

**ACCESSIBILITY AND DISCRIMINATION IN MARKET AND NON-MARKET  
INSTITUTIONS: A STUDY OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS IN ODISHA**

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of the degree of*

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**DECLARATION**

I Bibekananda Suna, hereby declare that the thesis entitled "ACCESSIBILITY AND DISCRIMINATION IN MARKET AND NON-MARKET INSTITUTIONS: A STUDY OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS IN ODISHA" submitted by me for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY is my bonafide work and the same has not been submitted in part or full, for any degree or diploma in this university or any other University.

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## Abbreviations

CL	Casual Labour
DW	Dalit Workers
EPF	Employee Provident Fund
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FHS	Farm Household Size
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC	Higher Caste
HR	Human Resource
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ID	Index of Discrimination
IDF	Index of Form Discrimination
IPD	Index of Provider Discrimination
ISD	Index of Sphere Discrimination
MDMS	Mid Day Meal Scheme
MNC	Multi-National Corporation
MPCE	Monthly Per capita Consumption Expenditure
MS	Manual Scavengers
NAC	Notified Area Council
NDW	Non-Dalit Workers
NMS	Non-Manual Scavengers
NSC	Non-Scheduled Castes

NSS	National Sample Survey
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organizations
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PDS	Public Distribution System
PU	Proportion of Unemployed
RTE	Right to Education
RWS	Regular and Wage Salaried
SC	Scheduled Castes
SE	Self Employed
SKA	Safai Karmachari Andolan
ST	Scheduled Tribes
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
UR	Unemployed Rate
WFPR	Work Force Participation Ration
WPR	Worker Participation Ratio

## *CHAPTER – 1*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Statement of the Research Problem**

India is considered as the largest democracy in the world. The Indian economy has achieved a remarkable growth rate in the first decade of the twenty first century. It has successfully managed to shift from a largely importing country during the initial years of the second half of the twenty century to a self-sufficient and a major exporting country in the recent years. India has become a land of opportunities for Multi-National Companies (MNCs) and foreign institutional investors and it has achieved remarkable progress in terms of modernization and urbanization. Further, the Indian economy has transformed primarily from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy along with the presence of a vibrant e service sector in the current days<sup>1</sup>. The agricultural sector was the major contributor to the In the initial planning period the highest share of Gross Domestic Product in the initial planning period, but at present, the lion’s share of the GDP is coming from service sector followed by secondary sector and the primary sector even though the agricultural sector still remain as the main source of income and employment for large chunk of India’s population. Moreover, in the recent years India has moved towards an economy driven by knowledge, scientific and technological innovation in various fields starting from basic consumer goods to heavy industrial products<sup>2</sup>.

However, even after achieving remarkable success in the field of science and technology and high growth in terms of GDP, there exists a complex set of political, social and economic problems that are still awaiting the attention of this so-called largest democratic and shining India. The so-called largest democracy and shining India has always remained indifferent to such problems rather than trying to resolve them in the

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<sup>1</sup> Joshi, S (2004): “Tertiary Sector-Driven Growth in India”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Sep. 11, pp. 4175-4178

<sup>2</sup> Chandrasekhar, C and Basvarajappa, K.P (2001): “Technological Innovation and Economic Development; Choices and Challenges for India”, *Economic and Political Economy*, August 25, pp. 3238-3245

last 65 year after India's Independence. In that, the age-old caste system and its implications are the deep-seated problems that haunt the Indian society till date.

According to the *Caste System*, previously known as *Chaturvanya*, people in each caste performs a particular kind of labour which is assigned to them since birth irrespective of their interest<sup>3</sup>. Ambedkar in his treatise *Annihilation of Caste* argues that there is no division of labour in India; rather it is division of labourers with watertight compartment<sup>4</sup>. Out of the types of labour stated above, the type of labour (mental labour) performed by the upper strata is highly valued and paid. But, the type of labour (manual and physical labour) performed by the people in the lower ranks of the caste system is mostly unpaid/underpaid and even if they get paid sometime, it will be proportionally very less compared to the physical labour they render in the process of laboring. This is primarily because of the existence of graded inequality within the caste system which regards the work done by the people from the lower strata of the caste system as culturally inferior and without any value and worth, and therefore the people involved in such works are considered to be worthless, valueless, degraded, and stigmatized. Thus, all kind of works and all type of labourers are not equally valued in the Indian caste society.

In the Indian society, the people from lower castes, particularly untouchables and women, do not possess equal status like the people from the other castes. They are denied access to equal opportunities and discriminated on the basis of their ascribed status and their achieved status is not recognized. They are forced to do all kinds of unclean, filthy, degraded, and stigmatized labour since time immemorial. Because of the caste ideology, the people from the Dalit communities are engaged in scavenging and menial work by using just a broom, a tin plate and their bare hands to collect and clean the night soil. Since, the people belong to the untouchable castes primarily do this work, they are called as 'manual scavengers'. In modern and legal terminology, a 'manual scavenger' is defined as "a person engaged or employed for manually cleaning, carrying, disposing of, or otherwise handling in any manner, human excreta in an unsanitary latrine or in an open

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<sup>3</sup> Ambedkar (1916): '*Caste in India; Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*', see BAWS, Vol.1

<sup>4</sup> Ambedkar (1936): '*Annihilation of Caste*', see BAWS, Vol.1

drain or pit into which the human excreta from the insanitary latrines is disposed of, or on a railway track”<sup>5</sup>.

However, it was an assumption that the traditional structure which is based on the inscriptive status and not on the achieved status will dissolve in the process. It was often assumed that the people from lower castes will be freed from their traditional occupation and will enter into modern industrial and formal sector and their stigmatized identity will disappear in the process of modernization, industrialization and urbanization. But, despite the attainment of spectacular growth, high level of industrialization, urbanization and modernization of different sectors, people from lower strata are still disproportionately concentrated in the traditional caste occupations like lather work, cleaning work, manual scavenging and so on. Moreover, even if they try to get rid of these traditional caste occupations, they will have to face multiple kinds of obstacles even in the today’s so-called modern era.

Further, even after relentless struggle by the lower castes, untouchables and women throughout the history and in spite of having various constitutional provisions in place for them, they are compelled through different means to take up the same unseen, filthy, degraded and stigmatized labour of manual scavenging even today. Furthermore, owing to the stigma attached to their work and identity, the same group of people are being denied equal opportunities and discriminated when they get engaged with both the market and non-market institutions. And because of this imposed caste based occupation; they are prone to various kinds of hazardous health problems as well. Even after having stringent laws like *Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines Prohibition Act, 1993* and *The Prohibition of Employment of Manual Scavengers and Rehabilitation Act, 2013* in place, there is an utter lack of political will to implement these laws in letter and spirit. The group based discrimination against the lower castes results in the violation of their basic human rights like right to housing, property, education, health care services, freedom of religion, and right to work and right to choice of work (Thorat, 2002). Due to this deprivation of basic rights, they are not only discriminated by the

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<sup>5</sup> See ‘*The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013*, Govt. of India

dominant social groups but also discriminated by both the market (like employment opportunities in labour market) and the non-market (like access to public policies and programmes) institutions.

## **1.2. Review of Literature**

The term social exclusion has been defined not only as ‘the inability of an individual to participate in the basic political, economic, and social functioning of the society’, but also as ‘the denial of equal access to opportunities imposed by certain groups of society upon others’ (Buvinic, 2005). The above definition implies that social exclusion denies equal access to opportunities to individuals because they belong to a culturally defined groups and that exclusion from equal opportunities is embedded in social relations. The focus on social groups refers that people are excluded because of ascribed rather than achieved features which is beyond individual agency (Thorat, 2010). As Sen defines, social exclusion is of two types. They are ‘unfavorable exclusion’ and ‘unfavorable inclusion’ (Sen, 2000). Unfavorable exclusion is the situation in which people from certain social groups are being kept out from certain opportunities whereas unfavorable inclusion means wherein people from certain groups are being included but with unfavorable terms and conditions. Moreover, the term social exclusion must be differentiated from individual exclusion. In case of social exclusion, all people belonging to a certain socio-cultural groups are excluded from equal access to equal opportunities due to their group identities and not due to their individual features. Similarly, in case of individual exclusion, a person is excluded from certain opportunities due to the individual attributes. This distinction between individual and social exclusion is important for policy prescriptions. It means in case of individual exclusion, pro-poor policies will have to be focused on enhancement of individual capacities whereas in case of social exclusion, the policy focus must be of equal-opportunities like affirmative action policy in India and it cannot be done away with pro-poor policies.

Having defined the concept of social exclusion or unequal accessibility by different groups of people, the term ‘discrimination’ can be defined as complete exclusion or denial of certain social groups like lower castes by higher castes various



services and opportunities. It also refers to selective inclusion but with differential treatment to excluded groups, reflected in differential prices charged or received. Unfavorable inclusion often forced bound by caste obligations and duties reflected, first in overwork, loss of freedom leading to bondage, and attachment, and second, in differential treatment at the place of work. Exclusion in certain categories of jobs and services of the former untouchables or SCs who are involved in so-called ‘unclean or polluting’ occupations such as scavenging, sanitary jobs, and leather processing.

### **1.2.1. Theoretical Overview on Accessibility and Discrimination**

Economic exclusion and discrimination and its causes have been theorized by many people over a period of time. Garry Backer in his seminal work ‘Theory of Discrimination’ (1957) is the first one to theorize the role of institutions (both economic and non-economic) on labour market discrimination. In his theory of discrimination (which is also known as Theory of Taste or Taste for Discrimination) Backer says that people have taste for discrimination because people derive satisfaction from that. Backer in his taste theory would argue that discrimination exists only when imperfect markets exist. So the prescription he suggested is ‘Market Power Hypothesis’ in which he says that there is a need to reduce the imperfect nature of market and promote competitiveness of market to end discrimination or exclusion. In other words, market has the power to end the discrimination of its own. So there is no need of external intervention and thus the theory by Backer suggests that it is a non-intervention policy suggestion to end discrimination (Thorat, 2010).

Another important theory of discrimination developed by Arrow (Deshpande, 2007) is known as Statistical Theory of Discrimination. According to this the employers discriminate because they don’t have sufficient information about employees. For instance, white does not have full information about black that is why white discriminate black in the process of hiring them. Here the discriminator has pre-determined perception of productivity of Black, women, and so lower castes in Indian case. So the notion of prejudices is working here. Arrow in his theory would argue that discrimination is due to

lack of information in the hand of buyer and salers. So the policy suggestion is just to increase the information to end discrimination.

Moreover, Akerlof and Kranton (2010) have given another theory of discrimination which is known as the theory of identity and discrimination. According to this theory, identities in the form of social categories and social norms play the powerful role in discrimination. For example men as a social groups decides the norms that what the social and economic rights of women would be; white as a social groups decides the norms that what the social and economic rights of black would be and so on. This theory of economic discrimination by Akerlof says that economic decision making is done mostly by incorporating identities and norms where social context matters a lot. It further says that in every social context, people have a notion that who they are, how they are and others are supposed to behave in the society and economy which is primarily determined by the societal beliefs and notions.

Economic Theory of Caste Discrimination: Economic theory of discrimination that have been given by people like Akerlof (1976), Scoville (1991), Deepak Lal (1988, 1989), and Ambedkar (1982) are to capture the caste based economic discrimination. Akerlof said there is discrimination in caste system because there is a social norm like social ostracism which is working as an active deterrent even at the cost of low level equilibrium. The fear of being socially and economically boycotted acts as a powerful deterrent to change in the system and so the aspect of economic discrimination is inbuilt in the system of caste. He further says that the decision whether to follow the caste code or not does not result in economic benefits rather results in the stigma of outcaste. So when the punishment of outcaste is predicted to be more than the benefits of economic arbitrage, then the members in the society are bound to follow the caste codes. Similarly Scoville in his theory says that there is discrimination in caste-based society because of the enormous economic costs which restricts any deviation from the caste codes and thus gives a functionalist approach of caste. So because of this functionalist approach, he argues that people in different groups perform their duty for the social stability and maintain maximum possible benefits.

Deepak Lal (Lal, 1989) argues that to meet the labour shortages in a historical point of time, caste system was created. He further says that the heterodox and unorthodox 'surplus-labour model' and 'segmented-market model' cannot explain the functioning of labour market in India. In other words, it is neither classical nor neo-classical assumption of perfectly competitive labour market and perfectly rational individual can give a viable explanation of Indian labour market. So it is Institutional Economics, which is of course the extension of neo-classical economics, can explain better the Indian labour. It means the overall demand and supply framework still can explain the Indian labour, which suggests that for a given supply the effects of an increased demand for labour will be transmitted into rising labour incomes. But this can only be achieved if there is deliberate disequilibrium between supply of labour and demand of labour, which further needs barriers to entry, either natural barriers like geographical barriers to labour mobility or man-made barriers through legal or social restrictions on the entry of competing groups to acquire the necessary skills, or discrimination based on non-economic factors such as race or caste.

However, both Akerlof and Scovill do not talk about the negative aspects of exploitation. Both are trying to generalize the implication of castes as same for every social group within the caste system. Both the theories say that even the lower castes being the follower of caste codes are also deriving a maximum possible benefit which is not true in real sense. It is because without violation of caste codes also the lower castes are systemically prone to different forms of disabilities and so discrimination. So the process of exclusion in the system of caste is beneficial to higher castes and the lower castes are always at the receiving end as Jodhka and Newman (2010) would argue, "The cost of social exclusion is not really so punishing as it is for those at the bottom". Both are trying to analyze the issue of discrimination within the circle of cost and efficiency which may not be the historical reasons and the real motives for the origin and sustenance of caste system. Similarly Deepak Lal somehow justifies caste system as historical invention and necessity and gives a very functional interpretation to that ignores the socio-cultural ill motives behind the creation of the system.

Ambedkar would say that whatever may have been the purpose behind the origin of the caste system, it certainly involved an economic motive of income maximization rather than economic efficiency (Ambedkar, 1936). He further says that caste discrimination exist because there is caste and caste based graded distribution of social, cultural and economic rights created on the basis of norms (identity). Disparities in different spheres of life within caste system are the natural outcome of the caste system due to the graded and unequal distributions of rights as a matter of rule. Ambedkar would argue that caste system would continue to exist as long as the upper castes derive gains in the social, economic, and educational spheres. In other words, the traditional and customary rules governing social and economic relations would cease to exist only when the new rules would yield higher economic and social benefits to Higher Castes and vice-versa (Thorat, 2010). He further says that caste based exclusion and discrimination is not just economic disparities or deprivation. It also involves social indignity and political inequality and so denial of dignity and equal citizenship. Thus, going beyond the framework of ‘cost and efficiency’, he further says that a change in the ideas about human rights and justice according to the modern value system has of course a strong power to induce changes in the social relations and hence has the power to minimize discrimination gradually if not to end discrimination all of a sudden.

### **1.2.2. Empirical Work on Exclusion and Discrimination**

A brief idea and over view of empirical works on exclusion and discrimination is equally important to understand the changes as well as continuity in the nature of caste system and so in the caste-based discrimination in Indian society. Because it can direct us to see the sectors/spheres where caste system still operates in its old fashion and the sectors where it is gradually dissolving. These insights from empirical findings will help us to understand the dynamics of change in the caste system which in turn helps us to devise methods to bring changes in those spheres where we still find to see the continuity of older form of caste discrimination. Therefore this section of the present chapter will outline some of the empirical studies not only to see the limitations of the already conducted empirical inquiry but also will try to see the need of empirical investigation where no proper attention has been paid so far. Moreover, the review of empirical

literature will be primarily done of the modern and urban spheres/areas where it is often claimed and assumed that 'caste does not matter at all' instead of the rural areas where the practice of caste-based discrimination is explicit which does not require empirical investigation to believe.

A study by Thorat and Attewell (2010) as 'The Legacy of Social Exclusion: A Correspondence Study of Job Discrimination in India's Urban Private Setor' suggests that social exclusion is not just a residue of the past clinging to the margins of the Indian economy, nor is limited to the people of little education. Rather it appears that caste based discrimination and the social exclusion of Dalits and Muslims occur in private enterprises even in the most dynamic modern sector of the Indian economy. The study is based on the field experiment conducted by sending fictitious resumes to different private sector firms for the job application advertised in different national English newspapers in between October 2005 to November 2006. The applications were send to private firms just by changing the surnames but keeping educational qualification same for both set of applications. The findings from the field experiments shows that on an average college-educated lower-caste and Muslim job applicants equivalent to higher castes with HC surnames are more likely to be called for the interview than with their own caste surnames. So the only aspect of family background that was communicated in these applications was the applicant's surname which was enough to generate a different set of response and so to invite caste based discrimination even in the urban labour market.

Similarly Jodhka and Newman (2010) from a study based on a sample of 25 human resources (HR) managers in farms based in New Delhi argue that the claim to merit based recruitment by the private urban firms is nothing but 'caste blind' orientation by them because merit is not determined on the basis of the attributes of the applicant itself rather determined based on the family background, educated parents, working people at family and preference from urban areas. So merit is distributed by caste, region, and necessary individual attributes matters secondary. The study also questions the very process of production and construction of merit in which it implies that even education can hardly be a function of individual talent alone rather combination of long term investment. Authors further say that production of merit is itself a highly unequal business because

merit is often linked with cultural capital which generally eliminates Dalits from the competition. So finally they suggest in the study that without equal playing field, there can be no real meaning to meritocracy.

Deshpande and Newman (2010) in their study ‘Caste and Post-university Employment Expectations, based on a longitudinal sample survey of 173 students who were completing postgraduate degrees from three universities in Delhi explain that contrary to the charges of reverse discrimination with the affirmative action to the non-beneficiaries, the findings suggests that non-Dalit students do not face disadvantages due to reservation policy in India and the opposition to the affirmative action policy is baseless. Moreover, the study has empirically proved that social and cultural capital has played significant role for the upper castes in the urban, formal sector labour markets. The affirmative action policy is not a big issue for the non-Dalits precisely due to shrinking public sectors and expansion of urban private markets due to liberalization and globalizations in the contemporary in which they have a better chance to get jobs easily due to their social and cultural capital. Since Dalits are deprived from both social and cultural capital, Dalits are severely affected in the urban private settings. Therefore, the study suggests that in a situation of shrinking public sectors and expanding private sectors, extension of reservation policy to private sectors is the only way to check the disadvantages to the Dalits. It is because urban formal private sector is less transparent than it appears at first sight and the scope of employment opportunities are mostly decided by the social and cultural capital instead of individual attributes.

The study titled ‘Wages and Job Discrimination in the Indian Urban Labour Market’, by Madheswaran and Attewell (2010) on the urban regular/salaried sector workers aged between 15 and 65 years old based on the data of all-India household survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization says that there is not only gross earning differences between SC/ST on the one hand and Non-SC/ST on the other hand within a given occupation but also there is job discrimination which implies that there is unequal access to certain occupations. It says that occupational discrimination is more severe than wage discrimination. The empirical findings in the study also show that along with unequal human capital endowments, the earning differences are due to

discrimination at the market places. Finally, the study suggests that along with the need of the expansion of reservation policy to the private sector, there is need for an equal employment opportunity act to give a legal protection against discrimination.

The theoretical discussion and field based research in a book by Aseem Prakash (2015) says that market outcomes in India are neither governed by the forces of demand and supply nor structured by formal institutions. Market outcomes are shaped by existing social institutions that form India's social structure of accumulation. The Dalit entrepreneurs choose to enter the market because of its normative promise of emancipation. Market economy for Dalit entrepreneurs is both flexible and rigid for them. It is flexible in the sense that the Dalit entrepreneurs are allowed to enter into the market in India, as long as it is not going to affect the interest of the upper caste players in the market. The inclusion of a lower castes as suppose labour contractor are only as a junior partner is taken to indicate the accommodative character of the market-based system of accumulation. Moreover, it is rigid in the sense that the dominant market players (upper castes) would always try to maintain status quo which implies that Dalits perceive that institutionalized attempts are made by the upper-castes to block them from staking accumulation claims in the market.

When Dalits are trying to enter the market as entrepreneur, the upper caste counterparts are creating all possible constraints to stop and deprive them from the process of capital accumulation. Even if they are allowed to invest, they have to face multiple forms of unfavorable conditions. For example, as someone during survey said "when I get credit from market, I am given credit for only 7 days, whereas others get credit for 14 days. And when I default, I have to pay an interest of 6 percent". Social networks play an important role in command and control over resources. Market players turn towards network for help or support during their operation in the market: such as – getting business information for newer businesses, getting more business, fulfilling credit needs, arranging labour supply, influencing price, influencing regulatory institutions. It is done through interpersonal relationships that operate outside the regulatory framework of the state. The respondents in the study say, networks find their basis in religion, caste, family and kinship ties, regional identity, and class. Dalit entrepreneurs perceived that

such networks are not merely economic interest groups (market players with common economic interests by virtue of common trade or profession), but are configured on the basis of one (caste), or more than one social identity. Consequently, they also feel that this lack prevents them from competing on equal terms with their upper-caste business peers. These kinds of social networks are seen as part of an institutionalized attempt to mitigate competition from relatively new entrants. Dalit Petty Business persons do face discrimination in credit market as well. The narratives from the dalit respondents say that for being a low caste person applicant, they were denied credit from both formal and informal sources of credit. A respondent says that “A poor person can still survive with dignity, but Chamars are always disrespected and ridiculed.

Moreover, unequal access to opportunities and discrimination is not just confined in the so-called urban market institutions but also equally observed again in unexpected spheres like non-market institutions. Study by Borooah (2010) suggests that in cases like health outcomes, the reasons cannot be attributed always to the life style and consumption behavior of the individual per se. He says there is also a need to study the social environment in which that individuals resides which has also equally responsible for different health outcomes. In his study author says that social positioning of the people like being a Tribal, Dalit, or Muslims in India, seriously impaired the capabilities of the individuals to function properly in the society. It means the risk of suffering premature death, poor health, and a lack of treatment is substantially higher among the lower castes than it is for the higher caste people.

Nambissan (2010) in her study ‘Exclusion and Discrimination’ says that though there is a growing aspiration for education among the lower caste people, due to rapid breakdown of public education system and growing privatization of private education system, they are deprived and excluded from accessing quality education which needs serious attention of policy makers. Similarly Thorat and Lee (2010) in their study of food security schemes like MDMS (Mid Day Meal Scheme) and PDS (Public Distribution System) based on a sample survey of 531 villages across five states observe that the rate of discrimination was consistently lower when cook and organizer of MDMS was Dalit



compared to the non-Dalit cook and organizer. Similarly, PDS dealership and shop held by Dalits corresponded with low discrimination and vice-versa.

Madheswaran and Attewell (2007) have examined caste Discrimination in the Indian Urban Labour Market: using evidence From the National Sample Survey data to study the wage gap between higher castes and the scheduled castes/tribes in the regular salaried urban labour market. They have estimate functions shows that ‘the rate of return of education for SC/ST is considerable lowers then for NSC. Decomposition analysis also showed the a majority share of the earnings differential between NSCs and SC/STs is due to differences in human capital endowments, but wile about 15 percent is due also to discrimination in the marketplace. It also reveals that occupational discrimination is more pronounced than wage discrimination, employment discrimination is substantial, especially in the private sector, and that discrimination occurs to a large extent in unequal access to jobs. An equal employment opportunity act would provide legal protection against discrimination in hiring, and a reservation system with a certain fixed share in certain categories of jobs would ensure the fair participation of marginalized groups in industrial/tertiary private sector employment.

Rao (2017) attempts to understand caste discrimination and differences in agricultural production process in his article ‘Caste Discrimination and Agricultural Performance in India’. In this article he analyzes various aspects of agriculture by using unit-level data from the Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households, NSSO 70<sup>th</sup> Round. In this article he also argues that “there is a clear difference in lands, crop yield rates and agricultural land productivity between caste groups in India. FHS of socially marginalized castes viz., SC, STs and OBCs have relatively less crop yields and land productivity than FHS of socially privileged group (others) and it occurs across all farm-size class holdings. The cost of cultivation per hectare of land, or the intensity of input use, is low among the socially marginalized groups. The proportion of leased-in land is relatively more among GHS of the SC group, which places numerous limitations on farmers, including excluding them from subsidized farm provision such as institutional credit, seeds, fertilizer, machinery, and so on. The empirical result proves that there is discrimination and differences in the performance of Indian agriculture both

in input and output, with FHS from socially marginalized castes at a disadvantage. The farm households of SCs, STs and OBCs across farm-size classes are behind others in land, crop yield rates, and land productivity values.”

### **1.2.3. Empirical Work on Manual Scavenger**

A *case study* by Singh (2009) deals the manual scavenging as a form of caste and occupation based social exclusion. Explaining the concept of social exclusion he says that in India social exclusion revolves around some sections of population like Dalits, adivasis, women and minorities. It is because they are deprived of equal access to social and economic opportunities because of their group identities. He argues that the practice of manual scavenging started particularly during British rule in India when municipalities were constituted. After the invention of flush type toilets, dry toilets disappeared from the western world, but this inhuman practice continues in India even today despite it is banned legally. Through field work he analyses the demographic features, causes and consequences of manual scavenging in Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh. His findings show that scavenging system was closely associated with the lower castes and it was Mehtar, Dalit caste in Uttar Pradesh. Their daily income varies from Rs 20 to Rs 50. Since this was very meager for their household basic expenditure, many were working indifferent houses. The interesting finding in the study says that though some tried to challenge their social and economic status by changing their jobs, they again returned to their original profession because of social boycott and the lack of support from both private and governmental agencies. The study concludes that without any help from state, civil society, the manual scavengers are totally conditioned to remain satisfied with their present life.

Patel in his paper *Manual Scavenging* (2014) argues that manual scavenging in India is one of the darkest blots on India’s development. He also says, it is a matter of national shame that thousands of scavengers’ families still live a socially degraded and inhuman life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In his study he shows that manual scavenging has its roots in the social ills emanating from the centuries old caste system. Because of the tag as ‘manual scavengers’ other people do not hire them for any other jobs and thus they

face perpetual discrimination. The indifferent attitude of the law enforcing agency has again multiplied their condition of exclusion, and degradation. He further says that manual scavengers should not be looked just as sanitary workers; rather it should be looked as the issue of violation of human dignity. Commenting on the *Swachha Bharat* campaign he says that the campaign should focus on human dignity rather than merely on sanitation issues. The paper also reviews the performance of laws for the prohibition of manual scavenging in India and found huge discrepancy between the welfare schemes and its implementation.

A study by Jodhka (2015) in rural Punjab shows that though the nature of association between caste and occupation is gradually changing in various occupations, unclean occupations like manual scavenging are still being practiced and done by the same caste people who used to do the same in the past. As far as the existence of caste-based occupation in today's time is concerned, 'unclean occupation' done by lower caste people still marks the strongest example even today. However in his study he opines that there is a small departure compared to past. It means in scavenging work the relational framework is no longer the old system of *jajmani*. Rather this cleaning of drains and toilets or sweeping of houses and streets are mostly done on purely commercial and formalized basis.

A study by Salve and et al., (2017) based on 360 safai karmacharis employed in Bombay Municipality Corporation suggests that the sanitary work is the burning evident for the urban elites that caste still matters even in the metropolitan cities like Mumbai. Through a detailed study, the authors of the article say that state policies on sanitary work has reinforced the institutionalization of caste-based occupations in the modern era instead of demolishing it. In other words, the study says that though traditional components like caste, alcoholism, health, and debt are still responsible factors for the sustenance of the caste-based occupations like manual scavenging, government policies and programmes have helped for it more. Apart from government policies, perception about the work and worker is also another important factor to be considered to understand the existence nature of manual scavenging in India. It is because more than social perception that the unclean occupations should be done by lower caste people, the lower

caste people themselves have internalized the work as their own work which is equally responsible for the strong association between caste and occupation even today.

Ramanujam (2016) in her study 'Exclusion in Education amongst children from household engaged in unclean occupation' in two cities of Haryana: Panipat and Faridabad states that the households engaged in "unclean occupation" are regarded as impure and their children are barred from the schooling system. The study reveals as to how the social and economic disadvantages of the children from 'unclean occupation' households affect their access to school, enrolment, persistence rates in school and learning outcomes. The prevailing inequalities got accentuated with the intervention of private schools, an offshoot of the neo-liberal economy. They replaced government schools that were underperforming, giving impetus to higher educational achievement. The household engaged in 'unclean occupation' were lured into it, though it did not improve the educational status of the children since the educational system continues to perpetuate the culture of 'exclusion and discrimination' based on caste as well as occupation. The RTE indeed improved the enrolment rate but was unable to get a foothold over school leavers or improve transition. According to statistics on school education the dropout rate in 2007-08 for Scheduled Caste children was 31 percent at primary, 52.47 per cent at upper primary and 63.43 per cent at secondary level. For children from 'unclean occupation' households, exclusion associated with their poverty, caste, occupation is exacerbated by the educational system. The attitude and discriminatory class room practices of the teachers, and their perception that these children have poor cognitive skills force children belonging to 'unclean occupation' to discontinue their education. In addition, lack of encouraging environment at home and outside, carefree socialization, lack of quality education and facilities at school, as well as lack of additional academic support in the school severely affect their learning outcomes. The school education has failed to adequately address issues relating to self-worth, dignity and livelihoods and therefore it results in undermining student's confidence in education as a vehicle for social mobility and change. No wonder, the educational status of the children from 'unclean occupation' household remains poor with a large number of children not moving beyond middle primary levels. Their learning outcome is also severely limited due to all the above mentioned shortcomings. The lower educational

levels of the children from household engaged in ‘unclean occupation’ put serious limitations on the future prospects for occupational mobility. Consequently, they tend to reproduce parental patterns of illiteracy and end up in early entry into their traditional works. The hereditary occupation and poverty has been a fundamental cause of exclusion and their continuation and poverty has been seminal in perpetuating this exclusion. Their continuation in the ascribed occupation in the present time will further marginalize and transmit poverty as well as the accompanied disadvantages amongst the future generation.

Diane Coffey, et al (2017) has conducted a study title “Understanding Open Defecation in Rural India: Untouchability, Pollution, and Latrine Pits”. The study has tried to understand as to why India has such an exceptional rate of open defecation. They draw on four data sources: (i) nationally representatives statistics on sanitation and human development from countries around the world; (ii) new semi-structured qualitative interviews from India and Nepali terai; (iii) quantitative survey data of 3,200 households in five states in North India; and (iv) several years of fieldwork in villages in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. They found that ‘widespread open defecation in rural India is not attributable to relative material or educational deprivation, but rather to beliefs, values and norms about purity, pollution, caste, and untouchability that cause people to reject affordable latrines. The study finds that many people consider having and using a pit latrine ritually impure and also polluting. Open defecation, in contrast, is seen as promoting purity and strength, particularly by men, who typically decide how money has to be spent in rural households. Perhaps the most important barrier to the adoption of affordable latrine in rural India is the unique history of untouchability and its continuing practice even today. The people in rural areas equate manual pit emptying with scavenging and other degrading forms of labour which are traditionally done by Dalits. Because of this, non-Dalits refuse to empty their own latrine pits. Dalits, who were traditionally compelled by violence and poverty to do similar works, increasingly seek alternatives to the kind of physically and ritually dirty jobs that have been used, for generations, to justify their oppression, exclusion, and humiliation in the society.

Subhas Gatade (2015) in his article “Silencing Caste, Sanitizing Oppression Understanding Swachh Bharat Abhiyan” reveals that the Hindu notion of purity and pollution is inextricably linked with the caste system and it is the practice of untouchability which underlies the unsanitary practices in India society. These beliefs perpetuate the oppression of the “polluted castes”, who are forced to undertake manual scavenging, unclogging manholes and cleaning of other people’s filth. The availability of cheap Dalit labour to do these dehumanizing jobs can be cited as one of the reasons to understand as to why development of toilet facilities and a modern garbage and sewerage management system have been neglected so far. As long as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan attempts to delink the relationship between caste and sanitation, its lofty goal of cleaning India will remain unachievable illusion.

