



A STUDY ON THE SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF PICKERS OF WASTE MATERIAL IN TIRUPUR

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Introduction

The basic necessity of the human being is food, shelter and cloth. These were considered as the main requirement of all human beings in olden days. But due to various reasons nowadays medical expenses is also brought under the basic requirement of the all individuals. It is the responsibility of all parents and elders in the family to generate income to meet the requirements of the individuals and also the family members. Hence all the parents either mother or father and the elders try to earn money by involving themselves in any one of the activities, which is possible to them. Based on the knowledge, availability of money, interest of the individual people select their occupation like business, farming work, working in private sectors, getting government job and labour and other related works. In almost all area of the country people involved in any of the activities stated above to get income to their family.

In Tamilnadu, Tirupur district is familiar for its knitted garment industries. Further it offers employment to more than 6 lakhs employees from various parts of the country. Out of them more than 75% of them are from all parts of Tamilnadu.

Tirupur Cluster – A Success Story

Tirupur an obscure town in Coimbatore District has been placed in the knitwear map of global apart from catering to the whole India. The success story of Tirupur can be mainly attributed to the entrepreneurial skills of the people coupled with hard work, commitment to the job. Tirupur can take its own pride that within a matter of two decades the export has grown up by leaps and bounds, from less than Rs.10 Crores in 1984 to Rs.11,000 Crores in 2006-07. However, due to appreciation of rupee against dollar in 2007-08 export has declined by 10% and registered Rs.9,950/-. As far as Tirupur exporters are concerned true to their spirit and entrepreneurship, they have taken lot of effort to cut down the cost and sustain in the global market and aiming to reach 4 billion by 2010. During the year 2008-09, due to financial crisis in US and EU market, the exports for half yearly period declined to Rs.5,050 crores compared to Rs.5,350 crores recorded in the corresponding period of 2007-08.

Chronological growth of Tirupur

The first knitwear unit in Tirupur was set up in 1925 and the growth of the industry was slow till late 1930s. A series of strikes in late 1930s in knitting factories in the neighbouring towns of Salem and Madurai resulted in the opening of new firms in Tirupur. Subsequently, it emerged as the prominent centre for knitwear in South India by 1940s. In 1942, 34 units were engaged in the production of knitwear all these units were composite mills and the production was carried out in the same unit (sic). There are also references to some units performing specific tasks / operations like bleaching and dyeing, located in the larger units. By 1961, the number of units rose to 230 and till early 1970s, the industry catered only to the domestic market. These units were mostly composite mills without any subcontracting system of production. It was in the 1980s, the export market began to expand and subsequently Tirupur emerged as the largest exporter of cotton knitwear from the country, accounting for roughly 80 percent of the total cotton knitwear exporters.

Commencement of Exports

Tirupur's direct exports started with Italy. Verona, a garment importer from Italy came to Tirupur in 1978 through Mumbai exporters to buy white T-shirts. A lot of job workers were manufacturing garments for merchant exporters. He realized the potential and came to Tirupur the following year. Verona was the man who brought European business to Tirupur. On seeing the quality, others soon followed suit. In 1981 European retail chain C&A came. Gradually, other stores approached the exporters.

A handful of manufactures exported garments worth Rs. 15 crore in 1985. The next couple of year was a windfall for Tirupur as exports touched Rs.300 crore in 1990.

Capacity of Units in Various Operations

Tirupur is known for the cluster activity and mostly each activity of garment making is being carried out be outside units say. Knitting units, Dyeing & Bleaching Units, Fabric Printing, Garmenting, and Embroidery, Compacting and Calendaring and other ancillary units. The following table shows the position of Tirupur units.



Operations	Number of Units
Knitting Units	1500
Dyeing and Bleaching	700
Fabric Printing	500
Garment Making	2500
Embroidery	250
Other Ancillary Units	500
Compacting and Calendaring	300
Total	6250

Tirupur textile Industries and allied industries textiles provide plenty of employment opportunities to all cadre of workers in various process of textile industries. Nearly 600000 people are getting regular employment in textile units which paved way to the waste material pickers from all parts of the country to move towards Tirupur for getting employment to meet their family requirement. Though in Tirupur, employment opportunity is abundant, some of the people are involved in picking of waste materials in the drainage and roadside and sell the same to the merchant for very nominal price. This amount is the only income to their family. They simply get the income and spend the amount in any aspects where they want. They do not bother about the development of their wards, education and the standard of living and also the social status. They lead very poor life style when compared with the others in Tirupur.

