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## **PP 20 - Explore the Socio-economic Issues on Garbage Collectors in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka**

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**Background:** Garbage collectors clear up all house hold garbage. They spend most of their time on roads and interact with the society. Society's negative perception towards them most likely comes from the work they do. But no one pays attention focusing or investigating on the life of garbage collectors, how they work, how they spend time, what they do apart from this job, how about their family support and their social interaction.

**Objectives:** The objectives were to investigate the social life of garbage collectors in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka and to investigate their social problems and quality of life.

**Methodology:** Qualitative, one to one in-depth interview method was used to conduct the study using convenience sampling in Gampaha District. The data saturation point was reached at 20 participants. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis and data was disseminated thematically.

**Results and conclusions:** Majority of the participants belong to the age 41-50 years (70%). Moreover, among the total participants, 14 participants were male. 13 participants studied only up to grade 8 while minority studied up to ordinary level. Out of 20 participants, 12 worked twelve hours per day. Majority of the participants had more than fifteen years of experience in their field. Among the total candidates, most of them do not engage much in leisure activities. Most subjects stated that they satisfy about their salary and also their families are more supportive and happy about the job. Out of 20 participants, 12 of them mentioned that they faced social discrimination while working. Discrimination affects their psychosocial well-being. They don't receive the respect they deserve. They chose this job due to the privileges they get later in the life like pension, over time. And also as they cannot get another job from their qualifications.

**Keywords:** Economic, garbage collectors, social problems