Bathran (2016) discussion in his paper ‘The Many Omissions of a Concept: Discrimination amongst Scheduled Caste’ that caste are caught in the binaries of Scheduled Castes and the ‘General Category’. These binaries see the lower castes as a monolith and leave little space for discussing discrimination among such castes. The nomenclature “Dalit”, its revolutionary impulse notwithstanding, does not help address the issue either. The homogenizing claims of the category Dalit have failed to address the issue of discrimination within Dalits. A major omission pertains to scavenging work.

Aery (2009) in his article ‘Enforcing Human Right of India’s Manual Scavengers’ has tried to analyze manual scavenging in the context of India’s human rights obligations. In his article, he states that ‘throughout India, manual scavengers are responsible for collecting and disposing of human filth from dry latrines. Scavengers are subject to gross violation of human dignity, extreme health risk, and social discrimination that ensure a cycle of poverty extending for generation. Manual scavenging is not a form of employment; it is a form of bondage that oppresses Dalit women disproportionately. Despite India’s ratification of important human rights treaties, manual scavenging continues to tarnish the lives of many Dalit communities in India. While the government of India has indeed neglected its human rights obligations, many of the human rights abuses can also be attributed to the State and the local authorities. The perpetual construction of dry latrines and the hiring of manual scavengers from Dalit communities

result in the violation of the rights of the human dignity, work, remuneration, health, and freedom from both gender-based and caste-based discrimination.

Tiwari (2008) in his study ‘Occupational health hazards in sewage and sanitary workers’ argues that “apart from the social atrocities that this sanitary workers face, they are exposed to certain health problems by virtue of their occupation. These health hazards include exposure to harmful gases such as methane and hydrogen sulfide, cardiovascular degeneration, musculoskeletal disorders like osteoarthric changes and intervertebral disc herniation, infections like hepatitis, leptospirosis and helicobacter, skin problems, respiratory system problems and altered pulmonary function parameters.”

Baruah (2014) in his article entitle “The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013: A Review”, attempts to trace out the brief history of the practice of manual scavenging in India as well as the constitutional commitments of the government. It also looks at the measures taken up by the successive governments to improve the conditions of this class of people. He argues that “Manual scavenging is a caste-based and the hereditary occupation for Dalit (Untouchables), which is predominantly linked with forced labour or slavery. The prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Bill, 2012 that has become an Act on 19 September 2013 relates to the eradication of employment of the ex-untouchables in manual scavenging in India. In Indian society, the problem of untouchability can be traced to approximately to two thousand years ago and it is based on a strictly defined division of labour in a hierarchical manner. The origin of untouchability lies in the restrictions imposed on the lives of the depressed classes, which comprise the untouchables among other primitive and backward classes in various forms. The most obnoxious and shameful aspect of untouchability was that the touch or even the shadow, sight, spit or for that matter the footprints of the untouchables were considered unclean by the upper caste people. The key reason for considering this class of people as untouchables originates from their vexatious and unclean professions such as scavenging, mending of shoes, cleaning of roads, septic tanks, sewers, hair cutting, and so on.

### **1.3. Research Gap**

So far we can find two broad streams of thoughts among the Academia as far as the project of annihilation of group based discrimination is concerned. One group of Dalit academia started by Thorat is of the opinion that State must play an active role if not for total annihilation of caste-based discrimination but for the minimization of role of ascribed group identities in different spheres of life in the society. This group is of this opinion that even the so-called market economy and policies are prone to identity based discrimination and so market forces are not working secularly as expected as a matter of principle. Rather most of the market outcomes are driven by not economic motivations but by social motivations. Therefore in the era of increasing privatization, this school of thought suggests that to minimize discrimination and to increase access to the opportunities of the different socially excluded groups, affirmative action must be extended to private sector along with pro-poor policies. The group further suggests that state must play a pro-active role in this regard. The other school of thought is of this opinion that state is less effective to contribute to the end discrimination based on caste, gender, religion and so on. Through different empirical evidence the school tries to establish that government policies and programmes have contributed less to end discrimination rather it has sustained discrimination. Because during 1950s to 1990s, all the policies were caste-blind (Jaffrelot, 2006; Mosse, 2018) and post 1990s with the implementation of market reforms has shown some good results. So market economy is the best way to dissolve caste (Prasad, 2008). State has very limited role to play. So we need to rely on market for the annihilation of caste. So the study on caste-based exclusion and discrimination has no single antidote to the problem. There are two broad ideas of solutions which needs further empirical study to understand the role of both market and state towards a casteless society.



#### **1.4. Research Questions**

Based on the insights gained from the literature, this study attempts to explore the following questions:

- How do the Dalits in general and manual scavengers in particular interact with different market and non-market institutions?
- Do the manual scavengers face discrimination and exclusion in the process of interaction with both the market and the non-market institutions?
- What are the major reasons behind the exclusion and discrimination faced by the manual scavengers?
- How are the government schemes helping the manual scavengers to get rid of exclusion and discrimination?
- What are the normative perceptions about the manual scavenging work and the scavengers?

#### **1.5. Research Objectives**

More specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- I. To analyse the occupational pattern and discrimination among the SCs and the Non-SCs.
- II. To analyse the differential access to urban labour market by different social groups.
- III. To examine wage discrimination, discrimination in working conditions and treatment at work place among Dalit in general and manual scavengers in particular.
- IV. To study the differential access to urban capital market by different social groups.
- V. To analyse the major determinants of access to better paid jobs for Dalits and others.
- VI. To study the normative perception about the scavenging profession and scavengers.

## **1.6. Database and Sampling Framework**

The study will be based on both the primary and the secondary sources. The study will also be relying on secondary sources data such as unit level data from 61st, 66th and 68th round (61st, 2004-05; 66th, 2009-10; 68th 2011-12) of NSS; the Primary census Abstract, Government of India; Economic Survey various years; and others.

The scope of the study will be confined to four different groups of population in Odisha. They are;

- a. The people who are doing manual scavenging,
- b. Who have left manual scavenging by now,
- c. Dalit main workers who never did manual scavenging, and
- d. Non-Dalit Workers in general.

The present study will be a household sample survey of around 400 households from two selected districts in Odisha and the sample districts will be selected by employing the multi-stage random sampling method. In the first stage, two districts will be chosen, one from the South-Western region and one will be from the Eastern region in order to see the relative status (in terms of accessibility and discrimination in market and non-market institutions) of Dalits in general and manual scavengers in particular in both the regions. Moreover, those two districts will be selected, whose average urban population is higher. So according to the population census, 2011, the two districts, Sambalpur from the South-Western Odisha and Khorda from the Eastern Odisha are selected as sample districts. Similarly, in the second stage, two cities from each district will be selected according to the highest percentage of urban population. From each city, few wards will be selected based on cluster sampling according to dalit and non-dalit population. Moreover, from each selected Dalit and non-Dalit wards, sample respondents will be selected based on random sampling. Therefore, ultimately the study will try to select 50 respondents from each city.

### **Sample of Urban Respondents**

First Stage: Total Number of Districts: 2 (Khordha, Sambalpur)

Second Stage: Total number of cities:  $2*2=4$

Third Stage: Wards will be selected based on cluster sampling

Fourth Stage: From each cities 25 Samples will be selected for each group of population under study

Fifth Stage: So based on random sampling, total samples would be:  $4*100 = 400$

The study is mostly based on primary survey. Apart from collecting quantitative information from each respondent with the help of a pre-tested questionnaire, the study also utilizes focused group discussions (FGDs) of both scavengers and non-scavengers in equal proportion in order to analyse the aspect of stigma associated with the work of manual scavenging as well as the scavengers. A Mixed method approach was considered suitable for the study as it allows the perceptions of the marginalized and excluded sections of workers to be incorporated to the understanding of manual scavenging in neo-liberal India.

**Table-1.1: Distribution of Urban Population in Odisha**

DISTRICTS	Urban_P	P_SC	P_ST	SC_MW	ST_MW	MAIN_MW
Bargarh	10.13	20.17	18.98	5.62	5.27	10.29
Jharsuguda	39.89	18.05	30.5	4.45	8.20	3.63
Sambalpur	35.25	18.43	34.12	5.33	9.88	7.02
Debagarh	7.16	16.67	35.33	3.91	7.47	7.83
Sundargarh	29.59	9.16	50.75	2.19	10.65	2.83
Kendujhar	14.04	11.62	45.45	2.51	9.38	4.70
Mayurbhanj	7.65	7.33	58.72	1.48	10.79	5.77
Baleshwar	10.91	20.62	11.88	4.64	3.05	7.14
Bhadrak	12.33	22.23	2.02	4.03	0.45	5.00
Kendrapara	5.79	21.51	0.66	3.99	0.13	4.87
Jagatsinghapur	10.20	21.83	0.69	4.79	0.17	4.93
Cuttack	28.04	19.00	3.57	4.30	0.88	5.05
Jajapur	7.39	23.72	8.29	4.39	1.64	5.81
Dhenkanal	9.85	19.62	13.59	3.95	2.71	5.60
Anugul	16.21	18.81	14.10	3.83	2.93	4.51
Nayagarh	8.28	14.17	6.10	2.91	1.30	6.15
Khordha	48.15	13.21	5.11	3.32	1.28	2.85
Puri	15.59	19.14	0.36	4.48	0.09	4.68
Ganjam	21.76	19.50	3.37	4.55	0.76	5.24
Gajapati	12.22	6.78	54.29	2.00	14.54	11.91
Kandhamal	9.85	15.76	53.58	3.05	10.89	5.84
Baudh	4.62	23.79	12.55	5.69	3.00	7.99
Subarnapur	8.18	25.6	9.37	5.89	2.27	8.84
Balangir	11.96	17.88	21.05	3.50	4.28	6.54
Nuapada	5.57	13.46	33.80	2.74	7.27	6.08
Kalahandi	7.73	18.17	28.50	3.51	5.86	9.12
Rayagada	15.18	14.41	55.99	2.86	11.44	6.93
Nabarangapur	7.17	14.53	55.79	2.95	11.31	5.92
Koraput	16.39	14.25	50.56	3.6	12.72	6.46
Malkangiri	8.07	22.55	57.83	5.67	15.59	3.90
ODISHA	16.68	17.13	22.85	3.78	5.02	5.77

*Source: Population Census of India, 2011*

### **1.7. Introduction to the Study Area (Sambalpur and Khordha Districts in Odisha)**

The primary survey of the current research is based on two districts of Odisha. Manual scavenging being predominantly related to the sanitation system in urban areas, two districts having the highest level of urbanization have been chosen for field work. Accordingly, Sambalpur from the Western Odisha and Khordha from the Eastern Odisha have been chosen since these regions have the highest percentage of urbanization in the respective areas of the state. Two districts from two different parts of Odisha have been chosen to understand the impact of urbanization on sanitation and its relation with the practice of manual scavenging across the state in general and in western and eastern part of the state in particular which are often projected as backward and developed region respectively in the state.

#### **Sambalpur District**

Historically, Sambalpur district was part of South Kosala. Before the British, the region was ruled by various empires like Kharbela, Chauhan, Maratha and so on from time to time. In the year 1803, the British occupied Odisha. And finally Sambalpur came under the British rule in 1817 after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Maratha War. During the rebellion of 1857, Sambalpur exerted strong resistance against the British under the veteran leader Surendra Sai. Although the rebellion was suppressed in all parts of India by 1858, Surendra Sai with the help of his associates continued fighting against the British till 1864. The administration of Sambalpur was transferred to Odisha division in 1905 from the commissioner of central provinces. And when the Odisha province was formed in the year 1936, Sambalpur was recognized as a district and that status continued even after India's Independence.

Currently, Sambalpur is situated in western part of Odisha. It is surrounded by Sundargarh district in north, Anugul and Subarnapur in south, Deogarh in the east and Bargarh and Jharsuguda in the west. Sambalpur district was divided into four separate districts in the year 1993 and they are Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, and Sambalpur. Sambalpur is the 1<sup>st</sup> urbanized district in the western Odisha and 4<sup>th</sup> urbanized district in the whole state with around 25.59 percent of its population living in the urban areas. It

has five statutory towns and one census town. Similar to the overall picture of the state, the Scheduled castes (18.43 percent) and the Scheduled Tribes (34.12) population together constitute more than 50 percent of the total population in the district.

Official sources of the district like the Gazetteer accounts the role Caste system as an important factor in the socio-economic life of the district. This official source defends castes as peaceful non-antagonistic social groups. It also says that castes through division of labour maintain the plural nature of village society. Though presently population enumeration is not being done based on their actual caste name in the society, all castes are clubbed into four different groups as – SCs, STs, OBCs and Forward Castes, which implicitly implies their respective social positions in the society. Of the total ninety-five sub castes categories of SC population living in the state, some of well-known SC sub-castes in the districts are: Pana, Dhoba, Adi Andhra, Audhelia, Bari, Burud, Bauri, Bhoi, Chamar, Chamara, Satnami, Dhanwar, Ghasi, Dom, Dombo, Ghasia, Ghusuria etc. *Ghasia* is the manual scavenging caste in some areas of the state and they are known as the same in the Sambalpur district as well. They are also known as drum beaters. They are mostly found in all the blocks and urban areas of the district. They are divided into a number of sub-castes. They are mostly concentrated in the slum areas of the town. Being known as sweepers in the town, some of them work as sweepers under municipalities and some of them work as private sweepers and cleaners in apartments and malls in the town.

### **Khordha District**

Khordha as a district came into existence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1993 by separating from the earlier Puri district when Puri was divided into 3 districts – Puri, Khordha, and Nayagarh. Historically, Khordha was the last kingdom to be conquered by the British in 1803. Khordha has been ruled by various rulers and dynasties over a period of time like the Nanda dynasty, Mourya dynasty, Kharavelas, Bhoi dynasty, Muslim rule, Maratha rule and then finally came under the British rule. But it was not so easy for the British to occupy places like Khordha. Apart from its contribution to national freedom struggle, people of Khordha have also locally fought and revolted against the British occupation and those revolts are known as the Revolt against the British under the leadership of Jai

Rajguru, Paik Rebellion, and the Tapang Rebellion in the history of Odisha. But all these revolt and rebellion groups were gradually decimated by the British using their strong military power and then ultimately Khordha came under the occupation of the British. Under the British rule, Khordha region became part of the Puri district in the year 1829 and this was the case till 1993, when the Khordha was made a separate district.

Khordha became the nerve center of Odisha when the capital of Odisha was shifted from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar formally on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1948. Since then the district has pioneered socio-political and cultural development in the state. Khordha is the 25<sup>th</sup> district in terms of size and 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of population. Khordha is the 1<sup>st</sup> urbanized district in the state with 48.16 percent of its population living in urban areas. It has 5 statutory towns and 8 census towns. According to population census 2011, the total population of the district has increased to 2,251,673 from 1,877,395 compared to the previous census 2001. The decadal growth rate of population in the district between 2001 and 2011 has been 19.94 percent as compared to 24.99 percent in the previous decade. Out of the total population, the district has 13.21(2,97,472) percent SC population and 5.11 (1,15,051) percent ST population as per the latest census survey. Chilika block is the highest SC populated block in the district having 30,280 SC populations. Likewise, Bolagad block has the least SC population in the district, that is, 10,199. Similarly, the Begunia block has the highest ST population concentration (14,010) and Balipantha is the least ST populated (89) district. The present Khordha area was once heavily populated by the Savaras, who are still found in some pockets of the district.

Caste plays an important role in the socio-economic life of the district. However, since 1951, no enumeration with regard to different castes and sub-castes has been made in the census. In general, the SCs constitute around 13.21 percent of the total population of the district as per 2011 census. There are total ninety-five sub castes categories of SC population found in the state. Some of the sub caste categories of SCs found in the districts are: Pana, Dhoba, Kandara, Hadi, Ghasi, Bariki, Ghamar, Dom, Siyal, Kela, Tiar, Gonda, Bhoi, Dewar etc. *Hadis* are the manual scavenging castes in some areas of the state and they are known as the same in Khordha district as well. They are also known as drum beaters. They are mostly found in all the blocks and urban areas of the

district. They are divided into a number of sub-castes. The Mehntar-Hadi sub caste alone acts as sweepers. They are mostly concentrated in the slum areas of the town. Being known as sweepers in the town, some of them work as sweepers under municipalities and some of them work as private sweepers and cleaners in apartments and malls in the town.

### **1.8. Methodology**

There are broadly three different approaches to study and quantify labour market discrimination in terms of wages and occupational attainment. One is single equation technique (also known as the ‘Wage Gap’ technique) in which it involves regressing earnings on the characteristics of all workers including caste as one non-economic regressor. It is done with the standard wage equation with addition of a dummy variable to capture group identity. So  $Wage = f(\text{age, education, sector of occupation, rural, urban, dummy})$ . In the model of regression, if the group dummy turns out to be significant in the presence of all the explanatory variables, we can conclude that dummy matters a lot after controlling for all other wage earning characteristics.

Still this method is not sufficient to establish discrimination because the equation assumes that the wage structure of groups is the same. Except for dummy, all other characteristics have the same coefficient. It means the returns to characteristics such as experience, skill, education etc., are the same for two groups (SC/Non-SC). However, this technique is often and likely to give biased results because this model assumes that the wage structure is same for both male and female, black and white, and similarly for both SCs and Non-SCs. Moreover, this technique also assumes other explanatory variables such as education and experience to be same for both male and female and so on.

So, it is necessary to separate the effect of the differential educational or skill level from discriminatory component. In other words there is need to separate for example the wage gap between male and female due to ‘endowment component’ and ‘coefficient’ component. This is done by Blinder and Oaxaca with an outlined econometric methodology by separating the effect of the endowment component in the wage gap from the discriminatory component. This is known as Blinder-Oaxaca (1973)



decomposition method. This method involves explaining the wage earned by a standard wage equation regression, where regression is done for each of the groups – men and women, blacks and whites, SCs and Non-SCs. Then the regression coefficient from, say, the white equation are substituted in the estimated black equation to yield the wages that black would have earned if they had been treated as an member of while community. The discrimination between this wage and the wage that black receive is the measure of discrimination.

Another most important approach to measure discrimination is the ‘expanded approach’ developed by Brown et al., (1980) which incorporates occupational distribution in the earnings estimation. This method helps us to measure both wage discrimination and job discrimination. The present study will be using both ‘Decomposition’ approach and ‘Expanded’ approach to study accessibility and discrimination in urban labour market.

The decomposition enables the separation of wage differentials into one part that can be explained by the differences in individual characteristics and another part that can't be explained by differences in individual characteristics. So the gross wage difference can be defined as:

$$G = \frac{W_{nms} - W_{ms}}{W_{ms}} = \frac{W_{nms}}{W_{ms}} - \frac{W_{ms}}{W_{ms}} = \frac{W_{nms}}{W_{ms}} - 1 \quad \text{----- (i)}$$

Where, G- Gross wage differential due to 'labour market discrimination i.e., caste.

$W_{nms}$ - Wages for non-manual scavenging groups.

$W_{ms}$ - Wages for manual scavenging groups.

Suppose there is no labour market discrimination or in the absence of labour market discrimination the Non-MSs and MSs wage differential would occur due to 'pure productivity differences' i.e., due to differences in individual skill and efficiency. So the gross wage different emerge due to productivity differences, but here no any market discrimination exists.

$$Q = \frac{W^{\circ}nms - W^{\circ}ms}{W^{\circ}ms} \Rightarrow \frac{W^{\circ}mns}{W^{\circ}ms} - \frac{W^{\circ}ms}{W^{\circ}ms} \Rightarrow \frac{W^{\circ}nms}{W^{\circ}ms} - 1 \quad \text{----- (ii)}$$

Where, Q- Gross wage differential due to 'productive differences i.e., lower skilled worker get obviously lower wages than skilled/ educated labours but no any market discrimination.

$W^{\circ}nms$ - wages of non-manual scavengers in the 'absence of market discrimination'

$W^{\circ}ms$ - wages of manual scavengers in the 'absence of market discrimination'

Now the market discrimination coefficient (D) is then defined as the proportion differences between G+1 and Q+1 according to the decomposition method.

**To study the major determinants of better paid jobs across the groups, the study will be using Binary Logistic Regression Model:** Two BLRM will be calculated to know the differential impact of different determinants among Dalits and Non-Dalits.

$$\text{Log} (p / (1-p)) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Sex} + \beta_2 \text{Age group} + \beta_4 \text{Educational Status} + \beta_4 \text{assets holding} + u_i$$

Where,  $\beta_0$ =constant

$\beta_1$  to  $\beta_4$  are the regression coefficient associated with the independent variables

$p$ = the probability of getting better paid jobs.

$1-p$  is otherwise (continuity).

$u_i$  is error term.

### **Discrimination in credit market**

This will be studied with a method by selecting the indicators to capture discrimination in forms and providers who may practice discrimination while providing loans. They will be ranked to understand the perception of Dalits and non-Dalits regarding discrimination and will also be used for construction of a composite index. The selected variables will

be: Forms - Manner of speaking, Use of demeaning words/phrases, higher interest rates to SCs and lower to Non-SCs, Wait to give chance to the dominant caste persons. Providers – Banking staff (if formal) and private money lenders, relatives, friends (if informal)

Then a composite index will be calculated.

$$ID = IDf + IDp / 2$$

$$IDf = (Fs1+Fs2+Fs3+Fs4)/4, \text{ or } \Sigma Fs/4$$

$$IDp = (Ps1+Ps2+Ps3+Ps4)/4, \text{ or } \Sigma Ps/4$$

Where,  $Fsi$ , ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ ) is the score of a respondent on

Variables of forms of discrimination;  $Psi$ , ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ ) is the score of a respondent on

Variables of forms of discrimination

## **1.9. Chapters Outline of the Study**

This thesis contains seven chapters including introduction and conclusion. The central focus of almost all the chapters is to understand the problem of accessibility and discrimination that the SCs and STs in general and manual scavengers in particular face in market and non-market institutions in Odisha. The first chapter has outlined the statement of research problem, status of the debate, research gaps, research questions, research objectives, methodology data source of the study. Second chapter gives a conceptual framework of the study in which it analyzes how certain specific labour in Indian society are stigmatized labour and so are subjected to different forms of discrimination in the economy. Third chapter has analyzed the issue of accessibility and discrimination that different social groups and particularly marginalized communities face in India. After showing the macro picture of exclusion and discrimination in India, fourth chapter has discussed the socio-economic characteristics of manual scavengers in Odisha from the primary household sample survey. Fifth chapter has analyzed exclusion

and discrimination that the manual scavengers face in market and non-market institutions in Odisha. Finally, sixth chapter concludes the major findings of the study and proposes certain suggestions for the policy makers in India.

## CHAPTER – 2

### LABOUR, STIGMA, AND DISCRIMINATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1. Introduction

Each and every human being has to do some or the other work to live on this land. The very process of work that leads a complete and meaningful human life is called as labour in human history. The whole process of work (labour) can be broadly classified into two categories; the works that involve manual and physical labour and the works that involve mental labour. These two types of labour can be found in almost all societies in the world. Moreover, both the types of labour are supplementary to each other to sustain and substantiate any human civilization. Nevertheless, these two kinds of work have not been valued equally. Manual and/or physical labour has always been undervalued compared to mental labour. This can be observed from the underpayment to the people who perform physical labour compared to the people who are engaged in mental labour.

However, the mere classification of labour into physical and mental does not capture the real dynamics and specificities of labour that exist in certain societies like India. It is because any type of labour carried out by the people from the lower strata of the Indian society is mostly underpaid and even if they get paid sometime, it will be proportionally lesser compared to the labour they render in the process of labouring. For instance, sociologically speaking a barber has a higher social status and value compared to a sweeper in a village though both are involved in physical labour. Similarly, in terms of gender for instance, a male cook in a big restaurant commands higher remuneration and higher social status whereas the labour of a housewife who may be thousand times better in preparing nice dishes has no value and hence carries a low social status. Therefore, the existence of differential remuneration and valuation of different kinds labour cannot be understood without knowing the cultural value system that assign different labour to different people. For instance, according to the traditional *Chaturvarna System* (now known as *Caste System*), people in each *Varna* performs a particular kind of labour which is assigned to them by birth. Moreover, because of this

nature of Indian social system, the kinds of labour performed by the people in the lowest strata of the social ladder is considered culturally inferior and without any value or worth, and therefore the workers involved in those works are regarded as valueless, worthless, degraded, and stigmatized.

Earlier there was a generally accepted premise which was particularly held by the development economists that the traditional caste-based social structure which is based on the inscriptive status and not on the achieved status will get dissolved on its own in the process of industrialization and urbanization (Beteille, 2012: 42). It was often assumed that people from the lower castes will be freed from their traditional caste-based occupations and will enter into the modern industrial and formal sector. And it was often asserted that caste is a matter of past and not of future. Further, the stigmatized identity based on caste will disappear in the process of modernization, industrialization and urbanization. However, even after the achievement of appreciable growth rates, high level of industrialization, urbanization and modernization of different sectors, the workers who perform the traditional caste based occupations such as leather work, cleaning work, and manual scavenging and so on are still disproportionately belongs to the lowest strata of the Indian society (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Baruah, 2014). Moreover, even if they try to get rid of these traditional caste occupations, they will have to face multiple kinds of obstacles even in this so-called modern era.

Against this backdrop, the current research will try to grapple with the following questions. How the labour in general and manual scavengers in particular can be understood in the context of the caste based Indian society? What role does stigma play in defining and differentiating work in the labour market of the contemporary India? By examining the arguments and evidence presented in the literature, the present research attempts to interrogate the interrelated questions of labour, stigma and discrimination in the Indian society and economy.

## **2.2. Caste and Labour in India**

Labour in Indian society is a very complex category to understand. The concept of labour has been studied and researched widely by many scholars from different vantage points,

such as colonialism and capitalist production relations (Gupta, 1992; Brass, T and et al, 1992; Breman, 1999). In such theoretical analyses, at times, caste is relegated to the background, although caste is increasingly being seen as an important analytical framework to understand labour and work (Harriss-White 2003; Jodhka, 2016). But the current research will be analysing the category of labour with the framework of Caste System. Much in the same way as the category of class cannot be understood without understanding the system of capitalism, the category of caste cannot be understood just by analysing the concept 'caste' as a singular independent phenomenon as many scholars would make us to believe (only at the time of caste atrocities and debate around reservation policy and identity politics), but by analysing the Caste System as a whole. To understand 'labour' in the Indian society, the paper thus believes that it must be studied with a through and systemic understanding of the Caste System.

However, there is no singular opinion as far as the existence of caste and caste system is concerned. A few scholars have argued that caste as a social system is no longer present in India (Gupta, D, 1984; 2000). It is an empirical fact that there is a gradual change within the Caste system like any changing phenomenon in the society (Jodhka, 2016). But there is also enough evidence to believe that caste system has still survived maintaining its core principles in spite of many interventions and challenges to it even today (Prakash, 2015). It implies that though there are some changes, still there exist newer forms of production and reproduction of caste in today's modern economy and society (Prakash, 2015; Jodhka, 2015). Because of this enduring nature of caste system with its strong core even today, the primary focus in this research is to analyse labour as a category within the caste system.

The labour that exists in the Caste society is not homogeneous owing to the intersectionality between caste and labour. Caste in India does prohibit the varied categories of labour to become an economic category. It is the caste that decides the social status and economic remuneration that the workers in a particular profession will be assigned and given. Moreover, the people from 'other' castes carry a superior and dignified status as opposed to the degraded and stigmatized status carried by the people from lower castes due to the graded inequality nature of castes in India (Ambedkar, 2010).

Given its heterogeneity, the labour within the Indian caste system can be broadly hypothesized and divided into two. They are; stigmatized labour and dignified labour. In the social system of caste, the more you go up, the more the labour will be considered as dignified and the more you go down, the more the labour will be considered as stigmatized. Hence the primary focus this research is to understand the category of stigmatized labour within the larger system of Caste.

### **2.3. Defining Stigma**

Stigma is a *virtual social identity* which deeply discredits an individual. In other words, a person with stigma is not seen as a human being (Goffman, 1968). Moreover, stigma is a cultural construction in the society which in turn is sustained by a subsidiary act of creation of 'other' which then particularly assigns a morally devastating attribution to this other (Guru, 2014). He further argues that the existence of prejudice is an essential aspect of stigma. The source of the prejudice is inherent in the act of imposing one's limits on the other. For example, the way male members of the society impose their limits on female members. Stigma is culture-specific. In the Western social context, occupations like sex work, identities like the blacks and the refugees and having criminal backgrounds are considered to be different sources of stigma (Nussbaum, 2004). But in the Indian context, caste produces a stigmatization that does not merely target a particular identity but rather creates a nested target or a hierarchy of stigmatization, the impact of which could be all-encompassing and much more devastating (John, 2013).

### **2.4. Meaning of Labour**

Labour is usually looked at in the economics discipline as an independent economic category. This idea particularly comes from the Neo-classical assumption of Individual being a free and rational human being. This assumption of rational implies that individual is a perfect one and does not have influence of the social, cultural factors around him/her. But this assumption does not hold true in practice. Probably this assumption has denied seeing labour as a social category as well. In other words, the conventional economics divorced labour from its social content. In certain circumstances, the social content and the existence of labour influence his/her economic existence (Deshpande, 2011). For



example, the gender and race become the primary determinants to assume the skill and efficiency of female and black labourers even in a market economy like USA.

But this a-historical and a-social conceptualization of labour in conventional economics in general and Neo-Classical economics in particular has been critically theorized by Karl Marx in his seminal work *Das Capital*. According to Marx, labour and value that are associated with different kinds of labour is decided by three things. First, labour is a social relation among people. Second, labour assumes a material form. And third, this material form of labour is related to and realized in the process of production (Rubin, 2008; 127). Moreover, through his theoretical method of Political Economy, he argues that though the social relation exists among people varies across social forms, the unique feature of all economic formations or types of economies is that the social relation among people is decided primarily in the process of production. In other words, social relation among people is dependent on the economic process of production in every stage of human history.

However, though this approach does not undermine the role of society and culture in influencing labour, it gives over emphasis to the economic factors. As per this approach the economic status of the labour decides its social status and not vice-versa. This approach to understand the meaning of labour is valid as long as the society and economy is based on division of labour with open ended social rotation and free exchange. But in the societal system which the current research is trying to analyse, the category of labour (Caste System) is not based on division of labour rather *division of labourers* (Ambedkar, 2010). Moreover, certain caste based occupations performed by the people from the lowest strata carry stigma and humiliation (John, 2013). This implies that certain caste labour as stigmatization and not just exploitation has profound implications since stigmatized labour cannot be valorised like the industrial labour which gets at least the value of their labour power in return. And this is because of the stigma which is directly associated to and reinforced by their already lower caste status. Hence, the '*labour theory of value*' by Marx cannot capture the stigma of caste labour in its totality because stigma also implies the very negation of value whose fullest and stark reference can be found in certain caste labour like the manual scavengers. Labour

produces value irrespective of the mode of production and economic formations. Similarly, the caste labourer such as the manual scavengers and leather workers produce value. But here the point of concern is that their labour doesn't get proper recognition as value in proportion to their labour they render in the process of work. Moreover, the value of labour power is at least paid in some economies, whereas value of labour power is not taken care of or paid properly for certain kinds of caste labour in the Indian economy. It is often regarded as super-exploitation. But the issue at hand is much more severe than it is perceived. This can be observed from the fact in the case of certain caste labour, even the value of labour power is not given not just because of their dispossession and deprivation of economic capital but because of the prejudiced notion of caste which symbolizes deprivation not only on the basis of the ownership of economic resources but also on the basis the possession of certain social and political rights which create a sense of utter helplessness. This situation of absolute destitution has its origin in the caste system which further leads to the ruthless and aggressive extraction of surplus by the capitalists using the stigmatized caste-based labour. Further, the value of labour power of caste labour is not determined by any objective economic criteria, but by the whims and fancies of the caste employer which is very difficult to understand objectively. When there is an absence of any objective criteria to decide the value of labour (power) and there is a presence of caste dictation from the employer, it denies the labour its due value. However, the point here is not to suggest that caste and capitalism do not exist together. Rather the main point of contention is that because of the sustenance of castes and production relations based on castes in the Indian economy even today, certain stigmatized caste labour has caused ruthless and aggressive expansion in the process of capitalist accumulation. Therefore, the coexistence of capitalism and the forces of caste should not be considered as a theoretical possibility as it will contradict the core ideas of historical materialism. Rather this coexistence should be attributed to two factors. First, capital is not allowed to play its natural role and it is being controlled by some other factors for some other purposes. Second, it may be the case that the social factor is very much dominant due to which it is regulating the economy (capital) in its own interest and not in the interest of capital. For example, caste ideology is regulating capital for the sustenance of caste due to which capital is unable to play its natural role and acting in the

interest of social (caste). Similarly, if there is capitalism, then it will definitely lead towards the advancement of the production relation along with the objective of accumulation by dismantling the traditional feudal identities. The coexistence of capitalism and caste being a theoretical impossibility implies that there is a difference between free labour in capitalism and stigmatized labour in caste system.

