

CHILDREN AS SCAVENGERS:
A CASE STUDY OF WAH CANTT



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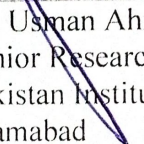
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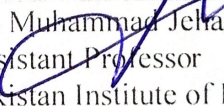
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DEDICATION

*Every challenging work needs self-effort as well as guideness of elders, especially, those
who are very close to our heart*

My humble effort is dedicated to my sweet and loving

FAMILY

*Whose affection loves encouragement and endless prayers made me able to get this
success and honour*

Along with all hard working and respected

TEACHERS

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I am grateful to my parents, it became possible due to their prayers. My mother has been a great support for me all the time; it has been her divine motivation and support that this research has been flourishing in all aspects. I would also want to thank my entire family members for their love and care throughout my research.

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ABSTRACT

Scavenging is the one of the most dangerous form of child labour. Child scavengers are searching for the reusable item from the waste. The main focus of this research is on the child scavengers of Wah Cantt. This study attempts to find the scavenger children life style, their leisure activities, their views about societal behaviour, the hurdles they have to face during their work, and also their self and identity construction. This study is based on qualitative methods and field work lasted over the span of six months. The sample size comprised of 40 individuals for the study and was chosen through convenience sampling because it is difficult for the researcher to cover the whole area so a sample which is representative of the whole population is taken. In-depth interviews, case studies, focus group discussion helped in obtaining reliable and valid data. Interviews are transcribed into English from Urdu language and then data is manually analysed through thematic analysis approach, in which different themes and sub-themes from the data were emerged. The findings of the study show that poverty is one of the key factors which force the parents to send their children to earn money at the very early age. All the negative behaviour of the society and their parents makes these children feel that they are inferior to all the other people in the society. The pressure of earning for their survival drives these children away from education. They face discrimination, harassment, harsh behaviour of society, psychological issues and health problems.

Keywords: Scavengers, Scavenger Children, psychological impacts, Health Impacts, Causes, Social causes, Economic causes

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A person who gathers recyclable and reusable stuff to sell off or for personal use is characterized as a waste scavenger (Hari, 2011). Scavenging is a significant commercial activity that contributes benefits to above 15 million people around the world, most of those people are in the areas of developing nations, and it creates a cost implication of numerous billion USD (Medina, 2010). In developing countries, several people earn their living by collecting recyclable stuff that has been disposed of by other people, a process termed waste picking or, scavenging (Urarattanasunthon et al., 2012). In this way, distinguished articles are salvaged of dumped solid waste (Afon, 2012). Scavenging is described as picking recyclable products from mixed-up waste dumped at dumpsites, landfills, and areas of waste collection (ILO, 2004). The discarded material which is collected by scavengers is turned into significant material and its physical form is transformed ere transferring to facilitate the processing (Urarattanasunthonet al, 2012).

Around 2% populations of developing countries earn a living by scavenging (Muhammad & Manu, 2013). Unemployment is a grave issue for impoverishment in developing states that end in scavenging (ILO, 2004). In addition, the benefits of scavenging are jobs without surveillance, corporate wear, and shift schedule. Assuredly, scavengers may also recover valuables items from either garbage cans in household places or dumping grounds (Gonzenbach& Coad, 2007). Furthermore, research also demonstrates certain other factors of waste picking that includes family background, living conditions, father's work, and parental education (Malik et al., 2002).Scavenging is filthy and dangerous work especially scavenging through children is considered the most horrible occupation, in which guardians and parents use their children for economic growth.

Majority of children¹ involved in scavenging are illiterate due numerous reasons like some of them leave school due to corporal punishment by their teachers, some of them not enrolled as they are bread earners of their families. The working environment of the scavengers is hazardous with plenty of fleas and unpleasant smells in waste sites together

¹ A child is any person under the age of 18. (UNICEF, 2020)

with the scarcity of proper safeguarding means. Therefore, the collection of papers, plastics, rubber materials, and ferrous and non-ferrous metals from dumpsites, exposed them to several transmissible agents and toxic elements that may induce illness (Ray et al., 2004). They face public abuse from elements of society, which arise social disruptions. Several scavengers end in substance abuse like smoking and drunkenness just to subdue the jeopardise of the work (Pisutthanon, 2004).

Good health is a basic right of every child, children who are involved in this precarious occupation are exposed to many health risks. Since the conditions in which scavengers live and work are unhygienic and their occupational nature exposes them to probably pathogenic bio aerosols that may result in the spread of numerous diseases (Pless-Mulloli et al.,1998). They suffer from constant threats or danger to their life. Similarly, it was mentioned by the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) that prolonged exposure to smoke from the flame and dirt of the waste yard may cause serious respiratory disorders to scavengers. On the other hand, some may suffer from sharp injuries which lead to death or get subjected to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and also hepatitis virus from medical waste (Aboagye-Larbi., 2014)

Simultaneously, it is also said that scavengers may also experience disorders like typhoid, and cholera (Magaji&Dakyes, 2011). Some get infected with skin and blood diseases, ocular and airway infections owing to exposure to contaminated particles, wounds from insect stings, musculoskeletal diseases resulting from the lifting of hulky waste containers, and impairments because of exposure with harmful chemicals coupled with overall waste. Whereas, dumping sites also a considerable amount of microbial load which is found to be a grave threat to scavengers and the community as scavengers brings some disease-causing agents from waste yards to the community (Grant, 2015).Waste scavenging is considered a popular simple activity that relies on the size and nature of waste produced by the community. Consequently, a great deal of waste scavengers on the roads and junk heaps in Pakistan, since the beginning of the 1980s depicts the evident worst situation of the profound economic pressure, the homeland has been undergoing (Ahmad, 2018).

In Pakistan, Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, poor health and economic growths remains the major problem. These problems compelled the child to enter in the labor force instead of school (Ali, 2011). Child labor is prevailing in Pakistan, and the stats of the child labor shows the alarming situation. Approximately 12 million children have to work to meet their end needs (UNICEF, 2013). Waste picking is the most dangerous, embarrassing, and self-destructive activity for the children. It is considered as an inferior and bad economic activity particularly for the children as it involves too much work danger, physical, psychological, and sexual abuse (Batool & Anjum, 2016). Poverty is considered as primary source of the child labor and due to poverty particularly in the rural areas that account for nearly 68% of the population, these children involved in the trash picking and other activities (Abbas et al, 2018). The children belong to the poor families are deprived of their fundamental human rights and they embraced the harsh reality of their life and support their family financially (Ali, 2011). Child labor on the form of scavenging is prevailing in every big city of the Pakistan. Due to the poverty and large family size the poor families face the severe financial constraint and as a consequence the children of these poor families also have to work for fulfilling the basic needs of life (Haider et al. 2016).

Scavenging is a very broad topic and current study assayed to vision the social aspect of the scavenger's lives, the way society creates the circumstances which stimulate the children to turn onto scavengers, or in another way, create grounds to the profession of scavenging. This study aims to find out the reasons responsible for scavenging. This research is focused on the lifestyle, living conditions, family dynamics and scavenging routine of these children.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Scavenging has become a social disorder which is being widespread and bringing in various ill effects on lives of millions of begging and scavenging children. Social fabric is being distorted as more and more are opting for this social ill due to poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. Child labour in scavenging is the kind of worst forms of child labour. In this field children faced many problems they can be seen wondering here and there for garbage and rage. They go to markets, residential streets, open dump and

other relevant placed. This study identified that how social, cultural, and economic factors motivates the children for joining this activity of scavenging. And also find out that how child scavengers² are contributing in the family income. What are the impacts of scavenging on physical health of child scavengers and what are the major problems faced by child scavengers.

The study is focused on the circumstances under which children are pushed into scavenging and the consequences it has on their lives. The study is significant in a way as few studies have been conducted on this issue particularly in the context of development studies approach. This research will guide in understanding the socio-cultural factors which push the Afghan children to become garbage collectors in Pakistani society. The research also suggests that there is a severe need to develop a mechanism to address the issues related to the scavenging and moreover, government must introduce certain policies to engage these children in other productive activities, create jobs, create business opportunities, promote awareness at societal and grass-root level and particularly focus on improving the environment.

1.2. Objectives

- To know about the construction of self-identity among the scavengers.
- To identify different social, cultural, and economic factors that motivates children to engage in the activity of scavenging as a livelihood.
- To find out the major problems faced by child scavengers.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study is reflected on the life worlds of waste scavengers with reference to their world view and experiences. The study is significant in a way as few studies have been conducted on this issue particularly in the context of development studies approach. This research will guide in understanding the socio-cultural factors which push the children to become garbage collectors in Pakistani society. The research also suggests that there is a severe need to develop a mechanism to address the issues related to the scavenging. This study will also help to know the social status of children in society. Findings of current

²A person who is under the age of eighteen and gather recyclable and reusable stuff to sell or for personal use.

study will be useful in helping scavengers facing socio-economic and health related problems and provide insights to the helping professionals when working with this population. This research would offer the essential information and its pointers on scavenging with greater attention to Pakistan. It reveals the difficulties encountered by scavengers, for this will assist the government and different regulations to establish policies or begin restoration or development plans for the scavenging children. Meanwhile, it would assist the administrator, legislator, and other concerned bodies to determine their action program to tackle the health challenges and hazards fronted by scavenging children. As well, it would evoke the need of development in third world countries where scavenging is becoming a common practice and would also play its part in policy formulation and operationalization about scavenging and provide an overview in respect of how scavenging is compared with education and social-economic settings.

1.4. Reflexivity of the Research

Reflexivity concerning positionality designates the system we get to experience and how we value our positionalities in respect of awareness creation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Following this, positionality includes the researcher's view as concerns power struggles comprising educational qualification, social standing, financial position, age, gender, national origin, and urban-rural connections and suchlike, and the impact (either positive or negative that may have on the data accumulated and consequently, the knowledge created) (Rose, 1997).

The current research held in the range of Wah Cantt. And forty respondents were picked as a sample. The researcher is Pakistani and an inhabitant of Wah Cantt. Moreover, the researcher can converse and comprehend Punjabi, Urdu, and local tongues. Therefore, this positionality had a positive influence on data accumulation on being a native language speaker. On the contrary, dealing with non-formal refuse collectors who were refugees and talks in Pashto and unable to conceive the Urdu or Punjabi, was problematic as it postured a language handicap, causing social ties restless. Whereas, it wasn't convenient to establish compatibility and social connections with local informal garbage collectors. The advantage of a translator can solve this problem.

