(RESEARCH ARTICLE)

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Working conditions and quality of work life paradigms on BBMP Pourakarmikas: Its implications

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Abstract

Modern research has shown that stress management has emerged as one of the most important ideas in the workplace. Because Pourakarmikas struggle to strike a balance between their personal and professional life, it is also evident that working efficiency has decreased to some extent. Due to this distinction, the relevant authorities have developed such policies that result in higher job performance and, as a result, job satisfaction as well as employee satisfaction. This level of contentment is known as QUALITY OF WORK LIFE. A procedure that allows employees at all levels of an organisation to actively and successfully influence the organisational environment, processes, and results is known as quality of work life. This study focuses on the intangible aspects of QWL, including its essential components such as job security, job performance, employee satisfaction, etc. Hours of labour in unsanitary circumstances on the roads with no amenities or restrooms are performed by Pourakarmikas for a small and frequently inconsistent wage. Yet they continue to toil away at their job for years. Residents of Bengaluru who have lived there for years or generations refuse to physically gather garbage.

These jobs are given to marginalised communities from outside Bengaluru. In fact, Bengaluru exploits these underprivileged individuals by failing to provide them with alternative employment opportunities. They continue to toil in sanitation tasks like cleaning septic tanks, public restrooms, or rubbish collection because of this. The current study analyses the circumstances that the Pourakarmikas in Bangalore City are put through. It reflects on the Pourakarmikas' factual information in the context of Bangalore City.

Keywords: Quality of Work Life; General Conditions; Health Conditions; Working Conditions

1. Introduction

The presence of a specific set of organisational conditions or practises is what is referred to as quality of work life. This concept typically states that democratic management methods, enhanced jobs for workers, dignity for workers, and safe working conditions all contribute to a high quality of work life. The term "quality of life" has become more frequently used in recent years to refer to certain environmental and humanistic elements that industrial productivity and economic expansion have neglected. The quality of the human experience at work has drawn attention in corporate organisations. Many businesses have also questioned their ability to survive in an increasingly cutthroat global marketplace. Due to these two issues, interest in potential changes to the nature of employment is growing. A lot of recent organisational experiments aim to increase employee satisfaction and productivity for the organisation as a whole.

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The extent to which people can meet their basic needs while working for a company is referred to as quality of work life. Organizations looking to improve employee performance Employees should feel a sense of security, equity, pride, internal democracy, ownership, autonomy, responsibility, and flexibility, according to the Quality of Work Life initiative. They make an effort to treat employees fairly and kindly, keep lines of communication open at all levels, provide workers the chance to participate in decisions that impact them, and give them the freedom to finish their tasks. Additionally, it has been linked to organisational changes intended to increase the levels of work enrichment and job widening (increased vertical task flexibility as well as the assumption of new duties, including those formerly performed by supervisory or managerial employees). Importantly, the concept is to increase the appeal of the work itself rather than the terms and conditions of employment in order to increase levels of involvement and, thus, motivation (Hertzberg). Early research looked into job satisfaction (as determined by absenteeism, turnover, or attitude surveys), organisational environment, and task learning as quality-of-life issues.

1.1. The working condition of pourakarmikas

One of India's highest urbanization rates is seen in Karnataka. By 2035, Bangalore's population is expected to have doubled from its current level of 1.3 core (130 million). The waste increases with population. This would result in possibly larger regions to maintain as clean and healthy as possible. If current behaviors continue, harm will be done to more recent settings.

In an urban agglomeration, cleanliness goes beyond mere aesthetics. In order to ensure public health and hence avoid sickness in the city, it is mostly about creating sanitary and safe settings. This necessitates an ethos for an urban metropolis to exist based on the concept of communal living and caring. Therefore, maintaining a clean and healthy city can only be achieved by a cooperative effort in which each resident, household, business, commercial entity, and municipality take part.