Therefore, though the mental and manual division of labour is seen in almost all societies, there is a need to go beyond this simple classification to understand the unique nature of caste labour in the Indian society. The peculiar and unique aspect of caste labour must be understood from the perspective of the stigma and dignity attached to such kind of labour.

Caste in India does prohibit the very category of labour to become an economic category because of several reasons. Firstly, as an institution, caste system involves the subordination of the inborn calibre and inclinations of an individual to the exigencies of social rules rather than employing any objective economic criteria which denies caste labour to be an economic category. It is because of the fact that the division of labour brought about by the caste system is not based on choice and natural aptitude but on the prejudice of predestination (Ambedkar, 2010: 48). Secondly, in a caste-based society, it is caste that decides an individual's profession/occupation and not the vice-versa as Ambedkar (1991: 292) would say, *"What is the use of telling the scavengers that even a Brahmin is prepared to do scavenging when it is clear that according to Hindu Shastras and Hindu notions even if a Brahmin did scavenging he would never be subject to the disabilities of one who is a born scavenger? For in India a man is not a scavenger because of his work. He is a scavenger because of his birth irrespective of the question whether he does scavenging or not."* Its reflection in the contemporary Indian society can still be observed from the exclusive presence of former untouchables in the sanitary work even in metropolitan cities like Mumbai (Salve, 2017). In other words, in the process of hiring labour in the urban labour market, it is caste that decides the entry of a person to a specific occupation (Thorat, 2010). Thirdly, labour is supposed to be a theoretical category which presumes that anybody can be a worker and the entire labourers go through the constant process of change and rotation. As Gopal Guru (2014: 217) in his

paper *‘Two Conceptions of the Dignity of Labour’* argues that “*labour that is competitive and sustainable through the radical rotation of opportunity structures creates space for dignity*”. In other words, labour that is not competitive and sustainable through the radical rotation of opportunity structures produces stigma as is the case with scavenging or leather work. It means that when some jobs cannot be undertaken on the basis of competition, and when some jobs cannot be part of rotation for all the workers, the work and workers involved in such jobs cannot be called as labour in true economic sense. Fourthly, when the labour does not go to the industry for work or stops going for work to the industry, there is no threat of direct violence. But when manual scavengers stop the work and try to do something else, there will be not only lack of employment opportunities for them because of their stigmatized identity but also direct threat of violence, a situation which do not seem to have existed under capitalism (*Human Rights Watch Report, 2014*). In other words, the opportunity cost becomes the wage rate in general on the basis of which someone decides to work in this industry or that industry. But under the caste mode of production, the worker does not have the freedom to choose any other industry/work to do owing to stigma which results in the unavailability of work due to which they end up in taking up jobs like manual scavenging. Moreover, along with the wage rate, lack of alternative employment opportunity due to stigma and the threat to life also become the components of opportunity cost to decide whether to leave the current work and to move to other work. Fifthly, the concept of labour in economics is defined as a universal category which implies that any kind of job undertaken by anyone in the economy is solely determined by economic incentives and the opportunity cost. But the caste labour like manual scavenging does not fit into this definition of labour which itself proves that the caste labour is a distinct labour unlikely to be performed by all. This difference in definition and the reason why this particular labour is not performed by all but by a particular social community are not only due to economic reasons but also due to the stigma attached to such labour. Further, labour being universal category should have some universal economic value. But labour being performed by a distinct group and not by all cannot have a secular and universal measure of economic value. Sixthly, the value of labour power (not value of labour) under the capitalist mode of production is given and determined through some objective economic

criteria. But the value of labour power in the caste mode of production is not determined by any objective economic criteria. Rather the payment to caste labour is decided by the dictation of the upper caste employer that is very difficult to understand and measure objectively. Thus, as per the above explained factors, caste labour cannot be qualified to be called as a universal economic category of labour. Therefore, certain caste labour is deemed to be stigmatized labour and therefore it is primarily performed by the people from the lowest strata of the social system in India.

## **2.5. Labour, Stigma and Discrimination**

After looking at the peculiar nature of the Indian society and the stigmatized labour that continue to exist in the Indian society, this section tries to understand the different theories of discrimination in general and economic theories of caste discrimination in particular.

To begin with, Garry Backer in his seminal work ‘Theory of Discrimination’ (1957) demonstrated that people have a taste for discrimination because they derive satisfaction from it. According to this theory, an employer will discriminate an employee because he/she has a taste for it. In other words, an individual with a taste for discrimination act as if he/she were willing to pay something, either directly or in the form of a reduced income, to be associated with some person instead of others. Becker directly attributes prejudice as the defining factor for discrimination. Moreover, as per this theory the individuals become ready to sacrifice income to maximize their group interest based on prejudice about the other.

Arrow has given another theory of discrimination called ‘Statistical Discrimination’ which ascribes discrimination to the imperfect information about the productivity of applicants in the labour market (Arrow, 1971). It says that the identities of the individuals are perceived as the marker of merit. In other words, all members of a given group are seen as having equal ability and are not evaluated on the basis of individual merit. Therefore the difference between perceived social ability and the actual individual ability give rise to discrimination.

A number of scholars like Akerlof (1976), Scoville (1991), Deepak Lal (1988, 1989), and Ambedkar (1982) have contributed to the economic theory of caste discrimination. Akerlof (1976) pointed out that there is discrimination in the caste system because there is a social norm like social ostracism which is working as an active deterrent even at the cost of low level equilibrium. The fear of being socially and economically boycotted acts as a powerful deterrent to bring about changes in the system and therefore the aspect of economic discrimination is inbuilt in the system of caste. He further says that the decision whether to follow the caste code or not does not result in economic benefits rather results in the stigma of being an outcaste. So, when the punishment of outcaste is predicted to be more than the benefits of economic arbitrage, the members in the society will be bound to follow the caste codes. Similarly, Scoville (1991) gives a functionalist approach of caste. According to his theory, discrimination in caste-based society is the result of the enormous economic costs which restrict the individuals from deviating the caste codes. He also argues that people from different groups perform their duty for social stability and maintain maximum possible benefits.

Lal (1989) argues that the caste system was created to meet labour shortages in a historical point of time. He further points out that the heterodox and the unorthodox 'surplus-labour model' and the 'segmented-market model' cannot explain the functioning of labour market in India. In other words, neither the classical nor the neo-classical assumptions of perfectly competitive labour market and perfectly rational individual can give a viable explanation of the Indian labour market. So, it is the Institutional Economics, which is an extension of neo-classical economics, can better explain the Indian labour. It means that the overall demand and supply framework can still explain the Indian labour, which suggests that for a given supply, the effect of an increased demand for labour will be resulted in rising labour incomes. But this can only be achieved if there is a deliberate disequilibrium between the supply of labour and the demand of labour, which further require barriers to entry; either natural barriers like geographical barriers to labour mobility or man-made barriers through legal or social restrictions on the entry of competing groups to acquire the necessary skills, or discrimination based on non-economic factors such as race or caste.

However, both Akerlof and Scovill do not talk about the negative aspects of exploitation. But both of them try to generalize the implication of castes as same for every social group within the caste system. Both the theories argue that even the caste codes are being followed by the lower castes and they are also deriving the maximum possible benefit out of it. But this is not true in real sense. Because even without violating the caste codes the lower castes are systemically prone to different forms of disabilities and discrimination. Hence, the process of exclusion in the system of caste is beneficial to the higher castes and the lower castes will always be at the receiving end as Jodhka and Newman (2010) would argue, “The cost of social exclusion is not really so punishing as it is for those at the bottom”. They tried to analyse the issue of discrimination within the framework of cost and efficiency which may not be the historical reasons and the real motives for the origin and sustenance of caste system. Similarly, Deepak Lal somehow justifies caste system as a historical invention and necessity and gives a very functional interpretation to it by ignoring the socio-cultural ill motives behind the creation of the caste system.

Ambedkar states that whatever may have been the purpose behind the origin of the caste system, it certainly involves an economic motive of income maximization rather than economic efficiency (Ambedkar, 1936). He further demonstrates that caste discrimination exists because there is caste and caste based graded distribution of social, cultural and economic rights created on the basis of norms (identity). Disparities in different spheres of life within caste system are the natural outcome of the caste system owing to the graded and unequal distributions of rights as a matter of rule. Furthermore, Ambedkar points out that the caste system would continue to exist as long as the upper castes derive gains in the social, economic, and educational spheres. In other words, the traditional and customary rules governing social and economic relations would cease to exist only when the new rules would yield higher economic and social benefits to the HCs and vice-versa (Thorat, 2010). He further notes that caste based exclusion and discrimination entails not just economic disparities or deprivation, but it also involves social indignity, political inequality and therefore leads to the denial of dignity and equal citizenship. Thus, going beyond the framework of ‘cost and efficiency’, he further explains that a change in the ideas about human rights and justice according to the

modern value system can have a strong power to induce changes in the social relations and hence has the power to minimize discrimination gradually if not to end it all at once.

## **2.6. Discrimination and Manual Scavengers**

After illustrating how the category of ‘stigma’ does help us to capture the true essence of labour in caste system in general and the labour performed by the lowest strata of the society in particular, the present section takes ‘Manual Scavengers’ as a reference category would argue how the stigmatized labour is prone to different forms of discrimination based on group identities in the so-called market and society even today. The term ‘manual scavenging’ implies the practice of manual handling of human excreta from insanitary and manual or dry toilets, built without a flush system (Baruah, 2014). This practice involves the removal of such wastes using conventional brooms and tin plates. Manual scavenging being a caste-based and hereditary occupation is mostly done by the former untouchables who are traditionally lined with forced labour. There is a dearth of studies on manual scavengers and the exclusion and discrimination they face not only for being in the same age old practice of scavenging but also after leaving this inhuman occupation.

### **2.6.1. Extent of Manual Scavenging**

There is an absence of unanimity as far as the numbers of manual scavengers in the country is concerned. The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in its report on Manual Scavengers dated on 21/07/2015 reports that there are 676000 manual scavengers in the country. The Census of India, 2011 puts out a figure which contradicts the 2014 Supreme Court judgment on the number of dry latrines in the country. The findings of civil society organizations like Safai Karmachari Andolan (SKA) suggests that there are 12,000,000 manual scavengers in the country. Similarly, according to the statistics published by the International Dalit Solidarity Network, quoted by Baruah in her study, records it to be 1.3 million people, and they also reports that mostly women from the Dalit community are engaged in manual scavenging (2014, 10). There exists asymmetries between the two official data sources and the data released by the official and independent civil society organizations. In spite of this lack of unanimity in macro



data sources on manual scavengers, government organizations like National Sample Survey and Central Statistical Organization show less interest to do a macro sample survey on the question of manual scavengers and their work. Given this negligence by the government in collecting data on manual scavengers, it is futile to expect the government to eradicate this inhuman practice. In other words, legislations of laws prohibiting manual scavenging will remain ineffective in the absence of reliable data on the numbers of scavengers in the country.

### **2.6.2. Living and Work Conditions**

Along with the issue of unanimity on the number of manual scavengers in India as a whole, it is also equally worthwhile to examine the lives of those engaged in the scavenging occupation and the condition under which they work. Since almost all the scavenging workers are from the Scheduled Castes which forms the lowest strata of the Caste System in India, they are completely looked down upon with disgust by the rest of the society. Because of the equalization of the former untouchables with disgust and filth and they are considered as polluted castes according to the caste system, they are pushed to do all kinds of polluted work like cleaning other people's filth (Gatade, 2015). They usually have little or no education at all and hence they lack modern skills to shift to any other occupation. They live in abject poverty and are deprived of even the basic amenities like housing, water, and other facilities to live a normal human life (Gatade, 2015). And the lack of modernization in the Indian sanitation system and waste management even today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can be directly attributed to the availability of cheap caste labour which is the result of the caste-based society. Therefore there is a direct link between the persistent nature of caste and the continuing practice of manual scavenging even today.

The manual scavengers work and handle filth with their bare hands without any protective gear. They are not even provided with the elementary tools such as rope, box, oxygen cylinder, mask, etc., at the time of descending into the gutters. Moreover, they don't have access to sufficient water to wash their body after the work. The manhole workers wear nothing more than a half-pants. Most of the time, the workers are asked to enter into the gutter or septic tanks without any safety belt. Even if they wear safety belt

sometime, it does not provide them protection from the toxic gases and sharp objects inside.

Because of the nature of their work, scavengers are always prone to many health problems such as cardiovascular degeneration, musculoskeletal disorders, infections like hepatitis, leptospirosis and helicobacter, skin problems, respiratory system problems and altered pulmonary function parameters which result from the exposure to harmful gases such as methane and hydrogen sulphide (Tiwari, 2008). Moreover, the workers who work in sewers and gutters die before their retirement. Sewer workers die from accident, suffocation and exposure to toxic gases. Despite the health risks involved in such kind of works, they are denied even a minimum subsistence wage rate. Their daily income varies from Rs 20 to Rs 50 (Singh, 2009). The persistent health risk and minimal pay together prevents the manual scavengers from accessing the right to better and quality health services.

### **3.6.3. Review of the Act**

Although manual scavenging is labeled as a form of labor, it cannot be defined as a form of employment. It violates the rights to human dignity, health, and gender justice. Despite recognizing manual scavenging as human rights violation in the whole world, India has failed to prohibit this most inhuman and in-dignified form of occupation (Sathyaseelan, 2013). Many programs and legislations have been introduced by the Indian government in the post-independent era to eradicate this inhuman practice. Out of them, some of the prominent policies will be reviewed in this section. For example, the Government of India legislated the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act in 1993. But, in the 20 years of its existence, not a single government official has been convicted for allowing this practice to continue. Apart from that, cleaning sewers, tanks, and railway tracks were not considered as part of manual scavenging and were not legally banned. In fact, it was observed that the main violators of the law were the government authorities themselves like the Indian railway (Gatade, 2015). Acknowledging the ineffectiveness of the act in the form of existence of still approximately 2.3 million insanitary latrines according to the Population Census Report

2011 as quoted in a study by Baruah (2014, 14), the government passed a new legislation, the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. This act was much more comprehensive in identifying manual scavengers and for the provision of alternate employment to them. This new act covered workers cleaning sewers, tanks and open railway tracks (Tandon and Basu, 2016). But the new act also could not put an end to the practice of manual scavenging in the country. However, in India there is no dearth of legislations for any problems. Rather the main issue is the lack of political will to implement the concerned laws for the concerned issues. In this regard, there is a complete indifference from the part of the government to eradicate this inhuman age old caste-based occupation. This indifference is not only reflected in the lack of political will to develop a standard government data source on manual scavengers but also in regarding the issue just as an issue of sanitation and not an issue of human dignity as reflected in the *Swachhata Abhiyan* of the current government. Moreover, the non-implementation of laws are not due to the lack of funds or technology. If technology could be used to launch satellites, then the same can/should be done for managing garbage and sewage (Gatade, 2015). Instead of modernizing the sanitation system and demolishing the caste-based inhuman occupations like scavenging, the government has rather helped in institutionalizing it. In other words, the government policies on sanitation have strengthened the relationship between caste and occupation in the form of concentration of scheduled castes population in the sanitation work (Salve and et al., 2017). In spite of two laws in hand, the government is unable to eradicate scavenging precisely because it has viewed the question of caste and scavenging as a question of individual rather than as the question of structure, the structure of caste which has caused the origin and persistence of manual scavenging even today ( Bathran, 2011). So without having a structural consideration of caste and its linkages to the issue of manual scavenging in the country, all the attempts by the government to this end will remain incomplete and ineffective. However, most of the legislations and its implementation also depend on how the middle class in the society as a pressure group pressurizes the state for its effective implementation. But manual scavenging being a degraded occupation, the workers who are involved in it are treated as untouchables, unapproachable and unseeable and they are further marginalized by the society, reinforced by its powerful

caste ideology. This marginalization of the scavengers by the society does not create much interest in the middle class to push for the effective implementation of the laws meant for the scavengers (Chaplin, 1999).

#### **2.6.4. How Scavengers are Exploited more than Others**

In India, social exclusion and discrimination revolves around certain sections of population because of their specific social identities like Dalits, Adivasis, women and the minorities. It is because they are deprived of equal access to social and economic opportunities owing to their group identities. Existence of around more than twelve lakhs manual scavengers in the country even today is witness to the fact that manual scavengers are being denied the equal right to citizenship by not rehabilitating them to live a life of dignity and self-respect. Caste based occupations and caste based social exclusion are evident from the exclusive employment of only Dalits in sanitation works under the Municipalities which is nothing but the institutionalization of caste through state policies (Salve and et al. 2017). Moreover, manual scavenging as an inhuman and stigmatized occupation, is closely associated with the lower castes and they have been doing this since ages (Singh, 2014). Since this is the only available job and they are denied other employment opportunities because of the stigma attached to them, the income they earn is very meager for their basic household expenditure. They work in different houses at least to live a life of subsistence (Singh, 2009). The interesting fact is that though some tried to challenge their social and economic status by changing their jobs, they again returned to their original profession because of social boycott and other hardships. Moreover, without any help, both from state and the civil society, the manual scavengers are totally conditioned to remain tied to their present life (ibid). The practice of this occupation has its roots in the social ills emanating from the centuries old caste system. Because of the tag as 'manual scavengers' other people do not hire them for any other jobs and thus they face perpetual stigmatization and discrimination both in the market as well as in the society. The indifferent attitude of the law enforcing agencies again worsens their condition of exclusion and degradation. Moreover, the scavenging work and the people involved in it are being treated just as a sanitation issue instead of an issue of violation of human dignity. The disregard with which the present government deals

with the issue of scavenging was exposed when the Prime Minister's 'National Skill Development Mission' listed manual scavenging as a possible employment opportunity for the people as cited in a study by Tandon and Basu (2015; 4). This is again reflected in the recent policy of '*Swachha Bharat*' campaign by the Government of India which only talks about the sanitation issue and maintains a complete criminal silence about this inhuman practice of manual scavenging and about the people who have been compelled to this stigmatized work since time immemorial.

Though the objective here is not to see manual scavenging and the people involved in it as an isolated phenomenon, the emphasis is to understand the cruellest form of exploitation and discrimination that the manual scavengers are subjected to compared to other workers. In this regard, it needs no much explanation to understand that cleaning human excreta manually cannot be called as employment in any civilized society. Similarly, the valorization of this work as 'spiritual activity' by Narendra Modi (2007) and as 'Sacred' by Mahatma Gandhi (1925) is nothing but "an outrageous and cruel joke on the helpless class" of manual scavengers as regarded by Ambedkar (quoted by Ramaswamy, 2005; 96). Compulsion to do certain work due to deprivation of economic resources must be differentiated from the compulsion to do certain work due to social ostracism. Therefore, both cannot be regarded as the same in term of its exploitation since the manual scavengers face the worst form of social ostracism along with the economic deprivation. Being from the lowest strata of the Indian caste society, they are already subjected to all forms of disabilities and stigmatization. And they are again pushed to even more adverse situation because of the stigma of doing the polluted work of manual scavenging. Along with the social atrocities that the scavengers face, they are exposed to certain other deadly health problems that no other workers in any other occupation face by virtue of their occupation. Since the scavengers are from the margins of the Indian caste society, they have negligible bargaining power to demand the government for better access to health, education, housing and welfare services and most importantly, they have been unable to form alliances even with other untouchable castes or Scheduled Castes which has resulted in no success in improving their wages and working conditions (Chaplin, 1999). Due to all the above mentioned unique form of exploitation and discrimination that the scavengers face compared to other category of workers, the

question of manual scavenging needs careful attention from both the academician and the policy makers.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

The study has tried to explain that the labour within the framework of caste in the Indian society is not only heterogeneous but also with differential normative value system. In that, the workers coming from the upper strata of the Indian society command higher social and economic value whereas the workers from the lower strata of the Indian society have lower social and economic value. Moreover, the labour from the lowest strata is not only considered as of less value, but also stigmatized and therefore the lowest strata labour is treated to be stigmatized labour irrespective of their personal skills and achievements. Further, the study has tried to explain how there is a complete absence of an objective criteria to define the value of caste labour in the Indian society. In this regard, the labour theory of value provided by Karl Marx is also proved to be insufficient to conceptualize caste based stigma of labour in the Indian society. According to the study, the very institution of caste always denies labour to be an independent economic category. This analysis has been substantiated with a proper historical analysis and its present continuity in spite of so called modernity and democracy. Certain social groups are still discriminated because of caste stigma. As analysed in the study, the manual scavenging community is still forced to do the same occupations for generations and when they try to give up this inhuman occupation, they are subjected to multiple forms of discrimination in general and sometimes they have to face atrocities at the hand of the people from the dominant castes. Though stigma is attached to the lower caste labour, the manual scavenging is the most inhuman practice, this kind of issues are yet to get political articulation in the Indian political democracy. Therefore, it is imperative to have a structural understanding and interrogation of the caste system to annihilate stigma and the resultant discrimination in the society and the economy.

## *CHAPTER – 3*

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND DISCRIMINATION IN INDIA: A MACRO VIEW**

#### **3.1: Introduction**

In contemporary economy and society, though the occupational patterns and positions of different caste groups varies across sectors in India, there is still a sharp inequality between Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) on the one hand, and so-called High Castes (HC) on the other (Madheswaran, 2012). This inequality can be seen in both private and public sectors particularly in job market. Here I have using “market” in the context of private sector and non-market as public sector. Although, it is contested, the market as a category can be used in both the sectors. That is why we say job market means in the context of both private and public. This inequality exists in a very complex manner. For example, the presence of high castes in good occupations can be seen in more numbers than lower castes or under-privileged castes. The presence of lower-castes people in lower grade jobs are more in numbers. However, here the good occupation means the higher level positions. Why this inequality exists in this manner is a concern to discuss here. Whether the presence of particular castes groups in particular jobs both in private and public sectors are vary or not, which need to be explored. Therefore to understand this sharp inequality even today across and between caste groups, there is a need to know their history in Indian society. It is because any individual’s or any groups’ or region’s present analysis will remain incomplete without analyzing their history in a study. As stated by Breman (1985) that documentation of present situation of any group or region without proper attention to the history of that group or region will not lead to a proper conclusion.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as constitutional categories are the ex-untouchables and tribal people of this land. These two represent a large section of the population in India and they are also known as Dalits and Adivasi. They together constitute around 25 percent of the total population in India, where SCs population is 16.2 percent and STs Population is 8.7 percent. Most of them reside in rural areas. Out of a total SCs population around 80 percent live in rural areas and out of a total STs

Population more than 90 percent live in rural areas (Population Census, 2001). But we find these two groups of people in urban areas also. If according to Population Census 2001, SCs population live in the rural around 80 percent, then twenty percent live in urban too, which is more than the percentage of their population 16.2 in India. And same with the Tribals, if they live in rural around 90 percent, 10 percent Tribals population must be living in the urban. Historically speaking, they are the most deprived and marginalized communities in the Indian society. For thousands of years they were deprived of any social, economic, and capital rights and thus kept in complete exclusion in the Indian society without any social power, economic capital and political participation. The exclusion and marginalization of SCs is related to the institution of caste and untouchability and of STs is related to their ethnic identity such as a distinct culture, language, social organization, and economy (Thorat, 2005). Due to complete exclusion and marginalization of these two social groups for thousands of years in the past, they were ended up with no access to resources, education, lack of civil rights, and no political participation, so complete destitution when India got Independence.

Just after Independence, when a modern and largest constitution was adopted to rule India, it came with many promises to uplift the depressed and disadvantaged in the Indian society. The objective to uplift was rooted in their historical exploitation for thousands of years. In this regard broadly four approaches were adopted by the Indian Constitution. They are as follows. Firstly, equal political and civil rights were given to them as enshrined in different articles of the constitution which were completely denied to them before independence. Secondly, to protect them from caste based discrimination like untouchability and atrocities, laws in the form of Prohibition of Untouchability Act in the 1950s by the Indian Constitution and now this is known as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prohibition of Atrocities Act amended in the year 1989. Thirdly, in order to compensate the historical socio-economic disadvantages and damage to these social groups, it has been enshrined in the constitution that special economic programs need to be implemented for them in regular intervals. Fourth and final approach for their development is in the form of affirmative action policy which is popularly known as reservation policy in India. This policy has a special meaning for them compared to other three provisions stated earlier. It is because if we will look at the Indian social system in



its historical perspectives, there was a complete separation between different social groups in terms of social, cultural and economic intercourse. So there was a complete absence of common feelings and sharing. So there was no sympathy by the socially upper strata to the lower strata rather there were a huge number of instances in history which proves that the socially upper strata have tried to check the social and economic mobility of the lower strata. Keeping this historical and material reality in mind the framer of the Indian Constitution proposed that there is no guarantee that in the Independent India the rulers if from the socially upper strata will try to implement the policies meant for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. So the makers of the constitution decided that the socially discriminated and marginalized communities should get proportional representation in different democratic institutions of free India by which they can represent their own problems. Ultimately, this apprehension came in the form of affirmative action policy which is widely known as 'Reservation Policy' according to the Indian Constitution.

Compared to the pre-independence socio-economic condition of the SCs and STs, after the implementation of the constitution there is definitely an improvement in the social and economic life of the SCs and STs in India (Thorat&Dubey, 2012). However, there is no remarkable progress of this community as far as desired objectives defined in different plans and programmes are concerned. Still SCs and STs are mostly at the lower economic quintiles in India even today. Most of the SCs and STs were and are landless agricultural labourers. Taking 13 major states in his study Mohanty (2001) argues that even after 60 years of independence, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are at the most disadvantaged situation with respect to land holding which has become a direct cause of their deprivation, chronic poverty and many more injustices and exploitations. Due to this complete deprivation and exclusion, they depend solely on their physical labour for their survival. Ultimately they are mostly dictated and exploited by the feudal landlords and local money lenders in the rural economy.

The inequality between SCs and STs on the one hand and the high castes on the other could be found in different fields. These inequalities were also identified by India's constitution makers and therefore in order to uplift their positions and status to the level

of upper castes, they tried to put different provisions in the constitutions. For example, providing equal civil rights to everyone is one among them. The introduction of the affirmative policy in the Indian constitution also ensures to an extent that they should get equal representation in different positions. Affirmative policy has been introduced in public sectors jobs, in political participations, and education as well. That is why the intention of introducing this policy is to uplift these both the communities socially, politically and economically. According to the constitution makers, this policy alone may not enough to remove the inequalities in different fields, so they put different safeguards and provisions for the development and up liftmen of these two communities socially, economically and politically as well. Thus these days one can see the presence of both the communities in different institutions of this country. But the presence is very less as compare to their population of the total population in India and as compare to the high-castes. However, in what way and why this inequality perpetuating in general even today after the seventy years of independence and particularly in the economic sector is need to be critically examined.

Since most of the population from SCs and STs are primarily from rural areas and most of them are landless agricultural laborers, the agriculture sector has a major role to play in the living condition of these people. But agriculture sector has not fulfilled all the desires of this section of the Indian society. On the one hand they are landless and on the other hand they are working with very less remunerative prices and by this agriculture laboring is a costly occupation for them. Moreover, the State intervention to revive the agriculture sector is quite disappointing. It is because a critical look at the succeeding five-year plan proves that Central Government has given more importance to industrial sector at the cost of the agricultural sector. Particularly after adoption of new economic policy in 1990s, the plight of the rural economy as a whole has worsened a lot and its impact on landless agricultural labourer who mostly belongs to SCs and STs is more compared to other social groups. As a result they are forced to migrate out because of rigid practices of caste occupation and untouchability on the one hand and inability to diversify their occupational strategies in the local areas (Sharma, 2009). So they are forced to migrate to semi-urban and urban areas within or outside state as a livelihood strategy.

Nevertheless, the primary objective in this chapter is not to see the traditional forms of exclusion and discrimination which are prevalent in rural areas. Rather the main focus is to analyze and understand the situation of SCs and STs in urban spaces which is often equated as 'secular spaces' without any discrimination and exclusion based on group identities. Therefore, the present chapter will be analyzing the situation as SCs/STs are moving from rural to semi-urban and urban spaces to escape from the traditional forms of marginalization and exclusions, and trying to enter into and access various other sectors in the urban spaces, and the various forms of exclusions and marginalization experienced by them in these new sectors and spaces. This study will be a macro study of India based on the available data from different rounds of National Sample Survey Organizations (NSSO). In order to understand the inequality between SCs and STs on the one hand and upper castes on the other, there is a need to know the socio-economic characteristics of households India.

Chowdhury (2009) argues that elopement and marriage between Dalits and the dominant caste groups indicates the existing conflictual relationship between the two. He further points out that the introduction of new, parallel and alternative structures of relationship in the post-colonial era has led to changes in the given pattern of relationship between the two groups which created a sense of insecurity among the dominant caste groups in relation to the Dalits. Therefore, even though inter-caste marriages were taking place among many dominant communities, it is the Dalit and non-Dalit association which captured attention of the public. And the dominant castes used such associations to garner support across communities on the one hand and the state agencies that are over enthusiastic in intervening and 'solving' such cases often overlook the violence and crime inflicted upon Dalit individually or collectively on the other.

Mohindra, Haddad and Narayana in (2006) studied the mortality rate and the reproductive health of women from a rural community in Kerala. The study regarded life expectancy, diseases, and disability as the markers of inequality. The study has argued that since caste is one of the major markers of inequality and stratification in the society, the economy also automatically gets regulated with the system of caste. The study has emphasized on the relationship between caste and the socio-economic life of

the people. The study has found that the women from the lower castes are more prone to ill health than that of the women from the upper castes. Further, the people who are in an economically and socially better position enjoy good health than the ones who are less likely to have such privileges. Therefore, the women from the upper castes who enjoy such socio-economic privileges will always have better access to the health facilities and thus can be more likely to be in good health than the women from the lower castes who are underprivileged and thus unlikely to get the same advantage of access to health and medicine in order to keep up good health.

Hoff and Pandey (2006) examined discrimination and social identity and the nature of durable inequality in North India especially in the context of Uttar Pradesh. They have noted that the Indian society is marked by various social groups called castes, which are more or less linked to the traditional occupations of various groups. They have observed that the “high caste participants were from the traditional landlord, warrior, priestly, and traditional castes; and the low caste participants were from a caste that was historically, but is no longer engaged in leather tanning.” This occupation was associated with the notion of purity and pollution and the untouchables were subject to caste discrimination at the hands of the Hindus. Further, they have outlined as to how the regime or the state maintained the various caste categories and justify the discrimination. The State has created a different kind of narrative which is suitable to justify discrimination on caste lines. Moreover, the authors have also mentioned that identities are important in influencing behavior in the context of India, and therefore, even if there is equality of opportunities there will be discrimination in the various other institutions. Further, the authors have pointed out that if social identities will be publicly recognized it will lead to negative thoughts and distrust on themselves (social marginalized groups) and it will have a negative impact in their achievement compared to that of the high castes.

Jhodka and Shah (2010) have conducted an empirical study in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka during 2007-08. They have done a survey on the situation of Dalits in these countries in order to identify the issues of social inequality, discrimination and deprivation in these countries. They have found that caste

discrimination was not that much strong in these countries compared to India. However, the socially excluded and deprived conditions of such groups were not recognized in those countries. And it was this caste blindness which helped them to maintain caste discrimination. They wrote, “Even when the ideas of purity and pollution have weakened in countries like Sri Lanka and Pakistan, Dalit groups continue to be on the margins of the power structure with very poor representation”. Therefore, in spite of having different religion and geographical location, the vulnerability of the Dalit remains more or less the same in these countries.