1.5. Thesis Outline

The current chapter deals with introduction, whereas 2nd chapter highlights the literature review. The 3rd chapter covers research methodology, techniques and tools used in data gathering and the area profile. 4th and 5th chapters explain about result and discussion, which further highlighted the construction of self-identity among the scavengers. It also highlights different social, cultural, and economic factors that motivate children to engage in the activity of scavenging as a livelihood and also put light on the major problems faced by child scavengers. The last chapter concluded the thesis with some recommendations at the end.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This part serves to recognize the scope of the literature review and enables a research worker to identify which portion of the available literature is significant to examine the research issues. For a greater understanding concerning child scavenging, it appears necessary to analyse relevant literature. It supports the research workers to expand and enhance the work done previously. The most serious issues in Pakistani society are poverty, unemployment, lack of education and poor health services. These issues force the children to work instead of getting education (Ali, 2011). Moreover, according to estimation nearly 12 million children in Pakistan have to work for their survival (UNICEF, 2013). Scavenging is the most dangerous job that damages the self-esteem of children (Batool & Anjum, 2016). These scavengers live in the polluted areas and in these areas basic facilities are of very low quality. They are facing the problem of safe drinking water, illiteracy and health related problems. These child scavengers are spending most of their time in waste areas for picking or collecting the waste material like glass, plastics etc. (Dhruvarajan & Arkanath, 2000). They have to work in every type of weather, in rainy season they are mostly suffer from the various diseases like diarrhoea and in winter season they mostly suffer from cold. Further, the poor family background, death or any disability to the breadwinner, and parent's illiteracy are the major factors of the scavenging (Malik et al., 2002). Poverty, lack of skills, and migration are also important factors that force the poor people to involve in the scavenging activities.

Most of the studies observed that these waste pickers belong to very low income and uneducated families. Most of the families migrate from the rural areas toward the urban areas for better facilities of lives. To support their families most of them start working at the age of five or eight. Most of the time they got injured while collecting the waste. Moreover, because of the food insecurity they are suffering from retarded growth. Apart from the physical danger associated with the waste picking these children have no time for their personality development. These children mostly face abuse instead of love or attention that every child need from their parents and society (Kumar, et al. 2017). While entering in the labour market at the early age these children may involve in the certain

crimes or bad habits like stealing and drinking (Thapa et al., 2009). As scavenger children hunt for useful items in the refuse. Similarly, it poses a great danger to the lives of refuse collectors since scavengers are subjected to unsafe substances such as shattered glass, pins, needles, and such like metal parts. These dangerous items may induce hepatitis, tetanus, aids and with pulmonary disorders as well. Most of the developing countries including Pakistan are facing the issue of street children. There are many reasons behind it but the major the major reason is the rapid population growth (Abdullah, 2014).

Similarly, street children were reported to be unwilling to request treatment in poor health. Frequently, they would rather discuss the disease in their social webs, as with the peers or the purchasers of items they recover. They would only rarely visit any hospital or physician when a situation becomes rough (Uddin, et al., 2014). Street children do not take care of their health. When these children fell ill they first discuss with their peer groups or their contractors. They prefer to call upon a local pharmacist over a trained doctor. They visit hospitals only when their health problems become severe. Children were also afraid of police because they take them to rehabilitation centres. They feel fear from police wagon, which might bring them to the reformatory schools, and of police threatening behaviour in a police station (Uddin, et al., 2014). However, one review defined a trivial sickness as a sickness that does not prevent scavengers' bread and butter, comprising lung infections, little incisions, burns, cold, slight temperature, skin diseases, and diarrhoea. A serious sickness as a situation compelling them to stay off from work and ask for some sort of medication (Ali & Muynck, 2005). Another essential thing which the scavenger's children face is that adult refuses collectors and drug addicts are used to forcibly snatch or steal their gathered scraps or usually accuse them if they bring some scraps. Children involved in scavenging do not pay head to their health problems they face for example cuts, skin infections, burns, cold or fever. To them major illness is only which force them to stay away unless they take proper medicine.

Scavengers are the marginalized community of our society. Due to increase in the population especially in the urban region and inadequate basic facilities, the children belong to these poor communities are bound to live in such poor environment. This badly affects their physical and mental health and they face the problem of hopelessness and

anxiety (Hussian& Sharma, 2016). Gutberlet and Baeder (2008), investigated the health issues and risks faced by the informal recyclers. They take the sample of 48 waste pickers of Santo Andre, Brazil. They find that all workers share that they are suffering from back, arms and leg pain, some of them have shoulder pain also as a result of carrying heavy weight.

There is a rapid increase in the population and poverty in Pakistan. In addition, about 40% of the total population comes under the age of 15 years. In accordance to the report published by the Human Right Commission here are nearly 1.2 million street children in Pakistan. Out of these 1.2 million street children, 30,000, children live in Karachi (Samad, 2019). Nasir and Siddiqi (2012), carried out a research study in Lahore, which emphasized the challenges faced by street children, and the researcher workers showed a speculative kind of facts in the study. The findings of the research unveiled that deprivation of life-saving needs was the compelling reason for the children to live on the roads. They encountered numerous problems like harassment, physical harm, lodging, humiliation, and sexual abuse. Along with this, many were living in public facilities suchlike parks, shrines, cemeteries, and bus stations. Rather, research unveils that some of them were aware of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and child rights. Besides, the study stated that plenty of street children was not content with their existing situation and craved to return to their places. The study suggested that the underlying causes of street children are to be abolished with the cooperation of the private-public sectors by launching various relief programs.

Gbadebo Olubunmi (2014), examined the risk attitude and self-evaluation of street urchins in Lagos city. In this, 249 street children were taken as a sample and 117of them were female and 132 males. The data was gathered with three tools as risk attitude rate scaling, self-evaluation rank scaling, and street child status identification scaling. Furthermore, ANOVA and t-test were applied for data examination. The author came across the findings which emphasized that several children had wretched self-evaluation and risking attitude. Therefore, the researcher came to an end that there is an irresistible urge to unite street children into the standard education system and welfare. Besides, the researcher indicated that the risk-taking behaviour of these neglected children is

prodigious in sports activities. And street children are a planetary exhibition of communities in third-world countries.

Khan and Jillani adopted a rational approach in identifying the difficulties faced by child workers. Khan focused on the plights in Pakistan, while the review of Jillani comprises a broader view. Khan (2004) assesses the performance of the Government of Pakistan in grabbing the issue of employment of minors. Similarly, the study reveals that child labor is proliferating throughout the globe, especially, in developing countries. And the Government of Pakistan is unendingly infringing the children's rights concerning occupied in labor. However, the reason behind the entire plight could be the non-consideration and greed of parents and the disinclination of administrators who are at the helm of affairs to indemnify the issues of child work. Besides, this challenging situation is widening with urban expansion, and its coexistent paradigm of social transformations, constrained resources, demographic explosion, commercial use of agricultural land and increase of landless populace, usual reluctance in educating women, small earnings, and a decline in employment of adults. (Khan, 2004; Jillani, 1997)

On the contrary, Jillani (1997) offered an analysis of the state of child work and emphasized that children are abused, overburdened, and deprived of the liberty to education, health, or childhood. However, apart from working at springtime of life, these children work overtime at low cost. Also, these children are forced to work consistently for a living for themselves, or their houses, and, as consequence, they are underprivileged academically and in the social sphere (Jillani, 1997). By taking the sample of 31 Afgan male emigrants, the study highlights that scavengers are poorly aware of their health sensitivity they seem fine with the garbage and unhealthy environment on dumpsites therefore they catch diseases. There is a need to increase literacy among scavengers and they have to be made aware of health and usage of the personal protective equipment of work (Malik *et al.*, 2020).

Mert and Hasibe (2014), explained the determinants and compulsions that force street children to struggle on the roads, by interviewing child workers and their mothers to have an evaluation of their approval or refusal to work, the comprehension of common upkeep obtained by their mothers and their problem-solving abilities. The authors found after the

investigation that the collective support and problem-solving abilities of the mothers with street working children were down to those of mothers whose children were out of the job. Aiming to select the populace difficulties of homelessness, the research was done to examine the sex, age, and job status of the respondents, and identifying the internal and external stratifications. It was revealed that foreigners and migrants are the ground cause for homelessness amongst adults generally and street children (Kok, Cross & Roux, 2010).

By taking the sample of 250 garbage collector children, the study expressed that garbage collector children encountered various real problems like flies, mosquitoes, shattered glass, pointed metal articles, broach, random animals, and facial matter around the trash heaps. Meanwhile, it was also identified that the refuse collectors are usually suffered from conditions like respiratory problems, skin, and digestion problems. Along with that, they experience a lack of self-care medicines and they visit the local health centres in some situations (Batool et al., 2015). To analyse the situation of street children workers in Turkey, 198 homeless children were picked, among said, there were 185 boys and 13 girls in the range of 5 to 14 years of age.. The research reveals that the greatest of the boy children in the range of 09 to 14 years of age struggle on the streets on a lower wage level (Sisman, 2006). By taking the sample of 50 participants below 18 years of age, study indicates the violence and exploitation against a child at different places. This study highlights some major issues that child scavengers facing violence at home whereas one side children who are contributing to the economy for improvement of family income and the other side they face a violation. It concludes that not at home they also face violence and humiliation but at the workplace while contributing indirect economy of the country. Besides, people who are responsible for this misbehaving and humiliating behaviour toward child scavengers are also highlighted in this study (Sehzad, 2014).

Furthermore, children are amongst the pre-eminent member of society and are the future of nations. They assuredly need great care, compassion, and attention. Mostly, the only thing that makes them a vulnerable segment of society is their dependence on others. Along the lines of the initiator's study, around 66 % of teenagers inhabiting the roads are escapees or the outcome of enforced removal from their houses. The leading cause following that is resident violence, workplace violence, and corporal punishment.

Further, fled teenagers on the roads are higher susceptible to suffer ruthless things even deaths. Also, in 1999, the episode of serial killing and sexual assault of 100 children has been testified in Lahore by Javed Iqbal. When he sent a note to a local journal and admitted his offense. And the criminal attempted suttee one day earlier than the signature date. Besides, various mafias also misuse street children and haul them into the profession of panhandling and offenses like stealing (Ghani, 2014).

Haider et al., 2016 conducted research on afghan scavengers, their family background and demographic factors were analysed in two themes. Scholars collected in-depth interviews about 50 respondents result shown that poverty, unemployment, migration, the independent nature of scavenging work, and urbanization were the major causes behind scavenging. The study also exposed that scavenger children faced many other problems like isolation, health risks, and violation from people. According to respondents this a profession where degrees or experiences do not matter you could join this profession effortlessly or without any investment. Vivian et al., (2009) analysed behaviour of scavengers towards HIV risk. They figured out that those who have learned about HIV/AIDS are most involved in sexual interaction. Similarly, children who are in HIV danger converse more often about it. The researchers proposed that abandoned children in Pakistan require knowledge on sexual interaction, HIV/AIDs, and they need to utilize substitute earning sources.

Pakistan is a developing country, poverty, lack of education and unemployment pushes children towards waste scavenging. They live in an area where no basic facilities are available. Rag picking is a quite new phenomenon that is prevailing mostly in urban areas. Scavengers collect paper, cartons, paper boxes, and sackings, anything made up of plastic material, medical waste, glass and iron from garbage, drains and roadsides. These materials cause health issues and problems among scavengers. There are many reasons that push children to adopt waste picking as a profession, like poverty, illiteracy, family pressure, lack of government support etc. Scavenging also becomes a sound profession of their choice because this profession does not need any professional skill to learn. They worked in any kind of weather. They faced many challenges at the dump sites. Mostly they are bare footed in waste picking. People mistreated them. Most of the rag pickers are illiterate and they do not even exactly understand the situation in which they are living.

