



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Social Science**

**VOICE AND VISIBILITY THROUGH STORIES OF WOMEN WASTE PICKERS FROM MUMBAI**

**KEY WORDS:** WASTE PICKER, VOICES, VISIBILITY, PARISAR BHAGINI VIKAS SANGH.

**Seema Vasant Ketkar**

Associate Professor, Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana, College, Thane.

**ABSTRACT**

In the last few years, several studies have been conducted to review the conditions of Waste pickers in many countries of the world as well as in India. In Latin American countries like Brazil, Colombia and Argentina Waste pickers/workers' cooperatives are formed. Cooperatives also exist in countries like Egypt, Philippines, Indonesia and in parts of Africa as well. There are global alliances like, Latin American Association of Waste Pickers, National Alliance of Waste Pickers, GAIA (Global alliance against Incinerators) and WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment - Globalizing and Organizing). In India also many groups/organizations are formed for Waste pickers like Kagad ,Kach, Patra Kashtakari Panchayat from Pune; Janseva from Latur; ACRON Foundation India; Chintan Environmental Research & Action Group; Karunya Trust; SWACHH Campaign, to mention a few. The current paper attempts to present one such effort of organizing women Waste pickers from Mumbai by non-voluntary organization *Stree Mukti Sanghatana*. The current paper also attempts to present the journey of leadership development among women Waste pickers through five representative cases.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Stree Mukti Sanghatana* (SMS) or Women's Liberation Organization is a Mumbai based non-governmental organization, which aims to create a society free of gender discrimination. It was formed in the year 1975 by activists, mainly from the various progressive groups. It focuses on women empowerment irrespective of ascribed identities such as caste, class, creed, religion, language and nationality. the basic aim is to create awareness in society not only about women's issues but also issues related to equality, peace and development. The main aim was to create awareness in society about gender disparity (Mhapsekar, np). The Sanghatana is working for the last forty four years and reaching the masses through various programmes and initiatives. Since its beginning, SMS has been taking several initiatives towards women's movement in Maharashtra. SMS has contributed immensely towards the cause. "It has initiated ten Counselling Centres for distressed women and 10 Day Care Centres, also running an Adolescent Sensitisation Program and conducting large-scale awareness campaigns on issues regarding women in various parts of Maharashtra and India using the medium of theatre, poster exhibitions, seminars and talks for the same. Besides these, SMS has also to its credit the publication of books and magazines as well as production of educational audio and video cassettes and CDs. The efforts have been widely recognized and appreciated at both the national and international platforms. In June 1999, SMS received the status of 'consultant' from the United Nations (ECOSOC)" (<http://stroomuktisanghatana.org/>).

In 1998, SMS started working along with *Parisar Bhagini* (women waste pickers) of Mumbai. Through the *Parisar Vikas* programme, they aimed to address the problems faced by women Waste pickers, who engaged in the task of 'cleaning waste'. Their activities also addressed the issue of waste management, a significant challenge for contemporary urban existence.

As per the Solid Waste Management rules 2016 issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, "in India 62 million tonnes of waste is generated annually at present, out of which 5.6 million tonnes is a plastic waste, 0.17 million tonnes is a biomedical waste, hazardous waste generation is 7.90 million tonnes per annum, and 15 lakh tonnes e-waste. Only about 75-80% of the municipal waste collected and out of this only 22-28% is process and treated. The remaining is disposed of indiscriminately at dump yards" (Mhapsekar, nd: 5).

**WHO ARE WASTE PICKERS?**

Waste pickers are those whose livelihood depends on going through discarded waste, sorting it and selling it to traders and sending it for recycling. As per the definition of Alliance of Indian Waste Pickers, the term 'Waste-pickers' refers to those who meet their ends by engaging in collecting the waste/garbage informally,

sorting it out and selling it. They differ from other type of workers like domestic servants, watchmen at residential complexes, doorstep garbage collectors, municipal staff engaged in cleaning the streets and alike. The basic difference between these two lies in the fact that the waste pickers do not get salary and do not have fixed income.

Definition of Waste-pickers, Informal Waste Collectors and Material Recovery Facility in Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 is stated as: "Waste picker" is a person or group of persons informally engaged in collection and recovery of reusable and recyclable solid waste from the source of waste generation the streets, bins, material recovery facilities, processing and waste disposal facilities for sale to recyclers directly or through intermediaries to earn their livelihood"(Gazette of India:Extraordinary, Part 2Section 3(ii): 55) and "informal waste collector" includes individuals, associations or waste traders who are involved in sorting, sale and purchase of recyclable materials", (ibid:55).