City cleaners and sweepers are leading the way with this enormous task. This workforce is known as Pourakarmikas in Karnataka (Poura = cleanliness; Karmika = workers, sometimes abbreviated as PKs); in Hindi-speaking areas of India, they are referred to as Safai Karmachari (Safai: cleaning; Karmachari: worker). This suggests two things: first, that Pourakarmika's work is essential for maintaining urban health; second, that they are the first to be exposed to various risks and diseases, and that, as trench-fighters, they are both victims of egregious neglect and ill health as well as potential reservoirs for infections that they contract as a result of the neglect of their health and safety. Bangalore has 1.3 crore residents, who are cared for by over 24,000 Pourakamikas. This indicates that only 0.3% of the urban population is providing essential environmental and public health services to the vast populace. This ratio of service extension is based on a time and motion study conducted by several government organisations, which supports the notion that 700 workers are enough. Pourakarmika unions dispute that this accurately reflects the situation since it encourages cruel working conditions and robs employees of their right to dignity in the workplace. For instance, they claim that the Salappa Committee report from forty years ago recommended a maximum ratio of 1:500 even though per-capita trash production was lower than it is today.

1.2. No change in working conditions of Pourakarmikas in 40 years

The true test of whether or not workers exposed to mentally, physically, and socially challenging situations, as Pourakarmikas are, will be protected and secured lies in how their actual working conditions are today. There are numerous national and international resolutions and commitments to this effect. They are obviously the least safeguarded and taken care of. However, what should shock our conscience is that this condition continues despite a profound and compassionate effort made forty years ago to direct the Government of Karnataka to address the crisis promptly. The "Committee on the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions of Sweepers and Scavengers" produced the IPD Salappa report in April 1976, which was presented to the Karnataka government. The report was based on a thorough examination of the working and living conditions as well as months of extensive travel by the committee across the entire state. For a number of reasons, this report is quite pertinent to the present. Most importantly, it is a report that asks, "What, if anything, has been done to better the living and working conditions of Pourakarmikas since 1976?" and holds up a mirror to our times. Reviewing the salient conclusions of the Salappa Committee Report is helpful in understanding the scope of accomplishments.

2. Review of litreature

- According to Rebbecca Bundhun, "Women and men often have a different idea of what the "life" element of the balance comprises" (The National (2009), an Abu Dhabi National Paper, p. 1) Women are more often devoted to it.

- She also cited a paper by Katty Marmenout, a research fellow at the INSEAD School in Abu Dhabi, who stated that "work-life balance is not simply about equally dividing the time spent on one's work and personal life, but establishing a harmony that reflects an individual's priorities". For men, this means spending more time pursuing personal interests. Thus, it is possible to accept the contented stay-at-home parent or the cheerful workaholic. The best indicator would be that it should feel right, she said. "How can we assess or evaluate work-life balance?" she said.

- According to Spector (1997), job satisfaction refers to how much people enjoy their occupations. While some people believe work to be an important aspect of life, others despise it and only go to work when they have to. In other words, job satisfaction refers to how people feel about their occupations and various job-related factors. It refers to how much people enjoy (or detest; pleasure or dissatisfaction) their jobs. Job satisfaction is an attitude variable in the sense that it is typically measured. Some studies have historically addressed job satisfaction from the standpoint of need fulfilment, which refers to whether or not the employment satisfied the employee's physical and psychological needs.

- In their 2015 study, "A Qualitative Study on Work Life Balance of Employees working in the Private Sector," Murthy M. and Shastri S. identified a number of challenges affecting parents' work-life balance, including parenting-related ones. Need more time for the kids; expressing work dissatisfaction to the kids. Relationship problems: Need more time from partner; unable to give spouse time. Role conflict/guilt: Unsure of how effective they are in the roles they play at home, such as mother or daughter-in-law.

- According to Chaudhry, Satya (1989), employees in the private sector reported higher mean job satisfaction scores than those in the public sector. Furthermore, it was shown that there are no appreciable differences between the levels of job satisfaction experienced by managers, supervisors, and employees in the public and private sectors. The study found that job happiness in the private sector is influenced by recognition of performance.

- Voydanoff (2004). It has been discovered that tension in the workplace contributes to family strife. In comparison to men, women experience more stress. After leaving the workplace, women professionals are typically expected to complete some family-related tasks as well. In this situation, family support is crucial for easing stress. There will inevitably be conflict in the family when family members do not offer support.

- Work-life integration and work-life mosaic are two suggested substitutions for the word "work-life balance," according to Harris and Pringle (2007). By emphasising integration, these alternatives have sought to eliminate the distinction between work and life. It is clear that the concept of work-life balance is not set or uniform, but rather, it is quickly changing to become more applicable to a wider range of individuals. The term "balance" has drawn criticism because some people think it implies an ideal of equality between work and life that is inappropriate for a sizable portion of the population. Maintaining a balance in the traditional sense was therefore unworkable because it wasn't always attainable or desirable.