They faced many difficulties in their survival. They face discrimination, harassment, harsh behaviour of society, psychological issues and health problems.

It is necessary to analyse the concerns of scavengers. This analysis will clarify the socio-cultural and economic adjustments which emphasized children to turn into scavengers. A few studies have been conducted on this issue particularly in the context of development studies approach. The researcher discovered only a few journal articles that discussed scavengers, as part of the approach against scavenging or to scrutinize the profession, as it has become a stereotype to consider it as a stigmatized activity. And the alleviation of the poverty plan may also be encouraged by delivering proposals to subdue this social ill by this study. Very few studies have been conducted on child scavengers in Pakistani context.

2.1. Theoretical Background of the Study

Waste can be defined as any material or things that are required to be discarded (SEPA, 2006). These waste materials also have some worth (Kabongo & Boiral, 2011), markets for green products made up of recycled items are expanding now days (Holt, 2011). This waste is the source of livelihood for the marginalized and poor community of the society (Schenck & Blaauw, 2011; Linna, 2013). Scavengers collect these waste materials from different waste areas and sell them to the contractor or buyer of the waste material. Scavenging is the activity or source of earning required no skill and entry barrier (Ashenmiller, 2011).

The developing countries have been facing poverty and more pointedly income disparities in urban regions as one of the great challenges (UN-Habitat, 2012). The demographic expansion not only heightened these difficulties but has also driven unbeatable rises in unemployed people. However, the outcome has been the great prominence of the grey economy, which shows the direct return of the urban crisis (Mwangi, 2003) and one of the informal jobs that are acknowledging this plight is scavenging of waste (Medina, 2007). In the study, scavenging is examined not in solitude, but as a component of a more extensive notion of the grey economic action prevalent in developing nations, not to mention Pakistan.

Identity is important for self-description and acceptance. Personal identity of the child is important not only for his or her own development, but also for the wellbeing of the society. In past, Identity was considered to be as an inherent quality and repository of history. Now a day's identity is not only considered as an inherent quality but also it emerges through interaction with others and a focus on the mechanism and factors by which identity is constructed (Ahn, 2011). Identity is flexible and situational one. Their identity fluctuates on the basis of their profession and socio-cultural changes. Religious ideology and political organization also play their role in identity formation. Current research elaborates that how socio-cultural changes and scavenging as a profession changes their personality and what are the impacts of scavenging on their identity.

In modern times, the subject of livelihoods has been a matter of discussion (Owusu, 2001). Several researchers have appeared to come with diverse meanings of the phrase livelihoods. As stated by Chambers (2006), a livelihood is a practice of earning a living” or “a blend of the means used and the actions tried to exist” (Scoones, 2009). Ellis and Freeman (2005) describe the word livelihood as what individuals manage to make a living and the means that give them the ability to make an adequate living, considering risk factors along with institutional and action framework that whether benefits or prevents them in their race of sustainable living. However, the most extensively believed and acknowledged definition is adapted from Chambers’ (2006) perspective of a livelihood. He says that "livelihood comprises the capacities, resources, and actions needed for a way to make living: livelihood is persistent when it can grapple with and overcome pressure and shocks, preserve or intensify its capacities and resources, and give possibilities to the posterity and which provides clear advantages to other livelihoods at the regional and world level in the short and long term" (Hilson & Banchirigah, 2009). This description has various explanations and purposes which apply to the subsistence context.

This livelihood structure offers a greater knowledge of how an impermanent population utilizing the urban space efforts for resources means in globalizing centres where the formal employment is not merely striving to make progress with demographic expansion aside from the economic turmoil has stretched the poverty gap as a result of the shortage

of jobs. Proportionately, the frame serves to indicate how resources are drained in livelihood policies and coping techniques which are returned in livelihood issues. Moreover, the urban expansion approaches have generated possibilities and restrictions for the local populace concerning the livelihoods and their consequences as demonstrated in the framework of livelihood (Scoones, 2009). Certain plans have been devised so that the national authority gains in the context of subsidization eviction, workforce reduction, and the start of taxes. And aforesaid for their parts put burdens on the urban population and withholds them of their income source (Akabzaa & Darimani, 2001). In the present study, scavenging emerged as a result of lack of economic growth and shortage of employment opportunities. The profession became popular in children because they have no other choice to support their families. They have no professional skills to work in any other sector and to earn.

2.2. Research Gap

It is necessary to analyse the concerns of scavengers. This analysis will clarify the socio-cultural and economic adjustments which emphasized children to turn into scavengers. A few studies have been conducted on this issue particularly in the context of development studies approach. The researcher discovered only a few journal articles that discussed scavengers, as part of the approach against scavenging or to scrutinize the profession, as it has become a stereotype to consider it as a stigmatized activity. And the alleviation of the poverty plan may also be encouraged by delivering proposals to subdue this social ill by this study. Very few studies have been conducted on child scavengers in Pakistani context.

2.3. Summary

This chapter includes different opinions of different theorists, researchers, writers and organizations about child scavengers. It builds up theoretical background of the current study. It also highlights research gaps. Secondary data helped in building a sound foundation before entering in the field. Next chapter is dealing with research methodology, techniques and research locale.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SETTING

3.1. Research Methodology

The ultimate goals of a research are to formulate questions and to find answers to those questions. No one can ask all the questions and no one can find answers to every question, so we need to find some way to limit what we are attempting to do. Research methodology is the mixture of instruments, devices and systems. These are utilized to gather data for the purpose of research in development studies. The immediate goal of research exploration, description, explanation, and action provide us with a strategy for figuring out which questions to ask and which answers to seek (Dane, 1990).

The main focus of methodology is on seeking the true and useful information. Current research is based on qualitative methods and field work lasted over the span of six months. The researcher did not face any kind of hurdle associated with “entering the field”. The respondents were identified on the basis of convenience of researcher. Key informants also helped in identifying respondents. Respondents were identified on the basis of their age, children in between age of three to sixteen years were selected as the research is solely based on child scavengers. The sample size comprised of 40 individuals, who are selected with the help of convenience sampling. In-depth interviews, case studies, focus group discussion helped in obtaining reliable and valid data. Interviews are transcribed into English from Urdu language and then data is manually analysed through thematic analysis approach, in which different themes and sub-themes from the analysed data are emerged.

3.1.1. Participant observation

Participant observation is a necessary procedure in qualitative research because without participant observation qualitative research faces difficulties to proceed. Systematic data may have biasness in it and it provides unbiased data. In participant observation, the researcher observed ongoing activities among the respondents of the research locale. It's a technical procedure that enables a social scientist to get accurate information (Good & Hatt, 1952). Participant observation is a research tool which helps to study the

phenomenon in its natural context. Researcher makes field notes about the observations and rapport building is very important in participant observation, because only then people feel comfortable, and show cooperation with researcher (Bernard, 2013).

By using this technique researcher observed them as being one of them. She walked with them during scavenging had meal with them that reduced the social distance among them. It helped the researcher to getting close to people and made them feel comfortable enough with her presence so that she observed and record information about their lives. Researcher also participated in the most activities that they perform in their daily routine.

3.1.2. Rapport Building

Rapport building is the first and foremost step of fieldwork where the researcher builds friendly relations with the respondents, then observes their activities and conducts interviews with them. Building good interpersonal relations between researcher and participant is an important aspect that needs to be considered especially when a researcher engages in interviews and observations to generate rich data (Heggen & Guillemin, 2009). Rapport building is an important tool to use while carrying out qualitative research. To build a good rapport a researcher must develop relationship of mutual respect and trust with the community. The researcher should show the respect to indigenous beliefs, norms, values and practices (Muntean et al, 2019). When rapport successfully built then trust and mutual respect will increase and communication will be more effective (Thoft, Ward & Youell, 2021).

In the beginning it is necessary for researcher to build rapport, so that the respondent feels free to trust. There were many personal questions which people felt shy to answer. Researcher spent two weeks of fieldwork in rapport building. It was very difficult for her to conduct interviews and to gather data from the population that is illiterate. The second cause of not talking with the researcher was that they had faced issues of abuse, sexual exploitation by different people. Researcher made them believe that she didn't belong to any agency, NGO or governmental institution. During this she discussed with them on her topic, she attended their gatherings and at last she won their trust, then she told them about her topic and they accepted to give her interviews. Participant observation is necessary procedure in qualitative research because without participant observation

qualitative research faces difficulties. In the current study researcher was an active participant and observer.

3.1.3. Sampling

The respondents for the study were chosen through convenience sampling techniques because it is difficult for the researcher to cover the whole area so a sample which is representative of the whole population is taken. The sample size comprised of 40 individuals. Research kept research objectives in her mind while selecting the sample to carry out the research activity.

3.1.3.1. Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling is used when the research requires those cases which have rich information about the subject under study, hence respondents are selected purposefully (Patton, 1990). The judgment or the criteria is determined by the researcher (Bernard, 2013). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For the current study, the researcher used convenience sampling to select the sample from the population. This sampling was based on judgment. Researcher needs those persons who had adopted scavenging as their profession. Both males and females were selected in equal ratio. Criteria to select respondent was their availability, knowledge of the respondent and their suitability to the topic. The sample comprised of 40 individuals with 20 males and 20 females to ensure equal gender participation.

3.1.4. Key Informants

Key informants were those persons who willingly share all their knowledge with respondent for the purpose to help the researcher. Researcher builds long term relationships with their key informants. According to Bernard researcher cannot choose their key informants, while both key informants and researcher choose each other by their own will, over time (Bernard, 2013). Key informants have enough knowledge about their society, culture and customs. They gladly cooperate with the researcher by sharing their knowledge. Researcher builds long term relationship with key informants.

Researcher explained the objectives of the study to the key informants. Key informants were helpful in identifying those respondents who made beneficial contribution into the study. As the sample for the study was selected through convenience sampling which lies under non-probability sampling technique, so this process was assisted by the key informants. Key informant is a person with whom a field researcher has intensive interaction for extensive period of time. Researcher had two persons as key informants. One was contractor of scavengers named Shahbaz Sharif and a very knowledgeable person about the research topic because he had all information about the area where scavengers live and where researcher can reach them. The second was Aslam, a scavenger who met researcher at slums, through him researcher accessed to the parts of slum where he was living with other scavengers. They assisted in collection of primary data and helped in triangulation of provided information.

3.1.5. In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews yield rich data and provide opportunity to explore in-depth knowledge. The major advantage of in-depth interviews lies in the richness of it descriptive examples that result from study of one or few persons (Lobovitz & Hageden, 1981). They help in the collection of data regarding the individuals own distinctive perception and behaviours. In the current study forty in-depth interviews were carried out by the researcher. These interviews followed an unstructured pattern, so that there must be more space to discuss phenomenon related to scavenging. This helped the researcher to get more insight into the native's perception.

3.1.6. Case Studies

The case study is a systematized analysis of the problem, was done to perceive complete knowledge of the respondent's view relevant to the research subject. As stated by Starman (2013), "A case study is a generic approach for the investigation of a person, society or circumstance" and according to Yin (2011) view, "Shortly, the case study enables an inquiry to maintain comprehensive and essential components of real-life experiences". Through the method of case study, a complete record of a person is obtained by multiple questioning and validating the data by cross-questioning to obtain authentic information. Six case studies were selected for detail information the basis of

different reasons of joining of this profession and different backgrounds. Case studies method was used because it gave more detailed, qualitative information on the lives of waste pickers, and insights on the attitudes of waste pickers on their work, the challenges they face, and where they see themselves in the future.

