



UNIVERSITY OF NATAL DURBAN

GARBAGE PICKING AS A STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL

by

RACHELLE DE KOCK

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES UNIT

Centre for Applied Social Sciences

WORKING PAPER NO.16

GARBAGE PICKING AS A STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL

by

Rachelle de Kock

Development Studies Unit

University of Natal

Durban

1986

Development Studies Unit

The Development Studies Unit is a multi-disciplinary unit within the Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Natal in Durban. The Development Studies Unit was established at the beginning of 1982 with the purpose of providing a focus for research into the problems of developing areas, with a view to assisting the University to play a meaningful role in the upgrading of the quality of life in the poorer area surrounding it.

As well as undertaking research in many areas of South Africa, the Unit offers a post-graduate Masters programme in development studies.

ISBN 0-86980-514-2

INDEX

1.	INTRODUCTION	I
	1.1 Method	3
2.	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	4
	2.1 Sex and Age Structure of Population	7
	2.2 Marital Status	7
	2.3 'Family Size'	
	2.4 The Importance of the Earnings from Picking to the Family	8
	2.5 Rural Links	9
	2.6 Educational Qualifications of the Pickers	10
3.	IS PICKING A TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT OCCUPATION?	12
4.	ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF GARBAGE PICKING	17
	4.1 Items Collected, the Use thereof and the Links with the Informal and Formal Sector	17
	4.2 Informal/Formal Sector Links	19
5.	INCOME EARNED FROM GARBAGE PICKING	25
	5.1 Earnings From Picking by Family Size	26
	5.2 Earnings From Picking by Age of Pickers	27
	5.3 Earnings From Picking by Sex of Pickers	28
	5.4 Earnings From Picking by Educational Level	29
	5.5 Earnings From Picking by Preference for Picking or Wage Employment	30
	5.6 Earnings From Picking by Length of Time in Occupation	31
	5.7 Earnings From Picking by Time Spent on the Dump	32
	5.8 Earning, Levels in Garbage Picking Relative to Other Informal Activities.	33
6.	WORK HISTORY	34
7.	WORKING CONDITIONS AND HARDSHIP	36
	7.1 Harrassment	37
	7.2 Hours spent Picking, Transportation and Assistance	39
	7.3 Reason why Person Picks	41
	7.4 Status in Community	42
8.	CONCLUSION	43

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of people living off garbage dumps is found world wide and is likely to become even more prominent as the urbanization process increases, especially in the developing world where urbanization rates greatly exceed the rate of job creation.

It is conservatively estimated that South Africa will have an urban population of 24 055 000 by the year 2000 (which is 44 percent of its total present population). (Cilliers & Groenewald 1982:37). With such rapid growth rates in the urban workforce and the generally slowing pace of the urban economy, the question must arise as to how all these people will live. Formal sector employment levels are certainly unlikely to be able to increase sufficiently to offer work to all those who need it. And in the absence of an adequate safety net in the form of unemployment benefits it is certain that significant numbers of the urban dwellers will be forced to seek some other survival strategy.

It is often argued that the informal sector in the towns fills this role (Nattrass, N.J. 1985; Wellings & Sutcliffe, 1984). However empirical studies of the informal sector show that even here there are limitations on entry into certain sectors such as commerce and construction and that consequently the really destitute have only very limited options even in the informal sector (Nattrass and Glass, 1986). Garbage picking is one area in which, from an economic point of view, entry is relatively open. This openness, coupled with the unattractive working conditions and the relatively low rates of

return, (which discourage entrance into the sector by those who can do better), means that it is an activity which like that of street trading, can be used as a survival strategy.

Even though garbage picking is common, very little is known about either the economics of the process or the characteristics of the people themselves.

"From what little has been written about these people, and it is indeed little, it is clear that most observers have been strongly of the attitude that garbage pickers are a hopelessly poverty stricken group who are scratching out a meagre existence from the crumbs of the richer man's table" (Birbeck, 1979:161).

It is generally accepted, without any real empirical foundation, that garbage pickers are poor, and are forced to pick because they cannot find employment elsewhere. Garbage picking is not officially regarded as work or employment. The purpose of this study is to examine the work done by the garbage picker in Durban's metropolitan area, and to find out where and how the picker fits into the socio-economic hierarchy, as well as the role, if any, he/she plays in the economy. An attempt will be made to determine just how well a person can live from picking garbage and whether it is indeed a viable alternative strategy for survival.