Singh and Prasad (1976) conducted a study on caste prejudice among Indian youth. This study was an attempt to assess and understand the ways of caste prejudices among the youths in India in the context of rural-urban setting, socio-economic and sex difference. This research mainly brought out four major conclusions; first, caste prejudices are more exposed in rural areas, secondly, urban untouchable are more prone to caste prejudices, thirdly, intensity of prejudice is similar among both the higher and the lower castes and fourthly, the girls practice more caste prejudice than the boys. They have also noted that casteism has its grip over the country’s population and the social contact among different castes is highly constrained and becomes impossible at times. In their own words “social mobility was adversely affected by atomized caste, family affiliations, job allocation and social acceptance depending on caste.” It has also been noted that caste play a major role in the distribution of wealth and facilities and high castes sometimes become synonymous to the high class.

Banerjee, Duflo, Ghatak, and Lafortune (2013) explored how caste as a noneconomic characteristic has it bearing on the institutions such as marriage among the middle classes. And it has been found that caste is one of the major influences of preference in matchmaking and secondly, these preferences are mostly horizontal in nature. Another observation was that the caste based preferences might be changing in course of time. However, the study noted certain different trends also about such preferences. As per the study, about 30 percent of people did not marry from their same caste, some of them had caste neutral preferences, around 40 percent of the siblings married through their friend and family networks and 20 percents were love marriages.

While observing such different trends in marriages they have noted that economic forces might not be undermining the role of caste.

While commenting on the liberalization of the Indian economy in the early 1990s, Jhodbka (2008), argued that with the initiation of liberalization in the Indian economy there were many changes that had taken place and according to him it was an important turning point for the country where that state reduced its involvement with the economy with a view to promote private enterprises Jhodbka further observed that caste is not simply a traditional hangover from the past. For centuries, those who have been at the receiving end of the social system in India remained at the bottom of the society and it were this social system which dominated and denied them various opportunities. Further he opined that this system of domination deprived the marginalized communities socially and economically. He writes, “The available official data clearly shows that a larger majority of Dalits continue to be landless and asset-less. The proportion of poor among them is much larger than the “other” categories of Indian population. Apart from economic disabilities, they also experience prejudices and discrimination in their everyday life. UPA at the Centre has proposal for the extension of the quota system for SCs and STs to the private sector. But the corporate sector’s response to the proposal was unequivocally negative on grounds of promoting meritocracy”

The new regime has already promoted the private sector. While reducing its involvement in the public sector it created a large economy of private business which denied opportunities for the SCs and the STs. Hence, with the presence of a large private sector in the economy, SCs and STs were deprived of any place and thereby denied them opportunities in the job markets. Jhodbka also mentioned that the family background also play a dominant role in the job markets where the Dalit or the Muslim candidates have lesser chances for being called for an interview in the corporate sector than the others from an established family background.

### **3.2: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Households in India**

The primary focus of the chapter is to highlight and analyze broad picture of accessibility and discrimination taking help of the National Sample Survey data across the social

groups in India. Before that the present section will show some basic socio-economic characteristics of sample households taking three NSS round (61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Round) and so during the period 2004-05 to 2011-12.

**Table.3.1: Distribution of Sample Households across Social Groups in Rural and Urban Sector**

Social Groups	61st Round			66th Round			68th Round		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
ST	10.7	03.1	8.6	10.9	02.9	08.5	11.2	03.5	08.8
SC	21.7	14.6	19.7	22.2	14.0	19.8	20.9	13.8	18.7
OBC	42.0	35.5	40.2	42.2	38.8	41.2	44.2	40.9	43.1
OTHERS	25.6	46.8	31.4	24.7	44.2	30.4	23.7	41.8	29.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Data*

The table 3.1 explains the distribution of sample households across social groups in both rural and urban areas during the period 2004-12. At the outset the table says that out of the total sample household surveyed in the year 2004-05 says that around 8.6 percent are from Scheduled Tribes, 19.7 percent are from Scheduled Castes, 40.2 percent are from Other Backward Castes, and the rest 31.4 percent are from other category. Similarly during the year 2009-10, approximately similar proportion of households from the respective social groups have been sampled and the picture is almost similar during the year 2011-12. However, the interesting picture to be noticed in the table is that across the period, the proportion of SCs and STs Households are largely concentrated in rural areas and the picture is almost same in case of OBCs as well. But the sample households from ‘Other’ social groups are disproportionately concentrated more in urban areas across the NSS rounds. Moreover, another interesting point to be noted is that the OBC sample households are increasingly moving towards urban spaces during the period.

**Table.3.2:Distribution of Sample Households between male and female across Social Groups**

Social Groups	61st Round			66th Round			68th Round		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
ST	02.9	03.2	03.0	02.8	02.9	02.8	03.5	03.3	03.4
SC	15.1	14.9	15	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.2	14.5	14.3
OBC	36.1	35.9	36	39.3	39.5	39.4	41.3	41.6	41.4
OTHERS	45.9	45.9	45.9	43.4	43.0	43.2	41.1	40.6	40.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Data*

The table 3.2 explains the distribution of sample households between male and female across social groups during the period 2004-12. At the outset the broad picture in the table says that out of the total sample household surveyed during the period, female from the upper strata of the society are higher and female from the lower strata of the society are lesser. This has been the sample picture across the NSS Rounds. The table also shows that the more and more we will go to the higher strata, we will get higher proportion of both male and female across the study period. In other words, out of the total male sample households, the male respondents are declining as we will move down the social strata and the vice-versa and the picture is almost similar across the NSS rounds.

The table.3.3 below shows the types of households across social groups during the period. The overall picture in the table says that across the social groups, a large proportion of sample household is regular and wage salaried workers. And the second highest proportion again across the social groups during the period is self-employed(SE). Moreover, the proportion of casual workers is declining as we will move to the upper strata of the society which means that households from SCs and STs are relatively more concentrated in casual work(CL) compared to OBCs and Others during and across the NSS rounds. Contrast to this, the proportion of OBCs and Others are more in self-employed and regular/wage salaried (RWS)work compared to SCs and STs.



<b>Table.3.3:Types of Households across Social Groups</b>					
Social Groups	SE	RWS	CL	Others	Total
68 <sup>th</sup> NSS Round					
ST	19.5	46.5	18.0	16.0	100.0
SC	26.8	44.0	20.5	08.7	100.0
OBC	37.8	37.6	14.3	10.3	100.0
others	36.9	44.5	05.9	12.7	100.0
All	35.3	41.7	11.8	11.2	100.0
66 <sup>th</sup> NSS Round					
ST	23.3	38.4	21.4	16.9	100.0
SC	26.2	39.4	25.2	09.2	100.0
OBC	36.8	35.0	17.1	11.1	100.0
others	36.2	44.1	06.1	13.6	100.0
All	34.7	39.7	13.4	12.2	100.0
61 <sup>st</sup> NSS Round					
ST	26.3	41.8	17.3	14.6	100.0
SC	29.4	41.1	21.8	07.7	100.0
OBC	40.3	36.7	14.5	08.5	100.0
others	38.6	44.8	06.2	10.4	100.0
All	37.5	41.3	11.8	09.4	100.0

*Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Data*

The table also says that during the period 2004-05 to 2011-12, proportion of self-employed households are increasing across the social groups which reflects the increasing trend in the number of jobs in formal sector of the economy and increasing in formalization of work in urban spaces. But as far as regular/wage salaried work is concerned, the SCs and STs Households are declining during the period whereas the OBCs and Others have maintained the same level during the period. Moreover, the table also shows that the proportion of casual work is increasing during the period for SCs and STs. But the same casual work is almost stagnant during the period for OBCs and Others.

**Table.3. 4: Educational Status of Sample Household across Social Groups**

Social Groups	Edn-1	Edn-2	Edn-3	Edn-4	Edn-5	Edn-6	Total
68 <sup>th</sup> NSS Round							
ST	19.4	15.8	53.3	01.2	08.0	02.3	100.0
SC	21.5	16.9	52.9	01.4	05.5	01.8	100.0
OBC	16.8	17.5	53.3	01.9	07.9	02.6	100.0
Others	09.8	13.4	53.7	01.8	15.4	05.9	100.0
All	14.7	15.7	53.4	01.8	10.6	03.8	100.0
66 <sup>th</sup> NSS Round							
ST	19.5	15.7	53.4	01.4	07.7	02.3	100.0
SC	23.6	17.1	51.4	01.1	05.0	01.8	100.0
OBC	17.5	16.7	54.5	01.8	07.2	02.3	100.0
Others	10.0	12.7	54.9	01.8	15.4	05.2	100.0
All	15.2	15.1	54.1	01.7	10.5	03.4	100.0
61 <sup>st</sup> NSS Round							
ST	25.7	15.7	50.2	01.7	05.7	01.0	100.0
SC	28.5	19.1	47.2	01.3	03.3	00.6	100.0
OBC	22.0	17.6	51.9	02.0	05.0	01.5	100.0
Others	12.0	14.4	54.4	02.3	12.7	04.2	100.0
All	18.4	16.3	52.4	02.0	08.3	02.6	100.0

*Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Data*

The table 3.4 shows the educational status of sample household respondents during the period. In the above table Edn-1 means not literate; Edn-2 means the respondents who are literate without formal schooling but below primary level of education; Edn-3 means from primary up to higher secondary; Edn-4 means diploma/certificate course; Edn-5 means graduate; and Edn-6 means post-graduation.

The broad picture in the above table says that out of total sample household respondents in the study, a majority have reached the educational status up to higher secondary. The second highest proportions of sample households are illiterate. But the point to be noted is that among the illiterate workers, the majority belongs to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. And we can see that an over whelming proportion are from SCs and STs in the country. Similarly if we will go to the higher level of education, we can find the first two groups of workers are not at all having educational status of

graduation and post-graduation. It is to mostly dominant OBCs and Others who are largely having the education of graduation and post-graduation.

The table 3. 5 below show the possession of land by different social groups in India. It is seen that during the period 2011-12, about 47.4 percent of the households cultivated less than 0.001 hectare. The corresponding proportions for ST,SC, OBC and Other category were 38.6 percent, 61.2 percent, 44.8 percent, and 44.3 percent respectively. The proportion of households cultivating land of size 4.01 hectares and above was the highest among others category of households that is about 3.8 percent followed by OBCs (2.7 percent). For the SC and ST households, the proportions of households operating land of size 4.01 hectares and above were 1.7 percent and 0.6 percent respectively.

Similarly as far as the picture during 2009-10 is concerned, about 45.5 percent of the households cultivated less than 0.001 hectare. The corresponding proportions for ST, SC, OBC and Other category were 37.2 percent, 58.9 percent, 43.4 percent, and 40.1 percent respectively. The proportion of households cultivating land of size 4.01 hectares and above was the highest among others category of households that is about 04.0 percent followed by OBCs (02.6 percent). For the SC and ST households, the proportions of households operating land of size 4.01 hectares and above were 0.6 percent and 02.0 percent respectively. Moreover, in the year 2004-05, about 43.8 percent of the households cultivated less than 0.001 hectare. The corresponding proportions for ST, SC, OBC and Other category were 30.8 percent, 54.6 percent, 42.9 percent, and 41.5 percent respectively. The proportion of households cultivating land of size 4.01 hectares and above was the highest among others category of households that is about 05.7 percent followed by OBCs (04.1 percent). For the SC and ST households, the proportions of households operating land of size 4.01 hectares and above were 01.0 percent and 02.8 percent respectively.

**Table.3. 5: Land Possessed by households across Social Groups**

Land Possessed	ST	SC	OBC	Others	All
68th NSS Round					
less than 0.001	38.6	61.2	44.8	44.3	47.4
0.001-0.004	00.3	00.4	00.9	00.3	00.6
0.005-0.40	19.0	20.2	20.1	19.2	19.8
0.41-1.00	19.4	10.4	14.8	13.9	14.2
1.01-2.00	14.0	05.3	11.2	11.2	10.3
2.01-4.00	07.1	01.9	05.6	07.3	05.3
4.01 & above	01.6	00.6	02.6	03.8	02.4
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
66th NSS Round					
Less than 0.001	37.2	58.9	43.4	40.1	45.4
0.001-0.004	01.0	01.1	00.8	00.6	00.8
0.005-0.40	18.6	22.0	20.1	19.9	20.3
0.41-1.00	20.8	10.8	16.3	16.1	15.5
1.01-2.00	12.7	04.4	10.5	10.8	09.5
2.01-4.00	07.7	02.2	06.3	08.5	06.1
4.01 & above	02.0	00.6	02.6	04.0	02.4
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
61th NSS Round					
Less than 0.001	30.8	54.6	42.9	41.5	43.8
0.001-0.004	12.0	17.6	11.5	09.0	12.3
0.005-0.40	03.6	02.7	01.6	02.0	02.2
0.41-1.00	23.9	14.7	19.5	18.5	18.7
1.01-2.00	16.3	06.7	12.8	13.4	12.0
2.01-4.00	10.6	02.7	07.6	09.9	07.5
4.01 & above	02.8	01.0	04.1	05.7	03.5
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Data

**Table.3. 6: Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure across social groups during the period**

MPCE Class	ST	SC	OBC	Others	All
68th Round					
00-10	18.5	17.3	12.4	05.4	10.5
10-20	12.5	13.6	11.6	07.0	10.1
20-30	11.7	13.8	11.3	07.7	10.2
30-40	09.8	11.4	11.7	07.9	10.0
40-50	09.5	10.5	10.5	09.1	09.9
50-60	10.3	09.5	10.3	10.0	10.1
60-70	07.4	08.1	09.0	11.2	09.7
70-80	09.2	06.5	09.0	11.8	09.8
80-90	06.7	05.6	08.0	13.2	09.7
90-100	04.4	03.7	06.2	16.7	10.0
All	100.0	100	100.0	100.0	100.0
66th Round					
MPCE Class	ST	SC	OBC	Others	All
0-10	17.7	16.6	11.9	05.1	10.5
20-Oct	11.6	13.9	11.6	06.9	10.1
20-30	11.2	13.8	11.0	07.6	10.2
30-40	10.3	11.6	11.5	07.9	10.0
40-50	09.8	10.5	10.6	09.2	09.9
50-60	09.9	09.1	10.3	10.0	10.1
60-70	07.3	08.6	09.3	11.5	09.7
70-80	09.6	06.5	09.4	11.9	09.8
80-90	07.8	05.7	08.2	13.5	09.7
90-100	04.8	03.7	06.2	16.4	10.0
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Data*

The table 3.7 gives the Worker Participation Ratio (WPR) for different social groups at the all India level. WPR means the number of persons employed per 1000 persons according to the usual status. It is also known as work force participation ration (WFPR). The work force according to the usual status which includes both principal and subsidiary status implies either worked for a relatively long part of the 365 days preceding the date of survey, and all those persons from among the remaining population who had worked at

least for 30 days during the reference period of 365 days preceding the date of survey. So the table 7 shows the WPR for different social groups at the all India level during 2004-12.

Table shows that for male, WPR according to usual status was higher among Others, SCs and OBCs than that among STs. So for male it was 56.9 percent among Others, 56.1 percent among OBCs, 56.3 percent among SCs and 53.8 percent among STs. Similarly for female, it was 20.2 percent for STs, 18.1 percent for SCs, 15.9 percent among OBCs and 13.8 percent among others. This was the picture in the 68<sup>th</sup> round of NSS. As far as the picture in the 66<sup>th</sup> round of NSS is concerned, WPR for male was 55.8 percent among others, 55.9 percent among OBCs, 56.7 percent among SCs and 53.4 percent among STs. WPR for female was 12.1 percent for others, 15.5 percent was for OBCs, 18.6 percent for SCs and 21.2 percent for STs. Similarly WPR in the year 2004-05 for male was 55 percent for others, 55.4 percent for OBCs, 53.7 percent for SCs and 52.3 percent for STs. For female WPR was 24.5 percent for STs, 20 percent for SCs, 18.5 percent for OBCs and 13.4 percent for others.

**Table-3.7: Worker Participation Ratio (WPR) across Social Groups**

Social Group	68th NSS Round			66th NSS Round			61st NSS Round		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
ST	53.8	20.2	38.0	53.4	21.2	37.8	52.3	24.5	38.4
SC	56.3	18.1	37.7	56.7	18.6	38.5	53.7	20.0	37.7
OBC	56.1	15.9	36.7	55.9	15.5	36.6	55.4	18.5	37.8
others	56.8	13.8	36.3	55.8	12.1	35.0	55	13.4	35.1
All	56.3	15.5	36.7	55.9	14.6	36.2	54.9	16.6	36.5

Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Round Data

**Table-3.8: Proportions of Unemployed (PU) across social groups during 2004-2012**

Social Groups	61 <sup>st</sup>			66 <sup>th</sup>			68 <sup>th</sup>		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
ST	1.6	9.0	2.5	2.4	9.0	3.3	1.8	1.0	2.8
SC	3.1	1.0	4.1	1.7	8.0	2.5	1.8	8.0	2.6
OBC	1.9	1.3	3.2	1.5	1.0	2.5	1.4	7.0	2.1
Others	2.1	1.3	3.4	1.5	7.0	2.2	1.9	9.0	2.8
All	2.2	1.2	3.4	1.6	8.0	2.4	1.7	8.0	2.5

*Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Round Data*

The estimates of the unemployed persons in various social groups in the above table have been generated following the usual status approach which includes both principal and subsidiary status of work. So the estimate of Proportion of Unemployed (PU) is the number of person unemployed per 1000 persons in the labour force according to the usual status. As the above table shows during 2004-05, among male PU was 1.6 percent among STs, 3.1 percent among SCs, 1.9 percent among OBCs, and 2.1 percent among others. Among female, PU was 9 percent among STs, 1 percent among SCs, 1.3 percent among OBCs and 1.3 percent among others. Similarly during 2009-10, among male, PU was 2.4 percent for STs, 1.7 percent for SCs, 1.5 percent for OBCs and 1.5 percent again among others. During 2011-12, among males PU was 1.8 percent each for ST and SC and 1.9 percent for others category while it was 1.4 percent among OBCs. Among females, PU was 1 percent among STs, 0.8 percent for SC, 0.7 percent for OBC and 0.9 percent for other category.

**Table-3.9: Unemployed Rate (UR) across social groups during 2004-2012**

Social Groups	61 <sup>st</sup>			66 <sup>th</sup>			68 <sup>th</sup>		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>ST</b>	2.9	3.4	6.3	4.4	4.3	8.7	3.4	4.8	8.2
<b>SC</b>	5.5	4.6	10.1	3.1	4.2	7.3	3.2	4.5	7.7
<b>OBC</b>	3.3	6.7	10.0	2.8	6.2	9.0	2.5	4.7	7.2
<b>Others</b>	3.7	8.5	12.2	2.7	6.2	8.9	3.4	6.3	9.7
<b>All</b>	3.8	6.9	10.7	2.8	5.7	8.5	3.0	5.2	8.2

Source: 61<sup>st</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, and 68<sup>th</sup> NSS Round Data

As the above table shows during 2004-05, among male UR was 2.9 percent among STs, 5.5 percent among SCs, 3.3 percent among OBCs, and 3.7 percent among others. Among female, UR was 3.4 percent among STs, 4.6 percent among SCs, 6.7 percent among OBCs and 8.5 percent among others. Similarly during 2009-10, among male, UR was 4.4 percent for STs, 3.1 percent for SCs, 2.8 percent for OBCs and 2.7 percent again among others. Among female during 2009-10, UR was 4.3 percent for STs, 4.2 percent for SCs, 6.2 percent for OBCs, and 6.2 percent for others. During 2011-12, among male UR was the highest and at the same level for ST and other category (3.4 percent), 3.2 percent among SCs, and 2.5 percent among OBCs. The picture among female says that UR was the highest among others category (6.3 percent) and it was 4.8 percent among STs, 4.7 percent among OBCs and 4.5 percent among SCs.

These tables show the different inequalities among different social categories. These above data show that the inequality particularly in economic sector in terms land holding among SCs and STs are very less. And this inequality can be seen in terms of unemployment of different categories in different works. In order to develop the inequality among different groups “land” plays a very important role. Some communities hold much land whereas others don’t hold at all. Further this help to perpetuate the inequality among different groups. How and why these inequalities among different sections are perpetuated has been explained in the book *Caste Discrimination and Exclusion in Modern India* (2015). Economic is one of the basic determinant factors for the inequality. For example, in this book it has been argued that the important of education as perhaps the most important determinant of a household’s position on the



economic ladder. Another important reason behind perpetuating the inequality between above mention groups are increasing of privatization in society. For example, when a high-caste house holder send their children to private school because of his/her economic status, at the same time lower castes not able to send to the same school because they are economically not sound and privileges. Therefore lower castes send their children to public schools.

### **3.3. Conclusion**

The present section analyzes the key findings the analysis in the chapter. To begin with, the findings suggest that across the social groups, a large proportion of sample households are regular and wage salaried workers. The second highest proportion of households across the social groups during the period is self-employed. Moreover, the proportion of casual workers is declining as we will move to the upper strata of the society which means that households from SCs and STs are relatively more concentrated in casual work compared to OBCs and Others during and across the NSS rounds. Out of the total sample household respondents in the study, a majority have reached the educational status up to higher secondary. The second highest proportions of sample households are illiterate. But the point to be noted is that among the illiterate workers, the majority belongs to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The possession of land by different social groups in India says that SCs are the most disadvantaged group. Inequality in terms of land holding among SCs and STs are very less. And this inequality can be seen in terms of unemployment of different categories in different works.

The above major findings suggest the macro picture of exclusion and discrimination from macro data sources that different social group in India face in the society and economy. This macro picture helps us to understand the issue in its generalized context. But this generalized picture may not be true always when it comes to understand a specific spatial situations and events. For example macro data source (National Sample Survey) on migration says that it is the educationally and economically upper strata migrate more and more. But micro studies on migration show a completely different picture meaning it is educationally illiterate and economically poor who are

migrating more and more (Srivastava, 1998). In this regard macro data source is not the source to understand a place or a community. Rather we need to go beyond this to capture the dynamics of that place and community. Therefore, the present study is based on primary survey to understand the socio-economic conditions of manual scavengers and their access to and discrimination in market and non-market institutions that is explained and analyzed in next two chapters.

## **CHAPTER – 4**

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS IN ODISHA**

#### **4.1: Introduction**

The present chapter will give a brief overview about the socio-economic characteristics of manual scavengers in Odisha before discussing about the manual scavenging work and its multi-dimensional implications on scavengers in the next chapter. In order to understand the present socio-economic condition of workers in general and manual scavengers in particular, it is also equally important to locate or trace the historicity of them which will again help us to understand their development over a period of time and also to have a meaningful analysis of their socio-economic characteristics in today's society and economy.

#### **4.2. Historical Background of Manual Scavengers in Odisha**

Historically Odisha as a state of India is known for various reasons. At the outset, Odisha is the first state in India which was formed in the year 1936 much before India got Independence. Odisha is surrounded by West Bengal in the North, M.P and Chhattisgarh in the East, Andhra Pradesh in the South and Bay of Bengal in the West. According to the 2011 Population Census, 3.47 percent of the total Indian population lives in Odisha. It is among the state which has the highest concentration of Scheduled Tribe population; and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population together constitute more than forty percent of the total population in the state. There are almost 62 Scheduled Tribes and 93 Scheduled Castes in Odisha.

Historically present day Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were mostly the original inhabitants of this land called Odisha. They were having a symbiotic relationship with nature and resources in it. They were using the resources in a sustainable manner and not for any greedy purposes. And most importantly resources were owned collectively and so were taken care up collectively for its sustainable use and so to be protected for the future generation as well. Since the resources of the nature were

everything for them, they were/are culturally and religiously connected with the nature<sup>6</sup>. But invasion into the central and east India and so also the areas presently known as Odisha by the communities and clans from the North and Western India in the Medieval Period witnessed fierce battle over resources and land between these intruder communities and the original inhabitants of the land<sup>7</sup>. This intrusion was in line with the larger picture of Aryan's invasion into North India and then it's hinterlands in which the communities who actually were in possession of land and other resources were forcefully dispossessed and literally were made to depend upon them. However, the direct attempt to colonize them economically failed in the face of cultural unity among the aborigines to protect their resources. In the face of this failure they followed the process of cultural appropriation to get control of the resources and this is done either by adopting the existing cultural practices of Adivasis and gradually took control of them and finally their resources or by imposing their own culture and religious tenets by using royal power or by intimidating them by propagating the divine superiority of a new god and by this gradually controlled their resources<sup>8</sup>. This whole process of cultural appropriation was not just to grab the resources of aborigines of the land. Rather it led to internal economic colonization within the economy and society. Since then the aborigines of the land became completely dispossessed and dependent upon the others for everything.

The process of dispossession and so exploitation of the people in general and the original inhabitants of Odisha in particular continued by the Kings and Zamindars throughout. This same process continued when Britishers colonized India<sup>9</sup>. The areas where Britishers found it difficult to get control of the resources collectively owned by Tribals, took the help of existing feudal forces and the process of cultural appropriation that this people used to apply to grab the resources. The changes that colonialism brought in India in 19<sup>th</sup> Century provided the contextual ground to the Kings and Zamindars to grow and reinforced their position in the society particularly after the Permanent

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<sup>6</sup> Sahu, B (2011), "Expropriation of Land and Cultures: The Odisha Story and Beyond", p.255

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.267

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.256

<sup>9</sup> Pati, B (2013), "The Diversities of Tribal Resistance in Colonial Orissa, 1840-1890: Survival, Interrogation and Contests", p.52

Settlement Act in the year 1894 (Pati, 2013: P. 49). The concept of Private Property Rights brought by British on resources like land strengthened their hold over society and economy. However, though some strong protective measures and provisions were enshrined in the constitution of Independent India for the exploited mass in general and indigenous people of the land in particular, the same feudal forces like Zamindars enjoyed the full power again after British left India and became the ruling class of the land and the same traditional communities who are known as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Independent India have been suffering all forms of disabilities till today.

The aborigines of the land were not just dispossessed from the resources. They were separated and divided into different groups and communities. And creation of caste groups was an important instrument to control and separate them from all kinds of resources because of its divide and rule policy<sup>10</sup>. In this regard we can see more than six thousand caste groups in India. All the caste groups have been classified into four major groups as per the Indian constitution. They are SCs, STs, OBCs and Forward Castes. This fourfold classification of castes is observed in almost all states. Similarly in Odisha, as per the population census, there are 62 Scheduled Tribes and 93 Scheduled Castes. Among the 93 SCs in Odisha, the caste who has been pushed to the inhuman occupation called '*Manual scavenging*' which is the main focus of the present work, are known in different names in different parts of Odisha. In few areas they are called as *Hadi* and in some areas they are also known as *Ghasis*.

According to 1871 criminal Tribes Act, Ghasis were identified as criminals and this legal stigma on Ghasis continued till India got independence. It is only after 1952, the legal stigma on the Ghasis has been removed but the social stigma has been continuing even today. Ghasis are a low Dravidian caste of Odisha and central India who cut grass, tend horses. They attend as musicians at weddings and festivals and perform

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<sup>10</sup> Sahu, B (2011), "Expropriation of Land and Cultures: The Odisha Story and Beyond", p.258

manual jobs of all kinds. They are also engaged in unclean occupations like sweepers and scavengers<sup>11</sup>.

The traditional occupation of the Ghasis is cutting grass and tending horses<sup>12</sup>. In the past, they were employed by the Kings, Zamindars, and Landlords as care taker of their horses. But after the end of Zamindari system and due to the process of modernization and urbanization, many changes in their traditional occupations were noticed. The new occupations of the Ghasis are scavenging, removal of carcasses and night soil, drum beating, rickshaw pulling, wage earning and petty business. The Ghasis who still retain their traditional occupations of cutting grass and are now engaged in agricultural operations and wage earning along with drum beating are called Ghoda Ghasis. And the Ghasis engaged in the manufacturing of brass and bell-metal jewellery and in petty trading are called as Chitra Ghasis. But the Ghasis who are exclusively engaged in the menial acts of scavenging, removal of dead animals and night soil are called Khapara or MaitraGhasis. Moreover, the Ghasis who could retain themselves in rural areas, they have taken up cultivation and petty business as their main occupation. But the Ghasis who migrated to urban areas are almost landless and thus got engaged in various occupations like scavenging, music, rickshaw pulling, business and allied activities. They are found in greater concentration in urban and industrial areas. These communities sweep the streets and clean the garbage boxes, drains and latrines. Some of them work in municipalities. Typically, they live in the slums located in the fringe of the town. Pig rearing has been the secondary occupation for most of the Ghasis as it fetches an additional income to them.

Ghasis being the Manual Scavenging caste and being totally disposed from resources, they are prone to different kinds of exploitation and discrimination in the market and society. Recognizing these disabilities of the manual scavenging castes across the states in India, many provisions and policies were made in Indian Constitution to safeguard their interests. Moreover, Government of Odisha also made various policies for

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<sup>11</sup> Sahoo, T (1991), "The Ghasi: A Scheduled Caste Community of Orissa", p.18

<sup>12</sup> ibid

the development of these communities from time to time<sup>13</sup>. But studies show that even after many decades have passed, Instead of any substantial changes, they are still living a life of complete destitution, social denial and degradation.

### 4.3. Socio-Economic Characteristics of Households in Odisha: A Macro View

The present section gives a brief summary of households and their socio-economic characteristics in both the study districts from secondary sources before analyzing the characteristics of sample households collected during the primary survey under the study. Moreover, the section analyzes specifically the socio-economic characteristics of urban households in general and particularly of the households from statutory and census towns of both Sambalpur and Khordha districts as the primary thrust of the present study is based on the sample survey of only urban households in both the districts of Odisha being manual scavenging issue predominantly an urban phenomenon.

**Table-4.1: Percentage Distribution of population in two districts of Odisha**

Variables		Sambalpur	Khordha	Odisha
Total Population	Total	02.48	05.36	100.00
	Male	50.61	51.83	50.54
	Female	49.39	48.17	49.46
Sector	Rural	70.41	51.84	83.31
	Urban	29.59	48.16	16.69
Literates	Total	67.59	77.72	63.71
	Male	55.88	54.72	56.43
	Female	44.12	45.28	43.57
SC Population	Total	18.43	13.21	17.13
	Male	50.31	50.94	50.33
	Female	49.69	49.06	49.67
ST Population	Total	34.12	5.11	22.85
	Male	49.98	51.36	49.29
	Female	50.02	48.64	50.71
No of Towns	Total	6	13	223
	Statutory	5	5	107
	Census	1	8	116

Source: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011

<sup>13</sup> .ibid

According to the population census, 2011 out of total population in Odisha, Sambalpur comprises around 3 percent and Khordha comprises around 5 percent of it as shown in the table one. Though both the districts are considered as two most urbanized districts in the state, still more than half of the populations live in rural areas even today according to the 2011 population census. In terms of literacy, around 25-30 percent of the population in both the districts is illiterate. Out of the 16 percent total Scheduled Castes population in the state, Sambalpur district comprises 18.43 percent SC population and Khordha district comprises 13.21 percent SC population. Similarly, out of total 23 percent Scheduled Tribes (STs) population in the state, around 34.12 percent are in Sambalpur and 5.11 percent are in Khordha district. Compared to other social groups in the state, the proportion of both male and female in case of STs and SCs are quite close and similar. Moreover, the proportion of female in case of STs is more than the proportion of male within the social group. As far as gender ratio across the two districts is concerned, the proportion of female is higher in proportion to male in Sambalpur compared to Khordha district. The above table also explains that out of 223 towns in the state as a whole, Sambalpur urban area is divided into 6 towns and Khordha into 13 towns. Moreover, out of 107 statutory towns, Sambalpur has five and Khordha has also five. But out of 116 census towns in the state, Sambalpur has only one census towns, but Khordha has eight census towns.

Out of six towns in the Sambalpur district, Hiraikud NAC and Sambalpur Municipality are the most populous towns in the district having 17 and 29 wards respectively as explained in the table 4.2 in this section. The table also shows that Burla NAC and Sambalpur municipality are the towns where the concentration of SCs population is highest. Similar is the case as far as concentration of STs Population across the towns in the district is concerned.