- Age is a significant socio demographic factor for work and family interference, according to Nubling et al. (2008). The younger generation is experiencing less issues than the middle- and high-age groups. This is a result of growing responsibilities within the family as people get older. Therefore, maintaining a healthy balance in your life will reduce the likelihood of family issues. In this aspect, family support is very crucial.

- Gupta and Charu (2013) looked at how Work Life Balance affected employees in the IT sector's job satisfaction. Data from 100 employees were gathered using the convenience sample method. A questionnaire that was created by the participant was used. Chi-square analysis reveals that burnout and work-life balance have an impact on IT professionals' job satisfaction.

- Bhargava and Baral (2009) discovered that while job characteristics (autonomy, skill variety, task identity, and task significance) were positively related to 51 work-to-family enrichment, self-evaluations, family support, and supervisor support were positively related to family-to-work enrichment. Only the enrichment of family and job was discovered to be associated to family contentment, nevertheless.

- As they were known as sweepers, the pourakarmikas, or by their caste names, Sri Basavalingappa, the then-minister of municipal administration, changed the name to pourakarmikas in a meeting in Delhi in September of 1972. Since then, March 14 has been designated as Pourakarmikas Day. The Kannada name "Pourakarmikas" alludes to "Poura" which means "Nagarika" or "citizen" and "Karmika" which means "Labourer" or "those who labour with the objective of cleaning the city." The English counterpart of Pourakarmikas is "scavenger." The Pourakarmikas are regarded as employees of civic organisations, hence they are not entitled to the same benefits as government workers. Pourakarmikas lack access to socioeconomic conditions, medical facilities, and other amenities. Women Pourakarmikas provide crucial services to the society, especially in metropolitan regions where slums have given them a new dimension. 90% of Pourakarmikas are from the Sc majority group, and some Pourakarmikas also involve night soil or those who are most susceptible to social and economic decline. Because of the filthy nature of their work, stigs continue to face the social stigma of untouchability in one way or another. Pourakarmikas go about the task of maintaining the house because they lack any other way to make a living.

- Pourakarmikas, which includes manual scavengers, sewer workers, and sanitation workers, are those who work in Karnataka to collect rubbish, clean sewage pits and drains, sweep roads, collect and dispose of human and animal excreta, and collect and dispose of animal carcasses.

2.1. Need of the study

Since national holidays have not yet been officially acknowledged, Quality of Work Life Services, a woman-owned company with headquarters in Manhattan, has been occupied by individuals with comparable expertise and attitudes. Different working hours have been established for people under the age of 18, women who are pregnant, mothers who are breastfeeding, and people who are looking after a kid who is disabled. The appropriate salary is agreed upon between the employee and the employer. The republic's government sets the minimum wage each year, and no employee may receive less from their business. A role in life that has been assigned by the person is an example of work. Work can be both a method of supporting one's family and a way of self-realization that is enjoyable and satisfying. We are conscious that we need to keep discovering, creating, and sharing new information. We're all so mentally preoccupied because work has always been one of the most important components of the human experience.

2.2. Objectives of the study

- To Study the present working conditions of Pourakarmikas.
- To analyze the present working conditions on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas
- To oFfer constructive findings and suggestions

2.3. Hypothesis

- Ho: Present working conditions has no adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas
- Ha: Present working conditions has done have adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas

3. Research methodology

It refers to the procedures or techniques used to find, process, and evaluate information on a certain issue. 88 workers were elected from the Bangalore city working in BBM as Poura karmikas by using simple random technique.

3.1. Statement of the problem

The situation facing the Pourakarmikas warrants serious attention. By doing tasks like taking out the trash, sweeping the streets, cleaning the restrooms, and other similar tasks, they serve the society and the public honestly. They provide a genuinely admirable contribution to the upkeep and cleanliness of the community. Their economic, social, and financial situation is exceedingly precarious, and they require assistance from the government. To improve the social and economic circumstances of the Pourakarmikas, the government must implement reforms, and labour unions must provide support. It is vital to alter the state's attitude to empowerment and to strengthen the Pourakarmikas. In order to improve the social and economic situations of Pourakarmikas, the demands side aims at enacting new laws and regulations that allow Pourakarmikas and their groups to collaborate with the government. When the intervening government should be setting up entertainment for them, the scavengers are experiencing a lot of mental and bodily problems. The burden on the body and mind would be lessened. They don't have a favourable situation. Therefore, the government must subsidise aid and give welfare.