3.1.7. Interview Guide

Interview guide is used to conduct interviews. Interview guide helps researcher in getting comprehensive, detailed qualitative data about the research topic. Interview guide helps in giving a general idea and outline of the major themes and questions going to be discussed and asked in the interview. It saves researchers time during the interview. In the current research interview guide helped in planning questions that researcher asked from the respondents. Interview guide helped the researcher to be consistent in questions that had been asked from different respondents throughout the research. It helped the researcher to ask more general questions in the start and then the researcher moved to more specific questions.

3.1.8. Field Notes

Field notes are essential to be taken since they let the research worker overcome the pressure of his mind and field notes involve field records that are jotted down at the site in a notepad or small diary simply in the keywords. Besides, they are made for observations, casual discussions, and regular interviews. Field notes also take into account jotting the everyday activities, discussion details, and the observation description a research worker conduct in the field (Bernard, 2013). In the research, the research worker jotted down the discussions since it was hard to memorialize discussions. It gave it providential for the research worker to vacate extra material and draw out the things which she required for research. It assisted in the collection of the line for line. Also, field notes expand reflection of the activities and interviews. And every small detail had been recorded in field notes. It assisted to arrange, maintain, and figure the data which the research worker had gathered in the field. Jotting is a way to formulate discordant notes. At the time of observation when it was feasible, the researcher created short headings and keywords on a little notebook. Moreover, the researcher took advantage of a daily journal on which all daily activities were recorded, which she had met in the process of research.

In the daily journal, the researcher had written daily tasks that she performed that day, whom she met with, who recommended her meeting with someone else for that matter. Record of discussions and schedules were written in the daily journal.

3.1.9. Photography

Photography is a research technique which helps to display concrete description of the routine life, daily events and the context in which the activities occur. In this process, images are produced by using different devices such as mobile, laptop, digital camera. A device must have a camera and we can make images with its help (Schwartz & Ohana, 2005). Photography was also used as one of the data collection techniques for the current research. It helped in capturing photos of scavengers and the activities that were carried out by them. This technique added strength to descriptive results.

3.1.10. Recording

Recording is a helpful technique, used to collect, and record the required data. Researcher had recorded interviews and the focus group discussions because it was difficult to write all the words and after that analysed required information. Researcher transcribes audios in the written form that made her able to extract the required data relevant to the topic and get exact and the inner information.

3.1.11. Unit of Data Analysis

The Unit of Analysis is the entity that frames what is being looked at in a study or is the entity being studied as a whole, within which most factors of causality and change exist (Newman, 2010). Unit of data collection are individuals selected through purposive sampling technique. Unit of data analysis will be transcription of interviews to English and then data manually analysed through thematic analysis approach, in which different themes and sub-themes emerge from data.

3.2. Research Settings

The research locale of the present study is Wah Cantt. Tehsil Texila, district Rawalpindi. The researcher selected Wah Cantt not only as on the basis of consonance but also that Wah Cantt has a large number of Afghanistan refugees living in it. Furthermore, the

researcher has a good reputation among local Afghan refugees so it has been easier for the researcher to build rapport with the research participants.



Figure 3.1: Map of Wah Cantt.

Wah Cantonment is a military city. It is located in Punjab, Pakistan. Wah Cantt has the highest literacy rate, 100 percent. It is located 50 km to the north west of Islamabad. Wah Cantt is divided into 27 Sectors and some private Housing Colonies.

Current research has been conducted on the dumping sites present in the areas of Wah Cantonment named Basti, Officer's colony, Aslam Market, 22-G, 24-G and 23-D. These dumping sites are located inside Wah Cantonment while scavengers who gather scrap lives in ghettos situated in Malakand Stop that is located outside from Wah Cantonment.



Figure 3.2: Respondents' Houses

3.2.1. Demographics

Population of Wah Cantt increased with a boost after 1950's. In 1998 it increases 198,891 persons according to the census of Pakistan. Population of Rawalpindi was 380,103 in 2017. Population of the city Rawalpindi was 198,891 in 1998 and it increased to 380,103 according to the census of 2017 (Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2020).

Sixteen households of rag pickers were situated at Malakand stop. Malakand stop is located outside from the Wah Cantonment. Households were made up of tents that are moveable from one place to another. Around eight people live in each household.

3.2.2. Climate

Climate of Wah Cantt is exceedingly uneven because of its area. The climate is warm and temperate. It faces four seasons. But the spring season is short. It has long and hot summers. Winter is short and wet. Monsoon is short but people enjoy it because it decreases the temperature of hot, long days. June is the warmest and January is the coldest month of the year. The driest month is November. In July precipitation is highest. Before a couple of decades, the temperature is comparatively less, but now there is a rise

in temperature due to global warming and deforestation. Housing schemes got a boost, due to their rise, forests and greenery faced a fall.

3.2.3. Language, Culture and Marriage Pattern

In "Wah Cantt" mostly people speak "*Punjabi*" and "*Urdu*" language. Wah Cantt is a multicultural city. People are from different ethnic and religious groups. A variety of cultures can be seen here. Literacy rate is hundred percent here. People are skilful and educated. Marriage is very important institution of the society. It provides ground for the creation of family which is the basic unit of the society. In the Wah Cantt endogamy and exogamy both are practiced.

The issue of the language was there between the researcher and the non-local or migratory waste picker's respondents who could neither comprehend Urdu nor utter Punjabi. This obstacle was lifted when researcher had a waste picker as an interpreter who came from the same tribe as the informal refuse collector was, and who were also migrants and could comprehend Pashto and elucidate it into Urdu.

3.2.4. Agriculture, Flora and Fauna

Urund plant (Castor oil plant), *kikar* (Acacia nilotica), *sheesham* (dalbergiasisso), *peepal* (Populus) and *dharaik* (Meliaazedarach) are found in locale. Fruits like Shehtoot (mulberry), bair (Ziziphusmauritiana), grapes and lemons are found in the locales.

Cattle and pet such as buffaloes, cows, goats and hens found in the locale. The birds like sparrows, black crows, pigeons, vultures, eagles and parrots are also found in the locale. Squirrels, jackals, pigs and foxes are found in forests.

3.3. Summary

In this chapter Research methodology and locale has been discussed. Qualitative research methods have been used. Convenience sampling technique has been used to select forty respondents. Children in between age of five to sixteen years were selected as the research is solely based on child scavengers. In-depth interviews, case studies and focus group discussion helped in obtaining reliable and valid data.

Interviews were transcribed into English from Urdu language and then data is manually

analysed through thematic analysis approach, in which different themes and sub-themes from the analysed data are emerged. Research has been conducted in Wah Cantt, tehsil Texila, district Rawalpindi. Next chapter is based on the data analysis. It deals with the construction of self-identity among scavengers.

CHAPTER 4

SELF IDENTITY AMONG THE SCAVENGERS

Identity is important for self-description and acceptance. Personal identity of the child is important not only for his or her own development, but also for the wellbeing of the society. In past, Identity was considered to be as an inherent quality and repository of history. Now a day's identity is not only considered as an inherent quality but also it emerges through interaction with others and a focus on the mechanism and factors by which identity is constructed (Ahn, 2011). In this chapter we will try to review the mechanism and factors of the identity construction among the Scavengers.

4.1. Social Interaction

Scavengers have friendship or interaction with the fellow scavenger or beggar. After much hard work and no other entertainment facility like television etc. these child scavengers spend their spare time with their friends. They share their problems with each other and try they also have good family ties with these friends as they belong to same community and most of the time lives in the same area. Basit Khan, one of the respondents during the interview said that:

“I and Ajjab Gul are friends, we work together. When we earn more than the normal routine we together go to eat something from the hotel. Whenever I am in some difficult or fight with someone he helps me support me at that time.”

This shows the close bonding between them. They have positive attitude toward friendship. Some of the respondent share that their time is mostly spent on working and earning money and they do have any time to play with each other but they also motive each other during the hard time and provide each other both emotional and sometime financial support also.

4.2. Relationship with the Contractor or Buyer of the Waste

Most of the respondents share that the buyer of the waste does not give them good money in return of their waste. As there are only one shop in our area which purchase waste from us so they set their own rates there is no check and balance. Moreover, on asking for

more price these shopkeepers or buyer of the waste start using abusive language. We have no other option so we sell our waste to them even if the price is very low. According to them they work hard and faces many difficulties but still do not get the reward accordingly.

4.3. Societal Behaviour

Scavengers are one of the most vulnerable communities of our society in two aspects. One, they belong to the informal sector so they are not able to receive as social protection from the government and second, negative behaviour of the people towards them. Because of this negative attitude of the people makes them “*yaredam*” (scared) and sad. Some respondent also share that their parents do not treat them in a respectful behaviour and they mostly abuse them. All these behaviours of the people make them feel that they are not human being or useless human on the earth. These negative attitudes toward the children adversely affect their personality development. They become rude and use the abusive language. Moreover, they are also sometime called by different negative names like sweeper, and scavenger etc. based on their age, colour, and work. As they belong to weak community of the society so they have remained silent and do not capable to protest against all the injustice that is happening to them.

4.4. Inferiority complex

All the negative behaviour of the society and their parents makes these children feel that they are inferior to all the other people in the society. In our society there is a class system that creates all these issues and makes the scavenger especially child scavengers to feel like they are poor and dirty citizen of this society. If we see around our society discrimination is prevailing at every level. Every poor community or lower income community faces the discrimination due to lack of awareness and because of their financial condition. Often the behaviour of the upper class or well of families toward the poor or low class is not much good which led the poor people makes feel as inferior citizen of the nation or society in which they live. These poor people are not able to enjoy their basic rights because of the poverty that led to illiteracy, lack of awareness and low status in society. In this context a respondent narrates that:

“Whenever I pass from any “koosa”(street), the “bachii”(children) playing there look at me in a way that makes me feel that I am “skhaa” (dirty) and “khakata”(inferior) then them. This “chaland” (behaviour) “khug” (hurts) me a lot but I am not able do anything to improve our status in this “tolana” (society) as scavenging is the only source of our earning and survival.”

All these negative behaviours of the society creates the mental illness like depression and a lot of stress. In addition, this bring element of hopelessness, loneliness and inferiority in the lives of these children. They loss any hope for their better future.



Figure 4.1: A Child Scavenger

4.5. Happiness and Sadness

Happiness and sadness are two of the important elements in human nature. During the interview it was observed that most of the scavenger have no other source of income and they mostly earn up to 250 or 300 rupees a day but when sometime they work more and can able to earn some good amount that brings some happiness and satisfaction to them as by that way they can be able to buy the things of their need and they get appreciation from their parents as well. They get motivated and work harder to earn more amounts so that they can easily fulfil their basic needs of life.