Since 1999, *Stree Mukti Sanghatana* got involved in work related to Waste pickers coincidentally. Waste pickers are marginalized sections of the society. SMS's volunteers used to perform the play *Mulgi Zali Ho* (A Girl is Born) in several localities with the intention of creating awareness among people about gender discrimination. On one such occasion they performed the street play at Govandi, near Deonar dumping ground where the volunteers got an opportunity to interact with the women slum dwellers who were largely from Waste-picking community. In an interaction with them, it was revealed that they are migrants and came from Marathwada region which is drought-prone area. Largely unskilled and with bare minimum educational background, these women have no other choice but to work as Waste pickers.

These interactions proved to be a solid foundation for establishing *Parisar Vikas* Programme. These women waste pickers were living in very precarious conditions and while understanding their situation, the need to conduct an extensive survey was felt. Their poor conditions were also adversely affecting their children's education. Some basic information was collected of these women, and the process began. The survey was conducted and a data base of approximately 2000 women Waste pickers was prepared. It revealed the following information:

Waste pickers' ages ranged from 7 to 70 years; the activity of Waste-picking was largely based on caste and gender. in that 95% of all the Waste pickers were women and from scheduled castes (Dalits). 90% of all Waste pickers were the main breadwinners for their families; 98% of Waste pickers were illiterate; 98% of Waste pickers had no alternative skills; and all the Waste pickers were from areas of Maharashtra and other southern states, which are hit by perennial drought (Dandekar & Mahajan, 2007: 8).

**OBSERVATIONS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED:**

Studies in the cities of Mumbai, Pune and Ahmedabad in India have effectively documented that Waste-picking is a caste and gender-based activity with most being women and from the Dalit caste. Women waste pickers constitute 85% of the total waste-picker population, men waste pickers 10% and children waste pickers, 5%. 50% of women waste pickers are either deserted by husbands; are widows or are wives of alcoholic husbands with a large number of children. The age group of waste pickers ranges from 7 to 70 years. 90% of all waste pickers are the primary breadwinners for their families. 98% of waste pickers are illiterate with no alternative skills.

They carry heavy loads and lack the facility of transport, resulting in health hazards such as backache. Among other serious illnesses were the respiratory diseases and tuberculosis due to handling toxic waste in the unhygienic conditions they work in. Poverty and malnutrition has caused anaemia among them. They are married off at a very young age and therefore face serious health problems during pregnancy and childbirth. A family planning operation after two or three deliveries also becomes impossible due to lack of strength. Women have neither the time nor the money to look after their own health and that of their children. The community suffers from high infant mortality rate. More than 50% of the children (especially girls) are out of school because they have to take care of their younger siblings. Most of them are married off at the age of 13 or 14. Waste pickers are susceptible to dog and rat bites and injuries from sharp objects such as glass thrown into the garbage bins. Citizens indiscriminately throw toxic waste such as biomedical waste and other material such as needles, broken glass pieces, partially empty acid bottles, etc. in the common dustbins. Injuries from these are also very common.

The health facilities provided by Municipalities are not adequate. Waste pickers go to work early in the morning and therefore cannot avail of the facilities of health posts which close around 4 p.m. or the visits of community workers.

Middlemen exploit waste pickers, leading to further degradation of their condition. Most of them are caught in moneylenders' trap and pay heavy interest. (Summarised from Jyoti Mhapsekar's note).

**CONTRIBUTION OF WASTE PICKERS TO SOCIETY, STATE AND ECONOMY**

There seems to be a multiple linkage between urban poverty and solid waste. Although not generally recognized, these self-employed waste workers make a major contribution to the economy, public health and a sustainable environment and also provide cost effective raw materials to industry. Women are more involved in Waste picking activity. In most cities in the world, women form the major part of this informal sector. Some of the prominent contributions of waste pickers to the city are:-

- in municipal waste-handling and transport costs reduced
- Steady supply of raw material to recycling factories
- Saving of space at dumping grounds
- Recovery of natural resources in the form of compost and conservation of the

environment when trained in these alternate skills  
Though they help immensely towards public health and sanitation by picking up the waste and managing it and disposing it off through proper channels; yet they remain the most vulnerable group.

These are all from unorganized sector, their economic exploitation is a matter of concern. No safety measures are used, no fixed income, the arrogance of waste traders, no fixed working hours and nature of work is hazardous to their own health.

**Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangh**

**The objectives of the *Parisar Vikas* Programme are mentioned on Sanghatana's website are as follows:**

- To organize and train women Waste pickers
- To try and improve the standard of living of women Waste

pickers by understanding their problems

- To create a 'zero waste' situation in our cities
- To keep our surroundings clean and green
- To help recycle waste appropriately
- To develop and use new techniques for the treatment of waste

It focuses on the poor migrant women in Mumbai who are working as Waste pickers. These Waste pickers contribute immensely towards economy of the country but their role and contribution is unacknowledged. There is a contradiction involved. Waste pickers who divert waste materials away from landfills, impact negatively on other pickers whose livelihood depends on retrieving recyclables at the landfill.

Building confidence and empowering these women waste pickers and creating impact on their lives is the main objective of this project.

When SMS began to work with waste pickers, its involvement, as a women's liberation organization, was based on the fact that 95% of waste pickers they surveyed at the start of the project were women from scheduled castes (Dandekar & Mahajan, 2007). By organizing individual workers, SMS sought to empower those considered the "poorest of the poor", who had little support from other networks. In the field of waste picking and recycling, the women SMS encountered were already experts in their trade; the benefits linked to their collaboration with SMS, therefore, were primarily those of an economic and social nature, as membership provided access to financial savings programs and basic health care (Gross, 2013: 20).

These women were in highly indebted situations and as they work with garbage and dirt, waste dustbins and dumping grounds, the sanitation and hygiene conditions were at stake. Due to illiteracy, financial exploitation was a common feature among them. Child marriages are common and there is an absence of steady income. The families of Waste pickers are dependent upon the income of the women. Among these women the number of destitute women is high. Hence the Sanghatana started working among those with two programmes: Microcredit groups and Health workshops.

While working with Waste pickers, we realized that the world of waste picking is totally different and never thought of the odds which are commonly found here, says Jyoti Mhapsekar in personal interaction (29 March, 2019). These Waste pickers are working incessantly but invisible in all possible ways. Their names, identities, status are woven around only one dimension and that is of Waste picking. Gradually the Sanghatana realized that this occupation is mainly carried out by specific caste community members. So caste identity and this work are closely linked. For them, the money comes out of dry waste and they suffer hardships daily. Ideally speaking, nobody should be doing such kind of work of picking up waste and maintaining life from that. But the ground level experiences were different. The stark reality was what the Sanghatana volunteers were experiencing. So the plight of Waste pickers is of serious concern which led to forming of *Parisar Vikas* programme.

The Sanghatana started training programmes for them. Compost-making out of bio-degradable waste was taught to them. They were also trained to create compost pits. Some have undergone gardening skills training. The Sanghatana also started accepting contracts for compost-making.

Uniting and organizing Waste pickers to train them, help them to demand more rate for dry waste, helping them in breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and indebtedness, discussing their issues with municipal officers, requesting middle-class citizens to segregate the waste, exploring on various solid waste management techniques, several such avenues through which the Sanghatana started working with them. Along with *Parisar Bhagini* (sisters) Sanghatana represented problems of Waste pickers at national and international conferences. Attending conferences and conventions revealed the fact that there is a close linkage between waste, climate change and greenhouse gases.

Effective waste management is a global issue and much more learning in this field is to be done is the feeling gathered by the Sanghatana volunteers and these women Waste pickers. But they all were assured that the path and direction they have been walking on, is the most appropriate path. This confidence was gained.

#### WOMEN'S VOICES:

Presenting the women voices from *Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangh* for understanding their journey from Unheard and Invisible to Heard and Visible. The women whose stories are presented here are associated with *Stree Mukti Sanghatana's Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangha*.

#### THE STORIES OF WOMEN WASTE PICKERS FROM PARISAR BHAGINI VIKAS SANGH

The following narratives are based on personal interviews of the three women Waste pickers on 29/3/2019, at *Stree Mukti Sanghatana's* Chembur office of *Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangh*.

