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Issues And Problem Faced By Sanitary Workers In Sanitation Work In The Thoothukudi District

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Abstract:

Waste from the products we use in our daily lives and company operations, resource use, and material use all contribute to waste generation. Handling, management, and proper disposal of solid waste are hot topics that affect public and environmental health. The health of the world is largely the responsibility of health workers. During this time, they faced difficulties such as financial, mental, and physical concerns. In addition, they deal with many social issues and financial instability. Both primary and secondary data are selected for this investigation. The respondents personally generated the primary data, and a structured questionnaire was developed. Printed websites, publications, and magazines were the sources of secondary data. This was a stratified sampling method. It describes the health problems faced by sanitation workers in the Thoothukudi district at work and includes 215 respondents.

Keywords: Sanitary Work, Sanitary Workers, Problems, Environmental Health

Introduction

Sanitation is an essential way to make certain that people are kept properly separate from dangerous garbage and to enable its safe processing and disposal. To "Ensure the availability and sustainable handling of water and sanitation for all," Sustainable Development Goal 6 of the World Health Organization recognizes the significance of sanitation. The goal and dedication to improving sanitation practices globally are emphasized by this global project. This involves those who look for bathrooms in different places, including homes, public areas, and companies. Sanitation workers also operate at facilities that treat and dispose of sewage and fecal waste, clean manholes and sewers, and empty full sewage tanks and pits.

Sanitation workers play a crucial role in improving the ecological environment of both urban and semi-urban areas, as well as the overall landscape of modern civilization. While sanitation workers often have a challenging job, most towns would struggle to operate effectively without their contributions. These workers collect trash and transport it to designated disposal sites, such as landfills or dumps, delivering an essential service to their communities. They are known by various names, including beauticians of the street, trash collectors, and garbage collectors. The majority of sanitation personnel perform their jobs in hazardous environments without safety equipment. It is frequently the case for sanitation

workers to be seriously hurt or killed while cleaning sewers without proper safety precautions. These individuals are subjected to hazardous, poisonous, and damaging substances.

Objective

To find out the problems facing sanitary workers in sanitation work in the Thoothukudi district.

Hypothesis

- Ho: There is no significant relationship between gender and problem faced by sanitary workers.
- Ho: There is no significant relationship between age and problem faced by sanitary workers.

Methodology of the study

The methods and procedures adopted in conducting the research are presented under the following heads.

1. Sources of the study

The data required for the study were collected from both the primary and secondary sources. The primary data has been collected directly from sanitation workers by using an interview schedule. The secondary data were collected from the published journals, books, magazines, and websites.

2. Sampling design

This study is focused on the working quality of sanitary workers. The total number of samples was 215 from sanitation workers. The proportionate stratified sampling method is used to select samples.

3. Tools for analysis

The various statistical methods to analyze the primary data, including percentage analysis, Kruskal- Wallis H Test and Mann-Whitney U Test analysis to interpret the data to arrive at findings from the study. For effective analysis and easy understanding, the data were tabulated.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondent

To understand the demographic profile of the customers, percentage analysis was used to identify the personal information, like gender, age, marital status, education, monthly income, and year of experience. The table1.1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table1.1 Demographic profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile	Options	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	124	57.7
	Female	91	42.3
	Total	**215**	**100.0**
Age	Up to 30	31	14.4
	31 – 35	39	18.1
	36 – 40	35	16.3
	Above 40	110	51.2
	Total	**215**	**100.0**
Marital Status	Married	190	88.4
	Unmarried	12	5.6
	Widow	13	6.0
	Total	**215**	**100.0**
Education	Primary school	107	49.8
	Middle school	40	18.6
	SSLC	36	16.7
	HSC	17	7.9
	Degree	15	7.0
	Total	**215**	**100.0**
Monthly income	Upto Rs12000	102	47.4
	12001 -15000	74	34.4
	Above 15000	39	18.1
	Total	**215**	**100.0**
Years of experience	Upto 3 years	79	36.7
	4-6 years	62	28.8
	7-9 years	16	7.4
	Above 9 years	58	27.0
	Total	**215**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

Gender: Among 215 respondents considered for the study, 124 respondents (57.7%) are male and 91 respondents (42.3%) are female. It is observed that majority of the male Sanitary workers

Age: Among 215 respondents considered for the study Above 40 years age group of 110 respondents (51.2%), 31 – 35 years group of 39 respondents (18.1%), Up to 30 years age group of 31 respondents (14.4%), 36 – 40 years age group of 35 respondents (16.3%). The Majority of the respondents (51.2%) are above 40 years.

Marital Status: Among 215 respondents considered for the study **Married:** 190 respondents (88.4%), **Widow:** 13 respondents (6.0%), **Unmarried:** 12 respondents (5.6%). Most of the respondents are married, which may indicate greater family responsibilities.

Educational Qualification: Among 215 respondents reflected for the study, **Primary School:** 107 respondents (49.8%), **Middle School:** 40 respondents (18.6%), **SSLC**: 36 respondents

(16.7%), **HSC**: 17 respondents (7.9%), **Degree**: 15 respondents (7.0%). A large proportion (49.8%) have only primary school education, indicating low educational attainment among many sanitary workers.

