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A STUDY ON THE STATUS OF SANITARY WORKERS IN TIRUNELVELI CORPORATION OF TAMIL NADU

Dr.Lourdes Poobala Rayen¹

¹Head and Associate Professor
Department of Commerce
St.Xavier's College (Autonomous)
Palayamkottai -627 002
Tamil Nadu, India.

T.Juliet Nisee²

²Research Scholar in Commerce
St.Xavier's College (Autonomous)
Palayamkottai -627 002
Tamil Nadu, India.

ABSTRACT

The sanitary workers' own health and working conditions are often ignored by the people. Sanitary workers are often seen as the bottom level of the urban residents. They work in the situation of wind, cold, heat and ram for a long term. They are affected by dust, poison, noise and other factors for long years. In addition, because of the traditional practice, sanitary workers are often considered to be of low birth, dirty in appearance and illiterate, by urban residents. Moreover, some persons call them "second-class citizens". Sanitary workers do not have a sense of belonging to the society. They are ill treated and discriminated by birth and moreover, they struggle for social justice.

KEYWORDS: Sanitary Workers, Scheduled Caste, Environmental Health, Scavengers, Urbanization.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental health cannot be ignored in social sustainable development. Sanitary workers are the "beautician of the city" has already contributed a lot to our construction of a harmonious society. Sanitary workers have played an important role in improving the urban and semi-urban ecological environment and the urban modern civilization, meeting the needs of people's desires for physical, spiritual, political, ecological civilization and implementing the social sustainable development. The name 'scavenger' was replaced by sanitary workers as the Government order was called from 1995. In Tamil Nadu after independence especially the government introduced change stating that all community people may join in this occupation. But those individuals from other communities engaged in sanitary work ask the Scheduled Caste instead people to work in these places and pay them an amount. Among the Scheduled Caste people who are engaged in the occupation like sweeping and scavenging and those who are bonded labours, tribes and nomadic tribes are classified as vulnerable groups. The sanitary workers' own health and working conditions are often ignored by the people. Sanitary workers are often seen as the bottom level of the urban residents.

They work in the situation of wind, cold, heat and ram for a long term. They are affected by dust, poison, noise and other factors for long years.

In addition, because of the traditional practice, sanitary workers are often considered to be of low birth, dirty in appearance and illiterate, by urban residents. Moreover, some persons call them "second-class citizens". Sanitary workers do not have a sense of belonging to the society. They are ill treated and discriminated by birth and moreover, they struggle for social justice.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Anant Suchitra (1999)¹ in her study about sanitary workers on economic Status and found that majority (90%) of the respondents were below the poverty line.

Borman (1999)² pointed out that the sanitary worker's backwardness in education and income plays a major role in their economic conditions.

Singh (2000)³ in his study on dalit women in Uttar Pradesh highlighted the issues of socio-economic conditions of scheduled caste female sweepers and scavengers in the municipal bodies of Uttar Pradesh. He lamented upon the poor status of scheduled castes females and recommended

rehabilitation of Scheduled Caste female sweepers and scavengers in the state.

Martin Medina (2000)⁴ in this study found that the socio economic condition prevalent in third world cities differ markedly from those in industrialized countries. Third world cities are experiencing rapid urbanization brought about by fast population growth, as well as high immigration rates. This paper analyzes the informal recycling activities carried out by scavenger cooperatives in Asia and Latin America. This paper argues that scavenger cooperatives can increase the income of their members and improve their working and living conditions, and promotes grassroots development. It concludes that the underlying factors that cause, people to become scavengers are the poverty resulting from underdevelopment, the inability or unwillingness of individuals to obtain other forms of employment. NGO's can play an important role in organizing scavengers and in helping them, particularly in the formative and initial stages of their operations. So by supporting scavengers co-operatives, refuse collection could be extended at a low cost. Scavenger's co-operatives could promote grass root development in an economically viable, socially desirable and environmentally sound manner. When supported, scavenging can represent a perfect example of sustainable development.

Appadorai, D.A. (2001)⁵ in his study on sanitary workers found that majority of the respondents are illiterate. It is also found that there is a relationship between education and employment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ◆ To study the social background of sanitary workers.

- ◆ To analyse the reasons for working as sanitary workers.

METHODOLOGY

This research work is a descriptive study based on the primary data.

Sample design:-

The researcher used simple random sampling method to collect the data from the respondents. 460 sample respondents were interviewed with the help of interview schedule.