Therefore, with the above given picture about the population in both districts, the study has chosen two towns from each district according to the percentage of urban population. Accordingly, in Sambalpur district, Hiraikud and Sambalpur towns and in Khordha district, Jatani and Bhubaneswar have been selected as a matter of random sampling for the primary survey under the study. Moreover, from both towns, two wards



from each town have been chosen through purposive sampling where the concentration of manual scavengers is highest to collect the total required samples for the study.

**Table-4.2: Distribution of Households across Towns and Wards**

<b>Sambalpur</b>				
Towns	No of Wards	Total Population	SC Population	ST Population
Kochinda	11	15576	2023	4278
Rengali	1	10867	1308	3409
Hirakud	17	30207	8071	3986
Burla	16	46698	12960	4719
Redhakhohol	5	15379	3085	2337
Sambalpur	29	189366	29651	18119
Odisha	223	41974218	7188463	9590756
<b>Khordha</b>				
Towns	No of Wards	Total Population	SC Population	ST Population
Khordha	22	46205	5716	1313
Kaipadar	1	4512	218	218
Pratapsasan	1	12830	1928	149
Majjihara	1	5598	884	0
Bhakarsahi	1	7110	1427	4
Bhapur	1	6438	656	3
Jatani	26	63697	8957	1087
Tangi	1	4471	602	3
Balipatapur	1	6898	4200	6
Balugaon	11	17645	4543	68
Dungamal	1	6271	424	139
Banapur	15	17278	1719	247
Bhubaneswar	81	885363	76770	44016
ODISHA	223	41974218	7188463	9590756

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

**Table-4.3: Percentage Distribution of Workers in Sambalpur District**

Towns	Total Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers
Kochinda	6,121	4,944	1,177
Rengali	5,126	3,857	1,269
Hirakud	10,640	9,268	1,372
Burla	16,011	14,476	1,535
Redhakhhol	5,933	4,719	1,214
Sambalpur	71,467	60,801	10,666
A.Sambalpur	505,840	336,854	168,986
Odisha	17,541,589	10,707,543	6,834,046

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

**Table-4.4: Percentage Distribution of Workers in Khordha District**

Towns	Total Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers
Khordha	15,221	13,018	2,203
Kaipadar	1,333	1,017	316
Pratapsasan	4,405	4,104	301
Majhihara	1,805	1,190	615
Bhakarsahi	2,464	1,616	848
Bhapur	2,349	1,673	676
Jatani	20,426	17,079	3,347
Tangi	1,442	1,086	356
Balipatapur	2,291	1,914	377
Balugaon	6,078	4,928	1,150
Dungamal	3,735	3,361	374
Banapur	5,269	3,968	1,301
Bhubaneswar	3,25,733	2,86,046	39,687
Akhordha	792,193	632,625	159,568
Odisha	17,541,589	10,707,543	6,834,046

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

As explained in table 5.3, just like the percentage distribution of total population across the urban towns, the percentage distribution of workers shows that Burla and Sambalpur municipality are the two towns where the proportion of workers is highest among its total population. As far as the proportion of main and marginal workers across

the towns in the district is concerned, it is again in both Burla and Sambalpur wherein they are predominantly concentrated. In case of Khordha district, Bhubaneswar and Jatani are the towns where not only highest numbers of workers but also highest number of main and marginal workers are concentrated as shown in table 4.

Percentage Distribution of Households living in Permanent, Semi-Permanent, and Temporary Households according to population census 2011 as explained in table 5 says that in Sambalpur district, we can see around 69.13 percent of households live in permanent houses. Out of that, Burla and Hirakud are the two districts having highest percentage of households living in permanent houses. Around 26 percent of the households in the district lives in semi-permanent houses and the situation in urban areas say that Kochinda and Rengali are the towns where people live most in semi-permanent houses. Moreover, around 3.94 percent live in temporary houses and Redhakhhol and Rengali are the towns where maximum households are residing in temporary houses. Similarly, in Khordha district, out of total households around 80.42 percent live in permanent houses, 6.88 percent live in semi-permanent houses, and 12.37 percent households live in temporary houses. Bhapur and Jatani are the towns wherein maximum households live in permanent houses. Similarly, Banapur and Kaipadar are the towns where maximum households are staying in semi-permanent houses. And as far as temporary houses are concerned, it is Kaipadar and Tangi are the towns where maximum households are staying in temporary houses.

As far as accessibility of households to different sources of drinking water is concerned, as explained in table 6, says that the first main source of drinking water for households in both districts is tap water and next is tube well. In Sambalpur district, around 61 percent households are using tap water as the main source of drinking water and in the corresponding percentage figure in Khordha district is 51.36 percent. Moreover, Sambalpur municipality and Burla NAC are the towns in the district having highest access to tap water as the main source of drinking water. Rengali is the town having least access to tap water. Kochinda is the town whose major

**Table-4.5: Percentage Distribution of Households living in Permanent, Semi-Permanent, and Temporary Households**

TOWNS	Sambalpur		
	Permanent	Semi-Permanent	Temporary
Kochinda	53.01	44.51	01.09
Rengali	60.52	34.38	05.10
Hirakud	62.56	33.30	02.63
Burla	63.99	31.92	03.98
Redhakhoh	52.31	23.05	23.59
Sambalpur(M)	74.97	21.23	02.63
(A) Sambalpur	69.13	25.92	03.94
TOWNS	Khordha		
	Permanent	Semi-Permanent	Temporary
Khordha	79.05	06.98	13.71
Kaipadar	37.15	16.78	46.06
Bhapur	87.07	06.35	06.51
Jatani	84.41	06.28	09.10
Tangi	58.46	15.46	25.78
Baliparapur	74.56	07.52	17.58
Balugaon	82.84	06.06	10.95
Banapur	71.42	16.93	11.04
Bhubaneswar	80.78	06.62	12.25
KHORDHA	80.42	06.88	12.37

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

**Table-4.6: Percentage Distribution of Households by main sources of drinking water**

<b>Sambalpur</b>						
TOWNS	Tap Water	Well	Hand pump	Tube well	River	Others
Kochinda	15.09	25.01	06.23	50.53	00.56	02.59
Rengali	08.31	23.01	31.73	35.14	00.12	01.69
Hirakud	66.03	06.72	08.60	18.48	00.01	00.15
Burla	67.77	09.35	03.00	24.06	00.50	00.33
Redhakhhol	11.98	34.71	17.25	35.09	00.27	00.70
Sambalpur	76.62	03.79	05.47	12.49	00.18	01.44
A.Sambalpur	60.13	08.44	07.02	18.97	00.23	01.18
<b>Khordha</b>						
TOWNS	Tap Water	Well	Hand Pump	Tube Well	River	Others
Khordha	16.07	63.19	06.27	13.36	00.06	01.04
Balipanta	01.46	05.82	76.98	14.71	00.29	00.75
Baliana	08.85	05.68	57.04	26.30	00.04	02.10
Jatani	28.26	55.03	05.31	09.98	00.24	01.19
Tangi	09.44	80.92	02.04	03.37	00.00	04.25
Balugaon	59.10	26.48	00.07	10.03	00.02	04.29
Banapur	06.51	47.69	20.78	24.29	00.21	00.53
Bhubaneswar	57.32	19.06	02.93	19.71	00.23	00.74
KHORDHA	51.36	23.62	05.22	18.69	00.22	00.89

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

Source of drinking water is tube well and same the case with Rengali town. But tap water is the major source of drinking water for Hirakud and so the case with Burla. Tubewell is again the major source of drinking water for Redhakhhol but tap water is the major source of drinking water overally in Sambalpur district and across the towns.

Just like the Sambalpur district, the overall picture in Khordha district says that Tap water is the major source of drinking water in the district too. Out of the total urban places in the district, Khordha is highly dependent on well for drinking water, but Balipanta is highly concentrated on Handpump and similar is the case with Baliana town. Well is the major sourcing of drinking water in case of Jatani and so the case in case of Tangi. For Balugaon, tap water is the major source of drinking water and for Banapur well is the dominant source. Finally, for Bhubaneswar municipality as a whole, tap water is the maximum possible source of drinking water in the district.

**Table-4.7: Percentage Distribution of Households by main source of lighting**

<b>Sambalpur</b>						
TOWNS	Electricity	Kerosene	Solar	Other Oil	Any other	No lighting
Kochinda	67.44	29.22	00.08	00.00	00.08	03.19
Rengali	88.14	09.89	00.14	00.11	00.04	01.67
Hirakud	62.97	35.98	00.80	00.00	00.00	00.24
Burla	89.67	09.13	00.08	00.01	00.07	01.05
Redhakhol	64.70	34.04	00.16	00.00	00.00	01.11
Sambalpur	95.42	03.70	00.07	00.02	00.06	00.73
Asambalpur	89.47	09.33	00.11	00.03	00.05	01.01
<b>Khordha</b>						
TOWNS	Electricity	Kerosene	Solar	Other Oil	Any other	No lighting
Khordha	87.53	10.57	00.19	00.12	00.01	01.58
K. Sadar	64.12	35.76	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.12
Balianta	87.86	11.78	00.00	00.00	00.00	00.36
Balipanta	69.44	28.84	00.14	00.02	00.17	01.39
Jatani	87.00	11.52	00.08	00.07	00.04	01.28
Tangi	66.78	31.93	00.13	00.53	00.00	00.62
Balugaon	84.83	13.23	00.07	00.07	00.02	01.77
Banapur	85.46	13.84	00.21	00.09	00.06	00.35
Bhubaneswar	86.53	11.74	00.18	00.14	00.10	01.30
KHORDHA	86.01	12.31	00.17	00.14	00.09	01.28

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

The overall picture in the above table 7 in explaining the distribution of households by main source of lighting says that electricity is the first and kerosene is the second main source of lighting in both the district in Odisha. Among the urban towns in Sambalpur district, Sambalpur is having highest access to electricity as the main source of lighting and Hirakud is the last. Similarly, Khordha is the town within its urban areas having highest access to electricity as the main source of lighting and Khordha Sadar is the minimum. The access to renewable energy is either very minimum or negligible across the towns in both the districts. Electricity and kerosene, the two being non-renewable sources of lighting, have become the major source of lighting in both the district.

The percentage distribution of households by type of latrine facilities in table-8 says that even today around 40.53 percent of the population in Sambalpur district have no

access to any kind of latrine facilities and the corresponding figure in Khordha district is 23.45 percent. Moreover, in both the districts, the latrines that the households have still being cleaned by people manually which gives evidence that manual scavenging practice is still continuing even today. Again, as the cleaners of drains in towns and cities are primarily from scavenging communities, the night soil disposed into open drain are again cleaned by scavengers which further shows the practice of manual scavenging in a very explicit way even today.

Similarly, the overall picture in the table 9 says that waste water outlets are connected substantially to the open drainage system and most importantly a substantial portion of household have no access to either closed or open drainage for the disposal of their waste water. The broad picture in Khordha district says that a substantial portion of households are having access to closed drainage connecting for waste water outlets. Still a sizeable proportion of households of 35.07 percent have still no access to any kind of drainage facilities which is of course a matter of concern. Moreover, some of the towns like Redhakhol, Rengali, Kochinda in Sambalpur district have really no access to any kind of drainage facilities to dispose their waste water. Towns like KhordhaSadar, Baliana, Balipanta, Tangi, Balugaonetc in Khrodha district have still substantially less access to any kind of drainage facility. The macro picture in Odisha says that the access to closed drainage facilities across the towns is abysmally low which is 39.88 percent in Khordha district and 11.62 percent in Sambalpur district.

**Table-4.8: Percentage Distribution of Households by type of Latrine Facility**

<b>Sambalpur</b>					
TOWNS	Flush Latrine	Pit Latrine	Night soil disposed into open drain	Service latrine by animal and human	No latrine within premises
Kochinda	39.95	03.57	00.15	00.43	55.90
Rengali	33.01	01.45	00.00	00.00	65.54
Hirakud	49.32	02.29	03.34	00.68	44.38
Burla	54.13	01.54	00.52	00.38	43.43
Redhakhol	29.77	03.89	00.11	00.00	66.23
Sambalpur (M)	63.41	01.63	00.67	00.28	34.01
(A)Sambalpur	56.41	01.91	00.83	00.32	40.53
<b>Khordha</b>					
TOWNS	Flush Latrine	Pit Latrine	Night soil disposed into open drain	Service latrine by animal and human	No latrine within premises
Khordha	65.63	02.58	00.27	00.55	30.97
K.Sadar	11.00	10.88	00.35	00.00	77.78
Balianta	35.86	01.11	00.16	00.00	62.87
Balipanta	23.05	05.30	00.62	00.00	71.04
Jatani	68.97	02.03	00.71	00.27	28.03
Tangi	35.52	05.71	00.04	00.09	58.63
Balugaon	52.68	00.99	00.05	01.31	44.97
Banapur	47.74	02.94	00.24	00.09	49.98
Bhubaneswar	72.30	05.64	01.08	01.15	19.83
A.Khordha	69.39	05.17	00.97	01.03	23.45

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*



**Table-4.9: Percentage Distribution of Households by type of Drainage connectivity for waste water outlets**

TOWNS	Sambalpur		
	Closed Drainage	Open Drainage	No Drainage
Kochinda	02.38	26.13	71.49
Rengali	08.39	23.65	67.95
Hirakud	04.60	52.75	42.65
Burla	13.89	45.27	40.84
Redhakhhol	02.38	16.28	81.35
Sambalpur.M	14.10	55.50	30.41
A.Sambalpur	11.62	48.83	39.55
TOWNS	Khordha		
	Closed Drainage	Open Drainage	No Drainage
Khordha	08.59	34.98	56.42
K.Sadar	01.39	19.68	78.94
Balianta	09.92	25.19	64.89
Balipanta	04.43	07.71	87.86
Jatani	10.36	54.97	34.67
Tangi	03.50	12.40	84.10
Balugaon	08.55	23.89	67.56
Banapur	20.72	29.85	49.43
Bhubaneswar	45.89	23.06	31.05
A.Khordha	39.88	25.05	35.07

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

According to table 10, the macro picture in both the districts shows that more than 75 percent of households have kitchen facility to cook food for the household members. Still it is a matter of concern that around 24 percent of the households in both the districts do not have kitchen facilities to cook food.

**Table-4.10: Percentage Distribution of Households by availability of Kitchen Facility**

TOWNS	Sambalpur		
	Has Kitchen	Does not have Kitchen	No cooking
Kochinda	70.76	28.81	0.43
Rengali	66.82	32.85	0.32
Hirakud	78.93	20.78	0.30
Burla	77.31	22.26	0.42
Redhakhhol	82.97	16.33	0.70
Sambalpur.M	74.58	24.95	0.47
A.Sambalpur	75.37	24.17	0.45
TOWNS	Khordha		
	Has Kitchen	Does not have Kitchen	No cooking
Khordha	75.92	23.63	0.46
K.Sadar	63.55	36.46	0.00
Balianta	72.03	27.61	0.36
Balipanta	51.66	48.12	0.22
Jatani	74.74	24.92	0.35
Tangi	37.47	62.40	0.13
Balugaon	75.75	23.60	0.65
Banapur	65.08	34.44	0.47
Bhubaneswar	76.35	22.79	0.87
A. Khordha	75.01	24.02	0.79

*Sources: Population Census Abstract, Population Census of India, 2011*

Having explained certain socio-economic characteristics of households of both the districts from secondary sources in the present section of the chapter, the next section will be followed by a detailed profiling of sample households collected during primary survey and their socio-economic characteristics.

#### **4.4. The World of Work at the Margins: Observations during the Primary Survey**

To explore the issues of accessibility and discrimination faced by manual scavengers in the society and economy, primary sample survey was done in two districts of the state. The survey focused on in-depth interview and discussion with the sample respondents placing the experience of the respondents at the center of survey. The study along with manual scavengers surveyed four different social groups to contextualize the socio-

economic conditions of manual scavengers in relation to the other social groups in the society. Moreover, the survey also focused more on to map the journey of the sample respondents across the generations as far as their socio-economic conditions are concerned. In this regard, the study not just captured some of the important empirical characteristics through a quantitative study to understand their disparities compared to other social groups, but also did in-depth interview to capture the qualitative nuances of their life which are often difficult in quantitative study<sup>14</sup>.

The field survey method typically based on structured questionnaires presumes certain kind of distance between those who would be surveyed and the researcher. Such distance is often thought to be required to be objective. Also, it is presumed that the concepts and categories used in the questionnaires are understood in a similar way by the respondents. Manual scavenging as an occupation and a kind of work is deeply embedded in the layers of (often contradictory) meanings that people in general and the workers engaged in such work attribute to their social and individual conditions. The first challenge of this research was to negotiate such multiple meanings and world-views of the respondents and others to establish a meaningful conversation with those who are being interviewed. Earlier I had just some rhetorical and theoretical understanding about the issue of manual scavenging and scavengers. But the field work was completely a different experience which to some extent conformed to the theoretical assumptions and to some extent came out to be the contrary to it. Initially I had to struggle a lot to find out the areas in which people from sweeping or scavenging community people reside. After recognizing the localities in which they live, I slowly interacted with the people just as a stranger. But from the initial interaction with the people, I could not manage to ask the exact question and so did not get the exact answer from the people. So initial conversations were just superficial. Then I reached to some of the activists who were already known to me working on Dalit issues there in the town. Through them I was made to meet two Munsis (who have been appointed by the Sambalpur municipality to

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<sup>14</sup> Because of the specific nature of the study, the process of conducting the field survey was found to have a significant bearing on the evidence that was collected. That is why a brief description of the process of conducting the field-survey and the insights from the initial and subsequent interactions have been presented in this section.

supervise the cleaning work directly and they are most preferably from the scavenging castes). Both were earlier doing sweeping and cleaning drain works and their parents were doing manual scavenging work which was locally called as *Utha Paikhana* work or *licen kam*. But now both are working as Munsis appointed by Sambalpur Municipality Corporation, in which they are directly supervising the cleaning and sweeping work done by sweepers. This work of manual scavenging is known as *Utha Paikhana* because the pot into which human excreta was collected was manually taken on head by women manual scavengers every day to a far of distance where the Municipality van was standing and that van was disposing off that in a secluded and isolated place. This work of manual scavengers was also known as 'license work' because the urban households in the municipality area were obtaining license from the Municipality to have dry latrines at home and through that license the households were demanding scavengers to clean those dry toilets every day.

Both said with approximate accuracy that this work is no more now and it used to be the case before 1990s. These types of latrines were converted into sanitary septic latrines and people involved in this work were thus stopped to do this inhuman work by Municipality around the beginning of 1990s. But both opined that they have seen this work being done by their parents. And also explained the pathetic and inhuman situation in which their parents were doing. Their parents had to carry the pot with full up human excreta to a far of place even if that was sometime coming to their head and face and also mouth. Because of no possible alternative work, they had to depend on this work only for their survival and so were forced to do this work.

But when Municipality demolished all dry and insanitary latrines as told by both of them, all the hitherto manual scavengers were asked to do sweeping and cleaning the roads and drains thereafter. Since then former manual scavengers are employed as sweepers. During one of my subsequent interactions, one Munsis said that along with the work, the sweepers are facing multiple kinds of discrimination, humiliation and exploitation keeping all these words in ambiguity and asked to wait to get the kinds and meanings of those words till we will interact with municipality officials and their treatment to the sweepers. And he expressed his astonishment that research can also be

done on such issues which are perceived as minor issue by society and for him being this as the inescapable fate of millions of untouchables even today and there is no way out in near future. Initially he suspected my intention of doing this survey doubting me as upper caste. But when I introduced me as an independent research scholar and said that my research survey is not going to put any trouble to his job under municipality, he started opening up gradually and assured me to take to the people who were doing manual scavenging MS and now employed as sweepers. Currently the work among the sweepers is popularly known as ward-charge.

Through both of them I reached to some of the people who are directly involved in 'the work'. Since I approached the workers through the local people and activists, slowly the people started opening up with me which helped me to even frame the question in a right way. By listening to them only I could know that the word manual scavenging has a different name which I had no idea earlier. This single word helped me a lot to interact freely and ask many open ended questions and so on.

Then through direct and continuous interaction with the workers during work and leisure both, I managed to know from some people that this work is no more because of the order of municipality to demolish the dry latrines way back to 20-22 years. Some were of the view that though the work is no more, occasionally we are called by private households to clean their private latrines because of two reasons. One, the machines to clean latrines employed under municipality cannot enter all the houses in the urban localities and second, wherever machines will reach also it is not cleaning the tank completely and so definitely some or the other human labour is used to clean the tank.

The difference between earlier practices and today's practices is that earlier workers were employed directly and regularly by the municipality whereas today they are hired occasionally by the private households themselves. Earlier work was done regularly whereas today the work is done either once in a month, six months or a year. It was regular in past because there was no tanks but small bucket to be replaced every day morning whereas it is occasional because big tanks are there in every household to be cleaned once it get filled which is usually taking months and years.

Another interesting fact is that earlier the scavengers under municipality were cleaning human excreta in the morning, and were cleaning and sweeping roads and localities in the afternoon. And since the scavengers were cleaning the latrines of those households who had taken licence/permission from the local municipality, the work was also known as *licen kam*. But when *utha paikhana* work stopped with the special drive by the municipality to construct new and modern flush latrines with big tanks all the hitherto scavengers were asked just for the cleaning and sweeping of roads, lanes, canals etc. in different words under the municipality. Since then they are known as sweepers and the work is known as *ward charge*. But initially nature of the work used to be regular under municipality. But gradually the work has been contractualized under the municipality in which the number of regular workers is declining and the number of contract workers is increasing. The contract workers who are working just like regular workers are known as N.M.R and the workers who work on daily basis are known as D.L.R. After contractualization, though the N.M.R workers are working like regular workers, they are getting just Rs5000 whereas the regular workers are getting some Rs22000 per month. So there is a vast difference in wage rate between permanent and contractual workers even in the same job and with same work.

Within that limited salary of 5000, the workers have to manage all the household expenditure. And obviously the amount is not sufficient to manage, so they are bound to do some private work in the second half of the day like cleaning latrines of private households, working as cleaner or sweeper in shops, malls, or hospitals and so on. They are unable to give private coaching to their daughters and sons. They are just going to schools that are generally of poor quality. There is no aim, aspiration and inspiration for education. So due to financial problems, no coaching facility, and finally due to lack of conducive environment to study, the students are dropping out very soon and since parents are also not ambitious that someone in the family will do a job, they are also not trying to search for alternative options for the education of children. So the vicious-circle of hereditary-based occupation is still continuing. Young generation has also no special aim and ambition in life and they seem to take the parent's job of sweeping under municipality as the only available employment opportunities. When I asked one 15 year old daughter of a manual scavenger in Sambalpur district about her aim in life, she

replied “I don’t know what I will become. If no other job, then I will also work as sweeper under municipality what my parents are doing”.

Another observation that I came across during survey was that many of the respondents had no ration cards to access the provision of Public Distribution System (PDS). The respondents who had ration cards in their name had mortgaged it with the local money lender. As they are getting very less salary and since that are inadequate amount to manage all the household expenditure, they were forced to borrow money from the local money lenders in which they had to surrender their ration card to him. Ration card were being surrendered as a form of securities on interest based loan from the local money lender. After taking rice, wheat and kerosene on the date of public distribution, they had to again return that to the local money lender on the same day. As long as the loaned amount is not repaid along with the interest to the initial amount, the PDS ration card will be deposited in the house of local money lender. Another serious situation that was observed is that even the passbook is being deposited in the hand of money lender. When the workers will be getting money, the money lender will go to the bank along with the account holder, withdraw money, take the monthly agreed amount money and return the rest amount to the worker. And again keep in his own hand the passbook and it continues till all the borrowed money along with interest amount is paid completely. Moreover, when such respondents were asked about the idea of calculating interest amount to the borrowed money, they expressed their helplessness and said that is calculated only by the money lender. The money lenders primarily come from Upper Castes in the town. So this kind of ignorance and illiteracy gives enough scope to the money lenders to cheat to the workers.

The houses in which all the sweepers are staying are not their own. They don’t have government *patta-parcha* or record of their own house. They have not encroached as illegal migrants from the outside. Rather they are all working under municipality sweepers for many years. But still they have not been provided permanent residential status. Moreover, the migrants from outside started staying in certain bastis by cleaning those areas as those areas were full of jungle and were dirty areas. After cleaning those

areas, they started staying there. But when town is expanding government has not made any attempts to provide residential status to them.

Another interesting fact is that even after working 15-20 years as N.M.R under municipality, their job is still not being regularized. When I inquired about the demand in municipality through the union, I found that the head of the labour union is a person who has nothing to do with the work and worker and a habitual compromiser with the authority to suppress the demands of the worker. As they are all illiterate and that to belong to a much stigmatized occupation even in the urban areas, their demands are less heard and nobody takes interest to help them in getting their legitimate rights. Even people in the same groups are also not helpful to them. Another interesting thing that I observed during the survey is that the system of taking attendance is such that is not the practices usually in other jobs. It was not just taking attendance, but a strange surveillance system in the form of taking their photo every day by the ward supervisor.

The workers and the families who were doing manual scavenging work before 1993 and were transferred to sweeper job as ward-charge were not given any help or legal compensation according to “*Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines Prohibition Act, 1993*”. Most of the respondents expressed their ignorance about the benefits and the provisions in the act. Even the officials had not taken the effort to distribute the benefits according the written provisions in the act.

When I inquired about their origin, I found that almost all are migrants from different rural areas of the neighbouring or nearby districts (Bargarh, Sonapur, Sambalpur, Rourkela, and Jharsuguda). And also I found that some people were brought from different rural areas to do the scavenging work by Sambalpur municipality long back as told by one respondent who is an old manual scavenger. In the place of their origin they were not doing manual scavenging. But after migrating to urban areas in will in search of some better employment opportunities, they ended up in doing scavenging work under municipality. Since then they have hardly managed to do job outside the cleaning work either under municipality or privately.



#### 4. 5. Socio-Economic Characteristics of Sample Households in Odisha

Though the primary focus of the present section of the chapter is to explain the socio-economic characteristics of manual scavengers (MS), but that will be analyzed in relation to another three groups of workers in Odisha: worker doing scavenging earlier but have left scavenging work by now (NMS), Dalit workers but have never done scavenging work (DW), and non-Dalit workers (NDW).

**Table - 4.11: Distribution of Sample Households across Group of Workers**  
(in numbers)

Group of Workers	Sambalpur		Khordha	
	Sambalpur	Burla	Bhubaneswar	Jatani
	Ward No.1	Ward No.2	Ward No.1	Ward No.2
<b>MS</b>	40	40	40	40
<b>NMS</b>	20	20	20	20
<b>DW</b>	20	20	20	20
<b>NDW</b>	20	20	20	20

Source: Primary Field Survey

**Table-4.12: Distribution of workers across gender in both the district of sample survey**

(in percentage)

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			Khordha		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
MS	30.0	70.0	100.0	20.0	80.0	100.0
NMS	58.0	42.0	100.0	54.0	46.0	100.0
DW	60.0	40.0	100.0	50.0	50.0	100.0
NDW	72.0	28.0	100.0	70.0	30.0	100.0
All	55.0	45.0	100.0	48.5	51.5	100.0

Source: Primary Field Survey

Table.4.11 explains the distribution of both male and female workers across the four groups of workers in this primary study. The table shows that out of the total sample respondents in the first district (Sambalpur) around 55 percent are male whereas 45

percent are female. Similarly in the second district (Khordha) of the study area, around 48.5 percent are male and 51.5 percent are female. As far as the Sambalpur district is concerned, out of total manual scavengers that exist in various forms even today, female constitute the majority that is 70 percent and male constitute around 30 percent. Out of the total sample respondents who have already left manual scavenging, around 58 percent are male and 42 percent are female. Further, out of the total Dalit workers who were/are not manual scavengers, around 60 percent are male and 40 percent are female. And out of the total non-Dalit sample workers, around 28 percent are female and 72 percent are male. Similarly the picture in the second district says the similar story in the sense that out of total manual scavengers in the district, around 80 percent are female and 20 percent are male. As far as the comparison between Dalit and Non-Dalit workers is concerned, more of female from Dalits are in work compared to Non-Dalit female.

**Table-4.13: Household Types across the groups of workers**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur				
	Self Employed	Salaried Workers	Casual Labour	Others	Total
MS	02.0	01.0	90.0	07.0	100.0
NMS	12.5	20.0	65.0	02.5	100.0
DW	10.0	25.0	60.0	05.0	100.0
NDW	37.0	46.0	07.0	10.0	100.0
All	21.0	34.0	39.25	05.75	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha				
	Self Employed	Salaried Workers	Casual Labour	Others	Total
MS	08.0	03.0	77.0	12.0	100.0
NMS	10.7	03.0	73.3	13.0	100.0
DW	13.7	28.5	55.3	02.5	100.0
NDW	45.6	41.0	04.4	09.0	100.0
All	25.2	46.0	22.8	06.00	100.0

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

It is shown in the table.4.12, the types of working households across the group of workers in both the districts of Odisha. The overall picture says that a majority of workers are casual labourers in Odisha and the second highest group of workers is regular and wage salaried worker. But the point to be noted in the above table is that among manual scavengers and Dalit workers who are not manual scavengers, they are proportionately concentrated more in casual work. Moreover, the higher percentage of workers who have left scavenging work by now in regular and wage salaried work does not necessarily mean that they are more into formal sector employment. In other words, the people who were earlier doing scavenging directly under the respective municipalities have been shifted to sweeper and cleaning work under again the municipalities. Thus the concentration of Dalit workers in regular and salaried work should be equated with the non-Dalit workers in the study.

The table clearly shows that the people who are involved in manual scavenging are mostly in casual work which does not necessarily produce the formal records to know the existence of manual scavengers in the respective places. It means the inhuman practice of manual scavenging exists but due to laws on the one hand and casual nature of work on the other hand, the existence of the work is seldom noticed by people and policy makers at the same time. Moreover, the table as well through the focused interview with the respondents further make it pretty clear that the people who were exclusively involved in manual scavenging before 1990s, have been either contractual worker under municipalities or they have been employed as casual worker for the same scavenging, sweeping, and cleaning in various public and private sectors.

The table 13 shows the educational status of sample respondents in the study locations. The broad picture in the above table says that out of total sample respondent workers in the study, a majority have reached the educational status up to higher secondary. The second highest proportions of workers are illiterate. But the point to be noted is that among the illiterate workers, the majority belongs to manual scavengers and then who are not scavengers per se but involved in the same kind of job like sweeping and cleaning either under municipalities or private sectors. And we can see that an overwhelming proportion in the first three category of workers are completely illiterate and

they are from Dalit background, which confirms the larger macro picture of wide spread of illiteracy among the ex-untouchables in the country. Similarly if we will go to the higher level of education, we can find the first two groups of workers are not at all having educational status of graduation and post-graduation. It is to some extent upwardly mobile Dalits and mostly Non-Dalits who are largely having the education of graduation and post-graduation.

