

Vulnerability of the Solid Waste Collectors' (Household Waste Collectors) Good Health and Well-being: With Reference to Bengaluru City, Karnataka, India

M.R. KAVITHA*¹ AND MOHAN, A.K.²

¹Research Scholar and ²Associate Professor

¹Department of Studies in Social Work, University of Mysore, Manasagangothri, Mysore (Karnataka) India

²Department of Social Work, Central University Kerala, Kasaragod (Kerala) India

ABSTRACT

The waste collectors' contribution to the community, environment, and public sanitation is great, but it can be found that occupational accidents are very frequent and common in this profession. It is found that the waste collectors' health is largely impacted through skin allergies, asthma, and other diseases. This paper explores the vulnerability in health and well-being of solid waste collectors in Bengaluru city. The city is divided into 198 wards under the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and every day Bangaloreans produce 35,000 metric tons of solid waste, and there are different ways and means to collect it, every day Sixteen thousand garbage disposal workers are paid by the BBMP to collect the garbage. In this study, descriptive survey method has been adopted in two wards; one is maximum waste collection and other from lowest waste collection. The article intends to show that household waste collection can lead to chronic respiratory symptoms such as cough, phlegm, and wheezing, and chronic bronchitis and musculoskeletal symptoms such low back pain and elbow pain along with injuries and cuts caused by sharp objects. The sanitation workers are addressing various health issues and are extremely vulnerable to chronic diseases. The Bangalore city solid waste collectors suffer from skin allergies, tuberculosis, asthma, frequent fever, arthritis, eye allergies, and daily headaches. It was found that 72% of the solid waste collectors have skin allergies, 64.0% are getting daily headache, and 84.0% are frequently feverish.

Key Words : Occupational health, Municipal sanitary workers, Solid waste management, Health, Civil society

INTRODUCTION

In India, the Municipal Solid Waste Management (MSWM) is governed by the Municipal Solid Waste Rules (MSWR). However, majority of the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) do not have appropriate action plans for execution and enactment of the MSWR (CPCB Report, 2013). No city in India can claim 100% segregation of waste at dwelling unit, and on average, only 70% waste collection can be observed, while the remaining 30% is again mixed and lost in the urban environment. Out of the total waste collected, only 12.45% waste is scientifically processed, while the rest is disposed of in open dumps (CPCB

Report, 2013).

Waste is anything that is discarded by an individual, household, or organization. It can be a complex mixture of different substances, some of which may be intrinsically hazardous to health. The working conditions of the waste collectors remain extremely precarious and unsafe. The rapid uncontrolled and unplanned urbanization in Karnataka, has brought serious environmental degradation, and one of the most pressing matters is the management of solid, liquid, and hazardous waste.

"Solid waste" includes solid or semi-solid domestic waste, sanitary waste, commercial waste, institutional

How to cite this Article: Kavitha, M.R. and Mohan, A.K. (2019). Vulnerability of the Solid Waste Collectors' (Household Waste Collectors) Good Health and Well-being: With Reference to Bengaluru City, Karnataka, India. *Internat. J. Appl. Soc. Sci.*, 6 (4) : 817-823.