



Socio-Economic Status of Pourakarmikas: A Sociological Analysis of Sankeshwara

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Pourakarmikas plays a vital role in maintaining the health of the people. They are fully involved in maintaining the cleanliness in the city, which helps in protecting from infectious diseases and also the beauty of the city will increase. The collected garbage should be disposed at the earliest. There should be no delay for any reason. Pourakarmikas will be provided with the necessary uniforms, gloves and shoes. The contribution of Pourakarmikas is very important for the development of the city. The services of Pourakarmikas are essential for the city residents to lead a healthy life. Pourakarmikas, who are socially and economically backward are facing several health hazards which leads to early death. Therefore, it is necessary for Pourakarmikas to use the security measures while doing the work on ground.

Key words: Jadamalis, Scavenger, barrage, slums, deprived, Shramik, karma, Religion

INTRODUCTION

The members of the society involved in several professions. Some workers are working in government and private sectors. Many people are working as wage earners, traders, farmers, and laborers. Pourakarmikas are one of them. In some cases, both men and women working outside by leaving their kids in their residence. Pourakarmikas pick up most toxic materials such as the bodies of decaying animals, and other

waste without any treatment and throw them in the trash.

There are Pourakarmikas in 6 metropolitan municipalities, 40 municipal corporations, 82 municipalities and 88 town panchayats in Karnataka. The representation of Scheduled Castes/Classes in these assemblies, by group, is very saddening. In all types of assemblies, Scheduled Castes constitute 23 percent in Group 'A' and 'B', while Scheduled Tribes constitute 0.03 percent. Similarly, these categories have not got legal opportunities in Group 'C' either. However, Scheduled Castes constitute 35.03% of the 'D' cadre, while the Scheduled Castes have not been appointed more than 3%. Barring a few urban areas, they are living a very low standard of living in most cities. After the privatization experiment started to be implemented at all levels, a situation has arisen where the 'Jadamalis' are drawing cold water on their stomachs. Most of the municipal corporations and city councils are outsourcing sanitation and garbage disposal to private contractors. The contractors who hire these people are making them work for low wages without providing any social security.

MEANING OF POURAKARMIKAS

Pourakarmika refers to street sweepers who collect street garbage and clean public places. As mentioned in the Municipal Act, 1993, Pourakarmika means those who are engaged in collecting garbage, cleaning of drains,



slaughterhouses and sewage other than feces. Manual scavengers are those who work in or clean dry latrines, open drains and sanitary workers are mentioned in the Manual Scavengers Report (Manual Scavenger Designate Report 2014). In general terms, they are those who perform dirty work such as sweeping streets, disposing of dead animals outside the city, cleaning drains.

DEFINITIONS OF POURAKARMIKAS:

The Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act, 1976 (Karnataka Act 14, 1977) shall have the meaning assigned to it in section (27) of the Act, 2, "Pourakarmika" means a person who is employed in a City Municipal Council, Town Municipal Council or Town Panchayat on direct wages, welfare or daily wages or on contract or equivalent work or on outsourced basis and has served for not less than two years.

The role of Pourakarmikas towards the health

Pourakarmikas plays a vital role in maintaining the health of the people. They are fully involved in maintaining the cleanliness in the city, which helps in protecting from infectious diseases and also the beauty of the city will increase. The collected garbage should be disposed at the earliest. There should be no delay for any reason. Pourakarmikas will be provided with the necessary uniforms, gloves and shoes. The contribution of Pourakarmikas is very important for the development of the city. The services of Pourakarmikas are essential for the city residents to lead a healthy life. Pourakarmikas, who are socially and economically backward are facing several health hazards which leads to early death. Therefore, it is necessary for Pourakarmikas should use the security measures while doing the work on ground.