3.2. Study limitations

The results of the study is time bound; it will pourakarmikas to better understand the working conditions and work life balalnce. But since the pourakarmikas perception are an uncontrollable factor, this again is bound to change in time requiring a repeated study in future. The sample was only taken from Bangalore.

4. Data analysis and intrepretation

Once the questionnaires had been completed, the replies were tabulated and the findings were put together. The results were examined to ascertain the pourakarmikas' work-life balance. Descriptive analysis and structural equation modelling were employed by the researcher to more accurately assess the existing pourakarmika circumstances. The results of the survey were utilised to form observations. The results of the data analysis, the conclusions, and the interpretations are all included in this section.

Table1 Gender Wise Classification of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	47	53.40
Female	41	46.60
Total	88	100

Source: Primary Data

Male accounts for the vast majority of responses (53 percent), while females account for only 47 percent, as seen in the table below. Male respondents in family have chosen working as poura karmikas.

Table 2 Educational Qualification Wise Classification of the Respondents

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	25.00	28.40
Primary and High School	35.00	39.78
PUC	28.00	31.82
Total	88.00	100.00

Source: Primary Data

According to the information gathered regarding the respondents' educational backgrounds, 25.3% of workers and 25% of adults lack basic literacy skills, while 37.78% of adults have completed elementary and high school and just 31.82% have completed a post-secondary degree. Therefore, it is evident that the majority of the workers are either illiterates or just have a primary or high school education, which is why they choose this scavenging employment.

Table 3 Age Wise Classification of the Respondents

Age in Years	Frequency	Percent
Age 20-30 Years	20	22.73
Age 30-40 years	38	43.18
Age>40 Years	30	34.09
Total	88.00	100.00

Source: Primary Data

The respondents are older than 45 (34.09%), followed by respondents between 20 and 30 (22.73%), and respondents between 30 and 40 (43.18%), according to the table above. The Pourakarmikas are between the ages of 30 and 40.

Table 4 Nature of work

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Sweeping of Roads and Streets	20	22.72
Disposal of Waste Material	28	31.82
Cleaning of Latrines	20	22.73
Other Works (Drivers, Supervisors, Helpers, etc.)	20	22.73
Total	88.00	100.00

Source: Primary Data

The cleaning of roads and streets, the removal of waste, the cleaning of latrines, the cleaning of drains and septic tanks, and other works (Drivers, Supervisors, Helpers, and similar people who participate in scavenging labour) are all included in the scavenging work. How much Pourakarmika involvement in these jobs has been investigated. According to the data in the table, the majority of Pourakarmikas—22.72% of the respondents—do sweeping labour, 31.82% of the respondents dispose of waste, 22.73% clean latrines, and the remaining 22.73% of respondents perform other tasks (Drivers, Supervisors, Helpers, etc.).

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics for Research variables

Particulars	Mean	Std Deviation
Working conditions		
Pourakarmikas must endure demanding and challenging working conditions (WC1).	3.5297	0.84986
Prejudices based on social class and caste continue to exclude them (WC2).	3.4245	1.01021
Pourakarmikas typically put in excessive hours. (WC3).	3.5157	0.92291
Health conditions		
A lot of people have skin allergies. (HC1).	4.0841	0.72586
Family members fall for a health illness (HC2).	4.3297	0.76986
Women Pourakarmikas frequently suffer from anaemia. (HC3).	4.2245	0.93021
General Conditions		
Women Pourakarmikas frequently suffer from anaemia. (GC1).	3.5041	0.78586
Pourakarmikas put in a lot of effort, but their contribution is underappreciated. (GC2).	3.7497	0.82986
Pourakarmiaks don't even have places to store their tools. (GC3).	3.6445	0.99021
Worklife Balance		
My personal life suffers because of work (WLB1).	3.7841	0.74586
I find it hard to work because of personal matters (WLB2).	4.0297	0.78986
I find it hard to work because of personal matters (WLB3).	3.9245	0.95021

The analysis has been presented in Table depicts that among all the sub-constructs of Working conditions, the respondents agreed to the influence of Pourakarmikas must endure demanding and challenging working conditions. (M = 3.5297) Prejudices based on social class and caste continue to exclude them (M = 3.4245), Pourakarmikas typically put in excessive hours. (M = 3.5157).

