in Bohemia-Moravia, half fled to Slovakia when the country was occupied by the Germans; those who remained behind were decimated. Looking at the dates of arrival in France of Gypsy refugees from Romania, it can be seen that many arrived in 1981 and 1982, and more in 1987 and 1988. But these arrivals attracted no attention. The mass migration of Gypsies truly increased only in 1990, when the Ceaucescu regime collapsed.

It is by no means easy to estimate the number of Gypsies involved in the East-West migratory movements that began in the early 1960s; it seems likely that there were somewhere between 200,000 and 280,000 of them, most of whom settled in countries nearest to the former Eastern Bloc (Germany, Austria and Italy, together, probably have at least 170,000 Gypsies living on their territory). Is this migration likely to continue and spread? The movements that have succeeded one another are attributable to a variety of different reasons. The Gypsy populations concerned differ, as do the ways in which they have sought to integrate in the West. According to A. Reyniers, Gypsies started migrating from East to West after the Second World War, and continue doing so today. However, there was no major migration to Western Europe before the early 1960s. The first wave of migration occurred between 1945 and 1960, and the West was hardly affected at all. During that period, Gypsies became peacefully integrated in the countries in which they were earning their living. The second wave of migration took place between 1960 and 1980, and particularly concerned Gypsies from the then Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey going to France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Austria and other parts of Western Europe, for
economic (and sometimes political) reasons. Small minorities of them have returned to their homeland, but most have settled definitively in the host country. The third wave of migration started in 1980 and is still continuing. In particular, following the collapse of communist governments from 1990 onwards, political asylum seekers left former Yugoslavia, Poland, Bulgaria, Russia and Romania, and are migrating to Western Europe (mainly France, Germany, Italy, Austria, etc.) (Reyniers: 1997). At the same time, the opening up of economies and borders can explain the migration of Gypsies from Bulgaria, former Yugoslavia, Romania and elsewhere to south-east Europe and Turkey. In the 1990s, many Gypsies from Bulgaria, Romania and former Yugoslavia are emigrating to do undeclared work in neighbouring countries: Greece, Cyprus and Turkey (Campani: 1997). In one year, approximately 30,000 Gypsies, refugees from Bosnia but also from Serbia. According to Reyniers, it is difficult to estimate the number of Gypsies that have been migrating since the 1960s, but the figure is put at between 200,000 and 280,000. The Gypsies have settled mainly in the neighbouring countries of the former eastern bloc (Germany, Austria and Italy alone are thought to account for at least 170,000 of them). It should be pointed out that the current East–West migration of Gypsies constitutes a major problem since, unless a way can be found of curbing it, the ever-increasing number of migrants will cause Western countries considerable difficulties (Arayici: 1998).

4. a. Migration History in Particular Spanish Basque Context

Although the exact origin of the Roma Gypsy is not known, it is believed they hailed from the Punjab region of India. After a lengthy period of migration at the beginning of the 11th century, for unknown reasons, their presence in Western Europe was recorded for the first time in 15th-century Germany. There is also evidence that there was a Roma presence in Spain at beginning of same century (Villanueva: 1999; Etxeberria: 2002). Villanueva has distinguished three fundamental phases in the history of Spanish Roma: 1425–1499: This is the ‘idyllic’ period, a time when this community was well received. 1499–1788: The Roma were persecuted, sometimes expelled and at other times forced to secure permanent housing, dependent upon the whims of the Royal Court. 1788 until the death of Franco (1975): This was a ‘normalization’ period. Their conditions improved, although always in a limited fashion. An example is the 1942 Francoist Law, which remained in effect until 1978. The Roma population in Europe is estimated to be 10 million people, with the
majority living in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It is believed that some 700,000 Roma people presently live in Spain (out of a total population of some 40 million), which represents 1.75% of the population. The Basque country, with a total population of 2 million, has a Roma population of approximately 9,000 (0.5%).