Significance of Study

While walking or jogging in the morning, or at any other time, when we see a road that is clean, our eyes also open. What if the same mess is dirty? A barrage of insults starts pouring out on the road sweepers. Words like "They only want money, they don't work hard" come out of our mouths. But, has anyone thought about the life of the civic workers who carry brooms and fill carts with garbage to bring the road to a clean state? Their lives, where they keep the roads clean and clean everything with such calmness that they don't even know the words "dirty, messy, disgusting"... are just pathetic!

They are working in a dangerous environment that is suffocating every day. They are working in many unsafe places without any safety gear, breathing masks, gloves, plastic bags, boots, etc. for their body and health. It is truly ironic that all of them, who earn Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,000 per month, are struggling to earn even their daily wages.

Life is hell

I have observed the nature of work of Pourakarmikas on the ground. Since the urban areas are clean, everyone lives happily. Pourakarmikas who keep the city clean and beautiful. Peace is just a mirage, life itself is hell. In a city of illusion like Bangalore, they cannot even survive on their salaries and cannot leave their jobs, so they live in slums, on the side of the road, in sheds or huts and make do with their clothes. The Pourakarmikas should not bother about climate during their work.

Children deprived of education:

The income of Pourakarmikas is low which is not sufficient to provide qualitative education to their children. This is the main reason the children of Pourakarmikas continue the same profession because of poverty. Taking this into account, the government has made the provision to provide free education for poor families.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY

"Workers are those who swallow hardship and share joy" - May 1 is celebrated globally as 'International Workers' Day' to honor the work of working people and commemorate their hardships. It is also known as May Day, Labor



Day, and Workers' Day. The purpose of Labor Day is to recognize the hard work and dedication of the working class, raise awareness about workers' rights, and protect them from exploitation. How did it start?: Labor Day was first celebrated in America in 1886. The movement that started with the demand for an 8-hour workday for workers was successful. Labor Day was born out of this struggle. This celebration began in India in 1923. Labor Day is celebrated in various parts of the world to express gratitude to the working class. May 1 is celebrated to commemorate the contributions and sacrifices of workers for society. In India, it is called 'May Day'. The first Labour Day in the country was celebrated on May 1, 1923 in Madras. It was started by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan led by Comrade Singharavelar. Since then, Labour Day has been celebrated in India and declared a national holiday. This is the 141st year of International Labour Day. Labour Day is celebrated under different names in different states of India. For example, 'Antarashtriya Shramik Diwas' in Hindi, It is also known as Karmika Dinacharane (Kannada), Karmika Dinotsavam (Telugu), Kamgar Divas (Marathi), Ujaipalar Deenam (Tamil), Thozhilali Dienam (Malayalam), and Shromik Dibosh (Bengali).

Efforts of Pourakarmikas:

Pourakarmikas who carry out cleanliness work from the early hours of the morning, regardless of wind, rain, sun, or cold, are real workers and pioneers of cleanliness. They worked in a critical situation like Corona, they have risked their lives and carried out their tireless work of sanitation. The government, associations, and institutions need to make a conscious effort to develop their skills. Society should not disrespect the Pourakarmikas due to their profession. These workers are much conscious about the time because the negligence effects on the health of the society. They are restless because they have to complete the work without caring of time. All the members of the society have observed the work of Pourakarmikas in the morning.

Welfare programs of the Central and State Governments for the development of the Pourakarmikas:

Social reformers, Dalit leaders and other progressives are fighting to empower the lives of the people who have been exploited for centuries. However, even if there is a slight change in the lives of the exploited people, there should not be any satisfactory improvement. Therefore, the Central and State Governments should take measures to improve the condition of the exploited people, especially the Pourakarmikas. It has been implementing several welfare programs through constitutional legislation.

Central Government Schemes: It can be seen that there are several schemes implemented by the Central Government for the development of Pourakarmikas. There are dozens of schemes related to their health and education. But there is a difference in their implementation and use. While some people take full advantage of everything, it is seen that there are some who do not have even the slightest knowledge about the schemes.