Sushila Vitthal Sabale: is 52 years old with bare minimum education, residing with her son and daughter-in-law at Kanjurmarg in a decent accommodation. Her son has studied Business Management and runs a small business of his own. Sushila Sable said she never dreamt of this. In the year 1972 she migrated to Mumbai with her mother in search of some work and some wages. She is from Marathawada region of Maharashtra. There was a famine that year and living in the region had become miserable for all. So her mother left Latur and moved to Mumbai with other villagers in search of some income-generation activity. They came and settled in a *vasti* (locality) in the Govandi-Chembur vicinity. Sushila recollects that the then Chembur area was not at all crowded and had ample space. They had small holding of land in the village but it was barren due to water scarcity and inadequate rainfall. After coming to Mumbai, she started looking after the household responsibilities and her mother used to go for Waste-picking. Sushila had a differently-abled brother under her care and eventually she also joined her mother in Waste-picking. At the age of 10-11, around 1977 she used to pick up waste from Jari-Mari vicinity and also Bail Bazar area. Her mother used to collect *Bardan* (cleaning cloth or duster) and Sushila used to carry those *Bardan* load on her head and walk some 7-8 kms daily. Her life continued in this manner and one day, she got married. However, her husband did not earn enough and finally he left her and went to his village. Sushila accepted her life without much regret as her fate.

In the year 1998, *Stree Mukti Sanghatana's* activists started *Vasti*-visits and happened to come to her *vasti* as well. The woman leader from her *vasti*: Shakuntakla Kurkute took the initiative and formed the micro credit group at the call of SMS. Sushila was a peace-loving person and quiet. Initially the women Waste pickers were not much influenced by SMS's ideology and thoughts but formation of micro credit group created some trust and faith in them, says Sushila. She was the member of micro credit group and when SMS started its work of making compost in the Tata Colony and Navy colony, she too joined that. Around 2003, SMS trained these Waste pickers formally by sending them to *Nisarga Udyan* (Mahim Nature Park) for formal training of compost-making out of bio-degradable waste.

SMS also conducted leadership-building camps for these members of micro credit groups. During leadership-training camps, the silent Sushila learned to be vocal and changed herself. With support of SMS, she learned effective ways of dealing with the day to day life situations and she was assured that SMS will continue to offer their support not only to her but to other members of the groups as well.

With the initiative of SMS, in the year 2004, *Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangh* was established formally but the process began much earlier, around 2000. She became the first President of *Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangh* and today she is also the state level President of All India Waste Pickers Association and discusses confidently, the issues and problems faced by Waste pickers with Municipal authorities and also delivers speeches at Waste Pickers' Meetings.

She had visited Copenhagen (Denmark), Rio-de-Janeiro (Brazil), Beijing (China), Durban (Africa), and Bangkok (Thailand). Before joining the PBVS, she was not able to read and write; today she maintains a diary and writes a report of her daily work in her own words. She has learned reading and writing skills with the help of Jyoti Mhapsekar and other staff members at SMS. She could compose songs and also sings them beautifully. She is surprised to notice the change in the quality of her song composition. She gives the entire credit to SMS for her present safe, secure and worthy life.

#### Susheela Mokal

She is 53 years old, working as a Waste picker since her childhood. She is from Latur district of Marathwada region, the drought-prone area from Maharashtra. Due to severe drought conditions in the year 1972, she moved to Mumbai. Her mother used to pick up waste in the form of paper from Mangaldas Market Victoria Terminus. She said, she never picked up waste from street dustbins or from dumping ground. In the year 1998, SMS's Micro credit group was formed in Ramabai Ambedkar Nagar, and she joined the group. After joining the credit group of waste pickers, she underwent a training programme for compost making from bio-degradable waste in *Nisarga Udyan* (Mahim Nature Park). Eventually, she was also trained in gardening at Pune and Mahim Nature Park and today she is the first supervisor who has acquired training in gardening. She gained knowledge of trees, gardening, and is also being trained for making *Jivika*, which is a medium which helps in plant nourishment; Magic Powder (for controlling the foul smell in the compost); and *Aushadhi Maati* (medicinal soil) (strongly recommended as a pesticide). She had education up to Class 5 and can share her expertise in developing the garden plots. In the year 2005, she became the Secretary of Vasundhara Credit Cooperative and the women members of Vasundhara are trained in compost-making. Today her team works in fifteen co-operative societies from Mulund and Bhandup region.