Indeed the overall aim of this study will be to try to discover to what extent Durban's garbage pickers are merely an expression of

poverty, and to what extent, if any, they form part of the informal/formal economy.

The study took place on three garbage dumps in the greater Durban area and the following information was obtained, by means of a survey.

1. The demographic characteristics of the pickers, in terms of sex, age, marital status, educational qualifications, place of birth and residential status in the area.
2. The income collected through the garbage collection and its major use.
3. The relationship between the average income, age and sex of the picker and his/her level of education and items collected.
4. The relationship between income earned and the types of items collected.
4. The working conditions and hardships endured by pickers.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted during November and December 1985 among Durban's garbage pickers and scavengers. A structured, pre-coded interview schedule was used which included questions relating to demography, income, work patterns and attitudes to the work being done. A copy of the questionnaire is given in Appendix I. A total of 96 people were interviewed 69 of whom were interviewed at the Westville Dump, 10 in Pinetown and 18 at the Springfield garbage dump.

These dumps were chosen as survey sites for two reasons : firstly because of the presence of pickers on these dumps., secondly, because permission could be obtained from the appropriate authorities to conduct interviews with the pickers on the respective dumps. At Pinetown only 10 pickers were allowed on the dump to pick, at Westville not all the pickers were interviewed, as the sample was considered adequate. Although there were more pickers on the Springfield Dump, a smaller sample was used because the pickers are allowed to pick for only two hours a day there, and it was felt that by interviewing them we were keeping these pickers from their work, (interviews lasted about half an hour).

Pickers were interviewed at random, depending on their presence and their willingness to be interviewed. Some of the people were embarrassed to be approached but very few actually refused to be interviewed. It became clear to the interviewers as the research proceeded that the topic of research was highly emotive from the pickers view point and many expressed the hope that through the study, their lot might be improved.

2. THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PICKERS SURVEYED

2.1 The Age and Sex Structure of the Sample

If garbage picking is a strategy for survival, one would expect to find it dominated by people who cannot find alternative employment. From the sex ratio point of view, because women in general experience more

difficulty in obtaining work, one might expect to find a predominance of women amongst the pickers. In January 1986 for example, of the unemployed Blacks counted in the Current Population Survey, 53 percent were women and 47 percent men (Statistical News Release p.374 20.5.1986).

Women are discriminated against in the formal workplace and there is no reason to assume that their position will be that different in the informal economy. This being so, one would expect women to filter down to the lowest occupational strata in the informal sector in much the same way as they do in the formal sector and to be relatively overrepresented in areas such as garbage picking. In actuality, however although women did dominate, making up 56 percent of the pickers surveyed, the extent of their dominance was lower than expected.

In view of the higher than expected presence of men it is useful to ask why were there so many men scavenging on garbage dumps? South Africa has been experiencing an economic recession during the last few years. More men, than usual are unemployed, as a result, and have to find an alternative way to support them and their families. Garbage picking offers one such an alternative.

The age distribution of the pickers surveyed is also very interesting and is given in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 : Age of Sample

Age	Number in Category	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
0 - 10 yrs	2	2,1	2,1
11 - 20 yrs	25	26,0	28,1
21 - 30 yrs	29	30,2	58,3
31 - 40 yrs	20	20,8	79,2
41 - 50 yrs	7	7,3	86,5
51 - 60 yrs	7	7,3	93,8
60 + yrs	6	6,3	100,0
Total	96	100	

The majority of scavengers fell into the young age groups. 26 percent were between the ages of 11 and 20 years, 30 percent were between 21 and 30 years which means that 58 percent were 30 years or less. A further 20 percent between 31 and 40 years. The mean average age of the pickers was 31 years but 50 percent were aged 27 years or under. The difference between the mean age of the sample and the median again illustrates the relative predominance of the younger age groups.

The age breakdown by sex is given in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 : Age/Sex Breakdown of Sample¹

Age	Percentage of Sample Category		Percentage of Age Category	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
0 - 10 yrs	0	1,0	-	100,0
11 - 20 yrs	21,0	5,2	80,0	20,0
21 - 30 yrs	8,3	21,9	27,6	72,4
31 - 40 yrs	7,3	13,5	35,0	65,0
41 - 50 yrs	3,1	4,2	42,9	57,1
51 - 60 yrs	1,0	6,2	14,3	85,7
61 +	2,1	4,2	33,3	66,7

The men appear on average to be younger than the women. Twenty-one percent of the pickers between the age of 11 and 20 years were men whereas only 5,2 percent were women. The majority of women were between 21 and 40 years old. All the children under 10 years were female, and 80 percent of adolescents were male.