5. Sensing the emergence of Dalitism among transnational oppressed communities

Pardeep Singh Attri, renowned Jai-Bhim Network led social activist and well-known in Roma Gypsies in Hungary, claims, “Stereotype reflects the ideas, beliefs that some people have about others who are not similar to them and become very potent tools for spreading hatred towards them. This happens with every persecuted community which becomes prisoner of various stereotypes propagated by the dominant community. The gypsy image of Roma people is full of stereotyping by the white Europeans which is the bane for the community”. To reclaim human dignity for Romas while strengthening Roma Civil Society, Attri and his team has been working to organize the oppressed Hungarian Romas/gypsies and enlightening them through Ambedkarite struggles against untouchablity. As a part of movement, Jai-Bhim Network, with the help of Hungarian Roma activists and community leaders like Derdak Tibor, is creating linkages with Dalit movement of India. The network has been in constant interaction with many of the young Dalit activists in India. The network is also instrumental in inviting young Dalit students and activists to stay with the community in Hungary and exchange their views and also provide them opportunities to interact with the Roma community and through this to provide exposure to both the Indian Dalits and the ‘Hungarian Dalits’ about each other’s struggle towards a justice and humane society. Further, Attri observes that gypsies are normally considered to be a nomadic group with the worldwide population of about 12 million, originally from south Asia. With their 8 million population in Europe they constitute one of the biggest minority blocks in many European countries and have the history of being discriminated, stigmatized and persecuted by white Europeans based on their prejudices and stereotyping of the community. They are still mostly found segregated from the mainstream, hated and ridiculed by the white society.
Presently, Roma activists and community leaders in Hungary derive their inspiration from Babasaheb Ambedkar and Buddhism and trying to inculcate Ambedkarite thoughts in their movement towards equal rights for the Roma community. By reading the literature of Dr. Ambedkar, they are trying to draw the linkages between the discrimination faced by Indian Dalits and Romas in Europe.

Narrating the team’s feelings, he says, “while visiting and staying with towns where majority of the Romas live in the outskirts of village in the ghettos, their life style being totally different from other Hungarians of the village movement, has created some synergy between us and we immediately felt a fellow feeling, a bond and a deep relationship between us though we lived thousands of miles apart and were meeting for the first time”. Roma activists find their situation in the otherwise ‘white’ Hungary almost akin to the Dalits of India and therefore they now call their community, ‘the Dalits of Europe’ as the Romas are also found in other European countries too and face similar prejudices and discrimination everywhere. The reason for discrimination against Romas by Hungarian people, Roma people the most problematic community of Hungary as they are different from the other Hungarians and they hate them just because they need someone to hate in difficult times and being helpless Romas are the easy target. Even police publicly announce that, “The perpetrators of all crimes are gypsies”. It is very clear that the lives of Roma people is not an easy one and suffer as much discrimination as faced by us Dalits in our everyday lives. In public schools, the Roma kids are forced to sit in the separate classroom and then children grow up constantly being dehumanized, humiliated, persecuted and rejected. The public schools used to separate cup plates for their kids around 10 years back. Moreover, they are declared mentally challenged and are sending to special schools and now days around 90% of special school students are from Roma community only. Even the special schools seems to take more interest in Roma students rather than non-Roma students, may be because they get higher grants/money/benefits in the name of these ‘mentally challenged’ kids. As the invitee for renovation programme in towns, we teach more about India, its culture and the problem of caste at Dr. Ambedkar High School. Our students included Roma children and women from all age group. All of them always listen to us patiently and appear very curious to know more about Indian Dalit communities, its struggle to reclaim human dignity which they find resonating completely with their own struggle in Hungary. The Network team, through regular
activities, anticipates more learning for Romas in order to be aware of the caste virus and the role of Dr Ambedkar.

Following the efforts by Jai-Bhim Network within the Hungarian context, further Zarine Habeeb, a Romani activist, criticizes the role of existing Roma Right Movements affiliated with International human rights organizations and EU funded agencies to inhibit the violation of the human rights and persecution of the Roma communities across European countries. These organizations also contemplate the legal processes and its effectiveness within the EU regimes. While discussing the emergence of Roma movements, and their formation shifted towards "NGO project Culture" across European countries which leading the aspirations of local Romany communities to be ignored and lastly the deliberate role of present Dalit movements in local and global level for their restoration of human rights.

In the beginning, Habeeb recognizes the roots in an emergence of Roma Movements. He states, "the Communist authorities in the Soviet Bloc countries had mostly followed the policy of assimilation of the Roma minority, denying their distinctiveness. But discrimination against them was pervasive and took on various forms. Ultranationalist political parties became very popular after the fall of Communism in many of the former Soviet Bloc countries and hate speech against the minorities, particularly the Roma became part and parcel of public discourse. It is in this context that a movement that was grounded in human rights principles, enunciated in international human rights, instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights emerged. Furthermore, the Open Society Institute played an important role in funding the Roma rights groups while initiating the “Roma Access Program” for their access in the employment and skill and training developments. In such a scenario of government intransigence, the process of accession of the former Soviet Bloc countries to the European Union provided an opportunity for the Roma rights movement to mount international pressure on the national governments. The accession process involved not only bringing economic standards but also socio-political standards, in line with international standards. In 2000, the European Union passed two landmark directives on the prohibition of discrimination, which member countries and accession countries were legally bound to follow. Another factor that helped international advocacy efforts is the existence of a number of platforms in Europe, such as the ‘Organization for Security and
Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe’ (which includes the European Court of Human Rights that provides a platform for litigating human rights claims at the regional level).