Data collection:-

The present study is based on primary data. The researcher collected the data by interviewing the respondents directly. For this purpose interview schedule was developed by the researcher and it was pre-tested to examine the appropriateness of the variables included in the interview schedule. The result of the pre-test was used to fine tune the interview schedule before it was used for the data collection.

STATUS OF SANITARY WORKERS

The status of the sanitary workers employed in the Tirunelveli Corporation either permanently or temporarily was considered for the analysis. The data collected for this purpose are classified and tabulated on the basis of the profile variables relating to the status of the respondents.

Gender of the Respondents:-

Gender of the respondent is one of the important variables to know about their status. The gender of the respondents is confined to male and female in this study. The distribution of respondents on the basis of gender is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Gender wise classification of Sanitary Workers

Sl. No	Gender	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	Male	82(27.3)	99(61.9)	181(39.3)
2.	Female	218(72.7)	61(38.1)	279(60.7)
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

The respondents' gender is presented in Table 1. It reveals that 60.7 per cent of the sample respondents working as sanitary workers are female and the remaining 39.3 per cent of the respondents are male. Among the permanent sanitary workers 72.7 per cent of the respondents are female and 27.3 per cent of the respondents are male. Among the temporary sanitary workers 61.9 per cent of the

respondents are male and the remaining 38.1 per cent of the respondents are female.

Age wise classification of Sanitary Workers:-

Age is an important factor with respect to work. Generally the experience and efficiency can also be related to age. The age wise classification of permanent and temporary sanitary workers is presented in the Table 2

Table 2 Age wise classification of Sanitary Workers

Sl. No	Age	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	18-28	13(4.3)	21(13.1)	34(7.4)
2.	29-39	35(11.7)	76(47.5)	111(24.1)
3.	40-49	131(43.7)	38(23.8)	169(36.7)
4.	50-59	110(36.7)	17(10.6)	127(27.6)
5.	Above 59	11(3.6)	8(5.0)	19(4.2)
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows the age profile of the respondents. It is evident that 36.7 per cent of the sanitary workers belong to the age group of 40-49. 27.6 per cent of the sample respondents are in the age group of 50- 59. Among the permanent sanitary workers 43.7 per cent of them belong to the age group of 40-49 and 36.7 per cent of them belong to the age group of 50-59 years. Among the temporary sanitary workers 47.5 per cent of them belong to the age group of 29-39 and

23.8 per cent of them belong to the age group of 40-49 years.

Educational Qualification wise classification of Sanitary Workers:-

Education plays a major role in deciding the occupation of an individual. The educational qualification is classified as illiterates, primary school, middle school, high school and higher secondary. The educational qualification of the sample respondents is given in Table 3.

Table 3 Educational Qualification wise classification of Sanitary Workers

Sl. No	Educational Qualification	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	Illiterate	128(42.7)	85(53.1)	213(46.3)
2.	Primary Education	91(30.3)	29(18.1)	120(26.1)
3.	Middle School	50(16.7)	19(11.9)	69(15)
4.	High School	25(8.3)	17(10.6)	42(9.1)
5.	Higher Secondary	6(2.0)	10(6.3)	16(3.5)
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows that there is a higher share (46.3 per cent) of sanitary workers coming under the classification of illiterates and 26.1 per cent of the respondents up to primary school. Among the permanent sanitary workers 42.7 per cent of them are illiterates and 30.3 per cent of them are having primary education. Among the temporary sanitary workers 53.1 per cent of them are illiterates and 18.1 per cent of them are having primary education. It is clearly evident that the majority (46.3 per cent) of the

sample respondents who are doing the sanitary work are illiterates.

Community wise classification of Sanitary Workers:-

In order to examine whether the community to which the respondents belong plays a role for being the sanitary worker is considered for the analysis. The sample respondents are classified according to their community and presented in the Table 4.

Table 4 Community wise classification of Sanitary Workers

Sl. No	Community	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	ST	30(10)	21(13.1)	51(11.1)
2.	SC	270(90)	139(86.9)	409(88.9)
3.	BC	-	-	-
4.	MBC	-	-	-
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 shows that the respondents belong to SC community dominates (88.9 per cent) in the sanitary work followed by ST (11.1 per cent). It is noted that the scheduled caste and schedule tribe constitute 100 per cent of the total sample population. The above table 4 shows that among the permanent sanitary workers, 90 per cent belongs to SC and 10 per cent belong to the ST community. Among the temporary sanitary workers, 86.9 per cent belongs to SC and 13.1 per cent are belongs to the ST

community. The above analysis clearly shows that majority(88.9 per cent) of the workers involved in sanitary work belongs to SC and ST communities.