**Table-4.14: Educational Status of different group of Workers**

Groups of workers	Illiterate	Literate upto primary	Prim to higher secondary	Graduate	Post Graduate	Total
	<b>Sambalpur</b>					
MS	29.7	35.5	33.6	1.2	0	100
NMS	21.5	16.9	52.9	6.9	0	100
DW	14.8	19.5	43.3	20.5	1.9	100
NDW	3.8	10.4	49.7	29.7	6.4	100
All	16.7	13.7	54.2	11.8	3.6	100
<b>Khordha</b>						
MS	37.9	33.4	28.5	12	0	100
NMS	22.3	15	58.8	3.9	0	100
DW	16.7	22.5	40.2	11.9	8.7	100
NDW	5.7	13.3	36.7	36	8.3	100
All	14.6	17.2	42	16.9	9.3	100

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

**Table-4.15: Percentage distribution of group of workers in various land possessed categories**

Land Possessed Category	Group of Workers in Sambalpur			
	MS	NMS	DW	NDW
Less than 0.41 ha	83.3	80.3	67.0	60.3
0.41 ha - 1.00 ha	09.8	10.2	14.4	11.1
1.01 ha - 4.00 ha	06.5	08.2	16.1	15.6
More than 4.00 ha	00.4	01.3	02.6	13.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Land Possessed Category	Group of Workers in Khordha			
	MS	NMS	DW	NDW
Less than 0.41 ha	82.3	80.0	64.4	60.7
0.41 ha - 1.00 ha	10.8	12.1	15.3	12.0
1.01 ha - 4.00 ha	06.3	07.1	18.2	15.1
More than 4.00 ha	00.6	00.8	02.1	12.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

In the above Table 14 MS means manual scavengers; NMS means the workers who have already scavenging work by now; DW means Dalit Workers who have never done scavenging work; and NDW means non-Dalit workers. The table explains the land possessed by different social group of workers in the study region. One of the important feature of the table is that in the first land possessed category (less than 0.40ha) manual scavengers and worker who were scavengers earlier are the highest, which implies that either they are landless or the land (1 acre). Having land of less than 0.41 ha around 71.0 percent from MS, 83.3 percent are NMS, 67 percent are DW and 60.3 percent are NDW. Sample workers having land between 0.41 ha – 1.00 ha are 18.2 percent from MS, 9.8 percent from NMS, 14.4 percent from DW and 11.1 percent from NDW. Moreover, for the category of land more than 4 ha, 1.3 percent is MS, 0.4 percent are NMS, 2.6 percent are DW and 3.3 percent are NDW. In other words, the percentage share of MS

and NMS are very less in the higher land possessed category (more than 4 ha) compared to the Non-Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe migrants in both the time period.

**Table-4.16: Distribution of Sample Households by types of Latrine Facilities**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			
	Flush Latrine	Pit Latrine	Service latrine	Total
MS	41.5	40.2	18.3	100.0
NMS	43.4	45.3	11.3	100.0
DW	46.9	42.5	10.6	100.0
NDW	58.7	27.3	14.0	100.0
All	45.9	48.0	06.1	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha			
	Flush Latrine	Pit Latrine	Service latrine	Total
MS	42.6	45.3	12.1	100.0
NMS	45.2	41.3	13.5	100.0
DW	48.4	46.0	05.6	100.0
NDW	49.7	44.2	06.1	100.0
All	50.3	40.2	09.5	100.0

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

The distribution of sample households in the above table by types of latrine facilities in both the study districts says that a substantial portion of households are using pit latrines followed by flush latrine and service latrines. Moreover, on an overage some 6 percent sample households in Sambalpur and around 9.5 percent households in Khordha are still using service latrine which signifies the existence of the practice of manual scavenging in the both the districts. However, as far as the picture across different working groups are concerned, it is non-dalit working households who are using flush latrine the most among the sample households. The practice of using service latrine though is very much high among the manual scavengers themselves due to no access to proper flush latrines, still a substantial portion of sample households among Non-Dalit workers are also using service latrine. The use of pit latrine among the households across the working groups suggest that the use of manual labour to clean these saptic tanks though not every day but in some

regular intervals denotes the very existence of manual scavenging practice in the society even today.

**Table-4.17: Percentage Distribution of Sample Households by Sources of Drinking Water**

<b>Group of Workers</b>	<b>Sambalpur</b>				
	Tap Water	Hand Pump	Tube Well	Well	Total
MS	08.4	26.5	30.0	35.1	100.0
NMS	12.3	28.4	38.2	21.1	100.0
DW	22.1	32.3	41.5	04.1	100.0
NDW	39.6	24.1	27.3	09.0	100.0
All	41.2	25.2	28.6	05.0	100.0
<b>Group of Workers</b>	<b>Khordha</b>				
	Tap Water	Hand Pump	Tube Well	Well	Total
MS	13.4	27.4	45.1	14.1	100.0
NMS	15.1	26.8	33.1	15.0	100.0
DW	25.2	22.8	45.0	07.0	100.0
NDW	48.3	17.6	32.0	02.1	100.0
All	45.3	22.2	31.3	01.2	100.0

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

The sources of drinking water in both the districts show that it is Tap Water which is the dominant source of drinking water. Tap water is followed by Tube Well as the second major source of drinking water in both the districts. Though Tap water is the dominant source of drinking water in both the districts, it is maximum at Khordha compared to Sambalpur. Similar is the picture in case of tube well as well. Though, Well is the less prevalent or used source of drinking water, about 5 percent of the households in Sambalpur still depend on Well for their drinking water. As far as the sources of drinking water across the group of workers are concerned, well is still the major source for the manual scavengers in Sambalpur and Tube Well in Khordha district. In other words, around 35 percent of the manual scavenging households in Sambalpur depend upon well for the drinking water. Both hitherto manual scavengers and Dalit workers are using Tube

Well as the major source of drinking water in both the districts. In case of Non-Dalit workers, it is Tap Water which is the dominant source of drinking water in both the districts.

**Table-4.18: Percentage Distribution of Sample Households by the Sources of lighting**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			
	Electricity	Kerosene	Solar	Total
MS	48.5	51.5	00.0	100.0
NMS	50.6	49.4	00.0	100.0
DW	58.3	41.7	00.0	100.0
NDW	64.5	33.0	02.5	100.0
All	69.4	26.1	04.5	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha			
	Electricity	Kerosene	Solar	Total
MS	46.7	53.3	00.0	100.0
NMS	51.3	48.7	00.0	100.0
DW	57.6	42.4	00.0	100.0
NDW	75.4	21.3	03.3	100.0
All	79.3	15.5	05.2	100.0

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

The above table gives the percentage distribution of sample households by the sources of lighting across the group of workers in both the districts of Odisha. The aggregate figure in both the district says that electricity is the major source of lighting in study areas followed by Kerosene and Solar. Around 69 percent households in Sambalpur and 79 percent households in Khordha are using electricity as the major source of lighting. Kerosene is still the second most dominant source of lighting in Sambalpur in which around 26 percent of sample households depend on Kerosene. Moreover, the picture across the working groups implies that manual scavenger and the workers who were in manual scavenging in past are still majorly using Kerosene as the main source of lighting in both the study districts. As far as the use of solar energy is concerned, 4.5 percent household respondents in Sambalpur and 5.2 percent household respondents are using solar in study areas. Out of that only few Non-Dalit households have access to solar as the source of lighting. But overally, the figure is still very negligible.



**Table-4.19: Percentage Distribution of Sample Households by Drainage Connectivity**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			
	Closed Drainage	Open Drainage	No Drainage	Total
MS	04.2	26.1	69.7	100.0
NMS	04.7	25.3	70.0	100.0
DW	04.6	52.7	42.7	100.0
NDW	13.8	45.2	41.0	100.0
All	10.5	18.6	70.9	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha			
	Closed Drainage	Open Drainage	No Drainage	Total
MS	02.6	19.3	78.1	100.0
NMS	09.1	25.9	65.0	100.0
DW	08.9	34.5	56.6	100.0
NDW	16.4	37.7	45.9	100.0
All	11.3	34.6	54.1	100.0

*Source: Primary Field Survey*

The overall pictures of drainage connectivity implies that a substantial proportion of sample households in both the districts have no access to proper drainage connectivity to dispose their waste water. Around 71 percent in Sambalpur and 54 percent in Khordha have almost no connectivity to drainage facilities. Moreover, even if some sample households have connectivity to drainage, they are connected mostly to open drainage. In other words, around 18.6 percent households in Sambalpur and 34.6 percent households in Khordha are disposing waste water and materials to open drains. The picture across the working group implies that compared to Non-Dalit and Dalit workers who have never done scavenging work, manual scavengers are having substantially higher problem in accessing drainage facilities. To its reverse, it is Non-Dalit workers who have to an extent better access to closed drainage facilities.

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

The socio-economic characteristics of manual scavengers in the study areas have peculiar stories to tell. As far as the comparison between Dalit and Non-Dalit workers is concerned, more of female from Dalits are in work compared to Non-Dalit female. The workers who were exclusively involved in manual scavenging before 1990s, have been either contractual worker under municipalities or they have been employed as casual worker for the same scavenging, sweeping, and cleaning in various public and private sectors. It is to some extent upwardly mobile Dalits and mostly Non-Dalits who are largely having the education of graduation and post-graduation. The percentage share of manual scavengers and Non-Manual Scavengers are very less in the higher land possessed category compared to the Dalit and Non-Dalit workers. Both hitherto manual scavengers and Dalit workers are using Tube Well as the major source of drinking water in both the districts. In case of Non-Dalit workers, it is Tap Water which is the dominant source of drinking water in both the districts. The picture across the working group implies that compared to Non-Dalit and Dalit workers who have never done scavenging work, manual scavengers are having substantially higher problem in accessing drainage facilities.

## *CHAPTER – 5*

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND DISCRIMINATION: A STUDY OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS IN ODISHA**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The aspect of exclusion and discrimination related to the question of caste, gender, religion, race etc., has been studied in different disciplines within social sciences. But the study of group based exclusion and discrimination in the discipline of economics is not so old<sup>15</sup>. However, even with its short span of engagement, there are wide varieties of studies (Thorat, 2010; Madheswaran and Attewell, 2010; Deshpande, 2011) with respect to group identities by prominent economists in India and across the world. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of studies on manual scavengers and the exclusion and discrimination that they face not only for being in the same age old practice of scavenging but also after leaving this inhuman occupation. Therefore, the primary focus of the study and also of this chapter is to analyze not only the obvious existence of manual scavengers in spite of laws enacted by Indian parliament, but also to see various kinds of discrimination they encounter in daily basis because of their stigmatized caste-based occupational identity called manual scavengers.

The study has taken a comparative framework taking four different groups of workers mentioned above in urban spaces along with the main focused group of worker i.e., manual scavengers. They are –

- a) The people who are doing manual scavenging (MS)
- b) Who have left manual scavenging by now (NMS)
- c) Dalit main workers who never did manual scavenging (DW), and
- d) Non-Dalit Workers in general (NDW)

Because the pertinent question of stigma, exclusion and discriminated emanating from it cannot be understood without the detailed analysis of the structure and relation of work

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<sup>15</sup> Garry Backer (1957), (Arrow, 1971), Akerlof (1976), Scoville (1991)

and so different groups of workers working and also relationship among different working groups in the society. The present chapter will analyze various kinds of exclusion and discrimination in a comparative perspective that they face vis-à-vis other group of workers in Indian caste society because of stigma attached to their caste and occupation. Moreover, the analysis is confined in two markets in particular – Urban Labour Market and Urban Credit Market in both the study district of Odisha.

## **5.2. Accessibility and Discrimination**

Before going into the empirical evidence of accessibility and discrimination in labour market and credit market, it is very much imperative to revisit briefly some of the theoretical debates within the discipline of economics. To begin with, the classical ‘Subsistence Wage Theory’ in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century, also known as Ricardian Theory of Wage, relied heavily upon the Malthusian postulation which held that the wages would inevitably tend towards the minimum owing to an ever-increasing population. Again, Wage Fund Theory, also from the classical era, proposed that wages depended on the relative amounts available with employers for payment of workers and the size of the labour force. Wages increase only with an increase in the resources of the employers or a decrease in the number of workers.

20<sup>th</sup> century (Neo-Classical School of Thought), the emergence of the marginal revenue productivity theory, stated that wages are determined by the incremental revenue created by the deployment of the last workers. According to Marxist school of thought, it is socially necessary average labour time to produce a commodity that decides the wage per unit of labour in the society. Moreover, according to Keynesian school of thought, it is the effective demand in the economy that decides the wage rate. In other words, more the effective demand, there will be more production, higher demand of labour and so higher wage rate and vice-versa. Recent debates on wage determination links wages with collective bargaining, existence of sticky wages, promulgation of stipulated minimum wages through the law and so on.

However, no single theory in economics talks about the role of non-economic factors in the determination of wage per unit of labour in the economy. Almost all the

theories assumes that wage rate as such is given and governed by the ability to work by the workers and the ability to pay by the employers. All the theories also assume that workers are heterogeneous only in terms of their individual skills and abilities. But studies by Garry Backer (1957), Arrow (1971), Akerlof (1976), Scoville (1991) and many others say that wage determination is not always about individual skills and abilities and rather it is also deeply influenced by the social identities of the individual labourer. In this regard, workers in India are recognized more with their ascribed social identities irrespective of their individual skill and abilities. And some social identities being always filled with some or the other form of stigma and prejudice, workers from that social groups are bound to face discrimination in their day to day life.

Caste is an important characteristic of the occupational and hierarchical structure in India. The notion of untouchability separated the lower castes from the main body of other castes for centuries and this perpetuated the stronghold of caste in social and economic life. In the traditional Indian structure, lower castes were expected to provide basic services for the dominant castes in return for which they received livelihood through payments, mostly in kind. The lower castes worked within the caste hierarchy. With abject poverty and illiteracy coupled with religious and social justification for keeping them underdeveloped, this section of the population in India have been kept away from upward occupational mobility. It is evident that caste structure is a labour structure, created primarily for the division of labour and occupational specialization. The persistent and adversity of the caste system is evident not only in the traditional social structure, but also in the modern market and non-market institutions which is the main subject matter of this study. The data in this study comes from a primary survey of almost 400 households in two districts in Odisha, a state in India. The survey contains detailed information on demographic and household characteristics of individual workers. Based on all these variables collected through primary survey, the present section of the chapter will analyze the aspect of both accessibility and discrimination in different market and non-market institutions.

### 5.2.1. Labour Market Discrimination

Labour market discrimination essentially implies a situation wherein equally productive people are treated differently in the labour market based on characteristics unrelated to their individual productivity. Initially studies on labour market discrimination focused more in explaining wage gaps between genders and between races in developed countries (Becker, 1957; Arrow, 1972). The labour market discrimination based on caste in India is a less researched area. In the urban labour market, recruitment is supposed to be done by formal methods and caste is less likely to play a role in earnings determination. But the present study would be an empirical investigation of labour market discrimination based on caste. In view of this, an attempt has been made to investigate some aspects of possible discrimination among the workers in urban areas in Odisha. In this context, certain questions have been discussed in this chapter: Whether caste discrimination exists among the workers in Urban Odisha; whether it exists in the form of job/wage discrimination; to what extent it exist among them. To verify the above questions data socio-economic characteristics of around 400 sample households, collected thorough primary survey, have been analyzed with the help few statistical tools and techniques.

To explain whether caste discrimination exist among the workers in urban Odisha, it is analyzed with the help of *average daily wages* of different social group of workers under study. The daily wages is calculated by dividing total wages reported during the week divided by the number of days of work in the last week and is reported in current prices. As explained in the table 1, the average daily wages of workers both who are still doing manual scavenging and who have left the scavenging work by now are still get wages much lower than non-scavenging Dalit workers and non-Dalit workers. This trend is not only reflected in the total picture but also found both in male and female across the group of workers. Moreover, female across the workers age getting less wage rate than their male counterparts but scavenging women both currently engaged and the women who have left the work are more discriminated in terms of wage rate. The picture of discrimination is almost same in both the study districts. This table briefly implies certain facts. First, the scavenging caste workers are the most discriminated groups among the workers even in urban areas. Second, even after leaving the occupation because of their

stigmatized identity they are again discriminated in non-scavenging occupations as well. Third, as far as gender aspect is concerned, it is the women from scavenging castes are the worst sufferer of caste based discrimination even in the urban labour market.

To analyze the job discrimination in the urban labour market in Odisha, table 4 explains the percentage distribution of workers across the work status in both the districts of Odisha. The overall picture says that a majority of workers are casual labourers in Odisha and the second highest group of workers is regular and wage salaried worker. But the point to be noted in the above table is that among manual scavengers and Dalit workers who are not manual scavengers, they are proportionately concentrated more in casual work. Moreover, the higher percentage of workers who have left scavenging work by now in regular and wage salaried work does not necessarily mean that they are more into formal sector employment. In other words, the people who were earlier doing scavenging directly under the respective municipalities have been shifted to sweeper and cleaning work under again the municipalities. Thus the concentration of Dalit workers in regular and salaried work should not be equated with the non-Dalit workers in the study. The table clearly shows that the people who are involved in manual scavenging are mostly in casual work which does not necessarily produce the formal records to know the existence of manual scavengers in the respective places. It means the inhuman practice of manual scavenging exists but due to laws on the one hand and casual nature of work on the other hand, the existence of the work is seldom noticed by people and policy makers at the same time. Moreover, the table as well through the focused interview with the respondents further make it pretty clear that the people who were exclusively involved in manual scavenging before 1990s, have been either contractual worker under municipalities or they have been employed as casual worker for the same scavenging, sweeping, and cleaning in various public and private sectors.

**Table-5.1. Distribution of Workers across the work status**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur				
	Self Employed	Salaried Workers	Casual Labour	Others	Total
Manual Scavenger(MS)	02.0	01.0	90.0	07.0	100.0
Worker but left MS	12.5	20.0	65.0	02.5	100.0
Dalit workers but not MS	10.0	25.0	60.0	05.0	100.0
Non Dalit Worker	37.0	46.0	07.0	10.0	100.0
All	21.0	34.0	39.25	05.75	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha				
	Self Employed	Salaried Workers	Casual Labour	Others	Total
Manual Scavenger(MS)	08.0	03.0	77.0	12.0	100.0
Worker but left MS	10.7	03.0	73.3	13.0	100.0
Dalit workers but not MS	13.7	28.5	55.3	02.5	100.0
Non Dalit Worker	45.6	41.0	04.4	09.0	100.0
All	25.2	46.0	22.8	06.00	100.0

Source: Primary Field Survey

**Table-5.2: Average Daily Wages of Group of Workers**

(in Rupees)

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			Khordha		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
MS	43.6	21.4	34.6	56.8	25.8	48.8
NMS	45.6	27.8	40.8	58.5	31.4	50.4
DW	49.8	28.9	40.9	71.2	33.2	55.6
NDW	65.7	33.4	56.7	93.6	47.3	90.7
Total	57.9	31.5	50.8	88.9	41.3	76.4

Source: Primary Field Survey



Similarly table 2 explains the average daily wage of workers across their religious identity. As explained, the average daily wages of workers both who are still doing manual scavenging and who have left the scavenging work by now are still get wages much lower than non-scavenging Dalit workers and non-Dalit workers. This trend is found both among Hindus and Christians. Moreover, Hindu workers are getting less wage rate than their Christians counterparts. The picture of discrimination is almost same in both the study districts for the two socio-religious groups. The overall picture in the table briefly implies certain facts. The manual scavengers workers are the most discriminated groups among the workers across the religions. Even after leaving the occupation because of their stigmatized identity they are again discriminated in non-scavenging occupations as well which implies that changing of religion has not really helped them in terms of leaving caste-based stigma. Though the pictures of wage discrimination across socio-religious groups are almost similar, the average wage rate across the workers is bit more in the Khordha district may be because of better opportunities due to more urbanization there. However, a manual scavenger whether in Hindu religion or converted to other religions like Christianity, she/he is still prone to discrimination because of her/his caste-based occupational identity.

To explain the convergence of wage rate among social groups, the ration of daily wages of each group of workers to Non-Dalit worker (NDW) is calculated in the table 3. The table shows that the wages of manual Scavenger was 61 percent that of Non-Dalit workers, the wages of NMS was 71 percent that of others and of Dalit Workers was 72 percent of others in Sambalpur district. The picture in Khordha district says that the wages of MS was 53 percent that of NDW; the wages of NMS was 55 percent that of NDW; and the wages of DW was 61 percent that of NDW. The picture is almost same in case of both male and female workers across the group of workers in both the districts under the study. Therefore, the overall picture in the table says that manual scavengers both currently working as scavengers and who have already left this work are not only discriminated against both from the Non-Scavenging Dalit workers and Non-Dalit workers in the urban labour market as well.

**Table-5. 3: Average Daily wages by socio-religious groups of workers**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			
	Hinduism	Christianity	Others	Total
MS	46.71	52.34	34.17	34.6
NMS	49.67	69.54	46.34	40.8
DW	58.98	79.33	73.47	40.9
NDW	91.12	97.21	75.34	56.7
Total	76.13	92.56	68.54	50.8
Group of Workers	Khordha			
	Hinduism	Christianity	Others	Total
MS	47.64	57.23	36.14	48.8
NMS	53.66	72.55	48.44	50.4
DW	59.87	89.56	79.64	55.6
NDW	94.43	99.41	85.13	90.7
Total	82.32	94.85	78.45	76.4

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

**Table-5. 4: Ratio of Daily wages of Group of Workers**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			Khordha		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
MS	0.66	0.64	0.61	0.60	0.54	0.53
NMS	0.69	0.83	0.71	0.62	0.66	0.55
DW	0.75	0.86	0.72	0.76	0.70	0.61
NDW	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

Table 5.5 explains the distribution of different social group of workers as per their access to paid leave. Table says that manual scavengers in both the study districts have almost no access to paid leave. But the workers who have left scavenging work by now have some access to paid leave. For example only around 5 percent workers in Sambalpur District and only around 8 percent workers in Khordha district, who have left scavenging work and engaged in other activities, have access to paid leave. But the Dalit workers who have never done scavenging work, have relatively higher access to paid leave but much lower if we will compare with the Non-Dalit Workers. While only 25 percent of Dalit workers are accessing paid leave, around 45 percent Non-Dalit workers are accessing paid leave job in Sambalpur district. The picture is almost same in Khordha district as well.

**Table-5.5. Distribution of Group of Workers by the eligibility for paid leave**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			Khordha		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
MS	00.0	100.0	100.0	00.0	100.0	100.0
NMS	05.0	95.0	100.0	08.1	91.9	100.0
DW	25.0	75.0	100.0	29.4	70.6	100.0
NDW	45.0	55.0	100.0	53.5	46.5	100.0

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

**Table-5.6. Distribution of Workers whether they are availing any social security benefits**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur			Khordha		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
MS	00.0	100.0	100.0	00.0	100.0	100.0
NMS	00.0	100.0	100.0	06.1	91.9	100.0
DW	21.9	78.1	100.0	33.4	66.6	100.0
NDW	43.2	56.6	100.0	61.2	38.8	100.0

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

**Table-5.7. Distribution of Workers by the types of Job Contract**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur				
	1	2	3	4	Total
MS	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
NMS	78.5	14.4	4.9	2.2	100.0
DW	72.3	22.5	3.1	2.1	100.0
NDW	47.7	12.3	15.5	24.5	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha				
	1	2	3	4	Total
MS	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
NMS	76.8	15.7	4.1	3.4	100.0
DW	67.3	34.4	5.2	3.1	100.0
NDW	45.8	14.2	12.3	27.7	100.0

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

N.B: No Written Job Contract = 1, Written Job Contract for 1 year or less = 2, More than one but less than 3 year = 3, more than 3 years = 4

Table 5.6 explains the access to different social security benefits by different social group of workers in the study region. Table says that the workers who are still engaged and who have left scavenging now don't have any access to any social security benefits in both the study districts. Compared to scavengers both currently working and who have left by now, Dalit workers have some access to some or the other form of social security benefits. For instance, around 21.9 percent Dalit workers in Sambalpur District and 33.4 percent dalit workers in Khordha district have access to social security benefits. But compared to the first three group of workers, Non-Dalit Workers have highest access to social security benefits in both the study districts. Around 43.2 percent Non-Dalit workers in Sambalpur district and 61.2 percent Non-Dalit worker in Khordha district have access to social security benefits which is much higher compared to both Dalits workers and manual scavengers. The broad picture in the table says that Dalits in general have very less access to social security benefits in the urban labour market in Odisha. Moreover, Within Dalits as well it is the scavengers who are in much more disadvantageous positions compared to other group of workers in accessing social security benefits.

Table 5.7 explains the nature of Job contract that different group of workers are working in the urban labour market in the study region of Odisha. Table says that the social groups of workers who are still engaged in scavenging work are absolutely working without any written job contract in both the districts. This may be due to legal ban on the practice of manual scavenging work. But this does not necessarily mean that there is no practice of manual scavenging work in Odisha. Rather the work is done completely without any written contract to avoid the legal scanner. But the scavengers who have left this job and shifted to other forms of work, though working mostly without any written contract, have some access to work with written contract. For instance, though 78 percent of workers in this working group are involved in work without any written job contract, around 22 percent have some access to jobs with written contract. Moreover, even among Dalit workers majority of around 72 percent are working in the urban labour market without any written job contract. But compared to Dalit workers, it is the scavengers as such who are the worst sufferers in accessing the work with written job contract. However, it is Non-Dalit workers who by and large have more access to

work with written job contract. Around 47.7 percent in Sambalpur and 45.8 percent in Khordha among Non-Dalit workers have access to job with written contract.

**Table-5.8. Major Determinants of Better Paid Job across Social Group of Workers**

Dependent Variable in the model is Getting Better Paid Jobs: Yes=1, No=0					
Independent Variables		MS	NMS	DW	NDW
Sex	Female®				
	Male	2.176***	2.648***	9.481** *	11.427** *
Age Group	0-14®				
	15-59	7.314***	7.632***	15.691* **	20.493** *
	60 and above	0.089**	0.974**	0.922** *	0.979**
Educational Level	Illiterate®				
	Literate upto primary	0.436***	0.540***	0.553** *	0.556***
	Primary and Middle	0.583***	0.716***	0.657** *	1.086***
	Secondary	0.839***	0.933***	1.078** *	1.594***
	Higher secondary & above	0.127***	0.971***	1.259** *	1.495***
Land Possessed	Less than 0.4 ha®				
	0.41 ha - 1.00 ha	0.704***	0.970	1.208	1.036
	1.01 ha - 4.00 ha	1.234***	1.413***	1.662** *	2.341***
	More than 4.00 ha	1.023***	1.159***	1.265** *	1.721***
Statistics	Number of Observations	100	100	100	100
	Constant	1.161	0.420	0.721	0.574
	-2 Log Likelihood	101352.4	191692.5	46077.1	174998.2
		85	21	41	52
	Chi-square	44493.72	95585.33	6294.74	27724.25
		2	1	2	0
	Negelkarke R Square	0.426	0.471	0.194	0.225

\*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p(0.01-0.05), ha = hactre

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

In the binary logistic analysis in the table 5.8, the binary dependent variable is better paid jobs (better paid job =1, Otherwise = 0) and the independent variables in the model are economic status represented through MPCE quartiles, general educational level, the land possessed, age group, and sex etc., which are likely to influence the accessibility to better paid job in the urban labour market. The binary logistic analysis is based on combined data of both the study districts – Sambalpur and Khordha.

Table explains that across the social group of workers, it is male compared to female workers who are more likely to access better paid jobs in the urban labour market. Nevertheless, male workers both currently engaged in scavenging work (MS) and who have left the job by now (NMS) are likely to access less to better paid jobs compared to the male among the non-scavenging Dalit workers (DW) and Non-Dalit workers (NDW). In other words, the likelihood to get better paid jobs is more among the Non-Dalit male workers and so Dalit male workers in general and Scavenging male workers in particular are less likely to get better paid jobs compared to the Non-Dalit male workers. Thus, though male are more likely to get better paid jobs across the social groups of workers, all male are not in same advantageous positions which implies that discrimination still exist in getting better paid jobs in the urban labour market in Odisha.

Similarly the adult age group people are more likely to get better paid jobs compared to the 0-14 year age group, which is the reference age group in the model. But the people of 60 year and above age are less likely to get better paid jobs compared to the reference age group. This is almost the trend in all the social groups of workers in the study regions. Still, the adult age group of workers across the social groups has differential likelihood in getting better paid jobs in the market. Adult age group among the MS workers is less likely to access better paid jobs compared to other social groups in its relative sense. Moreover, adult age group within the Non-Dalit workers has the highest probability of getting better paid jobs in the market.

There is a positive relationship between economic status of people and their chances to get better paid jobs in the urban market. In other words, economically upper strata people across the social groups are likely to get better paid jobs in the market. It

means as economic status increases the probability to get better paid job increases. But the workers across the social groups, who are economically poor, compared to their rich counterparts within the group are less likely to get better paid jobs. Similarly workers from upper educational status across the social groups are more likely to get better paid jobs. This implies that the workers having higher educational status are likely to get better paid jobs because of their higher skills out of it. However, the degree of probability of getting better paid job is not same for all the group of workers. In other words, while the Non-Dalit workers have most likely to get better paid jobs, the first three groups of workers are less likely to get better paid jobs. The picture is almost same of workers having different size of land. The workers having higher and higher land in their possession are likely to get better paid jobs more in the urban market compared to the workers having no land or minimum land in their possession.

### **5.2.2. Credit Market Discrimination**

Access to resources is very important in improving the conditions of the disadvantaged groups in the society. Access to financial resources in particular is very much imperative to facilitate upward economic and social mobility for them. In India, caste as a form of social identity remains an enduring predictor of economic status. It affects not only the occupation and employment in the society, but also decides the access to different resources and opportunities in the economy. As explained in the previous section, caste is a very discriminating factor for the workers who come from lowest strata of the society. This disadvantaged social groups being prone to discrimination in labour market, they can perhaps deal discrimination and exclusion better by moving towards self-employment in the urban business economy (Mosse, 2018; p.429). A better access to financial resources in the urban credit market is very much needed for a successful transition towards urban business economy. But the access to urban credit market, both formal and informal, is contingent upon so many factors and the prominent among them is the credit worthiness of the borrowers which essentially refers to the individual characteristics like employment status, type of account, land ownerships, economic status etc. But in this study, we focus on the role of group identity in general and caste identity in particular in accessing the credit market. In this regard, we will be analyzing whether there is equal



access to credit for all the group of workers or not. Moreover, if there is unequal access for different groups then why and what are the determining factors for this.

To understand the major source of credit for different group of works, table 5.9 explains the percentage distribution of group of workers according to their major source of credit in the urban credit market in study areas. For manual scavengers micro-finance is the major source of credit followed by money lenders. But bank is the least major source of credit for them. For the manual scavengers, who have left scavenging work by now, also dependent most on micro-finance as the major source of finance followed by money lenders. And just like the manual scavengers, they are also least dependent on Banks for credit. Similarly, for the Dalit workers in general also, micro-finance is the major source of credit followed by friends and relatives. However, for Non-Dalit Workers, relatives/friends are the major source of credit followed by banks as the second major source of credit. Money lenders are the least dependent source of credit. The picture across the workers is same in both the study districts in Odisha. The overall picture says that for Dalits

**Table.5.9: Major Sources of Credit for the Group of Workers**

Group of Workers	Sambalpur					
	Banks	Money Lenders	Relatives/ Friends	Micro Finance	Others	Total
MS	05.6	25.4	13.5	36.1	19.4	100.0
NMS	08.0	27.1	16.4	40.2	08.3	100.0
DW	10.5	19.3	21.7	42.2	06.3	100.0
NDW	25.7	11.6	35.4	16.1	11.2	100.0
Group of Workers	Khordha					
	Banks	Money Lenders	Relatives/ Friends	Micro Finance	Others	Total
MS	05.3	24.7	12.2	39.3	18.5	100.0
NMS	10.2	26.3	15.2	41.2	07.1	100.0
DW	12.6	17.2	18.3	44.3	07.6	100.0
NDW	31.5	11.8	36.2	12.2	08.3	100.0

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

**Table.5.10. Distribution of workers having saving account in Banks**

Group Of Workers	Sambalpur			Khordha		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
MS	12.0	88.0	100.0	21.3	78.7	100.0
NMS	23.4	76.6	100.0	33.6	66.4	100.0
DW	35.3	64.7	100.0	48.2	51.8	100.0
NDW	69.5	30.5	100.0	76.7	23.3	100.0

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

In general and for manual scavengers in particular, informal sources are the major source of credit unlike the Non-Dalit workers who by and large depend most on formal credit institutions.

The accessibility to formal credit institutions in the urban labour market can be better understood by looking at the distribution of workers having saving bank account. In this regard, table 5.10 explains the percentage distribution of workers having saving bank account in any banks. Among the manual scavengers, around 12 percent in Sambalpur district and around 21.3 percent in Khordha district have saving account in banks. In other words, around 88 percent in Sambalpur and 78.7 percent in Khordha don't have any saving account in banks. Among Non-Manual Scavengers, around 23.4 percent in Sambalpur district and around 33.6 percent in Khordha district don't have saving account. Similarly, among Dalit workers, around 64.7 percent in Sambalpur district and 51.8 percent in Khordha district don't have saving account in banks. But around 69.5 percent Non-Dalit workers in Sambalpur district and 76.7 percent in Khordha district don't have saving account. The broad picture implies that it is manual scavengers are most under-represented in terms of having saving account in banks. But the Non-Dalit workers are the group of workers having highest number of saving accounts in banks.