2.2 Marital Status

Sixty-seven percent of the sample had never been married, 11 percent were married and the remainder (21 percent) were either living with someone, widowed or divorced.

2.3 Family Size

Pickers were questioned on the size of their family, its structure and whether or not they were the sole breadwinners. From the answers obtained it appeared that the size of the family varied between two

1. All percentages used, unless stated otherwise, refer to the percentage of the total sample (n=96).

and sixteen people, with the mean family size being six people. Nearly two thirds of the pickers had between one and five children, 6,3 percent had between six and ten children. The relatively high percentage (31 percent) who had no children is explained by the overall youthfulness of the sample.

Table 2.3 contains data showing the breakdown of the sample in terms of whether the picker was the sole earner in the family or not.

Table 2.3 : Percentage of Sample that are Sole Earners

Category	Percentage of	
	Men	Women
Sole breadwinner	28	41
More than one earner	15	16

2.4 The Importance of the Earnings from Picking to the Family

Studies of other subsectors of the informal economy show clearly that a significant proportion of the operators in some sectors work only to supplement their family incomes (Krige:1985). If the garbage picking sector is acting as a buffer for the destitute as was hypothesised earlier, then one would expect that a high proportion of the pickers would be the sole breadwinner in their family or at the very least, that the other breadwinners would also be engaged in similar survival activities.

Table 2.4 : Rural Urban Migrants by Length of Urban Residence

Date of Departure from Rural Area	Percentage of Sample Born in Rural Areas in Category
Less than 6 months ago	3.0
6 months to 1 year	4.5
1 - 2 years	7.5
2 - 4 years	3.0
5 years and over	72.0

Taking the sample as a whole 69 percent of the pickers said that they were the sole earners in their family. Amongst those who were not the only earner 13.5 percent said that they were helped by live-in relatives other than their immediate family. Of the additional earners, only 23 percent were in receipt of a regular wage. Taking these findings together, they are a clear indication of the degree of poverty and desperation that pushes people into garbage picking and are evidence of the survival role played by the sector itself.

2.5 Rural Links

In an urban situation where the rate of rural urban migration is high and influx control has operated to institutionalise a system of circulating migration, one would expect that a low level occupation like garbage picking would be dominated by relatively recent entrants to the urban economy and further that they would have left their families in the rural areas (due to influx control). However, a question relating to the residence of the scavengers, showed very clearly that this is not the case, 76 percent of these surveyed said

that they lived with their families - suggesting that garbage picking as an occupation is dominated by the well established urban poor rather than by the new rural entrants.

This finding is further supported by the fact that although 70 percent of the sample said they had been born in a rural area 73 percent of the rural born had been living in the town for longer than five years. The data in Table 2.4 gives details of the rural urban movement of the sample and shows clearly that the majority of the pickers were long term city dwellers and not new rural urban migrants.

2.6 The Educational Qualifications of the Pickers

The educational profile of the pickers surveyed is contained in the data given in Tables 2.5 and 2.6.

Table 2.5 : Education Levels by Sex¹

Level of Education	Sex*		Total %
	Male %	Female %	
Less than Std. 3	12,5	23,0	36,8
Std. 3-5	13,5	16,7	30,1
Std. 6-8	15,7	15,7	31,3
Matric	1,0	1,0	2,1
Total	43,0	56,0	100

1. Not all the pickers responded to the question regarding sex (n=95).

The majority of the pickers 63,5 percent had reached an educational level above standard three, and as such can be taken to be functionally literate. However, the average educational levels were still low and 50 percent of the sample had completed only Standard 4 (6 years of formal schooling). At the higher end of the spectrum 14,5 percent of the total sample had a junior certificate (10 years of schooling), while only two percent had obtained a matric.

The men were generally better educated than the women; 39 percent of the men had reached an educational level of standard 6 to 8, or more, whereas only 32 percent of the women had reached the same level of education.

Table 2.6 contains data showing educational profiles by age.

Table 2.6 : Education Levels by Age¹

Education Level	Age Category					Total
	0-10 yrs %	11-20 yrs %	21-30 yrs %	31-40 yrs %	40 yrs+ %	
Less than Std. 3	2,1	11,5	7,3	5,2	10,4	36,5
Std. 3-5	-	7,3	8,3	9,3	5,2	30,1
Std. 6-8	-	7,3	12,5	6,3	5,2	31,3
Matric	-	-	2,1	-	-	2,1
Total	2,1	26,1	30,2	20,8	20,8	100

1. None of the pickers interviewed had reported Std. 9 as being the highest level of education they had reached.

The overall conclusion to be drawn from the data in Table 2.6, is that even in this sample where educational levels are low, the better educated are to be found among the younger generations. However, bearing in mind the nature of the sector it also provide some evidence for the fact that this group, however, cannot find formal employment, despite their education. This could be the result of their lack of work experience, as well a reflection of the present economic recession being experienced in the country.