The authorities and the politician even the NGOs do not bother about them. But at the time of election they are taken care to get the poll from them. After that, nobody think about the waste pickers. There is no purpose to blame anybody in this regard. But nobody can deny the fact. India is one of the fast growing countries in the world. The development and the movement of India is being watched every moment by abroad. The citizen of the country (India) must lead a normal standard of life. They must be able to lead peaceful life. It is miserable to say, some group of people in Tirupur lead very normal life. Many of them do not have a proper shelter for sleeping. Who is responsible for this poor standard of living of waste pickers? How they are uplifted? To get answer for the above question a thorough study on the socio economic status of the weaker section to be carried out. By keeping the above views in mind as a preliminary step the researchers made an attempt to write an article “A STUDY ON THE SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF PICKERS OF WASTE MATERIAL IN TIRUPUR”

Statement of the Problem

Most of the workers in Textile Industries of Tirupur are migrated from various parts of the country. There are in a condition to work daily for their survival. It will cause the income to the family. The waste pickers do not think off searching job in textile industries and other industries in Tirupur. They use the money generated in mostly drinking liquor products. Their spouse also doesn't care about their wards. In many of the family of waste pickers the wards and children do not have proper education. Their future is in a great question. Social welfare department is closing the eye in this regard. The waste pickers do not have proper dresses to them and also to their wards. Most of them sleep in the open places and in front of the petty shop during the night hours.

Significance of the Study

The waste pickers come to Tirupur with more burdens of loan and commitment to their family members. They have to work in the textile industries without considering the time frame of the work where they get normal income and bonus. But due to various reasons they find job i.e. picking of waste material where they could get only meager amount of income which is not sufficient to lead the normal standard of life in Tirupur.. They could not settle their loans. Further to meet all the requirement of the family they have to borrow once again. This problem increases the burden of the waste pickers. Some of them return to their home town with same amount of loans and financial crisis. This situation should be changed. And they should be cared to lead a peaceful life as like others in Tirupur.

Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the socio economic condition of the waste material pickers in Tirupur
2. To measure the income and standard of living of the waste material pickers in Tirupur
3. To find out the problems faced by the waste material pickers in Tirupur
4. To analyze the causes for the problems
5. To find out remedial measures and suggest to the authorities concerned to bring the life of the waste material pickers to a better condition



Research Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive research was undertaken to make the study effective and to find the result in a fruitful manner.

Data Collection: Both primary data and secondary data were collected for the study.

Primary Data: Primary data was collected by framing questionnaire and making interview schedule with the respondents. The questionnaire was prepared with the help of the experts in the relevant field. Necessary additions and deletions were made to make the questionnaire effective for the successful completion of the research work.

Secondary Data: Secondary data was collected from the magazines and journals published in the related issues to the waste material pickers.

Sampling : The population for the research work is waste pickers of Tirupur, who are engaged in picking of plastic, papers and other waste material of knitted garment industries and other business units and also from the streets. As the total population for the research in the study area is about 500 approximately, 10 percent of the respondents were selected from the total population at random by using the convenient sampling method. 50 samples respondents were selected from the total population in the study area (in and around Tirupur).

Study Period: The research work was undertaken from July 2016 to September 2016 consisting of three month.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table No.1, Table Showing the age of the Respondents

Age in years	Respondents		Total number of respondents	% of the respondents
	Male	Female		
Below 25	06	03	09	18
26 to 35	10	07	17	34
36 to 45	11	04	15	30
46 and above	08	01	09	18
Total	35	15	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The above table shows that among 50 respondents 18% of the respondent are below 25 years of age, 34% of the respondents belong to the age group 26-35, 30% of the respondents belong to the age group of 36-45 while the remaining 18% of the respondents belong to the age group of 46 and above.

Table No.2, Table Showing the marital status of the Respondents

Marital status	Respondents		Total number of respondents	% of the respondents
	Male	Female		
Married	23	09	32	64
Unmarried	12	06	18	36
Total	35	15	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The above table clearly reveals that 64% of the respondents are married while the remaining 36% of the respondents are unmarried.