There are various aspects of the Roma movement in Europe setting up the Roma rights movement in the human rights language (as distinct from one on identity). The problems faced by Roma could be coined in legal language with legal consequences. This has its advantages in that the governments and the individuals were made legally liable for violations with court orders, requiring the offender to pay compensation for pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages. But, on the other hand, this also meant an over-reliance on legal advocacy and under-estimating the importance of other forms of human rights advocacy, such as direct action. Also other pressing issues such as rampant poverty in Romani communities, which cannot always be framed in legal terms, did not receive adequate attention. Thirdly and importantly, the Roma rights movement has also come to be closely linked to the “NGO projects culture”, which requires activists to phrase their needs and objectives in terms of the requirements of funding organizations and external experts, who may not always be acquainted with the aspirations of the local community. This meant that activists working at the local level, who did not have the cultural tools (such as knowledge of English or other European languages, fund raising lingo and networking skills), were at a considerable disadvantage.

The rights violations within Romani communities also raised crucial questions for the Roma movement. Habeeb gave an example of backward rituals within Romany culture encountered rampant racist provocation against Romas; in the summer of 2003, when a Romani minor girl aged between 12-14 years was married to a fifteen year old boy in Romania. This was strongly criticized by various people including EU representatives, Romanian officials and intellectuals. That cultural practice among early marriage or child-marriage has been pointed out that a false dichotomy between the “progressive” white European culture and the “backward” Romani culture underlay many of the writings on the subject which treated Romani culture as a monolith, ignoring the Romani feminist movement. This false dichotomy coupled with viciousness of the criticism in an environment of pervasive racism forced some Roma organizations to go to the extent of claiming that child marriage is an integral part of Romani culture. A nuanced position that treats human rights violations like
child marriages at par with any other rights violation and which is supportive of various progressive cultural shifts within the community was adopted by some other organizations.

The need for critical evaluation of the movement from time to time cannot be emphasized enough. If the movement does not engage in its own critique, given that there is plenty of prejudice, malicious propaganda from “outsiders” may well take the place of constructive criticism. A movement is about the community and not about certain individuals. Even if a movement is vibrant today with several leaders, this may not last long if young people of the community are not encouraged to work for the community. Several Romani activists are keenly aware of the situation of Dalits in India and probably given the Indian heritage, notice a strong sense of affinity with issues related to Dalits. There is much that the two movements, both Dalit Civil Society and Roma Right Movements can learn from each other and, therefore, it is felt that it would be worthwhile to work together for the purposes of solidarity, consciousness-raising and movement-building.

Having reviewed literature of various books, journal articles, annual reports, booklets for the first chapter on historical exclusion of Safai labour in different parts of India and Pune City whereas Roma Gypsies for having connections and commonalities with Indian ancient and medieval caste system and contemporary languages. Following research questions for this research can explicitly be drawn out into both for the methodological and theoretical investigation;

a) How does caste based low status of job, job insecurity and low education level affect Safai Kamgars perception of life and work?
b) How do Safai Kamgars perceive their multiple exclusions across different life domains?
c) How do caste and gender concretely associate with multiple exclusions of Safai Kamgars?
d) How does the union intervene in processes of exclusion? What are the inclusions and exclusions fostered by the unions?
e) What does a comparison between Roma/Gypsies/Gitanos and Safai Kamgars open up for a study of social exclusion?
Subsequently second chapter brings out a severe marginalization into the social, political, cultural practices using ‘Social Exclusion Framework’ (SEF). Third chapter maps the research methodology and present an elaboration and rational for exploring caste and gender sensibilities of safai/scavenger communities in PMC. Fourth chapter deals with the case study for PMC Employees Union (Pune Mahanagar Palika Safai Kamgar Union) which is an active part of Shramik Kamgar Sanghatana to observe resistance to social, economic discrimination related for safai Karmacharis/sanitary workers. Fifth chapter provides an empirical analysis to the study of quality of life of Spanish Roma Gypsies which focuses upon the modes of labour exclusions and inclusion. Last chapter draws conclusions drawing a comparison between Safai workers and Roma Gypsies for their inevitable exclusions by measuring pertinent domains; especially necessary correlation between education and employment status; measurements of level of job security in order to exhibit the situation among contemporary cross-cultural ethnic groups.