Religion wise classification of Sanitary Workers

The following Table 5 shows the religion wise classification of permanent and temporary sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation.

Table 5 Religion wise classification of Sanitary Workers

Sl. No	Religion	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	Hindu	275(91.7)	151(94.4)	426(92.6)
2.	Christian	25(8.3)	9(5.6)	34(7.4)
3.	Muslim	-	-	-
4.	Others	-	-	-
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

The above Table 5 explains the religion of the permanent and temporary sanitary workers. Out of the total 460 sample respondents, majority (92.6 per cent) of the respondents belong to Hindus and the remaining 7.4 per cent of the respondents belong to Christians. Among the permanent sanitary workers, majority (91.7 per cent) of the respondents belongs to Hindus and the remaining 8.3 per cent of the respondents belong to Christians. Among the temporary sanitary workers majority (94.4 per cent) of the respondents belongs to Hindus and the

remaining 5.6 per cent of the respondents belongs to Christians. It is evident that majority (92.6 per cent) of the respondents belong to Hindu religion.

Mother Tongue wise classification of Sanitary Workers:-

Permanent and temporary sanitary workers of different mother tongue have been working in the sanitary work. The following Table 6 shows the mother tongue of the sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation.

Table 6 Mother Tongue wise classification of Sanitary Workers

Sl. No	Mother Tongue	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	Tamil	198(66)	105(65.6)	303(65.9)
2.	Telugu	102(34)	55(34.4)	157(34.1)
3.	Others	-	-	-
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

The above Table 6 explains the mother tongue of the sanitary workers. Out of the total 460 sample respondents, majority (65.9 per cent) of the respondents' mother tongue is Tamil and the remaining 34.1 per cent of the sample respondents' mother tongue is Telugu. Out of the total 300 permanent sanitary workers, majority (66 per cent) of the respondents' mother tongue is Tamil and the remaining 34 per cent of the sample respondents' mother tongue is Telugu. Among the temporary sanitary workers, majority (65.6 per cent) of the respondents' mother tongue is Tamil and the

remaining 34.4 per cent of the sample respondents' mother tongue is Telugu. It is evident that majority of the sample respondents' mother tongue is Tamil.

Marital Status of the Respondents:-

Marital status of the respondents will help the researcher to understand their status in the society. The marital status of the respondents is classified as married, unmarried, divorced and widow/widower. The following Table 7 shows the marital status of the sample respondents working as sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation.

Table 7 Marital Status of the Respondents

Sl. No	Marital Status	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	Married	245(81.7)	132(82.5)	377(81.9)
2.	Unmarried	15(5.0)	5(3.1)	20(4.3)
3.	Divorced	29(9.7)	15(9.4)	44(9.6)
4.	Widow/Widower	11(3.6)	8(5.0)	19(4.2)
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 7 shows that out of 460 sample respondents, 81.9 per cent of the respondents are married and the unmarried respondents constitute 4.3 per cent. The widow and divorced respondents comprises of 4.2 per cent and 9.6 per cent of the sample. Among the 300 sample permanent sanitary workers, 81.7 per cent of them are married and the unmarried respondents constitute 5 per cent. Among the 160 temporary sanitary workers, 82.5 per cent of the sample respondents are married. It is observed that majority (81.9 per cent) of the workers are married.

Family System of the Respondents:-

The family system in India has undergone change in response to development in terms of industrialization, education and urbanization. One of the important characteristic features of joint family is its shared nature. Today after having lived in a joint family system men and women move out of their family for better opportunities. The nuclear family gives immense freedom from the traditions and ways of life that the old system was ridden with. In this study the family system of the respondents is taken as one of the profile variable for the analysis. The following Table 8 shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of the family system.

Table 8 Family System of the Respondents

Sl. No	Family System	Permanent Workers	Temporary Workers	Total
1.	Joint family	162(54)	53(33.1)	215(46.7)
2.	Nuclear family	138(46)	107(66.9)	245(53.3)
	Total	300(100)	160(100)	460(100)

Source: Primary Data

The above table 4.8 observes the family system adopted by the permanent and temporary sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation. Table shows that among the total number of sample respondents, 53.3 per cent of the respondents living in a nuclear family system and the remaining 46.7 per cent living in a joint family system.