Health conditions, A lot of people have skin allergies. (M = 4.0841) Family members fall for a health illness (M = 4.3297), Women Pourakarmikas frequently suffer from anaemia. (M = 4.2245).

General Conditions, Women Pourakarmikas frequently suffer from anaemia (M = 3.5041) Pourakarmikas put in a lot of effort, but their contribution is underappreciated (M = 3.7497), Pourakarmiaks don't even have places to store their tools (M = 3.6445).

Worklife Balance, my personal life suffers because of work (M = 3.7841) I find it hard to work because of personal matters (M = 4.0297), I find it hard to work because of personal matters (M = 3.9245).

4.1. Structural equation modelling

A SEM model was created using sub-constructs that the CFA had discovered. The model's goodness-of-fit was initially evaluated (Table), and it was found that most of the time the values were within expected ranges, demonstrating the model's resilience. As shown in Table, the goodness-of-fit was calculated with the assistance of suggestions from various academics.

Table 6 Model Fit Indices

Model Fit Indices	Recommended Values	Observed Value
Chi-square (CMIN/DF)	1-5	1.782
Goodness of fit Index (GFI)	> 0.90	0.949
Adjusted Goodness of fit Index (AGFI)	> 0.90	0.922
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.90	0.959
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	> 0.90	0.946
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	> 0.90	0.982
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	> 0.90	0.975
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.981
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.08	0.049

Given the sample size of 88, which is a large sample size, the Chi-square value was expected to be large and statistically significant (Hair et al., 2010). The CMIN/DF (χ^2/df) value was found to be 1.782, which is acceptable as suggested by Bollen and Long (1993) and Kelloway (1995). Further, the values of GFI(0.949), AGFI(0.922),NFI(0.959), RFI(0.946), CFI (0.981), IFI (0.982), and RMSEA (0.049) were also found to be within the acceptable limits as suggested by the authors specified in Table 06 All the indices were found to be within the stipulated limits and therefore, the goodness of the model can be confirmed, i.e., the accuracy of the model and its explanatory power in predicting the relationships between the constructs was found to be acceptable.
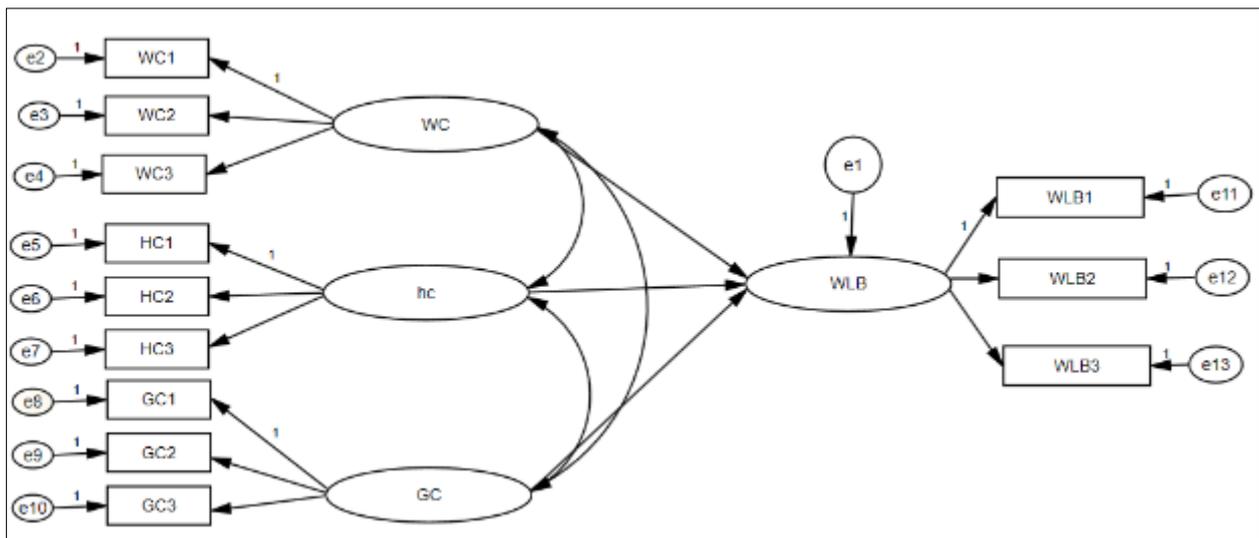