On contrary, the day in which they are not able to make enough money that can bring the food in their house that makes them sad. As they work very hard, facing many hurdles and risks, especially risk of health but still they are not able to earn some good amount. In addition, some elder respondents share that the illness or health issue or any financial issue that makes their parents sad makes them feel sad also because they do not have enough resources to support their parents to cope with these problems.

The negative behaviour of society towards this scavenger has severe impact on their personality like most of them adopt the rude behaviour. They want to be a successful and valuable citizen of the society but they are hopeless about their future. This hopelessness makes them feel sad and depressed Further, the children who lost any one of their parents missing them a lot.

The children who migrated from their village, when think about their time they spend in their village feel sad. According to one of the respondents: *“When I lived in village, I went to the nearby school. It was a government school. I had many friends there and we play together. In village I did not work whole day. I helped my father in his work in the field for two or three hours a day but after the migration everything change. Now I have to work whole day to get good earning and had to leave my education. I was happy in village.”* Whenever, these children feel unhappy or depressed they prefer to spend their time lonely.

4.6. Dreams and Hopes

Most of the children during the interview show their interest toward attaining education. They wanted to become good citizen of the society. Most of them want to get education and join army, start their own business, some also wanted to be a doctor or teacher. But they do not have many resources to get education. They belong to poor families their parents are not able to afford their education expenses. They have to work for their survival and fulfilment of their basic requirements.

4.7. Habit of Stealing

The economic freedom at the early stage makes these children to involve in anti-social activities (Thapa et al., 2009).In order to bring food on the table, sometime these children are also involved in stealing the thing. They told that they try to avoid this but sometime

they are helpless and hunger forced them to do this job. As they are poor and scavenging is the only source of income generation for them but some time they do not able to earn that much that is enough for buying food so because of this they do not have any other option but to steal.

4.8. Satisfaction towards their Job

Asking about the perception or satisfaction of these child scavengers about their job mix views are there about that. Some of the respondent shows satisfaction toward their job of waste picking as it is there source of earning and makes them able to earn something and financially support their families. Moreover, they can work according to their comfort. In this job they do not have a time constraint. The more time they spend in scavenging the more they can earn in a day. It is an easy source of income generation and does not require any specific skill or education. A respondent states that: *“I feel comfortable in doing this job as I have no education and other job option so this is a sole way of earning for me. This earning makes me able to bring the food in my home and also provide some satisfaction of supporting my family.”*

However, some of them are also of the view that this job is not considered as a respectable in the society, people considered them dirty and do not give any respect to them so, if they have any other option they will leave this job. Moreover, they are of the view that working in the bad condition in waste without wearing mask and gloves also badly affected their health. According to another respondent: *“We migrated from the village for improving our quality of life. But here we could not find any job. My father is a vegetable and fruit seller but his earning in not enough to meet all the “lagakhtoon” (expenses) that occurs in our daily life. I came to know about the “tolawal” (waste picking) from a “malgaray” (friend) living in my area. I started this work although I don’t like this work but for the sake of survival”.*



Figure 4.2: A Girl Scavenger at Dumpsite

4.9. Lack of Social Protection

According to them government or other responsible organisations also ignore them and if there exists any scheme or financial aid for their welfare form the government or any other welfare organisation they are unaware of any such policy or scheme. Some of the respondents are also wanted to get education so that they can help the poor communities like them and work for their welfare. They believe that if they study they can be able to find some good job and it is their basic right and government should support them as they also belong to this country.

4.10. Working conditions of the Scavengers

Scavengers besides facing the social stigma, also face the problem of poor working condition particularly at disposal areas and sexual harassment. In addition, there earning is very less and they hardly fulfil the basic needs of life. Although their job is of high risk but still there is no visible social protection or social assistance for them. About the social stigma one of the respondents stated that: “We are mistreated and ignored at every level of the society. People considered dirty and sometime they also looked us in a way as we are criminal or thieves.” Taking about the behaviour of the society one respondent narrates that: “People do not love us as we are the waste picker and we don’t have any respect in the society. They discriminate us.”

They mostly spend their time in wasted areas so they are exposed to polluted and toxic things and most of the respondent in this study do not use any type of gloves. Polluted material is present in the waste that includes bacteria and most of the scavengers are not aware of the importance of good hygiene and they mostly do not wash their hands before eating. These results may show that there is high risk that these child scavengers may be badly affected by various infectious diseases as this polluted waste contains various bacteria and germs that may be transferred inside their body through their mouth but as they are mostly illiterate so they do not know about the toxicity of the waste. Most of them are unaware of the disease or illness caused due to spending most of the time in waste picking without using gloves or other safety measures. On asking that whether they wash their hand before eating, a respondent narrated that: “Mostly I find some edible thing from the waste like apple or guava etc. I eat it without washing as there is no accessibility to the clean water near the landfill area.” Further, during the interview respondents share the information that mostly they get injured during their work. The injuries that these scavengers get during their work include cut through the piece of glass or bottle, metal cuts or falling while running behind the trucks or also got hit by the waste dumper and this may lead to infection. During the interview when they were asked about the treatment of their injuries or cuts they told that they left it or wrap it with their cloth or a paper. Some of the respondents told that they visit to the doctor with “*khug*” (swear injury). In accordance to a respondent: “During the process of separation of the waste material we most of the time come up in contact with some dangerous thing like needles, broken glass, medicine bottles, and injections. These things often hurt us and some time it leads to fever or skin infection.”

It was observed during the interview that most of the respondents have cuts in their hand or legs as they are mostly barefoot. Another respondent mentioned that: “About 4 to 5 months back I went to the doctor as I got injured as a needle pricked my feet. Due to this injury I was not able to work and I had to visit to the doctor for treatment.” One more challenge that is faced by the scavengers during their work is the fear of wild animals that are mostly present in the landfill areas. They are mostly bitten by these wild animals. In most of the time they are bitten by dogs and rats that are always there in the waste areas. A respondent narrated that: “The disposal areas are full of “*looganispii*” (wild dogs) and

we are afraid of them. Dogs bites us frequently. There is no security for us.” Beside dogs and other wild animal, there is also a wide spread of “*maashii*” (mosquitoes) in the waste areas. On asking about dengue most of the respondents suffered from dengue in past. A respondent in this context states that: “In past, I had a “*taba*” (high temperature). My father brings me to the “*salatrii*” (doctor) where doctor diagnose that it was a dengue fever. I had to stay at home for long time period more than ten days as I was not able to work during these days.”

Scavengers are more vulnerable as they belong to poor families and they have to work under any weather condition for fulfilling their basic needs of lives. Because of this they also suffer from some seasonal diseases like cold and cough. One respondent narrated that: “I often have “*tukhaii o taba*” (cough and cold) during the whole “*jamaay*” (winter season). But I belong to very poor family, my family members depend on me for financial support so I have to work in any situation.” Scavengers have to work in extreme weather conditions without any protection and that is also one of the hurdles that occur in the way of their work. One of the respondents told that: “We have to work under very hot and cold weather without any shade. Sometime in very hot weather I often have severe headache.” Besides having lots of hurdles in their work the risk of ergonomic is also high in them. They pick heavy bags full of waste material. This may cause severe back pain, pain in arms and legs. More over during the collection and sorting of waste and this process require a frequent lifting and bending which often cause musculoskeletal injuries. According to a respondent: “We have to walk at a long distance for the collection of waste due to which when I go for sleep at night I feel pain in my “*tolbadan*” (whole body) especially in “*pkhaay o lasoona*”(legs and arms).”

It is also noted during the interview the children who are working as a scavenger from the last 2 to 3 years suffering from the shoulder and back pain. This shows that with the passage of time they are at the high risk of musculoskeletal injuries. Some of the respondents’ stated that their health condition is worsening with the passage of time. As one of the respondents said that: “When I start this work, I only have pain in my legs and arms. Now it has been almost three years that I am working as a scavenger and besides having the pains in legs and arms now I often feel sharp pain in my shoulder and also in my back.” Scavengers are already facing the poverty and they hardly are able to meet

their end needs. They are not able to afford the health expenses as these became an extra burden on them because they already facing the problem of scarcity of the resources. On asking about the treatment, one respondent that is suffering from the back pain narrated that: “No, I do not visit to the doctor, my earning is not enough to afford the treatment expenses.”

4.11. Summary

Current chapter explain result and discussion, which further highlighted the construction of self-identity among the scavengers. Identity is important for self-description and acceptance. Personal identity of the child is important not only for his or her own development, but also for the wellbeing of the society. In this chapter the mechanism and factors of the identity construction among the scavengers have been reviewed. Next chapter elaborates the socio-economic determinants of scavenging. It also highlights the problems faced by scavengers due to scavenging.

CHAPTER 5

DETERMINANTS OF SCAVENGING ACTIVITY AND PROBLEMS FACED BY SCAVENGERS DURING WORK

Current chapter highlights different social, cultural, and economic factors that motivate children to engage in the activity of scavenging as a livelihood and also put light on the major problems faced by child scavengers. Poverty, illiteracy, lack of resources are the main determinants that push children to adopt scavenging as a profession. Parents send their children to earn money at the very early age. Poor families have scarce economic resources and they need financial support of their children to run the household. As a consequence, these poor families adopt the begging and scavenging as their source of earning and survival. There is a link between profession and tradition. The families in which elders are involved in this profession of begging or scavenging most probably their children also adopt the same profession. In some cases, the main head of these poor families i.e. father which is considered as the sole breadwinner of the household became drug addictive and do not fulfil his responsibilities toward his family and theses responsibilities are shifted towards the children of that family especially on the elder child. This chapter also highlights the different problems and issues faced by scavengers. Child scavengers face different problems in waste picking. Mostly they are bare footed in waste picking. People mistreated them. Most of the rag pickers are illiterate and they do not even exactly understand the situation in which they are living. They faced many difficulties in their survival. They face discrimination, harassment, harsh behaviour of society, psychological issues and health problems.

5.1. DETERMINANTS OF SCAVENGING

Majority of the respondents were illiterate or had only a primary school education. Few of them completed middle level educations, but the majority of them had to leave due to financial difficulties. The findings show a significant connection between illiteracy and the phenomenon of scavenging by children and it is considered as violation to their fundamental human rights. Most of the respondents adopted this source of income with their parents' consent, while some of the respondents became scavengers on their own will because they had no other choice to support their families. In a most of the cases, the

respondents had to do this work to support their families in term of money. Whether a child is adopting this work of scavenging by his/her own will or by the will of their parents in both the cases, poverty is the key reason. Overall from the interview the main causes of that may force these children to become scavenger are discussed below.

5.1.1. Poverty

Poverty is one of the most serious issues in less developed societies and it slows down the development process of these societies. It becomes the root cause of the certain health and other crisis in societies. People belong to these societies have less livelihood opportunities for their survival which adversely affect in the personality development process of their children. As a consequence, these poor families adopt the begging and scavenging as their source of earning and survival. It was also observed that there is a link between profession and tradition. The families in which elders are involved in this profession of begging or scavenging most probably their children also adopt the same profession. These families are unable to afford the education, proper nutritional and health facilities. As a result, children in these poor families remain illiterate and are unable to get some other way of livelihood for their better future.