Reason for working as a sanitary Worker:-

There are number of reasons for involving in a particular occupation. The reasons for working as a sanitary worker are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker among Permanent Sanitary Workers

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Government job	58(19.3)	180(60)	30(10)	12(4)	20(6.7)	300(100)
Lack of education	190(63.3)	52(17.3)	28(9.3)	8(2.7)	22(7.3)	300(100)
No experience in other work	142(47.3)	23(7.7)	57(19)	58(19.3)	20(6.7)	300(100)
Traditional work	126(42)	23(7.7)	69(23)	78(26)	4(1.3)	300(100)
Easy to work	140(46.7)	17(5.7)	54(18)	65(21.7)	24(8)	300(100)
No other work	63(21)	11(3.7)	30(10)	149(49.7)	47(15.7)	300(100)
Family maintenance	181(60.3)	30(10)	11(3.7)	49(16.3)	29(9.7)	300(100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 9 shows that out of 300 sample permanent sanitary workers, majority (63.3 per cent) of them strongly agree that they are working as a sanitary worker because of lack of education. 60 per cent of the sample permanent sanitary workers say that sanitary work being the government job they are doing this job. 60.3 per cent of the permanent sanitary workers say that they are involved in this work in order to maintain their family. 47.3 per cent of the permanent sanitary workers say that they are

doing this job because they have no experience in the other work.

Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker among Temporary Sanitary Workers:-

The following Table 10 shows the reasons for working as a sanitary worker by temporary sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation.

Table 10 Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker among Temporary Sanitary Workers

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Government job	35(21.9)	95(59.3)	10(6.2)	14(8.8)	6(3.8)	160(100)
Lack of education	110(68.8)	20(12.5)	9(5.6)	16(10)	5(3.1)	160(100)
No experience in other work	69(43.1)	10(6.3)	18(11.3)	54(33.8)	9(5.6)	160(100)
Traditional work	75(46.9)	18(11.3)	17(10.6)	33(20.6)	17(10.6)	160(100)
Easy to work	57(35.6)	14(8.8)	8(5)	52(32.5)	29(18.1)	160(100)
No other work	53(33.1)	13(8.1)	8(5)	37(23.1)	49(30.6)	160(100)
Family maintenance	97(60.6)	22(13.8)	5(3.1)	11(6.9)	25(15.6)	160(100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 10 shows that out of 160 sample temporary sanitary workers, majority (68.8 per cent) of them are strongly agree that they are doing the sanitary work due to lack of education. 60.6 per cent of the temporary sanitary workers say that they are involved in this work in order to maintain their family. 46.9 per cent of the respondents say that they are doing this job being a traditional work. ‘No experience in other work’ is the next major reason for doing sanitary work for 43.1 per cent of the respondents. It was revealed from Table 10 that ‘lack of education’ is the major (68.8 per cent) reason for doing the sanitary work.

Analysis of Reasons for Working as a Sanitary Worker:-

Sanitary workers are working as a sanitary worker for different reasons. The main reasons are government job, lack of education, no experience in other work, traditional work, easy to work, no other work and family maintenance. In order to find out the significant difference in reason for working as a sanitary worker among permanent and temporary sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation ‘t’ test is attempted with the null hypothesis, “There is no significant difference among permanent and temporary sanitary workers as regards the reasons for working as a sanitary worker”. The results of the ‘t’ test is presented in the Table 11.

Table 11 Analysis of Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker

Sl. No	Reason for working as a sanitary worker	Type of Sanitary Workers		‘t’ Statistic
		Permanent	Temporary	
		Mean Score		
1.	Government job	4.1133	3.9313	2.536*
2.	Lack of education	4.7467	4.4625	3.864*
3.	No experience in other work	3.9633	3.4750	3.797*
4.	Traditional work	3.6300	3.6313	-0.009
5.	Easy to work	3.6133	3.1125	3.406*
6.	No other work	2.6467	2.9000	-1.735
7.	Family maintenance	3.9500	3.9688	-0.128

Source: Primary Data

*Significant at 5 per cent level

Table 11 shows the mean scores of the reason for working as a sanitary worker among permanent and temporary sanitary workers along with its respective 't' statistics. The important reason for working as a sanitary worker among the permanent sanitary workers is 'lack of education' and 'government job' and their respective mean scores are 4.7467 and 4.1133. Among the temporary sanitary workers, the important reasons are 'lack of education' and 'family maintenance' and their respective mean scores are 4.4625 and 3.9688. Regarding the reason for working as a sanitary worker, the **significant difference among the permanent and temporary sanitary workers are identified in the case of the variables 'lack of education', 'no experience in other work', 'government job', and 'easy to work' since their respective 't' statistics are significant at 5 per cent level. So the null hypothesis is rejected.**

Association between the Status of Sanitary Workers and the Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker

The association between the variables relating to status of sanitary workers such as gender and family system and reason for working as a sanitary worker by permanent and temporary sanitary workers were analysed with the help of ANOVA and the results are presented below.