Figure 1 Structural Equation Modeling

Table 7 Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	**S.E.**	**C.R.**	**P**	**Label**
WLB	<---	WC	-0.01	0.002	-5.5	***	Sig
WLB	<---	hc	0.76	0.12	6.39	***	Sig
WLB	<---	GC	0	0.06	-0.06	0.96	N-Sig
HC1	<---	hc	1	--	--	--	Sig
HC2	<---	hc	0.92	0.13	6.84	***	Sig
HC3	<---	hc	0.99	0.14	6.88	***	Sig
GC1	<---	GC	1.39	0.1	14.7	***	Sig
GC2	<---	GC	1.36	0.09	14.55	***	Sig
GC3	<---	GC	1.4	0.1	14.78	***	Sig
WLB1	<---	WLB	1	--	--	--	Sig
WLB2	<---	WLB	0.95	0.11	8.95	***	Sig
WLB3	<---	WLB	1.21	0.13	9.31	***	Sig
WC3	<---	WC	1	--	--	--	Sig
WC2	<---	WC	0.92	0.08	12.06	***	Sig
WC1	<---	WC	0.78	0.08	10.36	***	Sig

The results indicates that Present working conditions which constitutes working conditions Experience (B =-0.01, p < 0.05; T=-5.5), health conditions (B =0.76, p < 0.05; T=6.39) has a significant has a adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas. The finding indicated that a unit change in Present working conditions produced about -0.001(working conditions) and 0.76(health conditions) changes in quality work life balances. Since p<0.05 it can be concluded that Present working conditions has a adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas

But It is observed that Present working conditions (general conditions) has no adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas, since P value is >0.05

5. Findings

The findings of the research are has outlined under

- The analysis has been presented in Table depicts that among all the sub-constructs of Working conditions, the respondents agreed to the influence of Pourakarmikas must endure demanding and challenging working conditions. (M = 3.5297) Prejudices based on social class and caste continue to exclude them (M = 3.4245), Pourakarmikas typically put in excessive hours. (M = 3.5157).
- Health conditions, A lot of people have skin allergies. (M = 4.0841) Family members fall for a health illness (M = 4.3297), Women Pourakarmikas frequently suffer from anaemia. (M = 4.2245).
- General Conditions, Women Pourakarmikas frequently suffer from anaemia (M = 3.5041) Pourakarmikas put in a lot of effort, but their contribution is underappreciated (M = 3.7497), Pourakarmiaks don't even have places to store their tools (M = 3.6445).
- Worklife Balance, my personal life suffers because of work (M = 3.7841) I find it hard to work because of personal matters (M = 4.0297), I find it hard to work because of personal matters (M = 3.9245).
- All the indices were found to be within the stipulated limits and therefore, the goodness of the model can be confirmed, i.e., the accuracy of the model and its explanatory power in predicting the relationships between the constructs was found to be acceptable.
- The results indicates that Present working conditions which constitutes working conditions Experience (B =-0.01, p < 0.05; T=-5.5), health conditions (B =0.76, p < 0.05; T=6.39) has a significant has a adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Parikramas. The finding indicated that a unit change in Present working conditions produced

about -0.001(working conditions) and 0.76(health conditions) changes in quality work life balances. Since p<0.05 it can be concluded that Present working conditions has an adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas

- It is observed that Present working conditions (general conditions) has no adverse effect on the quality work life balances of Pourakarmikas, since P value is >0.05

6. Discussions

The analysis of 88 women pourakarmikas revealed that the majority of them work as sweepers. Large families, a high dependency rate, and a modest per capita income all contributed to their socioeconomic hardship. Housing conditions for women Pourakarmiaks were discovered to be in extremely poor condition, with the majority of them experiencing fever, headache, back pain, respiratory issues, diabetes, etc. Regular health checks and a lack of education have contributed to many elements' delayed diagnosis. Although the majority of women Pourakarmikas were aware of social consequences, their level of social awareness fell short of expectations. A large percentage of health irregularities were found in the study of therapy results. Oral hygiene needed extra attention due to carry, discoloured teeth, and fungal infections in some of the female workers.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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