These are the two representative stories of women Waste pickers whom I have interviewed. While going through the stories of women Waste pickers collected and presented by Liza Van der Stock in her photography project on Waste pickers, it was observed that the majority of women Waste pickers come from lower social strata and for them Waste-picking comes as a legacy to them. Their follow their mothers and grandmothers into the profession almost as a given. Many of them had a strong desire for attending school and getting educated, but circumstances did not allow them to move away from their life and occupations. Most of them are married at an early age, say at the age of 10-12 or even at lower, just on the verge of getting menstruation, but life after marriage is equally difficult. In several cases, wide age gap between the two is seen; husbands are not educated and are alcoholics. The family depends on the income earned by women. Due to the initiatives of the Sanghatana, some women who were aspiring for education were facilitated by SMS. I cite below the words of Mangal Thorat from Liza van der Stock's work:

"Every day I was collecting waste next to a school campus and while I was spitting through the dirt I could see this teacher with her children. I fantasised how it would be to be her and to be in front of a class passing on my knowledge to these children. My intense desire to study and become somebody that I had locked away for so many years grew day by day. One afternoon I heard the children sing the national anthem and it was so beautiful, it really touched me. It was at that moment that I decided to leave all my doubts and fear behind and just went for it. I told a trainer at *Stree Mukti Sanghatana* about my dream and he enrolled me as an external student in 10<sup>th</sup> standard, at that time my son was also in 10<sup>th</sup> standard but I didn't want anyone to know. I feared that they would make fun of me so I studied in the middle of the night when everybody was sleeping. After a while I attended some classes during the day, it was really hard to keep this a secret and some people found out. "A mother of four shouldn't be studying, she has better things to do. Besides she would fail anyway because she was too old" ([https://www.lizavanderstock.com/Waste pickers](https://www.lizavanderstock.com/Waste%20pickers)).

After successfully completing Class 10, Mangala took her diploma in teaching and today she is a teacher. When she got her diploma,

she was not sure whether the mainstream would accept her in this profession. Since 2002, she has been a Kindergarten school teacher.

They also have big dreams and are chasing to achieve those. Sushila Sable said she wanted to travel in an aeroplane as she was working on a dumping ground near the airport. So, she used to see the aeroplanes fly off.

"At that time I worked on the dumping ground next to the airport. Every day I looked at the planes take off and land and every day I imagined myself flying away from here. It became my biggest dream to touch the sky and go to another place" (<https://www.lizavanderstock.com/Wastepickers>).

As she joined *Stree Mukti Sanghatana's Parisar Vikas* as a micro credit member, her life changed completely. She said that initially they never trusted Sanghatana volunteers but as they became members, they realized they are genuine people. In her interview she shared about her visits to foreign countries as representative of waste pickers, at United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) conferences, her journey reveals that there is a substantial change in her life.

Shobha is a waste picker, she says: "I know that the work I'm doing is very dirty, everyone keeps a distance from us waste pickers. It is a disgrace, but I know that the work we are doing is very useful. People need to understand the importance of segregation. I'm not only working to make a living but also for the environment" (<https://www.lizavanderstock.com/Wastepickers>).

They have clarity and commitment towards their work, which is considered dirty in the eyes of society. But they do it wholeheartedly and with conviction. They try very hard to earn dignity to their work and to their own life. They are ready to undergo training in manure-making and gardening. They wish to learn new techniques in waste management and organizing and running their groups and cooperatives successfully. They are keen on getting vocal and visible and strive towards real empowerment. They raise their own expectations and try to go beyond their identity. They are vocal in raising the issues of Waste pickers. Sushila Sable composed a poem in response to the issue of closure of dumping ground which is preventing the waste pickers from picking up the dry waste through notification by Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate change on 8 April, 2016. In reality, this is linked to stopping of dry waste on the dumping ground but the dry waste keeps coming to those dumping areas and still these women are prevented from picking up those generates in them the feelings of hostility as this notification is impacting them not in a friendly way but robbing off their rights as waste pickers. They are fighting collectively for their rights as waste pickers.

## DISCUSSION

Most of the work that women do is invisible, unrecognized and poorly paid. In the case of the informal sector, women's labour contributes substantially towards family income. In many of the rural and urban poor households, women's income helps in family sustenance. Due to increased hardships in the form of depletion of natural resources, feminization of agriculture, women's number in informal sector is high. Balancing the household burden of daily chores and informal nature of the duties in the said sector, women agree to work in good or bad working conditions in the informal sector. Waste-picking is one such field where no formal training is needed and as per workers' availability the working hours can be decided. "But there is a lot of harassment from police and citizens at times," says Suman More of *Kagad Kach, Patra, Kashtakari Panchayat* in her interview at Geneva conference ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2\\_X4z22P9k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2_X4z22P9k)). She says, "citizens' approach is also very biased. They look at us as unclean beings and hesitate in building rapport with us". "But due to consciousness-building by organisations like Kagad, Kach, Patra Kashtakari Panchayat, Parisar Bhagini Vikas sangha, Janseva from Latur, SEWA from Ahmedabad, there is a change in our status", says Sushila and Saraswati from SMS. In the urban set up, the inform sector offers variety of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs and services, which are taken up by women in large numbers.

