

CHAPTER - II

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Urbanization, as well as that of urban growth, which is the increase in the urban population growth and migration from the rural to urban areas has become an inevitable phenomenon, in the world today. And it has attracted the entire society's attention towards the remedies to approach the new problems arising due to unplanned and haphazard growth of cities. This has led to a number of negative consequences. For the developing country like India, nowadays the problem of small hutments of the people of lowest strata is increasing in a large proportion.

Although the government has introduced different schemes to meet the basic needs of these urban-poor, they have not served the purpose so far. Also the requirements of uncontrolled population are not maintained by the town planning departments or by the health departments. However the dualistic economy has created extreme gaps between the standards of living of the haves and have-nots. As the health and sanitation departments are not able to work smoothly, likewise they also could not be able to dispose the large proportion of waste and garbage created by urban living shares another discomfort.

Migration has lead to large scale influx of rural people to cities in search of employment. These people are mostly unskilled or semiskilled. Thus employment opportunities are also limited as the urbanization process has created more employment opprtunites for the skilled. Hence many of the migrants have to be satisfied with lower jobs which were not very much renmunerative. As a result, they are forced to look for possible employment and they found a need in waste recycling and filled the gap by collecting rags for the recycling process. This means they have to physically deal with garbage and filth every day and this could also effect their way of living.

As the women were the worst suffereres of any economic calamity, the study of adolescent ragpicking girls would assume importance. Thus the present study focusses on the different aspects of the life of adolescent ragpickiing girls. The adolesent at this age have different problems and as females even they might be facing different type of problems than the adult or male ragpickers. It also covers their future aspirations about educational, occupational and marital aspects too.

The researcher is also interested in the different dimensions of the adolescent ragpicking girls life, such as their economic conditions, demographic features, and health

conditions.

Rationale for this study

Ragpickers, are one of the group of child labourers of the vulnerable section of the society, who live in hazardous conditions. Also no efforts are made so far by the government to help these children. They may indulge in antisocial activities due to their ingenuous ways of life.

The present study about the "Problems of the adolescent ragpicking girls in Kolhapur city" is undertaken with the objective of highlighting their family background, their income level, working conditions, health conditions, the problem they face in their occupations etc.. As they are at their adolescent stage, apart from adults female or male ragpickers, they have different attitudes.

2.1 Objectives

The study is undertaken with the following objectives; They are as follows :-

- 1) To study the socio-economic, and educational background of the adolescent ragpicking girls.
- 2) To understand their working conditions and occupational hazards.
- 3) To find out the economic independence of ragpicking girls.
- 4) To know their future aspirations related to education

occupation and marriage. And,

5) To find out the health status of adolescent ragpicking girls.

Hypothesis

1) The occupation selected by the ragpicking girls and their parents occupation have a positive relationship.

2) Higher the level of education, higher would be the level of aspiration.

3) In the lower strata of the society earning status and economic independence are not related.

2.2 Working definitions of the variables used in the study

For the present study the above operational definitions and terms are considered.

Adolescent :- Different scholars have come forward to define adolescence and there are differences among them. For Holmes [1964] adolescence is the period from age 12 to 18 and for Gardner [1957] its the age span from 11 or 12 to 17 to 18

¹ years . According to Hurlock [1980] early adolescence extends

² roughly from 12 to 16 years . In the present study adolescent ragpicking girls means female ragpickers aged 12 to 18.

Rag :- Is applied contemptuously to thing eg. torn or scanty garment, a flag, a handkerchief, the atre curtain, newspapers, papers etc. Apart from the definition it also includes the scrap material, torn pieces of iron or any other

metal, plastic, plastic bags etc.

Attitude:- It means position of the body, opinion, judgement.

For the present study the word attitude refers the judgement about the ragpicking girls.

Saving:- It means the act of economizing, or accumulation of money. For this study 'saving' means the money accumulated by the ragpicking girls.

Educational interest:- It is considered as the concentrated attention of the ragpicking girls towards basic education.

Empowerment :- Authority or licence. In the present study the term 'economic empowerment' indicates the authority to spend the earned money.

Health hazards:- It means the risks and the obstracles for the physic of the ragpicking girls.

Aspirations :- It means lofty hope or ambition. The word is used for the act of aspiration by the adolescent ragpicking girls.

In the present study scrap merchant is the one who trades the scrap metal.

2.3 Area of study

The universe of the present study is the slums in Kolhapur city under the city limits of Kolhapur Municipal Corporation.

Sampling

A general survey was undertaken such as the house to house enquiry and from the number of ragpickers from the enquiry approximately 1/3 samples are selected from each area. It was found that most of the ragpicking families were located at Yadavnagar, Rajendranagar, Sambhajinagar, Jagrutinagar, Vicharemal and Nagala Park slums. Initially all the identified ragpickers were listed. Using lottery method 1/3 of those identified adolescent ragpicking girls were selected for the study and the sampling frame is as follows :-

Table No. 2.1

Slumwise selection of the sample

| Name of the slum | Number of adolescent ragpicking girls | Sample selected |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Yadavnagar | 74 | 24 |
| Rajendranagar | 107 | 36 |
| Sambhajinagar | 20 | 6 |
| Jagrutingar | 56 | 18 |
| Vicharemal | 28 | 10 |
| Nagala Park | 20 | 6 |
| Total | 305 | 100 |

A general survey was conducted to identify the adolescent ragpicking girls in the slums with the help of the staff members of the Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups Educational Improvement, Rajendranagar, a non-governmental organization working among the underprivileged

female children.

2.4 Research design

The present research is intended to describe the socio-demographic, economic, occupational, aspirational and health conditions of the adolescent ragpicking girls. Therefore the research has adopted descriptive design.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the present study is to find out why these girls have selected such ingenious ways for their survival and while passing through this stressful job what are their attitudes as well as of the society towards them.

Aim of the study

The aim of the present study is to analyse the socio-demographic conditions occupational and health hazards of the adolescent ragpicking girls.

2.5 Tools of data collection

The main tool of data collection in this study was the interview schedule. Initially the schedule constructed for data collection was tested and necessary changes were made. All the aspects which the study intended to cover were included in the interview schedule.

Interviews were conducted in the family setting and were opened free and informal in nature about 38 items were

included in interview schedule. Most of the questions were closed ended and a few open ended questions were also used. The questions were formulated keeping in mind the aims and hypothesis of the study. Questions were therefore related to personal information, family information, working conditions, economic conditions, aspiration, health, etc.. The interview took place during the months of December 1993 to March 1994.

Data processing and analysis

The completed interview schedule than scrutinised, verified, edited and arranged serially. For co-ording a master code sheet was prepared and the entire data entered into a master chart. Except for a few, all the questions in the interview schedule were precoded. Thus the precoded data was directly presented after some necessary reclassification, where as the uncoded data was classified on the basis of commonness of responses for making a comparable analysis of the material. While analysing the data use of percentages was made.

Strengths

- 1) Since the researcher was working among the slum people it was possible to established a rapport with the respondents.
- 2) The researcher was able to give adequate time to each interviewee. Thus getting more credible data.

Limitations

There were some limitations also in the present study. They are as follows:-

- 1) In some cases the respondents parents were present at the time of interview and tried to interfere.
- 2) The accurate date of birth of the respondents was not available, as most of them and their parents were illiterate, so in such cases the age is decided according to their sibling age gaps and the number of children.
- 3) The respondents who were between the 12-13 age group were hesitating to answer about their aspirations.
- 4) The respondents tried to ignore on certain aspects asked related to health status.
- 5) Only general health checkup was conducted by a medical practitioner.

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