Similarly, poverty is one of the key factors which force the parents to send their children to earn money. Moreover, the scarcity of food is the outcome of lack of money. Most of the parents send their children to work and earn some money because of the variety of the reasons and the most important among them is hunger. Likewise, the poor families have scarce economic resources and they need financial support of their children to run the household. To overcome problem of scarcity of economic resources parents involve their young children in to the income earning activities. According to one of the respondent:

“We are 12 family members. My father is a “samyor” (cobbler) and his earning is not sufficient to feed the whole family. Therefore, I along with my two younger brothers scavenge to earn some money and support our family”. One respondent narrates that: “Our economic resources are “lag” (so scarce) that we cannot afford food for three times a day. I only eat twice a day in the “sahar” (morning) before going to work and at the night after returning from the work.”

Adding in it another scavenger said: *“We do not have money so I support my family by selling the waste material that I collect from different waste areas. “In our society “mor o plaar” (parents) are supposed to financially support their families. But, most of the time the scavengers' parents work as farm “kargar”(labourers) and their income is not enough to meet the basic needs of the whole family. As a result, in order to compensate this income, gap the burden of earning money is shifted on the shoulder of the children. These families and their children faces the financial crises and due to these financial crises, these children work hard to fulfil their end needs and by involving in these types of earning sources like scavenging etc. also create the severe health problems form them. In accordance to a respondent:*

“I was 7-year-old when I started this work. I had to help my parents for fulfilling the financial requirements that led us to meet our end needs.”

Sometime children also have to entry in the labor market due to the occurrence of sudden *“najoray”* (illness) or disability to the family head or father. Because of this the whole burden of earning money is shifted toward the shoulder of the children of these families. But most of the time after such hard work they are not able to earn enough to fulfil their basic needs. Because of all these situations the adult child has to sacrifice his education and his future for earning money for the survival of their families. The adult child of the family has to take the responsibility to support the whole family financially for their survival.

During the interview child scavenger were asked to provide the information on why they choose this type of work instead of going to school and getting education almost half of the respondents answered that due to poverty and having no educational background they have to choose to become waste picker for the survival of their family. They have no other source of income. Narrating how poverty led to become a scavenger one respondent explain that: *“I have no other choice but to scavenge in order survive and put food on the table because I have no education that makes me able to secure some other job.”* Furthermore, since it is the simplest work to do without any specific skill or training and at their convenience and is readily accessible to individuals or children. In accordance to one of the respondent:

“I have never been to school and do not have any other skill that makes be able to adopt some other “izatmun” (respectable) source of livelihood. Scavenge does not required any “maharatoona” (skill) and “taleem” (education), so because of this I choose to became scavenger.”

This attainable job does not pay them much and they barely fulfil their nutritional and biological requirements. Meanwhile, other necessities of life, such as health and education, are not met by the money accumulated through scavenging. So, the filed like begging and scavenging only help them to fulfil their basic need that is necessary for their survival. As mentioned in the chapter 4 that these children are willing to get education, but some factor like poor financial condition kept them away from education. The statement of the one of the respondent was: *“I want to become doctor but we are 10 members in a house. I have five sisters and my “nayaneka” (grandparents) also live with us. My father is suffering from asthma and he have to leave his job because of his illness. There is no other source of earning so in order to fulfil the basic needs of the whole family, I choose to work and leave the school”.*

Most of the child scavenger chooses to work due to the absence or death of their earning members mostly father. After the death of the father they have no other choice other than to work for their survival. According to one of the respondent: *“My family depends upon me for the financial support. After the death of my father as I am the elder brother in my family so responsibilities to feed my family comes on to my shoulder. And as I have not much educational background, I only studied up to class 3 and I have no other skill so I choose this work as a source of income”.* Further, in accordance to another respondent: *“My father is drug addicted and he do not financially support our family. I am the only “gatunkaay” (breadwinner) in my family.”*

Child scavengers play an important role in enhancing the family income and most of the time their income is the main source for their own as well as for their family’s survival. Due to the poverty more than one member of a family has to work including children for their livelihood. It is noted during the interview that most of the respondents have large family size. Because one family member’s income is not sufficient to meet the basic requirement of the whole family. In short increase in the family size decreases the per

capita income of the family. Therefore, parents force their children to share some burden and contribute in generating the income for the family. Adding in it some respondent said that they want to learn some good skills so that they can get some other job in this way they can be able to support their families in better way. While interviewing a child scavenger, told that:

“I along my father and one brother earn money for the livelihood of our family. My father is working as a sweeper in a “rugtoon”(hospital). We are eight family members and my fathers’ income is not enough to meet the basic needs of life so I and my brother also work to support my family.” According to one other scavenger: *“Food in my house is brought by the money that I earn daily”*. Similarly, during the interview a girl scavenger states that:

“I am 7 years old. I lived in a jhugi along with my five “ron’rakhwandye” (siblings) and a mother. Our father is not living with us. My mother is doing “da korkaaruna” (house work). I along with my elder(mashar) brother earn money through scavenging so that we can bring food at our home”.

While interviewing, it was also observed that the responsibility of the female scavenger is more than that of male scavenger as female scavenger have to do household work. In this context a respondent narrated that: *“In the morning after finishing my household work, I along my brother goes for scavenge where we spent five to six hours in waste collection.”*

Joint family system is also one of the causes of the child labour. In Pakistan most of the family live in the joint family system due to tradition and also some time due to poverty. Joint family also cause the separation and divorce among the spouse. In case when the separation occurs among the spouse the female or wife has no other option and send her children to earn money instead of sending her children to school.



Figure 5.1: Scavengers in their Home

5.1.2. Family Size

The large family size is also one of the reasons that put pressure on the poor families to involve their children in the work instead of educating them. In Pakistan the poor families mostly have large family size with the view that these children will look after them during their old age. In addition, boys are mostly preferred over the girls and boy are considered as the support for the old age this is also one of the reason of having the large family size (Ali & Rukanuddin, 1992) and (Sivak, & Smirnov, 2019).

During the interview it was also observed that the scavenger having more family members have to work in order to support their families. Due to the large family size the earning of one member of the family is not enough even to meet the end needs of the members. Therefore, parents instead of focusing on the education of their children they encouraged their children to work and earn something. Sometime these children are the only breadwinner of the family and financially supporting their families. Scavenger earning have a significant impact on his/her family's living status. On asking how much they can earn in a day one of the respondent replied that: "Working six to eight hours in a day, I can earn 100-200 rupees. Sometime I earned more when I work more than eight hours." It is also noted during the interview that there is no specific breadwinner in these poor families and almost every member has to earn something for meeting his or her end

needs. Similarly, in case of insufficient earning of fathers, poor families are likely to send their children to labour to support in the “*kooranayii*” (family) earning. The statement of one of the respondent in this regard was: *“My father is a labour and he does not find the work on regular basis. Our family size is also large we are six brothers and sisters. I am the elder brother in my family. For supporting my family financially, I choose this work”*.

5.1.3. Lack of Education

The pressure of earning for their survival drives these children away from education. The main purpose of every member of these including their children is to earn money for getting food or fulfilling the end needs of life. It was estimated during the interview that some children of these families never attained the school due unfavourable learning environment, lack of financial support from family, and also regular “*kooch*”(migration) as they involved in this profession at the very early age Furthermore, because of their illiteracy, these people are left behind and are compelled to work in this type of environment. Despite the fact that scavenging is a low-wage, unregulated employment in our country, many children chooses it to meet their fundamental necessities. In accordance to one of the respondent: *“I am 14 years old. I left school four months ago after the death of my father. My father was the breadwinner in our family. After his death, I along my elder brother have to work for the livelihood.”* Similarly, according to another respondent: *“We are 6 family members and all depends on my earning. It’s hard to meet the end needs.”* In addition, one respondent said that; *“Mostly people ask us about the schooling but do not understand the fact that we belong to poor family and if we do not work then what will we eat.”*

Most of the respondent does not attend school in their lives but they want to get education. Many of them believe that education can make them successful person in their lives. According to those respondents who want to get education, if there they are not facing the financial crisis they can be able to go to the school and get education for the better future. A respondent during the interview states that: *“I know very little about education, and neither the people in our “kalaay” (village) nor anyone in my family attain the school in their whole life (zwand).”* According to another respondent *“We do*

not be able to get education as we have to work for the fulfilment of basic needs of our families. We don't have money and time to study."

During the interview some of the respondents also told that they want to get education but their parents are illiterate and they do not give importance to the education and their parents want them to earn money instead of going to school. In accordance to one of the respondent: *"I am 15 years old now and I want to "sabaqwayal" (study) so that I can join army. But my father is illiterate and he wants me to financially support family along with him."* Adding in it a respondent agreed with this statement and said that: *"My parents used to collect waste and they encouraged to adopt the same work for earning."* Similarly, one of the respondents narrated that: *"I can earn more if I studied, but my financial condition does not allow me to attend the "maktab" (school). I have to work as a scavenger at the age of 8 after the "marg" (death) of my father. Being an elder brother among my siblings, I promised my mother to support my family and earn money for fulfilling the basic needs of life."* It is also observed during the interview that some of the respondent leaves their study because of the negative behaviour of the teacher like violence. According to a respondent: *"I used to go to school for a year, our "khawunkaay" (teacher) is so strict that he "wahl"(beats) us so badly when we did not get good marks or forgot the lesson. After that I was so scared and I leave the study and started to work."*

Another reason of not studying that was noted during the interview is the strict or rude behaviour of the teachers especially in the government schools. As one respondent who migrated from his village to city said that:

"I used to go to the school in my village. It was a government school. When I do not learn the lesson or made any mistake my teacher beat me with the "laashta"(stick). He was very strict. Because of him I left my school and start to work with my father who was an agricultural labourer in my village. We have to leave our village as we were facing the severe economic crisis. The wage that land owner gave to my father was very little that we cannot able to bring proper food at home. So, my father decided to leave the village."

5.1.4. Lack of government support or social protection

Scavengers are ignored worker of the society. They belong to the informal sector so they do not receive any worker remuneration or social protection from the government. In every country it is the responsibility of the government to provide the social protection like unemployment allowance, insurance etc. to every citizen of society irrespective of race, colour, creed or gender. In Pakistan there is no effective social protection system. The government does not provide any unemployment allowance or other facilities to the vulnerable group of the society. The government does not have any effective program or scheme to provide any shelter facility or any vocational centre where these people can learn free skills so that they can utilize it for their better future or getting some other job. Moreover, those poor people who want to start their own business or want to become self-employed are facing the problem of easy or interest free loan from banks. As a result, these poor people have to adopt such profession of scavenging and begging which is not considered as a respectable profession in our society. These people who are suffering from poverty, instead of educating their children have to send their children for earning money for meeting their end needs. While asking about the government support one of the respondents narrates that:

“Government provide the facility of free education for the poor children but if we go to the school then what we eat. And also, we have to pay rent all these expenses are fulfil when we work. If government provide us “sarpanah” (shelter) and other basic needs of “zwand” (life) than there is no problem in getting education. We also want to become a respectable “osaydunkay”(citizen) of the society. We want that people treat us in a good manner.”

Moreover, the responsible organisation including government is unable to properly implement the laws that prohibit the child labor. No serious effort has been taken by these responsible organisation and government to control this issue of increasing child labor. Laws related to child protection are their but there are implementations as well as awareness issue.