Monthly Income: Among 215 respondents reflected for the study, **(47.4%)** of respondents earn **up to ₹12,000 per month**, while **34.4%** earn between ₹12,001 and ₹15,000, and only **18.1%** earn above ₹15,000. The Majority of the respondents (47.4%) of respondents earn **up to ₹12,000 per month**.

Years of Experience: Most respondents (**36.7%**) have work experience of **up to 3 years**, followed by **28.8%** who have 4-6 years of experience. Only **27%** have above 9 years of experience. The Majority of the respondents (36.7%) of respondents have work experience of **up to 3 years.**

Identification of problems in sanitary workers

Sanitary workers play a vital role in maintaining the cleanliness and hygiene of society. Despite their contribution, they face numerous problems and challenges in their personal and professional lives. The present study, based on field observations and literature review, identifies the following major problems faced by sanitary workers.

Table1.2 Identification of problems in sanitary workers in Ranking

Problems	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Insufficient Sanitary workers	4.16	.984	III
Low wages	4.25	1.153	I
More work	4.24	.949	II
No proper information about work	3.26	.980	VI
Health hazards	3.18	.965	VII
Respiratory Diseases	3.01	.932	IX
Debilitating Infections	2.87	.960	X
Lack of security at night time	2.03	1.243	XI
Facing difficult people	3.10	1.346	VIII
Drinking water problem	3.95	1.171	IV
Rest room/ Washroom Specializes	3.84	1.324	V

Source: Primary Data

The rank analysis was performed by using the overall mean score on factors. The identification of problems in sanitary workers; it is inferred from the Table that out of 11 variables the mean score value is more than 4.00, for the variables namely, low wages' (4.25), 'more work'(4.24), 'insufficient sanitary workers' (4.16), 'drinking water problem' (3.95),' rest room and washroom specializes'(3.84), 'no proper information about work' (3.26), 'health hazards' (3.18), 'facing difficult people'(3.10), 'respiratory diseases'(3.01), 'debilitating infections'(2.87), and 'lack of security at night time'(2.03). The main problem for sanitary workers is to low wages for sanitary work.

Table1.3 Low wages with gender wise Mann Whitney U test

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U Test	P Value
Male	124	105.04	13025.50	5275.500	.346
Female	91	112.03	10194.50		
Total	**215**				

Source: Primary Data

The table 1.3 Shows the mean rank for male respondents is 105.04, and for female respondents is 112.03. This shows that female sanitary workers have slightly higher average ranks than male workers in the studied variable. The Mann-Whitney U statistic is 5275.500, and the corresponding p-value is 0.346.

Since the p-value (0.346) is greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05, there is no statistically significant difference between male and female sanitary workers concerning the studied variable.

Table1.4 Low wages with Age wise Kruskal- Wallis H Test

Low wages	N	Mean Rank	H Test	P value
Strongly Disagree	5	138.60	50.670	.000
Disagree	26	157.71		
Neutral	14	155.32		
Agree	35	65.17		
Strongly Agree	135	103.49		
Total	**215**			

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.4 indicates that the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, indicating that there is a statistically significant difference among the groups in their perception of low wages. The mean ranks show that those who disagree and are neutral have higher mean ranks (157.71 and 155.32), while those who agree have a much lower mean rank (65.17), and those who strongly agree have a mean rank of 103.49.

Findings

- It is found that among the 215 samples sanitary workers that the majority of the respondents are male 57.7 per cent.
- It is found that among the 215 samples sanitary workers that the majority 51.2 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group from above 40 years of age.
- It is found that among the 215 samples sanitary workers that the majority of the respondents are married 88.4 per cent.
- It is found that among the 215 samples sanitary workers that the majority 49.8 per cent of the respondents belong to the primary education level.
- It is found that among the 215 samples sanitary workers that the majority 47.4 per cent of the respondents are having upto Rs12000.

- It is found that among the 215 samples sanitary workers that the majority 36.7 per cent of the respondents upto 3 years of working experience.

Suggestion

- Workers should receive adequate, high-quality personal protective equipment, or PPE, such as a mask, gloves, footwear, and clothing. Regular instruction should be provided on properly using safety gear and hygienic work practices.
- The government should revise and increase the wages of sanitary workers frequently to ensure a fair and living wage. Salary modifications should take into account inflation, living costs, and the nature of the work involved.
- Wherever practical, temporary or contract sanitary workers should be established and offered a permanent job. Permanent work will provide job security, stability, and access to various social assistance.

Conclusion

Sanitary workers constitute the foundation of public sanitation and hygiene. Despite their vital role in maintaining cleanliness and preventing illnesses, they continue to face various obstacles that affect their physical, mental, and social well-being. The present study has systematically analyzed the problems confronted by sanitary workers based on both quantitative knowledge and personal observations. The results of this study reveal that low wages, work overload, lack of sufficient manpower, and poor working conditions are the primary problems faced by sanitary workers. The majority of them also suffer from health hazards, breathing-related illnesses, infections, and psychological stress due to continuous exposure to unhygienic environments. An absence of proper safety equipment, medical facilities, and welfare benefits further worsens their present predicament.

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