Reasons for Working as a Sanitary Worker based on Gender:-

Sanitary workers of different gender groups have been working as a sanitary worker for different reasons. In order to find out the significant difference among the permanent and temporary sanitary workers as regards the reasons for working as a sanitary worker in terms of different gender group, 't' test is attempted with the null hypothesis, "there is no significant difference among different gender group of permanent and temporary sanitary workers as regards the reasons for working as a sanitary worker". The results are presented in the Table 12.

Table 12 Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker based on Gender

Sl. No	Reasons	Gender		't' Statistics
		Male	Female	
Permanent Sanitary Workers		Mean scores		
1.	Government job	4.4390	3.9908	6.289*
2.	Lack of education	4.7439	4.7477	-0.050
3.	No experience in other work	4.1951	3.8761	2.016*
4.	Traditional work	3.7805	3.5734	1.235
5.	Easy to work	3.6463	3.6009	0.242
6.	No other work	2.9634	2.5275	2.474*
7.	Family maintenance	4.6463	3.6881	5.241*
Temporary Sanitary Workers				
1.	Government job	4.1212	3.6230	3.313*
2.	Lack of education	4.7273	4.0328	4.606*
3.	No experience in other work	3.7273	3.0656	2.842*
4.	Traditional work	3.8687	3.2459	2.606*
5.	Easy to work	3.3737	2.6885	2.679*
6.	No other work	3.0606	2.6393	1.534
7.	Family maintenance	4.1919	3.6066	2.389*

**Significant at five per cent level*

Table 12 shows the mean score of seven reasons for working as a sanitary worker along with its respective 't' statistics. The important reasons for working as a sanitary worker among the male permanent sanitary workers are 'lack of education' and 'family maintenance' since their respective mean scores are 4.7439 and 4.6463. Among the female permanent sanitary workers, the important reasons are 'lack of education' and 'government job' since

their respective mean scores are 4.7477 and 3.9908. The important reasons for working as a sanitary worker among the male temporary sanitary workers are 'lack of education' and 'family maintenance' since their respective mean scores are 4.7273 and 4.1919. Among the female temporary sanitary workers, the important reasons are lack of education and government job since their respective mean scores are 4.0328 and 3.6230.

Regarding the reasons for working as a sanitary worker, the significant difference among the permanent sanitary workers are identified in the case of the variables ‘government job’, ‘no experience in other work’, ‘no other work’ and ‘family maintenance’ since the respective ‘t’ statistics are significant at 5 per cent level. So the null hypothesis is rejected.

Regarding the reasons for working as a sanitary worker, the significant difference among the temporary sanitary workers are identified in the case of variables ‘government job’, ‘lack of education’, ‘no experience in other work’, ‘traditional work’, ‘easy to work’ and ‘family maintenance’ since their respective ‘t’ statistics

are significant at 5 per cent level. So the null hypothesis is rejected.

Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker based on Family System:-

Sanitary workers of different family system have been working as a sanitary worker for different reasons. In order to find out the significant difference among permanent and temporary sanitary workers as regards the reasons for working as a sanitary worker in relation to family system, ‘t’ test is attempted with the null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference among permanent and temporary sanitary workers as regards the reasons for working as a sanitary worker in relation to family system”. The result of ‘t’ test is presented in Table 13.

Table 13 Reason for Working as a Sanitary Worker based on Family System

Sl. No	Reasons	Family System		‘t’ Statistics
		Joint family	Nuclear family	
Permanent Sanitary Workers				
1.	Government job	3.9877	4.2609	-4.143*
2.	Lack of education	4.7716	4.7174	0.790
3.	No experience in other work	3.8272	4.1232	-2.093*
4.	Traditional work	3.5380	3.9493	-4.039*
5.	Easy to work	3.5309	3.7101	-1.071
6.	No other work	2.4383	2.8913	-2.886*
7.	Family maintenance	4.0494	3.8333	1.268
Temporary Sanitary Workers				
1.	Government job	3.4906	4.1495	-4.344*
2.	Lack of education	4.3208	4.5327	-1.286
3.	No experience in other work	2.9057	3.7570	-3.594*
4.	Traditional work	4.0000	3.4486	2.223*
5.	Easy to work	3.1321	3.1028	0.108
6.	No other work	2.8113	2.9439	-0.465
7.	Family maintenance	3.7358	4.0841	-1.361