Social and Economic Reform Programmes: The Central Government has launched a number of schemes to improve the social and economic condition of the people engaged in the sanitation profession. The most important of these are:

Since there is a perception among other people that the profession of sanitation is reserved only for certain castes, in order to dispel this perception and to socially empower the people engaged in sanitation profession, in the amendment of 1993-94, 5% reservation was provided for the general public, 45% for OBCs and 50% for Scheduled Castes as per the reservation scheme for vacant posts of sanitation profession in local bodies.

Educational Development of Children of Pourakarmikas:

The state government has ordered to open 'Hi-Tech Residential' schools in all districts of the state with the aim of educationally empowering the children of the people working in the sanitation profession in local bodies, and to increase the scholarship from Rs. 500 to Rs. 700 for children studying in post-matric schools, and to provide an incentive of Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 to students who score high marks in post-matric schools. Free education is provided in government and private schools from class 1 to 2nd PUC. Through the Vidyashree Puraskar scheme, the first prize is Rs. 25,000, the love prize is Rs. 15,000, and the third prize is Rs. 10,000. This prize is given by the city council. For this, Rs 5 lakh has been reserved in the municipal budget, and free laptops are being provided to students studying in technical and vocational education, hence Rs 10 lakh has been set aside in the annual budget.



Review of Literature

Ghurye G. S. (1961), According to him, the lack of unrestricted choice of occupations is an important feature of a caste system. The law of karma and religion have reinforced the concept of caste or caste profession. Some professions within a caste or caste group are considered caste professions. Caste-related professions are given a place in the caste system depending on the caste. Professions involving intellectual skills were considered superior to manual labor. Avarnis were engaged in lowly, inhumane, degrading and unclean occupations such as skinning, leather goods manufacturing, street sweeping, scavenging, etc. Their pollution was determined from birth. People of this group were not actually engaged in unclean occupations but were considered to be polluted, hence the hierarchy is an important feature of the caste system.

Beitell, A (1966). In his book " **Old and New Caste** ", he undertook a study of caste, class and power relations in the process of change in the village of Sripuram in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. He examined how the process of modernization has gradually dismantled traditional structures in various areas of social life. To differentiate between the untouchables, he divided the village people into three groups: Brahmins, non-Brahmins and Scheduled Castes, and studied the effect of production, exchange and distribution on the class system. Brahmin dominance in the village panchayats was high, and continued until the mid-1940s. He explained that it was ruled by Brahmins, but from the beginning in India, Brahmins taught the Vedas and Puranas and kept the system of administration under their control in the rural administration. Over time, after independence, due to the reservations given in the Constitution and the reservation given in the Panchayat Raj political system, their system of administration gradually changed.

Rajeshwari M (2019), "A Sociological Study on the Pourakarmikas of Mangalore Mahanagara Palike" A study has been conducted on the socio-economic status of the Pourakarmikas of Mangalore Mahanagara Palike in Dakshina Kannada district. The study has revealed that the socio-economic status of these workers is low and the government needs to pay attention to them and make them eligible for government schemes.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To know the social and economic status of the Pourakarmikas
- To study the health status of the Pourakarmikas
- To know the educational status of the Pourakarmikas
- To know the effects on the health of the Pourakarmikas

HYPOTHESIS

- The socio-economic condition of the Pourakarmikas is not good
- The Pourakarmikas are facing several health problems
- The salaries of the Pourakarmikas are also not being received on time
- The children of the Pourakarmikas are being deprived of education

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The profession of a Pourakarmikas is one of the lowest and the work they do is dirty. Street sweeping, toilet cleaning, sewer cleaning, and bus stand sweeping can all have a strong impact on their health. Pourakarmikas are a working class that has not been identified in the mainstream of society and is excluded. It is important to study their social and economic status.

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Sankeshwar:

Sankeshwar is a town in Hukkeri taluk of Belgaum district in the state of Karnataka. It is located on NH47 (formerly National Highway). It is about 50 km northeast of Belgaum. It is situated on the banks of the Hiranyakeshi River.