Table no.3, Table showing the opinion of the respondents regarding the factor influenced the consumer to buy britannia products

Factors made them to pick waste materials	Respondents		Total number of respondents	% of the respondents
	Male	Female		
lazy	22	03	11	22
unemployment	09	07	20	40
illiteracy	07	02	09	18
circumstances	12	03	10	20
Total	35	15	50	100

Source: Primary data



Interpretation: From the above table it is understood that 22% of the respondents informed that the lazy made them to pick waste materials, 40% of the respondents told that unemployment influenced them to pick waste materials, 18% of the respondents conveyed that the illiteracy influenced them to pick waste materials while the remaining 20% of the respondents said that the circumstances influenced them to involve in picking of waste materials on the roadside.

Table no.4, Table showing the opinion of the respondents regarding initiative taken by government to bring upliftment

opinion	Respondents		Total number of respondents	% of the respondents
	Male	Female		
Yes	08	03	11	22
No	27	12	39	78
	35	15	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: It is understood from the above table that 78% of the respondents told that government does not take initiative to bring up-liftment to the waste pickers, while the remaining 22 % of the respondents agree with the initiative taken by the government takes initiative to bring upliftment to the waste pickers

Table no.5, Table showing the satisfaction of the respondents regarding socio economic status

Satisfaction Level	Respondents		Total number of respondents	% of the respondents
	Male	Female		
Highly satisfied	05	07	12	24
Satisfied	09	03	12	24
Neutral	14	03	17	34
Dissatisfied	04	01	05	10
Highly dissatisfied	03	01	04	08
Total	35	15	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The above table clearly reveals that 34% of the respondents are neutral in expressing their satisfaction level with the social status, 24 percent of the respondents are highly satisfied and satisfied respectively with the social status, 10 percent of the respondents are dissatisfied with their social status while the remaining 8 percent of the respondents are highly dissatisfied with their social status

Findings From Simple Percent Analysis

The collected data were properly tabulated and analyzed by applying necessary statistical tools to make the research work efficient and find out the result fruitfully. On the basis of the analysis following findings were made

- Majority (34%) of the respondents belong to the age group 26-35.
- Most (64%) of the respondents are married.
- Considerable portion (40%) of the respondents told that unemployment influenced them to pick waste materials.
- Majority (78%) of the respondents told that government does not take initiative to bring up-liftment to the waste pickers.
- Most (34%) of the respondents are neutral in expressing their satisfaction level with the social status.
- Majority (71%) of the respondents conveyed that they could not send their wards to even school education.
- Most (67%) of the respondents informed that they do not have house for the family.
- Majority (55%) of the respondents informed that they normally sleep on the flat form or in front of the petty shop.
- Most (71%) of the respondents informed that they face police problem during the night time as they sleep on the roadside.
- Considerable portion (53%) of the respondents told that they lead very poor life style and the socio economic condition is also very poor.
- Majority (68%) of the respondents are not satisfied with the initiatives taken by the government and NGOs to the welfare of the respondents.

Findings From Chi Square Test

- There is no association between the age of the respondents and the income from the activity involved by them.



- There is an association between the opinions of the respondents regarding the initiatives taken by the government for the betterment of the pickers of waste materials.
- There is an association between the opinions of the respondents regarding the problems from the police during the night time and their age.
- There is an association between the satisfaction of the respondents and their socio economic condition.

Suggestions

- 1 The government should take initiatives to bring betterment to the life of waste material pickers in the study area.
- 2 Illiteracy is the main reason which made the respondents to pick the waste materials on the roadside, hence the authorities concerned if possible, may take initiative to provide adult education.
- 3 The politicians should take initiatives to find alternative way of employment or labour work to the respondents and advice them to involve in any other labour work.
- 4 Educated youth may create awareness to the people involved in picking of waste materials regarding the future development of the wards of the waste pickers.
- 5 It is the responsibility of all the well settled people to take necessary measures as a part of corporate social responsibility to find alternative activities for generating income to the family of waste pickers to lead a normal life like others in the society.

Conclusion

The common problems faced by workers are low wages, poor working conditions, inhumane treatment, and absence of job security etc. issue of racial discrimination has become a disturbing reality for overseas workers who are forced to take menial jobs as domestic helpers and labourers or waste material picking on the roadside. These are the major issues faced by them that will affect the economic, political and cultural factors. Thus there is in need of structural, historical and moral dimension of labour practices in all industrial sectors which may bring the waste pickers to involve themselves in any labour works or any other activities for generating income and lead a peaceful life as like others. Government has more responsibility than others in this regard.

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