*Significant at five per cent level

Table 13 shows the mean scores of seven reasons for working as a sanitary worker among permanent and temporary sanitary workers along with its respective ‘t’ statistics. The important reasons for working as a sanitary worker among the permanent sanitary workers belonging to joint family system are ‘lack of education’ and ‘family maintenance’ since their respective mean scores are 4.7716 and 4.0494. Among the permanent sanitary workers belonging to nuclear family, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’ since their respective mean scores are 4.7174 and 4.2609. The important reasons for working as a sanitary worker among the temporary sanitary workers belonging to joint family system are ‘lack of education’ and ‘traditional work’ since their

respective mean scores are 4.3208 and 4.0000. Among the temporary sanitary workers belonging to nuclear family system, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’ as their respective mean scores are 4.5327 and 4.1495.

Regarding the reasons for working as a sanitary worker, significant difference among the permanent sanitary workers are identified in the case of variables such as ‘government job’, ‘no experience in other work’, ‘traditional work’ and ‘no other work’ since their respective ‘t’ statistics are significant at 5 per cent level. So the null hypothesis is rejected.

Regarding the reasons for working as a sanitary worker, significant difference among the temporary sanitary workers are identified in the

case of variables like ‘government job’, ‘no experience in other work’ and ‘traditional work’ since their respective ‘t’ statistics are significant at 5 per cent level. So the null hypothesis is rejected.

FINDINGS

- ☆ Among the permanent sanitary workers, 72.7 per cent of the respondents are female and 27.3 per cent of the respondents are male. Among the temporary sanitary workers, 61.9 per cent of the respondents are male and the remaining 38.1 per cent of the respondents are female.
- ☆ Among the permanent sanitary workers 43.7 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 40-49 years and among the temporary sanitary workers, 47.5 per cent of them are under the age group of 28-39 years.
- ☆ It is found that among the permanent sanitary workers, majority (42.7 per cent) of the respondents are illiterates and among the temporary workers, majority (53.1 per cent) of the respondents are illiterates. This shows clearly that illiterate people lacking opportunities in other spheres of employment and forced to join in the sanitary work.
- ☆ It is found that the SC community dominates (88.9 per cent) in the sanitary work followed by ST (11.1 per cent).
- ☆ Majority (91.7 per cent) of the permanent sanitary workers belongs to Hindus and the remaining 8.3 per cent of the respondents are Christians. Among the temporary sanitary workers, majority (94.4 per cent) of them belongs to Hindus.
- ☆ Majority of the sample respondents’ mother tongue is Tamil, and a small portion of the sample respondents’ mother tongue is Telugu.
- ☆ It is found that among the permanent sanitary workers, 54 per cent of the respondents belongs to joint family system and the remaining 46 per cent belonging to nuclear family system. It is further found that among the temporary sanitary workers, majority of 66.9 per cent of the respondents living in a nuclear family system and the remaining 33.1 per cent living in a joint family system.
- ☆ Majority (63.3 per cent) of the sample respondents are strongly agree that they are working as a sanitary worker due to lack of education.

- ☆ Among the permanent sanitary workers the important reasons for working as sanitary workers are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’. Among the temporary sanitary workers, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘family maintenance’.
- ☆ Among the male permanent sanitary workers the important reasons for working as a sanitary worker are ‘lack of education’ and ‘family maintenance’. Among the female permanent sanitary workers, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’.
- ☆ Among the male temporary sanitary workers the important reasons for working as a sanitary worker are ‘lack of education’ and ‘family maintenance’. Among the female temporary sanitary workers, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’.
- ☆ The important reasons for working as a sanitary worker among the permanent sanitary workers belonging to joint family are ‘lack of education’ and ‘family maintenance’. Among the permanent sanitary workers belonging to nuclear family, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’.
- ☆ The important reasons for working as a sanitary worker among the temporary sanitary workers belonging to joint family are ‘lack of education’ and ‘traditional work’. Among the temporary sanitary workers belonging to nuclear family, the important reasons are ‘lack of education’ and ‘government job’.

CONCLUSION

This study on the status of sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation has helped the researcher to understand the status of the sanitary workers. The government should give priority to the sanitary workers in Tirunelveli Corporation to come up in life and offer them a dignified life in the society.

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