METHODOLOGY

Face to face interview conducted with Pourakarmikas about their issues for their survival. The interview schedule has been prepared and organized the pilot study before finalizing the schedule.

Selection of Sampling

Two pourakarmikas have been chosen as sample from each ward of the Sankeshwara Town Panchayat. Equally selected the Pourakarmikas from different wards for collecting the data.

Methods of Data Collection:

Primary Data: The first hand information collected from the Pourakarmikas by using interview schedule and also collected the data from the Medical Officer.

Secondary Data: The information is collected with the help of articles published in journals, books, news papers, magazines, reports and also gathered information from the internet

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Only the civic workers who are carrying out sanitation work under the jurisdiction of Sankeshwar Municipality were used for the study.
- Both men and women working in the municipality, and people of all castes, were included in the study.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE POURAKARMIKAS

The socio-economic profile of the informants is an important factor in analyzing a community socially. The present chapter analyzes the socio-economic status of the Pourakarmikas.



Table No. 1: Distribution of Age of the respondents

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	30 to 35	21	84%
02	More than 36 years	04	16%
	Total	25	100%

Table 1 constitutes about the distribution of age among the respondents. More than 80 percent of the Pourakarmikas age is above 30 years and less percentage of pourakarmikas observed above 36 years. The overall picture of the above table indicates that they work in this profession for little years.

Table No.2: Distribution of Religion among the Respondents

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Hindu	25	100%
02	Muslim	00	00%
03	Christ	00	00%
04	Others	00	00%
	Total	25	100%

The above table indicates about the religion of respondents. All the Pourakarmikas belongs to Hindu.

Table 3: Class distribution among the Respondents

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	SC	24	96%
02	ST	00	00%
03	OBC	01	04%
04	GM	00	00%
05	Others	00	00%
	Total	25	100%

The table 3 reveals the fact about the distribution of class among the respondents. Out of all the respondents majority of Pourakarmikas (96 percent) belongs to Scheduled Caste (SC), whereas only one respondent belongs to Other Backward Community (OBC). The above table can be concluded that, majority of the Pourakarmikas are from Scheduled Caste.



Table 4: Educational Status

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Illiterate	00	00%
02	Primary	04	16%
03	Secondary	20	80%
04	PUC	01	04%
05	Graduation	00	00%
06	Others	00	00%
	Total	25	100%

Table 4 illustrates about the educational status of Pourakarmikas. Out of all the respondents, 80 percent Pourakarmikas have studied upto 10th standard, whereas primary is about 16 percent and only 4 percent have their qualification upto PUC. The above analysis indicates that majority of the Pourakarmikas have crossed the secondary level of education.

Table 5: Distribution of Gender

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Male	18	72%
02	Female	07	28%
	Total	25	100%

The analysis of gender of the respondents shown in the table 5. Majority of the male are working as Pourakarmikas is more than 70 percent and less than 30 percent are female.

Table 6: Size of the family

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	1 to 4	18	72%
02	5 to 8	05	20%
03	9 to 12	00	00%
04	More than 13	02	08%
	Total	25	100%

Table 6 reveals the fact that the size of family among the respondents. Out of all the Pourakarmika families, more than 90 percent of the respondent family size is within 8 members, whereas 8 percent of the Pourakarmika families are residing more than 13 members. The inferences of the above table indicates that the nuclear families are more because of city culture.



Table 7: Annual Income of the Respondents

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	50,000 to 1,00,000	00	00%
02	1,00,001 to 1,50,000	00	00%
03	1,50,001 to 2,00,000	20	80%
04	More than 2,00,001	05	20%
	ಒಟ್ಟು	25	100%

The above table indicates that, the annual income of Pourakarmikas. 80 percent of Pourakarmika annual income is less than Rs. 2,00,000, whereas above Rs. 2,00,001 is about 20 percent. The overall picture of the above table indicates that the annual income of Pourakarmikas is not sufficient to meet their daily basic requirements.