Table.5.11 explains the percentage distribution of workers whether they have applied for loans in banks and whether the applications were approved. In Sambalpur district around 32.4 percent manual scavengers applied loan in last one year but out of that only 2.1 percent applications were approved for loans. Similarly in Khordha district, out of 35.3 applications from manual scavengers, only 5.4 percent applications were approved. Out of 36.2 applicants from the Non-Manual scavengers, only 7.3 percent applications were approved in Sambalpur district. And the corresponding figure in Khordha district is only 10.3 percent among the 41.1 applicants. Among the Dalit Workers in Sambalpur district, 43.3 percent applied for loans but 12.2 percents applications were approved. In Khordha district 22.1 percent Dalit worker's applications were approved out of 53.5 percent applications. But among the 57.1 Non-Dalit applicants, 35.6 percent applicants were approved in Sambalpur district and out of 78.2 percent Non-Dalit applicants, 47.5 percent applicants were approved. The overall picture in the table says that manual scavengers have least approval for loans and Non-Dalit workers have highest approval for loans.

**Table. 5.11: Banking Behavior of Workers in the Formal Credit Institution-Bank**

Group Of Workers	Sambalpur				Khordha			
	Ever Applied loan		Whether Approved		Ever Applied loan		Whether Approved	
	yes	No	Yes	No	yes	No	Yes	No
MS	32.4	67.6	02.1	97.9	35.3	64.7	05.4	94.6
NMS	36.2	63.8	07.3	92.7	41.1	58.9	10.3	89.7
DW	43.3	56.7	12.2	87.8	53.5	46.5	22.1	77.9
NDW	57.1	42.9	35.6	64.4	78.2	21.8	47.5	52.5

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

As explained in the table 5.9 that a predominant section of population are not dependent upon the formal credit institutions and so are mostly dependent upon the informal credit institutions in the urban credit market in Odisha. Informal credit market comprises many

sources like – money lenders, friends, family relatives, and micro-finance and so on. Informal credit market on average charges varieties of interest rates ranging from very low to high due to its segmented market structure. Low interest rates in informal credit markets can be justified when the credit is borrowed from friends and family lending. Moreover, education among the borrowers in terms of access to more and more information and increase in economic status are the two another most determining variables that lead to low interest rates in informal credit market (Bhattacharjee and Rajeev, 2010). In other words, rich and educated borrowers not only have the advantage of accessing loans from formal sources but also avail informal loans on better terms and conditions and quite contrary to it the economically poor and uneducated borrowers ended up with loans on adverse terms and conditions. Along with interest rate variation because of its segmented market structure, most of the people rely on informal credit market because of credit without any collateral.

### **Measuring Discrimination**

Measuring discrimination in credit market involves selection of indicators to capture discrimination in spheres, forms, and personnel who may practice discrimination. In this regard, 12 variables have been selected as indicators to derive the nature of discrimination experienced in a given sphere and form by any provider. They were ranked to understand the perception of different group of workers regarding discrimination and used for construction of a composite index. The variables include visit to the credit institutions, inquiring about the procedure to avail credit, screening the credit worthiness, granting loans (Spheres); duration of stay at the credit institutions, manner of speaking (gently or otherwise), use of words (demeaning or offending), making to wait to give chance to the other worker(s); by the bank staff, clerk at help desk, documents screening clerk, and bank manager. Prevalence of discrimination in different spheres and forms by providers was measured by simple percentages, calculated on the basis of total number of times that manual scavengers were exposed to an event and experienced any form of discrimination. Ranking of the selected variables was used to understand the perception of manual scavengers about the discriminating credit providers and treatment desired from them.

Respondents who reported having experienced some discrimination (in form and sphere, and by provider) at least five times during one year prior to the survey were given a score of 5; those who reported having experienced discrimination at least 3-4 times were given a score of 2.5; and those who reported discrimination less than three times were given a score of 1. The scores for each respondent were computed using these weights assigned to them on the basis of the number of times they experienced discrimination. The scores accrued by the respondents ranged from 5 to 25. The average score for each respondent was computed for ‘sphere’, ‘form’, and ‘provider’ separately. The sum of scores on all variables was divided by 4 (total number of variables used in ‘sphere’ to derive the average score). Similarly, scores were obtained for ‘form’ and ‘provider’. Then, an average of the three values was derived to get the index of discrimination.

**Table.5.12: Selected Variables for Discrimination by Sphere, Form, and Provider**

<i>Sphere</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Provider</i>
Visit to the credit institutions	Duration of stay at the credit institutions	The bank staff
Inquiring about the procedure to avail credit	Manner of speaking (gently or otherwise)	Clerk at help desk
Screening the credit worthiness	Use of words (professional or offending)	Documents screening officials
Granting loans	Making to wait to give chance to the other worker	Bank manager

The index was computed for sphere, form, and provider separately. They were used to compute a composite index of discrimination. Thus,

Index of discrimination:

$$ID = \{(\text{Index of sphere discrimination}) + (\text{Index of form discrimination}) + (\text{Index of provider discrimination})\}/3$$

$$\text{Or } \Sigma (ID_s + ID_f + ID_p)/3$$

$$\text{Index of Sphere discrimination: } (ID_s) = ([S_1 + S_2 + S_3 + S_4])/4 \text{ or } \Sigma S_s/4$$

$$\text{Index of form discrimination: } (ID_f) = ([F_1 + F_2 + F_3 + F_4])/4 \text{ or } \Sigma F_f/4$$

Index of provider discrimination:  $(ID_p) = ([Ps_1 + Ps_2 + Ps_3 + Ps_4])/4$  or  $\Sigma Ps/4$

Where,

$S_{si}$ ,  $i=1,2,3,4$  is the score of a respondent on variable  $i$  of sphere of discrimination;  $F_{si}$ ,  $i=1, 2, 3, 4$  is the score of a respondent on variable  $i$  of form of discrimination;  $P_{si}$ ,  $i=1, 2, 3, 4$  is the score of a respondent on variable  $i$  of discrimination by provider.

The weighted average for all the variables was the score for the respondent. These scores were used to assess which form of discrimination was more prevalent in which sphere, and practiced by which providers.

**Table-5.13: Scores and Weightage for Degree of Discrimination**

Score categories	Degree of Discrimination	Weights for scores
<2	Low	Less than 2 times:1
2-4	Medium	2-4 times: 2.5
4>	High	More than 4 times:5

Source: *Generated by researcher*

**Table-5.14: Nature of Discrimination Experienced by Manual Scavengers in Banks**

Nature of Discrimination	Total Response	Positive Response	Manual Scavengers experiencing discrimination (in percentage)
<b>Spheres:</b>			
During visit to the banks	546	300	55
During Inquiring about credit	864	561	65
During Screening the documents	981	853	87
During Granting loans	616	505	82
<b>Form by Providers (The bank staff)</b>			
Less time given	594	368	62
Didn't speak gently	718	567	79
Use of offending words	253	80	32
Have to wait	235	61	26
<b>Form by Providers (Clerk at help desk)</b>			
Less time given	720	367	51
Didn't speak gently	612	410	67
Use of offending words	473	411	87
Have to wait	903	821	91
<b>Form by Providers (Documents screening officials)</b>			
Less time given	567	464	82
Didn't speak gently	531	414	78
Use of offending words	208	118	57
Have to wait	142	66	47
<b>Form by Providers (Bank manager)</b>			
Less time given	593	314	53
Didn't speak gently	936	645	69
Use of offending words	431	189	44
Have to wait	321	77	24

Source: *Primary Field Survey*

As regards the spheres of discrimination, factors that were taken into account included visit to the credit institutions, inquiring about the procedure to avail credit, screening the credit worthiness, granting loans. Most of the manual scavengers experienced caste-based discrimination when their documents were screened for loan, followed by granting loans. And the next sphere of discrimination is when manual scavengers inquire about the loan in banks. Banking staff discriminate most in terms of not talking gently to the manual

scavengers. Banking staff also discriminate by giving less time. Banking staff discriminate least in terms of making them wait. Clerk at help desk discriminate most by using offending language. It is followed by not speaking gently and then making them wait in the process of availing credit. Documents screening officials discriminate most in terms of giving very less time to the manual scavengers followed by not speaking gently. Bank manager discriminate most in terms of not speaking gently to the manual scavengers followed by giving less time to them.

### **5.3. Manual Scavenging and Slavery: A Comparative Analysis**

Manual scavenging in India is not an occupation that one can willingly take up in his/her life. It is a structurally imposed occupation and a means of survival, for a particular section of people in the society and it carries the burden of stigma and social degradation (Ravichandran, 2011). This stigma and social degradation can be associated either with the nature of the occupation or with the kind of people involved in it. As some people are born with such pre-destined inhuman occupations as manual scavenging, it is very difficult for them to dissociate themselves from the notion of stigma and social degradation inherent to such occupations and since the nature of the occupation is so inhuman and degraded, that the occupation is bound to be degraded and inhuman (Teltumbde, 2014). If the day of a worker starts with manually removing the human excreta, garbage, and the waste of the society, then the 'work' which is being claimed to be an occupation loses its meaning and it turns out to be oppression of the worker in the name of occupation. Nothing can be that worse and inhuman than forcing someone to clean human excreta and waste of the society. It will be completely against the human rights, self-respect and dignity of that person (Varun, 2015). As an oppressive institution, manual scavenging has no parallel in the human history. There are hundreds and thousands of people who are still engaged in this inhuman occupation in this country even after seventy years of independence (Census, 2011). The people who are involved in cleaning dry latrines use their bare hands to clean and usually carry the human excreta on their head to dispose it. And those who are involved in cleaning sewer and septic tanks enter into manholes in bare bodies without any protection. Often they die inside the manhole while cleaning the wastes. It is evident the nature of this work that no one will



ever take it up willingly as an occupation. In fact, those who are involved in manual scavenging are forced to do this work as a means of livelihood (Singh, 2009). And this raises a question that what forces these people to do this filthy, inhuman, degraded works. Before we discuss the reasons behind this, it needs to be emphasized that it's the nature of the work which makes the occupation oppressive, inhuman and stigmatized. The people who are involved in scavenging work go through severe ostracization, untouchability, humiliation and discrimination in the society. They live in complete isolation and ghettoization, segregated from the other sections of the society. Moreover, they are discriminated and humiliated not only by the society, but also by the government institutions while accessing public facilities and services. They are unable to enjoy the right guaranteed by the Constitution due to this social stigmatization, discrimination and this further makes their lives even more vulnerable to all kinds of indignity and social oppression (Singh, 2014).

However, it is imperative to discuss the other important aspect of this occupation in order to have proper understanding of the depth and degree of the social oppression. It is found that, in India, only people from a particular social background are involved in manual scavenging. Most of the manual scavengers belong to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. And these communities are involved in this occupation on hereditary and traditional basis (Srivastava, 1997). Neither they can leave this occupation nor are they allowed to take up other occupation. If they stop doing this job, they will be subjected to social boycott and atrocities by the higher castes in their villages. Most of the manual scavengers are landless and they don't have any other means of livelihood. Under such circumstances, if they are socially boycotted and not given any other jobs, it will affect their subsistence. Even the Government does not come for their rescue in spite of having constitutional provisions and protection mechanism in place thus forcing people to rely on the same occupation, as a means of their survival and livelihood goes against their will. And this makes manual scavenging a well-designed oppressive social institution, rather than a mere occupation. The de facto position of the manual scavengers in India is already decided by the society. Under the Indian social customs and traditional laws, the manual scavengers do not have any civil rights and liberty. They are forced to undertake this very same inhuman occupation generation after generation without. They

are completely bound by this oppressive institution. They can neither move out of this occupation nor can they resist. They are born as manual scavengers and die as manual scavengers.

Beside this, since most of the manual scavengers come from the Scheduled Castes or untouchables communities, they have to face multiple layers of indignation, humiliation and oppression which make this institution unique, and worse than the institution of slavery. In slavery, the slaves had the right to mobility and freedom if they paid or returned the money they owed. Moreover, untouchability was not practiced with the slaves. The slave owners could touch the slaves and could employ slaves for their indoor and well as outdoor household activities. The slave owners were taking care of the slaves, though not out of empathy, as a property like others, to be sold in the markets for profits. There were many instances where slaves were also engaged in many professional works such as in administration, military, business, etc. They used to get trained to become skilled in many works by the owners for higher profits. The social interaction between the slave owners and the slaves were unlike the institution of untouchability and manual scavengers. In slavery, a slave is recognized as a personality to be trained and skilled, and of a value by the society even though it is withdrawn by the law.

Therefore Ambedkar mentioned that the de-jury position of the slave looks worse than the de-jury position of the untouchable. But the de-facto position of the slaves is relatively better than the de-facto position of the untouchable. Even though the constitutional laws recognize an untouchable or a manual scavenger as a human personality, the social laws or the society doesn't (HRW, 2014). The society withdraws all the rights guaranteed by the constitutional laws from an untouchable or a manual scavenger. But the reverse happens in the case of slavery. An untouchable or a manual scavenger is never considered or recognized as a human being with dignity and self-respect, by the society. They live in complete isolation and untouched from the rest of the society without any social interaction. Humiliation and oppression is the only interaction or communication that happens between a manual scavenger and the rest of the society.

Nevertheless, there is another important aspect which is linked with this institution. Why most of the manual scavengers do come from the Scheduled Caste or the untouchable communities? What is the relation between Scheduled Caste and the manual scavenging? The political economy provided no direct answer to these questions. However, the answer must be explored from the Indian social laws, institutions and religions. The institution of untouchability is age old as the Indian civilization, a product of social laws and religion than economics. Untouchables have been historically persecuted by the privileged castes in the Indian subcontinent. There are various reasons behind the persecutions of these communities. But more than these reasons, the nature of this persecution is of great importance and hence to be looked at in order to understand the relation between the institution of manual scavenging and the untouchables.

Historically, the untouchables were religiously considered sub-human, impure, and outcaste, meant for serving others and thereby subjected to brutal punishment. The religion and its philosophy denied them their rights to education and land along with other socio-political and economic rights, thereby pushed them towards a state of permanent persecution devoid of any basic human rights. Religion, being the strongest, largest and the effective governing social institution, has crushed the untouchables completely generations after generations and pushed them into a permanent condition of helplessness by making them vulnerable to all kinds of social oppression. They were forced to do all kinds of degraded and filthy works labeling it as hereditary occupation, for mere livelihood and survival. Scavenging is one among those occupations that were historically subjected upon untouchables. Thus removing dead animals, cleaning wastes and garbage of the villages and of the dominant castes became the hereditary occupation of the untouchables. Whenever they resisted, they were forcefully and violently crushed by the dominant castes. The work of scavenging became the occupation of the untouchables, and came to be known as a synonym for each other (Ambedkar, 1991). However, the untouchables were not those who were involved in this occupation, rather it is the untouchables who were subjected to this oppression. Untouchables were also subjected to many other hereditary occupations as well. Untouchability, as a social institution of oppression is prior to the institution of contemporary and traditional manual scavenging. Nonetheless, these two institutions became synonym for each other and still

remains the same, e in India. And this is the reason why the high-castes never prefer to do the occupations like sweeping, cleaning public toilets and rail tracks even today. They would prefer to remain jobless than doing these jobs. Even if they get such kind of jobs through government employment scheme, they will recruit other scheduled caste people to manage and perform these filthy tasks.

#### **5.4. Perception, Work and Manual Scavengers: Self and Social Perception**

The term ‘perception’ refers to an idea or a belief or an image someone has as a result of how she/he sees or understands about a particular thing or a person. Perception also implies the way someone notice things especially with the senses. But the perception that we are going to discuss here is the understanding by an individual or a group of people towards a things and a person which is not really noticed with the senses. This perception is mostly on the basis of prejudice and blind beliefs about a place or a person or a community in the society. In other words, the way one thinks about or understands about someone or something by using the existing prejudice and not on any scientific logic and reasoning. This perception can be of two types – self-perception and social perception. For example, in the context of our study what manual scavengers think about themselves can be called as self-perception and what others think about the manual scavengers can be called as social-perception. So the focus of the present section is to understand both self and social perception on manual scavenging work, and the worker involved in it.

Perceptions about the work and worker can be seen in two ways. Firstly, the perception by the manual scavengers themselves, that is, what they think and how they understand the manual scavenging work. Secondly, what the society in general thinks and understand about this work and particularly by the upper-castes in India.

The upper castes might say that it’s an obvious thing for some people to do this work because they belong to certain communities like the SCs and the STs in India. That way some sections are forced to do this work for forever. It is also told that as they don’t have any skill to perform any other better jobs, they are bound to do the manual scavenging works rather than any mental works. But in case of the Scheduled castes and the Scheduled tribes in India, in reality, they can be meritorious but their merit and

capacity can never get recognized unless they are given enough opportunities in the society.

However, people perceive mental labour as superior than the physical labour. This is where the stigmatization gets started and perception gets constructed in the society. It is indeed that the conditions of scavenging workers are very pathetic and degraded both in terms of payment as well as in terms of working conditions/standards. And the general perception about them is very indifferent in the society and it is never thought to be an inhuman kind of work and labour in India. So the general or the public perceptions regarding manual scavenging in the society can be inferred as normal and it is viewed as a part and parcel in our society. For example, in India, caste as an institution is never considered as a serious problem for the nation and its development in general. Thus it's a normal and inevitable institution in India for the public. Here, I mean public as people other than scavengers or Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes in India.

Scavenging work is perceived as the problem of the subjects (communities themselves who are involved in scavenging work) who are involved in the work rather than as a structural problem for which the society as a whole is responsible and therefore should collectively put in efforts to eradicate this stigmatized labour. The society as a whole or being part of society, the governments, organizations and the civil society have never taken this issue seriously. Also, they have never taken the views of the manual scavengers seriously to rehabilitate them and thereby bring some alternative solution to this pressing problem.

Most of the manual scavengers belong to the SCs and STs Communities. Within the caste system, they are pushed down in the social strata and are deprived of their socio-economic and political rights. But since independence some constitutional rights were given to these communities for their upliftment, they are gradually becoming conscious about their rights and working conditions in the society as compared to others. Hence, it can be said that the communities who are involved in this particular work might not be necessarily proud of doing this work rather many resistances and assertions have come from within these communities. In this way, they became well aware about their

working conditions and also want to overcome from this. Therefore, one can find that there exists an opposite perceptions among the SCs and the STs on the manual scavenging work or the stigmatized labour in India and the mainstream society, particularly among the upper castes in India.

Manual scavenging is prevalent even in today's modern or secular era. The Indian government has banned the manual scavenging work because it violates the basic fundamental rights of the person involved. However, the main concern here is, why after banning this particular work, still it is prevalent in the society. The one and only reason behind this is social-perception. The perception towards the manual scavenging work has not changed in the society. People still consider that this work is not problematic and therefore it should continue. Another reason is that the Indian society is a very caste ridden society which do not allow for a "public space" where one can openly discuss things and debate critically, particularly about the traditional practices like manual scavenging, caste etc. Therefore whatever traditional practices are there in the society, it has been continuing and those traditional practices have been becoming general perceptions and get normalized. Thus in this context, the society holds a stigmatized perception on traditional practices such as the manual scavenging work.

However, it is not that people don't have negative perception towards this work but the problem is even they consider it as a negative work, dirty occupations, filthy work etc., they have not materialised this idea into practice by which that can be stopped. Since people hold negative perception towards the manual scavenging work, it is obvious to have negative and disliking notion towards the manual scavengers too. For example, the upper castes in the Indian society dislike and consider lower caste people as impure and therefore untouchable. In other words, the high castes in India might have negative perception towards manual scavenging work but at the same time they are comfortable with that work if it is done by people from certain communities such as the SCs and the STs. Therefore, there are two types of negative perception that exists; one is the negative perception towards the work (manual work/scavenging) and the other is the negative perception towards the manual scavengers. Thus, in a way, it has been essentialising certain works to certain specific group of people. In the context of manual scavenging,

the SCs and the STs are essentialised by the high castes to do this particular work. This essentialisation as an activity of stigmatization can also be understood in the context of women and the kind of works provided to them. For examples, there are certain works or jobs which are considered best suited for women such as nursing, domestic work, beauty work and manual scavenging etc. (Panchali Ray, 2016). Hence, this is nothing but essentialising or stigmatizing certain works to certain people.

## 5.5. Life Stories of Manual Scavengers

### Case Study-1 (A Young Age Manual Scavenger)

My mother-in-law used to do *Utha-Paikhana* (manual scavenging) work under municipality for few years in which the last salary she was drawing was 300 rupees per month. After this work was declared illegal, she did the sweeper job as ward charge for almost last 25 years. My in-laws are originally from Kesapali, Jujumura, Sambalpur. They were landless agricultural labourers there in their village. But due to hardships in getting work and sometime due to work, they migrated to this place and ended up doing this work under municipality. As she is suffering from Tuberculosis now, I am doing her work as *badly* (substitute). Even after doing this job under municipality, the nature of job is still contractual now. I do manual scavenging work in different private households because of less income from sweeping job under municipality. As there is no other work available to me, I don't mind to do this work though this work is completely disgusting (*as facial expression denotes*) work. As I have kids and they are studying, I have to do this work. Otherwise they will not get anything to eat and will die. Children will be doing what they will wish, but I feel I must all possible efforts to take them out from this disgusting work. I don't want my kids to do this

work. But I am not sure about their future. I am not sure what will happen to them.

We have neither a permanent job nor a permanent house. I get a monthly salary of 6000 rupees only and we don't have government record (*Patta Parcha*) of the house that we are staying now. Only one member that is son is doing government job that to a sweeper in government district hospital. But the rest are doing private cleaning job. There is no possibility of promotion in this department because of increasing privatization of work. We are being hated because of our caste and occupation even by the officials in the same municipality department. Because of this I never allowed my own sons and daughters to work under municipality. We are from lower caste people. We are not educated also. So we will remain like this for ever. Whatever little changes you can see in our own family and community is only due to education and nothing else. But since we belong to lower caste and we don't have land, jobs and money we can't even effort for education. We are discriminated very subtly but you cannot find the visible form of discrimination in town here. There is no pension facility in this work now. My in-laws are not getting any pension. Their Employee Provident Fund (EPF) money is also not returned after retirement. We have been demanding many issues like regularization of our work, increasing the monthly salary, making arrangement for the registration of land where we are staying since long, and issues related to our pension and EPF. Though we have a union, it is not working properly and most of the time the union leader is someone from outside the community/caste who has no link to this work. Currently our worker union president is *Prasant-Padhi*, a Brahmin by caste, who never takes our problems



seriously. Rather makes all compromises with the Municipality administration and makes us fool and confuse.

My husband died in 2008 while working under municipality and so now I am a widow at the age of 28. I was supposed to get some money from municipality. But even after 9 years I have not received any death money so far. Initially I had no information that I should get some money. When I got to know about the money, I went and applied. But within these 9 years I have been many times to office, but still the officials are reluctant to give money. And to be honest we are not educated like you rather we are completely illiterate. That is why we find it is difficult to follow up things and documents and to inquiry properly and to collect the due money. I got to know about the benefit only after 7 years to death. So far no body came voluntarily to inform about the scheme. Though we are staying in this municipality worker, we spend from our pocket to repair this house. Since we are earning very less and salary is not regular, we don't make courage to borrow money from others. Regarding *utha paikhana*, many people say that this work is illegal. But still this work is prevalent but privately. As everybody in this area know us and about our work under municipality, we are often asked by many private households to clean their toilets without any safety equipments. The horrible situation in which we were doing the pension work, I wish this work should not be given to anyone to do and even to my enemy (*sat janamrasatrubhi e kamkenainkaruhetamuinprathanakarmi*). Because this work is so disgusting that no human being should be made to clean human excreta.

## Case Study-2 (A Middle age Manual Scavenger)

I did manual scavenging work for almost 20 years under municipality. Every day I used to go to 5 kilometers to do this work. First we were getting Rs.120, then Rs.150 and then Rs.200 per month when working as manual scavengers under municipality. But when the work was stopped, we were asked to do sweeping work in which the salary was first 4500 and then 5500. Even after working for almost again 20 years also I was not promoted as regular worker. Even if new motor machines have come to clean septic tank, still it does not clean completely. So the liquid part is only cleaned by machines, but the rest hard part of human excreta is again cleaned privately calling the same sweepers like us. Moreover, where Machine motor is reachable that tank is cleaned at least partially by it, but where this machine is not reachable, that tank is fully cleaned by us.

We all sweepers are either from *Thelkopada* or *Daleipada*. We have a union which is known as Mehtar Sangha. But she mentioned that unfortunately the union's head is not a worker under municipality but an outsider that to an upper caste. The union head most of the time is less concerned about the problems of the workers and most of the time in collusion with the administration. There are many issues along with arbitrary tax cutting, no *patta-parcha*. Because of inadequate earning from sweeping work under municipality and other problems, people are forced to do other private works simultaneously in hotels, lodges only with 2000-3000 rupees per month, though the rule is minimum 6000 rupees per month.

I have three sons and one daughter. Out of three sons, one has completed M.A and now posted in postal dept. The second

has completed Matric and now working as a Bank Peon, and the third one has completed B.A and working in some private institution. The daughter has completed intermediate but working as a helper in Ambulance service. The grandsons and daughters are also taking education from good educational institutions. Sons and daughters were there in municipality school, but grand sons and daughters are going to central school. So in family there is upward mobility. When manual scavenging work was stopped, around 25000 rupees was given to open new business. But according to the rules in the 1993 Act, a new and alternative job was supposed to be given but was not given. When I was working as manual scavengers under municipality, my husband was working as rickshaw puller and sometime wood breaking. I hesitate to speak to my own son while working as manual scavengers. Now working as sweeper and will be working for another 5-6 years to show to grandchildren that in how difficult situations we are working and educating them. While sweeping, people from other castes maintain distance. While asking for drinking water, other caste people maintain a distance. But Muslim households do not discriminate. This is a good aspect which I like. We are getting salary in every 3-4, 4-5, 5-6 months. The life we used to live while doing manual scavenging work, the same life is being led by the sweepers under even today. Regarding tuition for the children in the locality, people cannot wait more than 2 months. So students are being deprived from proper education. The horrible situation in which we are working and the disabilities we are continuously subjected to due to this work, we are doing everything possible so that the new generations from our families will not face such things in their life. We are also human beings. Our kids are also human beings

like the kids of others. We want the government to support us in our fulfilling of human rights.

**Case study-3 (An Old Age Manual Scavenger):**

I worked directly as manual scavenging under the Sambalpur Municipality. But when the work was legally prohibited by the government, I was asked to continue the sweeping work. While doing pure manual scavenging work and when I will ask water to drink, the households in the lane used to give water in a different water bottle which the household was not taking back. The other households in the locality were asking their own children not to touch. If we will be walking in a particular lane, all the other households used to maintain a particular distance from us. We were denied to walk carefully not to touch them. Even if many things have changed in today's world, till today we are not touched both because of our caste and job. The shopkeepers in the locality don't touch us while purchasing commodities from the shop.

When I was purely engaged in manual scavenging work, I used to have problem in my eyes and skin due to toxic gas. And I also got tuberculosis due to this work only. It is because I used to skip meals remembering the job. I was not having interest to eat after work. Due to this work, I drink. Otherwise I cannot do this job. Moreover, because of inadequate amount from salary, we usually take loan from the local Brahmin money lenders. Money lenders are Brahmin. As a matter of guarantee or security, the salary passbook has to be kept in the hand of money lender. Moreover, the passbook has to be deposited to the money lender because ration was bought from the same money lenders also. So

when salary comes, the same money lenders will go to the bank along with the workers to withdraw money. After deducting borrowed money and ration money, the rest amount used to be returned to the worker but the passbook has to be deposited in the money lenders till all the borrowed money is returned. Moreover, because of too much financial problem, we were forced to deposit government ration card in the money lenders to borrow money from him. In the whole municipality department, at max the workers are being promoted till *munsi* and *chaprasi*.

It is my father and mother who migrated to Sambalpur from Sareipali village of Bargarh District. My father used to ride rickshaw to earn money for family Bargarh town. Due to less income from rickshaw pulling, my father migrated to Sambalpur for any good work but due to no other work and no network of better work, the whole family ended up in doing manual scavenging work under municipality. Initially we worked with 80 rupees per month which at max increased to only 120 rupees. We were doing manual scavenging work with salary of 120 rupees per month. Before 1990s we were doing this work. After being declared as illegal and as we were municipality workers, thereafter we were given this job of sweeping. I was doing this work in spite of many problems. I was unable to escape from this work because no work was available for us. So for survival we were bound to do this job in spite of so many disgusts and difficulties. After doing this work, I cannot eat properly. Every day we were cleaning 10-12 dry toilet tanks. Since we were not having land in Sambalpur town, we started staying near a funeral place (*Smasan/ Masan*). We are staying in this place since then. Even after staying here and working under municipality for so many years, we don't have government records (*patta-parcha*) of the land we are staying. We are not only discriminated by the

upper caste people here, but also by the people who are known as SCs. For example *Kisan Ghasi* will not take even water from *Sweeper Ghasi*. Just like the upper caste people, these sub-castes within SCs also don't have any social relation with us.

Initially I did scavenging work in exchange of my mother-in-law. In other words, I did the manual scavenging work but started as a substitute person. Then I continued to do this work for almost 30 years. Just after scavenging work, I joined sweeping work as ward-charge. Then I have been working as sweepers since last 22-23 years. While working as manual scavengers, I used to get Rs.120 and then it increased to Rs. 150 and then Rs. 300 per month. And now as sweeper under municipality I am getting Rs. 13000. My husband and me, both were working under municipality as manual scavengers. While working my husband got eye problem and so resigned from municipality and now have joined *Sambad* office as private cleaner. My sons and daughters are no more involved in either manual scavenging or in sweeper work under municipality. We both tried our best that our kids should not do this job. Son is now working at Grill work. Son has again 3 kids. All are in English medium in KG classes. Though my kids are not that educated, they are giving emphasis on education of their kids. However, the house in which we are staying now has no *patta and parcha*. Though repeatedly the issue has been tabled in the municipality office, nobody has given importance to the issue. Her educational qualification is 7<sup>th</sup>. She has 5 daughters and 1 son. Regarding untouchability, we feel only when going to Mandirs here in our locality and asking water while working.

Our salary from municipality is never regular. We don't have health holidays and benefits. Even after retirement, my

husband is not getting his retired money, too much late in giving salary, even after death also not getting pension money. All senior officials at municipality office are taking all the money related to death, pension. Since the beginning of contractualization, there is continuous shortage in the staff. In the locality, kids are not taking education seriously. Even parents are not focusing seriously in the kids' education. Though parents and grandparents have a great role to play for kids, they are not at all concerned about the kids' education. Between upper caste boys and lower caste boys there is discrimination and same the case between girls from both the communities.