## CONCLUSION

The significant changes are visible from the narratives of these two as well as from the stories of women from the records. They have emerged from independent self-employed workers to service providers. Their status and dignity of their labour is ensured by Sanghatana and the women themselves are ensuring their own growth and development. The awareness programmes conducted by organization, are not only attended by these but they have implemented those values in their own lives. Another impact is in terms of steady income. From unsteady income they have moved to assured income. The working hours are fixed now. Earlier it was erratic and there were no norms set for working hours. Due to sanghatana efforts, there are fixed hours of work. Sushila Sable and Sushila Mokhal said we have successfully eloped the money lender's trap and today we have savings accounts in the Banks.

Impact on Health status was found out as they work with toxic waste. The basic blood related tests were performed to understand the health profile of women waste pickers. In health matters their anaemic conditions are overcome as the importance of nutritional awareness and other health care facilities were provided to them.

## Education of children

Children of waste pickers daughters were not able to go beyond class 8 in a maximum way but due to sanghatana efforts daughters are reaching up to class 10 and sanghatana is offering concrete help for girls to pursue further education as diploma courses or some basic computer based training programmes courses etc. One important achievement is stopping of the Child marriages in case of daughters of women waste pickers.

An initiative by *Stree Mukti Sanghatana* in the form of *Parisar Vikas Sangh* can be considered as an environmental movement in a new form. In *Parisar Vikas* initiative, women's role is significant. Through *Parisar Bhagini Vikas*, the women Waste pickers are getting new identities of their own through their hard work. They are trying to strike the balance between keeping the environment clean and trying to come out of their stereotypical image and stigma as Waste pickers. They are shaping their lives not from expecting others for bringing change for them but initiating the change by themselves. Waste is not dirty but it can generate income and wealth, is the message which is spread with these stories. Waste has moulded their lives in a positive manner. Their stories are inspirational and create gender spaces with voice and visibility.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Grateful to Stree Mukti Sanghatana's Chembur office staff. Also indebted to Jyoti Mhapsekar; Suneeta Patil; Suneeta Sadaphule; Lalita; Sushila Sable; Sushila Mokhal; and Saraswati Sadavarte for sharing their experiences with me.

## REFERENCES:

- Gross, A. 2013. "Stree Mukti Sanghatana: Exploring the work of an Indian NGO through Gender, Economy, and Civil Society," Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pp. 1-32.
- Pillay, V. 2017. "Amplifying voice, visibility and validity: Waste Pickers in Jo'burg city," SA Labour Bulletin Vol. 41, Number 4, Pp. 4-6.
- Ansu, S. and Shetty, P. (n.d.) "Empowering Women Waste Pickers of Mumbai: Stree Mukti Sanghatana's Parisar Vikas Programme - A Case Study," Submitted to Mumbai: Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Pp. 1-20.
- Dandekar, H. and Mahajan, S. (2007) "Alleviating Poverty and Greening the City: Women Waste Pickers of Mumbai.
- Mhapsekar, J. "A Note Prepared on Environmental Entrepreneurship Program for Urban Poor Women," pp. 1-13.
- "Stree Mukti Sanghatana: Cultural Movement Against Domestic Violence," Report prepared by Deloitte.
- Mhapsekar, J. 2014, 2016. *Kachara Navhe Sampatti*, Mumbai: Stree Mukti Sanghatana Prakashan, pp. 1-92.
- Mhapsekar, J. (ND). *Know Your Waste*, Mumbai: Stree Mukti Sanghatana
- Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change: Notification, New Delhi, the 8th April, 2016.

## Web Resources

- <https://www.lizavanderstock.com/Wastepickers> Accessed on 2/4/2019
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2\\_X4z22P9k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2_X4z22P9k) Accessed on 4/4/2019
- <http://stremuktisanghatana.org/>. Accessed on 5/4/2019
- [stremuktisanghatana.org/parisar-vikas-addresses/](http://stremuktisanghatana.org/parisar-vikas-addresses/) Accessed on 5/4/2019

## Primary Data

- Interaction with Jyoti Mhapsekar and Suneeta Patil, Suneeta Sadaphule on 22 and 29 March, 2019.
- Interview with Sushila Sabale, Sushila Mokhal, Saraswati Sadavarte, dated 29.3.2019 at Chembur Office of Stree Mukti Sanghatana for Parisar Bhagini Vikas Sangh.