5.1.5. Living conditions of the Scavengers

Scavenger faces the poor living condition as they cannot afford to live in the areas with good quality service. Because of their low income they have no proper house live in a clean environment. They have to live in the areas where the basic facilities like water and sewerage, electricity and gas etc. are not available. They live in the most polluted areas where no clean water is available for drink and because of this they mostly face digestion problems. The profession of scavenging or begging is contract based. One of the respondents narrated that: *“We are 10 family members. We live in a house having two rooms. In our area we don’t have electricity and gas facility. My mother and sisters “rawrun” (fetch) water from the nearby well for drinking, “pakhlay” (cooking) and “wenzel” (washing).”*



Figure 5.2: Scavenger Children

According to some of the respondent the water they used for *“skalo”* (drinking) and cooking is not clean because of this they often suffer from Hepatitis, cholera and Diarrhoea. Further, they do not have money as well as time to visit the doctor when they are ill or suffering from any disease or injury. Mostly in the areas where they live are polluted due to which there are vast number of mosquitoes that causes the Malaria. Some

of the respondent told that they live in huts, jhugi or tent. Moreover, these families and their relatives are mostly live in the same areas as living together in same areas gives them a sense of privacy and comfort because of the same traditions or languages. The statement of the one respondent was: *“We live in Jhugi where we have no electricity facility. We don’t have “safaoba”(clean water) for drinking. During the rainy days we have to face very difficulties as rain water came into our Jhugi.”*

5.2. Problems and Issues faced by Scavengers during Work

Children face different problems in waste picking. Mostly they are bare footed in waste picking. People mistreated them. Most of the rag pickers are illiterate and they do not even exactly understand the situation in which they are living. They faced many difficulties in their survival. They face discrimination, harassment, harsh behaviour of society, psychological issues and health problems.

5.2.1. Discrimination, Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Scavengers face discrimination on the basis of economic situation, and race. This abusive language became a part of their life. Their neutral attitude starts turning into a harsh attitude. They feel psychological pressure that affects their mental health. Sometimes, scavenger children forcefully indulged in sexual activity. People use vulgar language with them. Dirty minded people forcefully engaged these children in sexual activities. Sometimes these innocent children escape or run away from the scene and sometimes they trapped and manipulated by people. Some people blackmailed these children but on the other hand some people took stand for them to provide them moral support. One of the respondents told that her money collection bag had been snatched, and the snatcher harassed her and asked to fulfil his wrong desires to get back her money bag. She also added that people offer money for sexual act. When she refused the sick mentality, people tried to rape her. She told that she usually ran away from the area and never came back to that area where she felt danger.

5.2.2. Harsh Behaviour of Teachers at School

Mostly children are uneducated in the community of scavengers. Some of the children have studied in schools but soon they left their schools. One of the respondent told that he

cannot manage school and rag picking at the same time so, he left school as he had to help his family. These children are the bread earner of their families. Education is a basic right of each and every individual but due to responsibilities of family most scavenger children cannot continue their studies. One of the respondents told that: *“I cannot get education because I have to work and “gatal” (earn), if I start studying than who will look after my family. I cannot go for study because study wastes a lot of time.”* These children are not aware of basic human rights due to illiteracy. Scavenging is widely prevalent in under developed and developing countries. These children have a mind-set that life is stagnant and they cannot change their lifestyle because they are born in a low-class family. Some respondents were interested to get education but poverty, society’s behaviour, and responsibilities on these young kids cannot lead them to be educated.

Scavenger children thought that society remains at a distance from them. Teachers’ behaviour is not good and suitable with scavengers because they are not neat and clean like other children. They are not able to get basic education. Most rag pickers left studies because of the harsh behaviour of their teachers. Punishments and teachers’ harsh behaviour forces children to leave school. In this context one of the respondents narrates that: *“I was very fond of reading, I went to school daily but children said that they felt smell from me. They made fun of me. I had no friend in school. Teacher scolds me. I was scolded on late arrival and incomplete homework. Rag picking was difficult with school so I had left school. Now I am very happy because we all children look like same and play together”*. Most of the respondents told that they want to get education but problems and financial situation do not let them to get educated. However, they believed that education can change their life style. Moreover, according to them their health problems due to poverty can be overcome by education.

5.2.3. Family Responsibilities

Most of the children told that they have to support their families and they have to earn bread for the family, they have no other option. 12 respondents said that their father died and they have no other resource of money so they have to work to support their family. Children showed interest in getting education but family responsibilities cannot let them to get education. One of the respondents told that: *I had started this work because I had*

to earn for my family. I did not know any think else. We can work by our own choice. No one can force us to work". Majority of the families do not pay proper attention to their children. These families were facing financial crisis, they do not have any concern with the bright future of their children, they think that they spent their lives as scavengers and their children will also spent their lives as scavengers. Due to illiteracy parents think that their children will adopt their profession, so they do not focus on education.

Many respondents said that their father died and they have no other resource of money instead of rag picking so they have to work to support their family as they do not know any other skill and they have no education and financial resource, so they adopted scavenging as a profession. They told that their relatives were poor and no one was taking care of them, these scavengers have younger siblings, for their siblings they need money. Values and humanity does not exist in today's world. Adding in it one of the respondents stated that: "*We have no one in this world*". Similarly, another respondent told that his father suffered from cancer and left him in this harsh world, he does not have any other option father to work as a scavenger and earn for his family.

5.2.4. Gangs

Normally dumpsites are open to everyone, no one can claim the ownership of any dumpsite. But, different scavengers divided different areas among them. Small gangs or powerful healthy rag pickers do not let other rag pickers to enter in their areas. No one can scavenge in their area without their permission. Sometime they beat innocent rag pickers and snatch all the material they collected by their dumpsites. Child rag pickers have to obey to powerful rag pickers. Disobedient scavengers cannot stay at the site. Material picked from the dumpsite has different value. Sometimes rag pickers fight over expensive materials. In accordance to a respondent, he cannot pick rag from the other dumpsites because small groups of scavengers and gangs are there and they do not let child scavengers to scavenge in their areas.



Figure 5.3: Child Scavenger at Scrapper Shop

5.2.5. Health Problems

Dumping sites have all kind of waste materials, many of them are dangerous for human health. Material made up of tin, glass, paper, rubber, clothes, iron, copper etc. are dumped at dumpsites. Hospital wastes are also there which can be a great threat to the health of scavengers. Explosive material, paints, also dumped at these dumping sites. Children do not exactly know the harmfulness of these wastes.

Rag picking is a quite new phenomenon that is prevailing mostly in urban areas. Scavengers collect paper, cartons, paper boxes, and sackings, anything made up of plastic material, medical waste, glass and iron from garbage, drains and roadsides. These materials cause health issues and problems among scavengers. Accidents, injuries and cuts can transform into ulcer and tetanus. Animals who feed from dumpsites, harm scavengers, biting by dogs is common. Scavengers are facing poor sanitary facilities and water shortage which lead to hygienic problems. Due to poverty and lack of resources, they cannot afford private doctors. Most of the scavengers do not adopt precautionary

measurements. They do not pay attention to minor injuries or diseases. Scavengers faced many issues at the dumping areas, these areas are very dirty, and scavengers work for hours in these unclean dirty sites and think their selves to be a part of these dirty sites. These sites leave a long-lasting stress. If a scavenger wants to go to school, students make fun of him, even teachers treat him badly. School dropouts are common because of harsh behaviour of teachers and other students. These things put psychological pressure on scavengers' lives. They look dirty and unclean at dumping sites because of low resources and poverty. They feel themselves different from other children. This approach also adds psychological pressure. People treat these children harshly. Abuse, discrimination and bad treatment also lead to build pressure on these children.

Dump sites have all kind of material, some are dangerous to health. Sharp tin, broken glass, syringe needle or any other harmful thing can cut hand or foot. Sometimes uneven surface can lead to injury. Chances of accidents are also there. Scavengers do not have any protective clothing (masks, gloves), they scratch and got injured by harmful materials. Rag pickers have the risk to get injured by glass. In this context one of the respondents told that: "*Sometimes I got injury by broken bottles and glass pieces. I didn't have gloves or a cloth piece to wrap around my hand for rag picking*". Another respondent told that he got injured by a dumping truck when he was searching for scratch at the dump site. They told that many times they get injured by syringe needles and sharp materials. Rag pickers lift heavy weight, they do hard physical work that can lead to physical injury. They carry heavy sacs and metallic object all the day long. One of the respondent told that he was used to do these heavy jobs, so his body adapted to the situation. Some small children told about the leg pain, they have to suffer with. Respondents told that they help each other in carrying the waste from the dumpsites to the buyer. They have to walk for miles from the dumpsites to reach the buyers. They worked in the harsh weather conditions which increases their safety risks. Respondents told that due to air pollution, dust and smell they face breathing issues.

Rag pickers get in contact with polluted water, faecal matter and dead animals, which results in the form of emergence of different diseases. Cough and fever is a common disease among scavengers. Respondents told that they often feel temperature and this fever vanishes without any medicine. Tuberculosis was mentioned many times by

respondents. Respondents told that they eat from these dumpsites. They are not aware of the fact that food picked up from these dumpsites will harm them. They do not have enough resources to visit doctor. One of the respondents told that he picked up and eats food from dumpsites, sometimes he got ill by this rotten food. On asking that why he consumes rotten food although he know about the side effects, a respondent told that he had no other option because he did not have enough money to buy food. In accordance to respondents: *“Everyone gets ill, so why to worry about illness”*. Moreover, they told that insects and snakes bite them many times, as they live in dumpsites. These dumpsites are full of mice. In addition, one of the respondents told that: *“I was very scared of “migackay” (mice) when I started scavenging, but gradually I started getting used to it.”*

5.3. Summary

Current chapter highlights different social, cultural, and economic factors that motivate children to engage in the activity of scavenging as a livelihood and also put light on the major problems faced by child scavengers. The next chapter is about the summary and conclusion of the research thesis and based on its results some recommendations are given at the end.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Scavengers are one of the most vulnerable communities of our society in two aspects. One is as they belong to the informal sector so they are not able to receive as social protection from the government and second the negative behaviour of the people towards them. All the negative behaviour of the society and their parents makes these children feel that they are inferior from society. On contrary to this, whenever they can able to earn some good amount that brings some happiness and satisfaction to them. They get motivated and work harder to earn more amounts so that they can easily fulfil their basic needs. They are also interested to get education but they have resource constraint. Most of them want to get education and join army, start their own business, some also wanted to be a doctor or teacher. Moreover, the economic freedom at the early stage makes these children to involve in anti-social activities. In order to bring food on the table, sometime these children are also involved in stealing the thing. Some of them are satisfied by their job as it is there source of earning and makes them able to earn something and financially support their families. Moreover, they can work according to their comfort. However, some of them also not considering it as a respectable job in the society, people considered them dirty and do not give any respect to them so, if they have any other option they will leave this job. They do not get any support from the government or other responsible organisations and if any program or scheme exists for their welfare these people or unaware about that. These child scavengers are not aware of their basic rights because of the lack of education.