The above life stories of manual scavengers depict the multiple aspects of their life. The stories give a historical perspective on manual scavenging communities and their forceful entry and presence into the occupation. It explains the absence of both inter-generational and intra-generational occupational mobility. Even today most of them are tied with this occupation. Getting out from this occupation has remained a difficult task for them. Even if some have tried to get out from this occupation, they are left with same work again and again though in different forms because of no other alternative employment opportunities. They are deprived from opportunities because of the stigma attached to their identity. Even after leaving the occupation also, they are subjected to different forms of exclusion and discrimination in the economy and society. They are not only discriminated by the market institutions but also by the non-market institutions. Because of their caste and occupation, they face not only economic exclusion but also subjected to distrust. By this they are deprived from taking equal access of social, cultural, and political processes in the society. They are equally deprived by the other sub-castes within SCs because of the stigma attached to both occupation and their identity. Almost all the manual scavenging households expressed their ignorance about the political process. Whoever has some consciousness about the political processes; they are never encouraged and allowed to take part in electoral process actively. They are always used as vote banks. According to the respondents, the political leaders only come to their

localities during the time of election and even during that time also they are very conscious about not touching any member from the scavenging communities. Segregate settlement of the manual scavengers is clear demarcation for others to recognize who is a manual scavenger and who is not. They are easily identified because of their separate and ghettoized settlement. Children from other communities do not make friendship with the children from manual scavenging communities because of the consciousness of disgust fed by their parents and communities. The urban schooling system in the study area is such that certain government schools have become synonyms as the schools where only kids from scavenging communities only goes for study and kids from non-scavenging communities do not go there. This segregation of even government schools have caused unequal access to education which again reproducing the caste-based inequality even in today's world. Almost all the scavenging households expressed their dissatisfaction that government institutions have failed them. Minimum government programmes are neither implemented properly nor accessible to them. They are misbehaved and discriminated by the officials in different government institutions.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

The present section of the section summarizes the key findings on the analysis of exclusion and discrimination experienced by workers in general and manual scavengers in particular in the urban labour credit market in the study areas. Manual scavengers in particular and Dalit workers in general are disproportionately concentrated more in casual work. In other words, the people who are involved in manual scavenging are mostly in casual work which does not necessarily produce the formal records to know the existence of manual scavengers in the respective places. The scavenging caste workers are the most disadvantaged group among the workers. Even after leaving the occupation because of their stigmatized identity they are again excluded from equal access and opportunities in non-scavenging occupations as well. Manual scavengers in both the study districts have almost no access to paid leave. But the workers who have left scavenging work by now have some access to paid leave. But the Dalit workers who have never done scavenging work, have relatively higher access to paid leave but much lower if we will compare with the Non-Dalit Workers. They have very less access to social security benefits in the urban



labour market. Moreover, compared to Dalit workers, manual scavengers are in much more disadvantageous positions compared to other group of workers in accessing social security benefits. Most of the manual scavengers still engaged in scavenging work are absolutely working without any written job contract in both the districts. As far as major determinants for getting into better paid jobs show, it is male compared to female, adult age group compared to old and kids, most educated compared to illiterate or less educated across the group of workers including manual scavengers who are most likely to get into better paid jobs. But the degree of probability for the manual scavengers compared to other group of workers is much less in getting better paid jobs in the urban labour market. The major findings in urban credit market in study areas say that for Dalit workers in general and for manual scavengers in particular, informal credit market are the major source of credit unlike the Non-Dalit workers who by and large have relatively better access to formal credit market. Manual scavengers are most under-represented in terms of having saving account in banks compared to the Non-Dalit workers who are having highest number of saving accounts in banks.

## **CHAPTER – 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS**

At the outset, the study has tried to analyze labour as a category within the framework of caste in the Indian society. It argues that much in the same way as the category of class cannot be understood in isolation without understanding the system of capitalism, likewise the category of caste based labour cannot be understood just by analyzing the concept 'caste' as a singular independent phenomenon as many scholars would make us to believe (only at the time of caste atrocities and debate around reservation policy and identity politics), but rather by analyzing the Caste System as a whole. Through a detailed historical analysis, the study says that the labour performed by certain castes and communities in Indian society is not only considered worthless but also stigmatized. Further, the study has tried to explain how there is a complete absence of an objective criteria to define the value of caste based labour in the Indian society. According to the study, the very institution of caste always denies labour performed by certain communities to be an independent economic variable. In spite of so called modernity and democracy, caste does play a very decisive role in determining the value of labour in the Indian society in general and value of labour performed by communities like manual scavengers, sanitary workers, leather workers, rag pickers etc. in particular. Communities like these are always subjected to severe stigmatization not only because of their location in the caste hierarchy but also because of the very nature of work they are involved in. For instance, a certain caste has been doing manual scavenging work in Indian society since ages. Manual scavengers in India are not considered as an occupation based caste group. Rather the occupation in itself is caste based occupation. This manual scavenging community is still forced to do the same occupations even today and when they make efforts to give up this inhuman occupation, they are subjected to social ostracism and more and more stigmatization in the process. This stigmatization generates multiple forms of disabilities for them in accessing and taking equal benefits of opportunities in the society. Therefore the primary focus of the work is to understand the socio-economic outcomes when manual scavengers in particular interact with different market and non-market institutions in Odisha through a primary survey. In other words, the category of

stigmatized labour and the resultant discrimination is understood through a primary survey of manual scavengers in Odisha.

Before analyzing the micro picture of exclusion and discrimination faced by manual scavengers, the study has first tried to explain the macro picture of accessibility and discrimination experienced by different social groups in India. This macro analysis at first is done to set the background context to understand the socio-economic condition of manual scavengers. The macro findings suggest that the socio-economic characteristics of different social groups in general and of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in particular imply that SCs and STs are the most disadvantaged communities in the Indian society. They are disproportionately concentrated more in casual work compared to other social groups. As far as the distribution of different social groups in regular and salaried work is concerned, SCs and STs have very negligible access to salaried jobs in the urban labour market in India. Self-employment among the SCs and STs is either very less or negligible in India. The percentage share of regular jobs is very negligible among them. This implies that very large sections from these two social groups are still concentrated in the urban informal sectors as manual and casual works. Educational level among different social groups says that most of SC and ST households are either mostly illiterate or at maximum have reached up to higher secondary level. Majority of the illiterates among the workers belong to the categories of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes worker. The degree of inequality in terms of land holding between SCs and STs are very less compared to the degree of inequality between SC/ST on the one hand and Non-SC/ST on the other hand. The Scheduled Castes, in particular, have very low levels of access to land.

Having explained the major findings on the socio-economic characteristics of different social groups in all India level, the findings on the socio-economic characteristics of manual scavengers in the study areas are worth noticing. As far as the comparison between Dalit and Non-Dalit workers based on gender is concerned, the numbers of female are more from Dalits in work when compared to Non-Dalit female. The workers, who were exclusively involved in manual scavenging before 1990s, have been either contractual worker under municipalities or they have been employed as casual

worker for the same scavenging, sweeping, and cleaning job in various public and private sectors. Manual scavengers are mostly illiterate in the study region. The workers who were manual scavengers earlier but have left the job by now have access at maximum till upper primary education. It is upwardly mobile Dalits and mostly Non-Dalits who are largely having the education of graduation and post-graduation. The percentage share of manual scavengers and Non-Manual Scavengers are very less in the higher land possessed category compared to the Dalit and Non-Dalit workers. Both hitherto manual scavengers and Dalit workers are using Tube Well as the major source of drinking water in both the districts. In case of Non-Dalit workers, it is Tap Water which is the dominant source of drinking system in both the districts. The picture across the working group implies that compared to Non-Dalit and Dalit workers who have never done scavenging work, manual scavengers are having substantially higher problem in accessing drainage facilities.

The key findings on the analysis of exclusion and discrimination experienced by workers in general and manual scavengers in particular in the labour and credit market in the study areas says that Manual scavengers are disproportionately concentrated more in casual work. In other words, the people who are involved in manual scavenging are mostly in casual work which does not necessarily produce the formal records to know the existence of manual scavengers in the respective places. The manual scavengers are the most disadvantaged group among the workers. Even after leaving the occupation because of their stigmatized identity they are again excluded from equal access and opportunities in non-scavenging occupations as well. Manual scavengers in both the study districts have almost no access to paid leave. But the workers who have left scavenging work by now have some access to paid leave. But the Dalit workers who have never done scavenging work, have relatively higher access to paid leave but much lower if it is compared with the Non-Dalit Workers. Moreover, compared to other Dalit workers, manual scavengers are in much more disadvantageous positions compared to other group of workers in accessing social security benefits. They even have very less access to social security benefits in the urban labour market. Most of the manual scavengers still engaged in scavenging work are absolutely working without any written job contract in both the districts. As far as major determinants for getting into better paid jobs show, it is male

compared to female, adult age group compared to old and kids, most educated compared to illiterate or less educated across the group of workers including manual scavengers who are most likely to get into better paid jobs. But the degree of probability for the manual scavengers compared to other group of workers is much less in getting better paid jobs in the urban labour market. In other words, the manual scavengers from low educational level are most likely to get into casual works and very less likely to get into regular salaried jobs. Moreover, those who are most educated are likely to get into regular salaried jobs and those who are illiterates and have poorest education; they are most likely to get into casual works and less likely to get into regular salaried jobs. It means the manual scavengers who are uneducated are deprived from the positive benefits of the development and ended up in manual and casual kind of works in the urban areas.

The major findings in urban credit market in study areas say that for Dalit workers in general and manual scavengers in particular, informal credit institutions are the major source of credit unlike the Non-Dalit workers who have relatively better access to formal credit market. Manual scavengers are most under-represented in terms of having saving account in banks compared to the Non-Dalit workers who are having highest number of saving accounts in banks. Moreover, a predominant section of the sample households in general and manual scavengers in particular rely on informal credit market because of a variety of reasons. Higher interest rate charged by the private money lender is not the only reason in informal credit market. Along with interest rate, most of the people rely on informal credit market because of credit without any collateral. Because of localized and personalized service, many people depend on informal credit market. Moreover, it is not only economically poor who are most into informal credit market but also upper class and caste people depend on it as the source of credit on most of the occasions. Because informal credit market on an average charges varieties of interest rates ranging from very low to high due to its segmented market structure. Low interest rates in informal credit markets can be justified when the credit is borrowed from friends and family lending. Moreover, education among the borrowers in terms of access to more and more information and increase in economic status are the another two major determining variables that lead to low interest rates in informal credit market . In other words, rich and educated borrowers not only have the advantage of accessing loans from

formal sources but also avail informal loans on better terms and conditions and quite contrary to it the economically poor and uneducated borrowers ended up with loans on adverse terms and conditions.

Analysis on discrimination in urban credit market says that most of the manual scavengers experienced caste-based discrimination when their documents were screened for loan, while granting loans and also when manual scavengers inquire about the loan in banks. Banking staff discriminate mostly in terms of not talking gently to the manual scavengers. Banking staff also discriminate by giving less time. Clerk at help desk discriminate mostly by using offending language. It is followed by not speaking gently and then making them wait in the process of availing credit. Documents screening officials discriminate mostly in terms of giving very less time to the manual scavengers followed by not speaking gently. Bank manager discriminate mostly in terms of not speaking gently to the manual scavengers followed by giving less time to them.

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative evidence presented in the previous chapters suggest that (a) manual scavenging *is* part of the ‘world of work’ of many workers, despite the official ban on manual scavenging; (b) manual scavengers suffer stigma long after leaving manual scavenging. Thus, the observed discrimination not just associated with a particular occupation; rather it is associated with a group of workers who are stigmatized within a framework of graded inequality. Secondly, the distinction between market and non-market institutions that have been emphasized in the literature is not so distinctive when analysed from the perspective of the stigmatized labour. In each of their transactions in markets, including the labour market, their identity as manual scavengers (current or former) takes precedence over other attributes or abilities that they might have. The transactions in markets are not impersonal, these are almost always mediated through the lens of their stigmatized identity. Such a grounded understanding of labour and work raises serious theoretical questions for the received theories of labour market.

This picture of stark inequality and deprivation among SCs and STs in general and among the manual scavengers in particular even today proves to the fact that caste was

not a matter of past. Rather it is very much a decisive factor even today in determining the social and economic outcomes of the people at the margins. They are unable to access various opportunities at par with others precisely because they are disabled by the continuing legacy of discrimination. They have poorest education, have the least land, and are mostly into casual work. Since they are illiterate and economically poor, they are ended up in the urban informal sectors with very low wage rate and harsh working condition. They are deprived from all important resources. In spite of multiple prolonged strategy of the government to end deprivation in the Indian economy, the most deprived are still far behind in many developmental indicators. This proves that caste blind economic policy has generated almost very negligible results in the desired direction which explains that caste is still playing a determining factor in accessing different resources and markets in the economy. These pictures among manual scavengers imply that the urban led growth in the era of liberalization has not really benefited them in terms of equal access to resources and opportunities in urban areas. It indirectly reflects that the urbanization process in general is not inclusive for certain castes and communities because people from the margins just like the village are ended up in precarious situation in urban areas.

### **6.1. Policy Suggestions**

With the above concluding remarks on both the macro study of exclusion and discrimination among SCs and STs and micro study on manual scavengers and their access to market and non-market institutions, the present section proposes certain propositions to be taken into account during policy formulations in Indian economy if at all we want to see a inclusive society wherein marginalized sections of the society are also getting their true shares and representations in its true sense.

1. First and foremost need of the hour is that the policy makers have to understand the socio-economic condition of the manual scavengers in a very historical context as they are known as former untouchables or Scheduled Castes in India. Because historically they are deprived from many resources like education, health, land, income, quality and decent job which are the real

backbone for any individual for that matter to lead a very meaningful and dignified life. In order to protect and uplift them, the constitution of free India has enshrined certain provisions for them. In order to compensate the historical damage it has devised certain economic policies from time to time for them. For example, independent India, among many other things, has legislated two important Acts to end the inhuman practice of manual scavenging and also to provide necessary support for them to live an independent life with dignity and self-respect. They are namely, *Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines Prohibition Act, 1993* and *The Prohibition of Employment of Manual Scavengers and Rehabilitation Act, 2013*. In spite of all these two constitutional provisions in the Indian constitution, there is no much difference in the life of manual scavengers. The practice of manual scavenging is still going on even today. They are in a highly unequal position in terms of different development indicators. So the first proposition in this regard would be political willingness by the Indian state for proper implementation of those laws meant for them in both letter and spirit and by finding out an alternative for those people who are involved in this particular work.

2. Due to non-implementation of existing laws meant for the manual scavengers, a special Statutory National Commission must be created and authorized to enforce the laws. The commission should be authorized to produce annual reports on the manual scavengers. It should be authorized to regulate and punish the officials and departments for not implementing the laws meant for manual scavengers. In each year's National budget, a special allocation must be made for the manual scavengers and the commission must be given the autonomy to make necessary arrangements to end this inhuman occupation and provide them with some dignified occupation.
3. Making legislations to end manual scavenging and to improve the conditions of manual scavengers has as a prime significance. But what is most important than merely making of legislations is changing the cultural attitudes and perceptions of people in general. Otherwise people in charge of implementing



the laws would be incapable to execute the laws in its totality. In such situation, unless the general perception is not challenged and changed through different mechanisms, it is very difficult to end manual scavenging. In order to eradicate manual scavenging, many concerned organizations and the civil society have to play a vital role to challenge and change the general perception about manual scavenging.

4. Manual scavenging community being the most disadvantaged group in terms of educational level, they are unable to acquire information and so are unable to take equal accessibility to benefits and opportunities in the urban market. Even if manual scavengers have some access to education, they are far behind the others and that is insufficient to apply even for the jobs available in the market. Moreover, manual scavengers are mostly concentrated in municipality schools where they only go for study where infrastructure is almost precarious. Thereby they are deprived from quality and good education. But this deprivation from proper schooling will prevail as long as there is absence of universal schooling system. So universal schooling system is must wherein all students irrespective of their caste, class, gender, and occupation will avail equal education. Government must take proactive steps in this regard. This equal access to education will equip them with equal skill; equal access to information will help them to take equal benefits in the urban economy.
5. Manual scavenging is widely considered as a human rights violation which rejects the right to life, denies equality, and inaccessibility to quality education and healthcare system, Health being a primary need of the human being an quality health care system has to be provided to all in general, but it is at most necessity specifically to the manual scavengers who are exposed to highly contaminated filth and dirt are the ones who extremely suffer from chemical and biological hazards. The nature of work for them is such that they are always prone to chronic health issues. They are most likely to get infection in eyes while cleaning latrines, gutters, roads, drains etc. They are often affected by Asthma and Tuberculosis. And most importantly the female manual scavengers who are working under an unprotected environment are highly

prone to dangerous diseases. In order to address the occupational health hazard, a proper, free and quality health system has to be provided for the manual scavengers.

6. As we saw in our analysis on urban labour market and credit market, labourers even in urban areas are not treated according to their skills and capabilities but their capabilities are assumed and measured by their ascribed identity like caste. This is the empirical truth everywhere in India (Thorat 2010; Deshpande, 2011). This picture of urban India implies that the so-called market economy in urban India is very much influenced by caste. Group based identity has remained all pervasive in urban India. Therefore, these discriminated groups must be protected with special measures. This provision is already available in public sector undertakings in the form of 'Affirmative Action' policy. In order to protect the marginal groups from the vast private market economy and to ensure equal access to benefits and opportunities in the urban India, one step can be extending the 'Affirmative Action' policy to the private market economy as well.

7. Moreover, it is imperative to have a structural understanding of the issue or problem in hand. For example, gender based oppression in India is not some isolated and independent incidents. Rather it is the manifestation of system of patriarchy. Gender being a relational concept within the system of patriarchy, the oppression of women in society cannot be understood without analyzing the power that men uphold. So the oppression of one gender (women) is the reflection of power and privilege of another gender (men). Similarly, caste is also a relational concept within the structure of caste system. Thus deprivation and exploitation of one caste cannot be understood completely without taking into account the power and privileges that other castes enjoy in the structure of caste system. Stigmatization of one caste in the caste system cannot be understood without considering the unquestionable dignity that other castes enjoy. This cultural realization by everyone in the society will promote the participation of all to resolve the problems. This collective consciousness must be generated in both the victims and

victimizers, the oppressed and oppressors to successfully end the problem. In caste-based or gender-based atrocities, oppressors are never made the central point of discussion. Rather it is majorly premised upon victims. This one-sided approach never succeeds to bring desired conclusions. The focus must be to problematize the power and privileges of oppressors. Therefore, it requires structural interrogation of the caste system wherein the primary agent of oppression (oppressor) must be held responsible.

8. In order to eradicate the dehumanizing practice of manual scavenging, apart from deconstructing the subjective meaning of the concept it is equally important to implement the three major approaches in at most priority; which includes engineering, legislative and health care facility. The engineer approaches would provide a plan on making the work more mechanistic and human free activity, legislative measure would provide a monitoring and effective implementation of the laws and services and lastly the health care system would provide quality medical services to the workers.

## **6.2. Concluding Remarks**

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative evidence presented in the study suggests that (a) manual scavenging is part of the ‘world of work’ of many workers, despite the official ban on manual scavenging; (b) manual scavengers suffer stigma long after leaving manual scavenging. Thus, the observed discrimination not just associated with a particular occupation; rather it is associated with a group of workers who are stigmatized within a framework of graded inequality. Secondly, the distinction between market and non-market institutions that have been emphasized in the literature is not so distinctive when analysed from the perspective of the stigmatized labour. In each of their transactions in markets, including the labour market, their identity as manual scavengers (current or former) takes precedence over other attributes or abilities that they might have. The transactions in markets are not impersonal; these are almost always mediated through the lens of their stigmatized identity. Such a grounded understanding of labour and work raises serious theoretical questions for the received theories of labour market.

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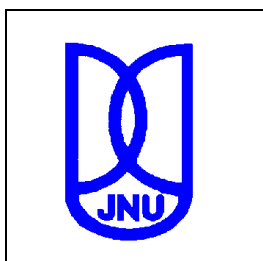
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**Centre for the Study of Regional Development**  
**School of Social Sciences**  
**Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi**  
**Primary Survey Questionnaire**  
**On**

HH Sl. No:

Date:

***'Accessibility and Discrimination in Market and Non-Market Institutions: A Study of Manual Scavengers in Odisha'***

<b>Block(0): Identification of the Sample Household</b>					
1	State:	Odisha	5	Block:	
2	District:		6	name of the Head of Household:	
3	Tehsil/Town:		7	Sector:(Rural=1, Urban=2)	
4	Village Name:		8	Name of the informant:	

<b>Block (1): Characteristics of the Head of the Household</b>					
1.1	Gender (Male=1, Female=2):			1.7	Social Group:
1.2	Household Size:	Male:		1.8	Religion:
1.3		Female:		1.9	Land Possessed:
1.4		Total:		1.10	Primary Occupation:
1.5	Household Type:			1.11	Status of Dwelling:
1.6	Age:			1.12	Distance to the place of work:

**Codes for Block 1**

**Items:** 1.1: Gender: *Male=1, Female=2*

1.4: Household type: *self-employed=1, regular wage/salary earning=2, casual labour=3, Others=4*

1.7: Social Group: *SC=1, ST=2, OBC=3, Others=4*

1.8: Religion: *Hindu=1, Muslim=2, Christian=3, Buddhist=4, Other=5*

1.9: Land Possessed: *Less than 1 acre (0.4047) =1, 1 acre – 2 acre=2, greater than 2 acre=3*

1.11: Status of Dwelling: owned: *freehold=1, leasehold=2*, hired: *hired dwelling units with written Contract=3, hired dwelling units without written contract=4, no dwelling=5*

1.12. Distance of Dwelling to the place of work: *not required to travel=1, travelled a distance of less than 1 k.m =2, 1 k.m- 5 k.m = 3, 5 km-10 k.m=4, 10 k.m.-20 k.m.=5, 20 k.m and above=6*



**Codes of Block (2)**

Item: 2.3. Relation to Head: *Head=1, Wife/Husband=2, Son/Daughter=3, Son-in-Law/Daughter-in-Law=4, Grandchild=5, Father/Mother=6, Brother/Sister=7, Father-in-Law/Mother-in-Law=8, Nephew/Niece=9, Sister-in-Law/Brother-in-Law=10, Grand Mother/Grand Father=11, other relatives= 12*

Item: 2.6. Marital Status: *married=1, not married=2, widowed=3, divorced/separated=4*

Item: 2.7. General Education: *Not literate=1, Literate with no formal schoolings=2, Primary=3, Middle=4, Secondary=5, Higher Secondary=6, Graduation=7, Diploma=8, P.G=9, Others=10*

Item: 2.8. Technical Education: *No technical education=1, technical degree in agriculture/ engineering/ technology/medicine=2, Diploma or certificate course in: agriculture=3, engineering/technology=4, medicine=5, crafts=6, other subjects=7*

**Codes of Block (3)**

Item: 3.3. Employment Status: *UPS=1, UPSS=2, CWS=3, CDS=4*

Item: 3.4. Work Status: *Self-employed=1, Casual labourer =3, Regular Salaried/Wage labourer = 4, Not in labour force=5*

Item: 3.5. Industry: *5 digit code as per NIC-2008*

Item: 3.6. Occupation: *3 digit code as per NCO-2004*

Item: 3.7. Enterprise: *Proprietary: Male=1, Female=2; Partnership: with members from same HH=3, with members from different HH=4; Government/Public sector=5, Public/private limited Company=6, co-operative societies/trust/other non-profit institutions=7, employers' households=8, others=9*

Item: 3.8. Number of Worker in the enterprise: *less than 6=1, 6-10=2, 10-20=3, 20 and above=4*

Item: 3.9. Type of Job Contract: *No written job contract=1, written job contract for 1 year or less=2, more than 1 year to 3 year=3, more than 3 year=4*

Item: 3.10. Whether eligible for paid leave: *Yes=1, No=2*

Item: 3.11. Any social security benefits: *Yes=1, No=2*

Item: 3.12. Method of Payment: *Regular monthly salary=1, regular weekly payment=2, Daily Payment=3, piece rate payment=4, others=5*

<b>Block (4): Sources of Livelihood</b>						
<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Last 6 months</b>	<b>Last 1 year</b>	<b>5 Years Back</b>	<b>10 Years Back</b>	<b>20 years Back</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.7</b>
1	Agriculture (irrigated)					
2	Agriculture (rain-fed)					
3	Honey bees					
4	Fishery					
5	Animal Husbandry (Livestock)					
6	Artisans					
7	Business					
8	Collecting & processing forest products, raw-drugs from med. plants					
9	Agro-processing					
10	Processing & marketing homemade products					
11	Casual farm labour					
12	Casual non-farm labour					
13	Long-term agriculture labour					
14	Regular Salaried employment					
15	Handloom					
16	Sericulture					
17	Interest income, property, land rentals					
18	Public transfers/ pensions					
19	Private transfers/ remittances					
20	Other (specify)					



**Block (5): Initial Endowments**

5.1. Are you staying here for more than 1 year? Yes=1, No=2. If No, then Place of origin\_\_\_\_\_.

5.2. If migrated from rural area, then (a) Origin same district different location; (b) outside the district same state; (c) outside the state; why? \_\_\_\_\_

5.3. What are the jobs they used to do in their place of origin?

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>

5.4. What are the assets they have/had in their place of origin (village)?

Sl. No	Name of the Assets	Units	Quantity of the Assets
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1	Agricultural Land	In Acres	
2	Homestead	In Numbers	
4	Bicycle	In Numbers	
5	Motorcycle/Scooter	In Numbers	
6	Tube well/bore well/Dug well	In Numbers	
7	Water pump	In Numbers	
8	Pukka House/Kachha House	In Numbers	
9	Number of Rooms in House	In Numbers	
10	Chair/Table	In Numbers	
11	Television	In Numbers	
12	Radio/Transistor	In Numbers	
13	Tractor	In Numbers	
14	Mobile Telephone	In Numbers	
15	Others	In Numbers	

5.5. What are the assets they have in their place of destination (Town)?

Sl. No	Name of the Assets	Units	Quantity of the Assets
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1	Electricity		
2	Mattress		
4	Pressure Cooker		
5	Table/Chair		
6	Cot/Bed		
7	Electric Fan		
8	Radio/transistor		
9	Television		
10	Mobile Telephone		
11	Land Line Telephone		
12	Computer with Internet		
13	Refrigerator		
14	Cool		
15	Own House/Rented House		
16	Pukka House/ Kuchha House		
17	Number of rooms		
18	Sources of drinking water		
19	Washing Machine		
20	Utensils		
21	Car		
22	Bicycle		
23	Toilets at house		
24	Sewing Machine		
25	Others		

## 5.6. Total Dependents and Working population in the house –

No. of Dependents in the HH		No. of Working Population in HH	
<i>1</i>		<i>2</i>	
Old People	Kids (0-5 yrs)	Ex. Workers	Working Children
<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>

<b>Block (6). Generational shift in Occupation (Occupational Mobility):</b>			
Sl. No	Father/Mother (Main Occupation)	Grant Parents (Main Occupation)	Son/Daughter (Main Occupation)
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

<b>Block (7): Household Consumption Expenditure</b>			
Sl. No	Item group	value of consumption (in Rs) during	
		last 30 days	last 365 days
7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4
1	Cereals and Cereal Products		
2	Pulses and Pulse Products		
3	Milk and Milk Products		
4	Edible oil and Vanaspati		
5	Vegetables		
6	Fruits and Nuts		
7	Egg, Fish and Meat		
8	Sugat (Gur, Misry, honey)		
9	Salt and spices		
10	Other food items		
11	Pan, Tobacco, and intoxicants		
12	Fuel and Light		
13	Entertainment (Cinema, Picnic, Sports, etc.,)		
14	Personal care and effects		
15	Toilet Articles ( Toothpaste, hairoil, etc.,)		
16	Sundry articles		
17	Rent/ House rent		
18	Consumer taxes		
19	Medical expences		
20	Tuition fees and other fees		
21	School books and other articles		
22	Clothing and bedding		

<b>Block (7): Household Consumption Expenditure (Continue.....)</b>			
Sl. No	Item group	value of consumption (in Rs) during	
		last 30 days	last 365 days
7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4
23	Furniture and Fixture		
24	Crockery and Utensils		
25	Cooking and household appliances		
26	Goods for recreation		
27	Jewellery and Ornaments		
28	Personal transport equipment		
29	Other personal goods (clock, watch, PC, telephone, mobile etc.)		
30	Repaire and mainteince ( residential buildings, bathroom equipment etc.,)		

**INDIVIDUAL WORKERS QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>BLOCK.1: IDENTIFICATION</b>	
1.1. Name:	_____
1.2. City/Town/Village:	_____
1.3. Sector ( <i>Urban = 1, Rural = 2</i> ):	_____
1.4. Tehsil/Taluk:	_____
1.5. District:	_____
1.6. State:	_____
1.7. Address:	_____
	_____

<b>BLOCK.2: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE INDIVIDUAL WORKER</b>	
2.1. Name :	_____
2.2. Sex ( <i>Male = 1, Female = 2</i> ) :	_____ <input type="text"/>
2.3. Age:	_____ <input type="text"/>
2.4. Marital Status:	_____ <input type="text"/>
2.5. Educational Status:	_____ <input type="text"/>
2.6. Social Category:	_____ <input type="text"/>
2.7. Sub-Caste:	_____
2.8. Religion:	_____ <input type="text"/>

*N.B: Codes of the items in the above table will remain same as in the HH questionnaire*

**BLOCK.3: EMPLOYMENT PARTICULARS OF INDIVIDUAL WORKER**

- 3.1. What is the Occupation that you mainly do (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4 ): \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.2. Employment Status ( UPS=1, UPSS=2, CWS=3, CDS=4) : \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.3. Work Status: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.4. Types of Job Contract: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.5. Whether eligible for paid leave ( Yes=1, No = 2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.6. Do you get any social security benefits (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.7. Method of Payment : \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.8. Are you paid in Cash or in Kind : \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.9. Are you paid regularly : \_\_\_\_\_

**Codes of Block (3)**

Item: 3.3. Work Status: *Self-employed=1, Casual labourer =3, Regular Salaried/Wage labourer = 4, Not in labour force=5*

Item: 3.4. Type of Job Contract: *No written job contract=1, written job contract for 1 year or less=2, more than 1 year to 3 year=3, more than 3 year=4*

Item: 3.7. Method of Payment: *Regular monthly salary=1, regular weekly payment=2, Daily Payment=3, piece rate payment=4, others=5*

Item: 3.8. Paid in Cash or in Kind: *Cash only=1, Both Cash and Kind=2, Kind only=3, Not paid=4*

**BLOCK.4: ACCESSIBILITY TO DIFFERENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

Sl. No	Items	Do you read a News paper?	Do you listen to the Radio?	Do you watch Television?
4.1	Almost every Day			
4.2	At least once a week			
4.3	Less than once a week			
4.4	Not at all			

**BLOCK.5: DISCRIMINATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET**

- 5.1. Have you ever applied for any job in the market? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.2. Did you get the job after applying? (Yes=1, No=2) : \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.3. If yes, the kind of job you got in the market: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.4. The sources from which you knew about the job application: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.5. Do you get equal wages and allowances compared to others in the same industry?  
(Yes=1, No = 2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.6. Do you get any social security benefits in the job?(Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.7. Have you ever been asked to do lower paid jobs? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.8. Do you feel equal like your other co-workers? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.9. Do you get any scolding from your boss/employer in the name of your caste?  
(Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.10. Do the co-workers laugh/joke/scold you in the name of your caste?  
(Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.11. Do you have your lunch with co-workers at the same place? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.12. Do you have your lunch in same utensils with others? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.13. Do you take water from the same source of drinking water? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.14. If you are not getting equal wages and allowances compared to other in the  
industry, what are the reasons? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.15. Are you provided all logistics of work while working? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.16. If not, then why? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.17. Are you allowed to take break in between the work? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.18. If not, then why? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.19. Are you paid regularly (weekly/monthly/annually)? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.20. If not, then why? \_\_\_\_\_



**BLOCK.6: DISCRIMINATION IN THE CREDIT MARKET**

- 6.1. Have you got any credit? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.2. If yes, then the sources of credit : \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.3. Have you ever applied in banks for credit? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.4. If yes, then the sources about the credit availability in banks: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.5. Did you face any difficulties while accessing credit from bank? (Yes=1, No = 2):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6.6. If yes, then what are those difficulties? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.7. How many times have you applied for credit in banks? : \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.8. Normally how many days have you spent in getting the loan if approved? : \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.9. Do you get any scolding from banking staff in the name of your caste?  
(Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.10. Have you even been to local private money lender for credit? (Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.11. If yes, then for what kind of credit?
- 6.12. What is the interest rate usually charged by private money lender? : \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.13. What is the interest rate charged by public commercial banks? : \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.14. While inside the bank, are you asked to seat in separate waiting chair? :  
(Yes=1, No=2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.15. If yes, then why? : \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.16. Are you allowed to take water from the same source of drinking water in the bank?  
:  
(Yes=1, No=2): \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.17. If not, then why? \_\_\_\_\_