Table 8: Type of Houses

Sl No.	Type of Houses	Frequency	Percentage
01	Semi-Pucca Houses	25	100
02	Pucca Houses	00	00%
	Total	25	100%

The socio-economic condition of Pourakarmikas based the structure of houses. All the Pourakarmikas are residing in Semi-Pucca houses. This shows that, the socio-economic status of Pourakarmikas are in pathetic.

Table 9: Satisfaction level for Salary

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	05	20%
02	No	20	80%
	Total	25	100%

The inferences of table 9 expresses about the satisfaction level of salary. Out of the respondents, 80 percent of the respondents opined that, the salary is not sufficient to meet their daily requirements, whereas 20 percent agreed that the salary is sufficient. The overall picture of the above table indicates that, the Pourakarmikas are expecting little high salary for their survival.

Table 10: Number of years working as Pourakarmikas

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	1 to 5	12	48%
02	6 to 10	10	40%
03	11 to 15	02	08%
04	15 to 20	01	04%
05	More than 21	00	00%



	Total	25	100
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Table 10 constitutes about the total number years working as Pourakarmikas, out of total respondents, more than 85 percent of Pourakarmikas are working in this profession upto 10 years, whereas between 11 to 15 years is about 8 percent and rest of the percentage are working between 15 to 20 years. The above table gives clear picture that majority of the respondents are working in this profession upto 10 years.

Table 11: Job Satisfaction

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	12	48%
02	No	13	52%
	ಒಟ್ಟು	25	100%

Table 11 constitutes about the information pertaining to satisfaction level of job. Almost equal percent of the respondents agreed and disagreed about the satisfaction.

Social Problems and Facilities

Table 12: Basic Infrastructure facilities in their Residence

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Electricity	25	100%
02	Bathroom	21	84%
03	Kitchen Room	25	100%
04	Study Room	00	00%
05	Water and Toilet facilities	25	100%

The analysis of basic infrastructure facilities in the residence of Pourakarmikas are available in Table 12. All the houses are having the facility of electricity, whereas 84 percent of the respondent had the facility of separate bathroom, separate kitchen room is about 100 percent and nobody is having the separate room for study for their kids. The facilities are good except the separate room for study which will be little impact on the studies of kids.

Table 13: Information of the nature of works

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Garbage Cleaning	2	48%
02	Garbage Sweeping	5	20%
03	Loading Garbage in Lorry		28%



04	Cleaninig of Open drains and toilets	4	16%
05	Implying Pesticides	4	16%
06	Driving of vehicle	3	12%

The nature of work of Pourakarmikas have been described in the table 13. Out of all the Pourakarmikas, 48 percent of the pourakarmikas have involved in garbage cleaning, whereas 20 percent in sweeping, 28 percent involved loading garbage in lorry and the rest of the percentage of pourakarmikas involved in implying pesticides, clearning open drains and toilets and also driving vehicles.

Table 14: Details of getting this job

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Through Parents	11	44%
02	Through Institution	00	00%
03	Through known person	09	36%
04	Self will	03	12%
05	Advertisement	02	08%
	Total	35	100

The information collected during the survey about the details about the getting the profession and the same has been analysed in Table 14. Out of all the respondents, 44 percent states that they have chosen this profession after the death of parents and also after their retirement. More than 35 percent of the respondents opined that they entered to this profession with reference and only 12 percent came with their own willing. 8 percent of the respondents entered to this profession with advertisement in the news paper.

Table 15: Duration of work (in hours)

Sl No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	6 hours	21	84%
02	6-8 hours	04	16%
03	8-10 hours	00	00%
04	10-12 hours	00	00%
	Total	25	100%

The above table shows the clear picture of the hours of work as Pourakarmika. All the Pourakarmikas are working as per the labour law upto 8 hours, which also includes lunch hours.