Poverty is one of the key factors which forces the parents to send their children to earn money at the very early age. Most of the parents send their children to work and earn some money because of the variety of the reasons and the most important among them is hunger. Likewise, the poor families have scarce economic resources and they need financial support of their children to run the household. As a consequence, these poor families adopt the begging and scavenging as their source of earning and survival. Moreover, poverty became the root cause of the certain health issues and adversely affects the personality development process of their children in these societies. It was also

observed that there is a link between profession and tradition. The families in which elders are involved in this profession of begging or scavenging most probably their children also adopt the same profession.

Joint family system is also one of the causes of the child labour. In Pakistan most of the family live in the joint family system due to tradition and also some time due to poverty. In our society parents are supposed to financially support their families. But, most of the time the scavengers' parents work as farm labourers and their income is not enough to meet the basic needs of the whole family. Further, in some cases the main head of these poor families i.e. father which is considered as the sole breadwinner of the household became drug addictive and do not fulfil his responsibilities toward his family and these responsibilities are shifted towards the children of that family especially on the elder child. Sometime children also have to entry in the labour market due to the occurrence of sudden illness or disability to the family head or father. In addition, the responsibility of the female scavenger is more than that of male scavenger as female scavenger have to do household work.

Child scavengers faced different social, economic and health problems due to rag picking occupation. The pressure of earning for their survival drive these children away from educational attainment. The main purpose of every member of these including their children is to earn money for getting food or fulfilling the end needs of life. Scavenger plays a significant role in cleaning the environment but still these are ignored worker of the society. They belong to the informal sector so they do not receive any worker remuneration or social protection from the government. Scavenger faces the poor living condition as they cannot afford to live in the areas with good quality service so they mostly live in the polluted areas. They have to live in the areas where the services like water and sewerage, electricity and gas etc. are not available. Further, Scavengers besides facing the social stigma, also face the problem of poor working condition particularly at disposal areas and sexual harassment. In addition, their earning is very less and they hardly fulfil the basic needs of life. Children face different problems in waste picking. Mostly they are bare footed in waste picking. Most of the rag pickers are illiterate and they do not even exactly understand the situation in which they are living. They faced

many difficulties in their survival. They face discrimination, harassment, harsh behaviour of society, psychological issues and health problems.

Child scavenger have positive attitude toward friendship and they spend their spare time with their friends. They share their problems with each other and try to solve them. They share that their time is mostly spent on working and earning money and they do have any time to play with each other but they also motivate each other during the hard time and provide each other both emotional and sometime financial support also. They work hard and faces many difficulties but do not get the reward accordingly. Sometime their parents also do not treat them in a respectful behaviour and they mostly abuse them. All these behaviours of the people make them feel that they are not human being or useless human on the earth. These negative attitudes toward the children adversely affect their personality development and they become rude and use the abusive language. Rag picking is a quite new phenomenon that is prevailing mostly in urban areas. Scavengers collect paper, cartons, paper boxes, and sackings, anything made up of plastic material, medical waste, glass and iron from garbage, drains and roadsides. These materials cause health issues and problems among scavengers. Accidents, injuries and cuts can transform into ulcer and tetanus. Scavengers are facing poor sanitary facilities and water shortage which lead to hygienic problems. Due to poverty and lack of resources, they cannot afford private doctors. Research findings show that most of the scavengers do not adopt precautionary measurements. They do not pay attention to minor injuries or diseases.

Policies should be made and implemented by focusing on the circumstances that have to be faced by the scavengers. Major focus should be on causes which enhance the problems of scavengers. Programs and interventions should be developed according to human rights. Quality of life can be improved by implementing some measures from the government or law making authorities. Protective clothes, shades, free medical, stipend or any other measurement to provide basic facilities to these innocent children can be made at government level and also on local level. Efforts should be made for sound waste management, sorting and separation of waste can cause less harm to scavengers.

6.1. Policy Recommendations

- Government should formulate and implement policies to provide basic facilities and education to safeguard child scavengers.
- Government should take measures to ensure health safety at the dump sites, and free medical facility should be provided to scavengers.
- Government should provide some stipend to scavengers.
- Government should inaugurate special skill development programs for scavengers.
- Government should provide employment to child scavengers' parents, or any part time job should be provided to these scavenging children.
- Community can play a major role for the welfare of these children, they can make small community or society that runs on donation to help these children.
- Public harassment should be dealt strictly.

6.2. Research Limitations

The issue of the language was there between the research worker and the non-local or migratory refuse collector who could neither comprehend Urdu nor utter Punjabi. This obstacle was lifted when researcher had a refuse collector as an interpreter who came from the same tribe as the informal refuse collector was, and who were also migrant and could comprehend Pashto and elucidate it into Urdu. Conclusively, at the waste disposal site, it was challenging persuasive informal refuse collectors that the goal of the study is completely educational since as claimed by refuse collectors numerous other research workers have talked to them and reassured them of the cooperation of all kinds but it turned into a fake promise. Data has been collected in six months. One locale was selected to gather data, forty respondents were selected, that was not sufficient to represent all scavengers and also it was not sufficient to generalize results for the whole country. Some respondents were reluctant and shy to interview. Time limit was another limitation at the research site. Data was collected when pandemic COVID-19 was at its peak this was another limitation in data collection as COVID-19 reduced travelling.

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Appendix- CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1

Gul Muhammad is 15-year-old, started work as a scavenger at the age of 7. His father is also a scavenger. He have primarily level education and he want to study more but due to poverty and being an elder son, he has to work along with his father in order to support his family. He observed people do not treat them in a respectful behaviour and they consider them as a dirty and sometime people look at them as they are thieves or some criminal. In his words *“We are treated in a way that we are not human being, people do not understand that scavenging is not our hobby, poverty forced us to choose this work not. If we have resource we can get education for better future instead of this.”*

Case Study 2

Muhammad Ismael is a 7-year-old. He is new in the field of scavenging. He did not attend the school. His father is making the baskets but earning of father is not sufficient to fulfil the basic needs of the family so, his parents send him for waste picking along with some other children of his area. He starts his work in the morning from 9 am to 6 pm but still at the end of the day he will only able to earn up to 200 to 250 rupees. He gave all his earning to his father. Telling about his income he said that *“My father spends my earning in bringing food for me and my family.”*

Case Study 3

Yousaf Khan is 12-year-old and his father was died. He started this work at the age of 10. He used to go to the school but after the death of his father there is no one who provide financial support to his family so he has to work and earn something to feed his family. In his family he has *“mor”* (mother) and three siblings. He is the elder brother among his siblings. When his father died he was in 4th grade and because of the lack of education and other skills he has to choose this work. He stated that *“I want to do some other work instead of scavenging but as I’m uneducated and unskilled person so I have no other choice.”*

Case Study 4

10-year-old Usman is also working as a scavenger. His father is also doing the same job. He never went to the school in his life. He belongs to the uneducated family so they do not know the importance of education. Their focus is to earn money instead of educating their children. Usman told that his younger brother is also involve in this work. He told that *“If we study and stop working then what will we eat”*.

Case Study 5

Shehnaz is 7-year-old, her father leaves her mother for second marriage when Shehnaz was very young. She collects waste along with his elder brother as they have no other source of earning. She wakes up at 7 am and helps her mother in the housework. She then goes to the work with her brother. They work 7 to 8 hours a day. She told that they can collectively earn approximately 300 rupees in a day. She told that *“We collect plastic, paper and glass bottles etc. in whole day and sell them and earn some money.”*

Case Study 6

Ali is 12 year old scavenger. He and his brother worked as a scavenger. They both worked hard to earn money for their family. They are orphans and do not have father or elder brother who can earn for them. Their mother also worked with them to meet their daily expenses. Ali told that he could not manage to reach school on time because he visits dumpsite early in the morning to collect saleable things. His teacher punished him daily and he cannot study properly because of shortage of time. He added that he wants to get education, so that he can change his family's living standard, but due to harsh behaviour of school teachers and school children, he left his studies. He further added that most of the scavengers leave their schools because of school pressure. They cannot get proper time to complete their homework, teachers punished them. They faced many difficulties at the dumpsites, young scavengers do not let them scavenge in their areas. Sometime they snatch rags which Ali and his brother picked up. They told that many time they had been harshly beaten up by these elder scavengers.

Interview Guide

1. What is your name and age?
2. Which area you belong to (Province/Territory)?
3. At what age did you start this work?
4. Is your father alive?
5. How is/was the health condition of your father?
6. Is your father in the same profession as you?
7. Is any other member of your family in the same profession as yours?
8. How many other members of your family are involved in this profession?
9. Is your mother alive?
10. What is marital status of your parents?
11. Do you study at a school?
12. What is Your Family size?
13. What is your educational attainment?
14. What is your monthly income?
15. What is your total family income per month Income from all resources?
16. Does your family own a house?
17. What is the condition of your house?
18. What kind of sickness were you suffering from?
19. What were the causes of sickness?
20. Where have you been treated?
21. What do you feel now about your health?
22. What are the most common diseases affecting the whole family?
23. What causes the health problem in the family?
24. What were the coping mechanisms of the family?
25. How long have you scavenged trash at the site?
26. What do you do with the items scavenged? Do you use them directly for individual consumption or sell them on the market?
If they are sold, how much money do you get from your total sales of a day? For what purpose do you use it?

GLOSSORY

Bachii	Children
Bair	Ziziphusmauritiana
Chaland	Behavior
Da KorKaaruna	Housework
<i>Dharaik</i>	Meliaazedarach
Gand/ Gund	Waste
Gatal	Earn
Gatunkaay	Breadwinner
Izatmun	Respectable
Jamaay	Winter
Kaargar	Laborer
Kalaay	Village
Khawunkaay	Teacher
Khkata	Inferior
Khug / Dard	Hurts
Khug/ Zakhmi	Injury
<i>Kikar</i>	Acacia nilotica
Kooch	Migration
Kooranayii	Family
Koosaa	Street
Laashta / Tendaye	Stick
Lag	Scarce
Lagakhtoonaa	Expenses
LooganiSpii	Wild Dogs
Maashii	Mosquitoes
Maharatoonaa	Skills
Maktab	School
Malgaray	Friend
Marg	Death

Mashar	Elder
Migackay	Mice
Mor O Plaar	Parents
Mor	Mother
Najoray	Illness
Nya Neka	Grandparents
Osaydunkay	Citizen
Pakhlay	Cooking
<i>Peepal</i>	Populus
Pkhaay O Lasoona	Legs & Arms
Rawrun	Fetch
Roghtoon	Hospital
Ron'raKhwandye	Siblings
SabaqWayal	Study
Sabaq/ Taleem	Education
Safa Oba	Clean Water
Sahar	Morning
Salatrii	Doctor
Samyor	Cobbler
SarPanah	Shelter
<i>Sheesham</i>	Dalbergiasisso
Shehtoot	Mulberry
Skalo	Drinking
Skhaa	Dirty
Taba	Temperature
TolBadan	Whole Body
Tolana	Society
Tolawal	Picking
Tukhaai O Taba	Cough & Cold
<i>Urund</i>	Castor oil plant
Wahal	Beats

Wenzal

Washing

Yara/ Yaredam

Scared

Zwand

Life