Table 16: Health Issues among the Pourakarmikas

SI No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Seviour body ache	25	100%
02	Back Pain	20	80%
03	Knee Pain	24	96%
04	Weakness	20	80%
05	Malaria and Vomitting	15	60%
06	Asthama	00	00%
07	Alergy	21	84%
08	TB	00	00%

The above table indicates about the health issues for Pourakarmikas after the work. All the Pourakarmikas are facing the seviour body pain, whereas 80 percent facing the back pain, more than 96 percent are facing knee issues, weakness is about 80 percent, feeling body weakness is about 80 percent, malaria and vomiting is a common issue among the workers and nearly 85 percet are facing skin allergy issues.

All the safety measures followed by the Pourakarmikas during the work. These equipments supplied by the Urban Local Bodies. The dresses, socks, shoes, handgloves, Jackets and caps were supplied by the Municipalities. The Pourakarmikas are freely treated by the Doctors in government hospitals.

Table 17: Aware of the Health Insurance

SI No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	Yes	20	80%
02	No	05	20%
	Total	25	100%

A question has been raised about the awareness regarding the health issurance among the Pourakarmikas and the results have been analysed in the table 17. Out all the respodents, around 80 percent of the Pourakarmikas are the aware of benefits of health insurance during emergency.

Table 18: Nature of Insurance

SI No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
01	LIC	28	80%
02	Life Insurance	07	20%
	Total	35	100

The above table indicates about the nature of insurance owned by the Pourakarmikas. Around 80 percent of the Pourakarmikas are awareness about the various schemes in Life Insurance Corporation, whereas around 20 percent



knows the Life Insurance from different companies. The overall picture of the above table indicates that the LIC is most popular than any other insurances.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

FINDINGS

The following are the findings of study after conducting an indepth field survey and face to face interview also organized.

- ✓ The role of Pourakarmikas are considered as important from the view point of health of the society.
- ✓ More than 95 percent of Pourakarmikas belongs to scheduled caste.
- ✓ Around 80 percent of Pourakarmikas had completed secondary level of studies.
- ✓ More than 70 percent of Pourakarmikas are male.
- ✓ The nuclear family is more than 70 percent, therefore the size of family is small.
- ✓ Around 80 percent of the Pourakarmikas annual incoe is low, therefore it is difficult for them to satisfy their basic requirements and more over the cost of living is little bit high.
- ✓ Majority of the Pourakarmikas are not satisfied with salary given by the urban local bodies.
- ✓ Nearly 90 percent of Pourakarmikas are working in the same profession upto 10 years duration.
- ✓ Almost all the Pourakarmikas are facing the problem of body ache, backpain and knee pains and also they are facing skin allergy due to garbage cleaning work.
- ✓ Pourakarmikas are well aware of benefits of Insurance.

SUGGESTIONS

The following sugestions on the basis results received from the field survey.

- ✓ Providing good quality and necessary protective equipment as per the work.
- ✓ Providing health related facilities such as free medicines, free ward system, etc. not only in government hospitals but also in private hospitals by skilled specialist doctors and providing health facilities to the families of the civil servants.
- ✓ Conducting information camps on health and personal hygiene.
- ✓ In order to improve the health of civil servants, the public should be given appropriate information about the diseases caused by drinking, alcohol consumption, and tobacco consumption at least once a year. Workers engaged in the sanitation profession should be made mandatory to use uniforms, masks, and gloves.
- ✓ Provide the same salary as permanent civil servants to substitute and outsourced workers.
- ✓ Schedule specific holidays as per the situation. Provide maternity leave along with medical allowance.
- ✓ Provide women civil servants with rest rooms and basic necessities in the ward office.
- ✓ In order to create awareness about education among the civil servants, separate adult education should be implemented for civil servants. In addition, compulsory education for the children of civil servants and free education up to higher education should be provided, along with a system of providing incentive money to the talented students who score high marks. Reservation should be provided in education and employment to the children of civil servants.
- ✓ The Metropolitan Corporation should order contractors to pay monthly salaries in the last week of the month, without defrauding civil servants by paying them monthly salaries every 3 months or every 4 months.

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