Access to a formal sector job is not simply a matter of obtaining education. In a study of 187 African households covering 220 employed adults, 163 unemployed adults, and 137 school going children done in Port Elizabeth in 1984, it was found that for the majority of Africans destined to work at a semi-skilled or unskilled level, factors such as age, sex, previous experience, and access to contacts who were already employed, were more important in ensuring that an individual found a job than education. The reasons for this were complex, and the researchers commented; "The operation of internal labour markets, the de-skilling of jobs, the recession and the need to control the labour force all interacted to down-grade education as a giver of life's chances" (D. Gilmour and A. Roux : 1984, p.40).

3.0 IS PICKING A TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT OCCUPATION?

In keeping with the other survival sectors of the informal sector, such as hawking and small-time craft manufacture, one would hypothesise that if garbage picking is seen as a survival strategy

then it would be viewed by those in the activity, as a temporary occupation - something to tide them over until they can find a better paying and more pleasant type of work. To test this hypothesis pickers were asked how long they had been picking garbage and their answers are tabulated below in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 : Number of Years Spent Picking

Years	Number in Frequency	Percent of Sample
Less than 1 yr	18	18,8
1 - 3 yrs	64	66,7
4 - 6 yrs	8	8,3
7 - 10 yrs	3	3,1
11 - 15 yrs	2	2,1
Over 15 yrs	1	1,0
	96	= 100

It was found that by far the majority, 86 percent had been garbage picking for less than three years, 67 percent of the pickers said that they had been picking for between 1 and 3 years and 19 percent for less than a year. This shows clearly that most pickers interviewed had only been doing this work for a relatively short time and does suggest that picking is seen as a temporary measure by the pickers and is probably tied to the overall economic trends in the country.

Since men have better access to formal sector work than women they are even less likely to seek garbage picking as a permanent occupation and a higher percentage of them are likely to have been picking for a relatively short time. The data relating length of picking time to

sex of the pickers is given in table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 : Sex by Number of Years Picking

Sex		Under 1 yr	1-3 yrs	4-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	More than 10 yrs	Total 100 %
Male	% total sample	11,5	27,0	2,1	1,0	1,0	42,6
	% total no in sex	27,0	63,4	5,0	2,4	2,4	100
Female	% total sample	7,3	39,0	6,25	1,0	2,0	56
	% total no in sex	13,0	70,4	11,1	2,0	4,0	100

Although the difference between the work history of the sexes is not as marked as one might expect, given the differences in access to the labour market, nevertheless, 27 percent of the men had been picking for less than one year as against 13 percent of women in this category and 90 percent of the men had been picking for three years or less, whereas 83 percent of the women were in this category.

The fact that the unexpectedly large number of men who were found picking, is clearly a result of the current economic recession being experienced by the country, is further evident by the fact that the majority of men, when asked, gave retrenchment as the reason why they had left their previous job.

taken as a whole, however, the number of years that women have been picking is not significantly different than that found for men,¹ except many more women (12,8%) fell into the 4 - 6 yrs category than men (6,7%). This leads one to suspect that women are affected first by an economic recession, and are possibly more vulnerable.

If garbage picking were a selected occupation and not a survival strategy one would expect the length of time that a picker had spent picking to be positively correlated to his/her age. Table 3.3 relates picking time to the age of the picker.

Table 3.3 : Age by Number of Years Picking

Age of Picker	Number of Years Spent Picking				Total
	1-3 yrs	4-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	over 10 yrs	
0 - 10	1,0	-	1,0	-	2,0
11 - 20	18,0	2,1	-	1,0	21,1
21 - 30	22,0	2,1	-	1,0	25,1
31 - 40	16,0	2,1	1,0	-	19,1
41 - 50	1,0	1,0	-	-	2,0
51 - 60	5,2	-	1,0	1,0	7,2
60 +	4,2	1,0	-	-	5,2
	66,7	8,3	8,1	3,1	81,0

* 18 pickers have been picking for less than a year and are therefore not accounted for in this Table.

1. A chi-square test carried out on the data obtained was not significant at the 0,05 level ($\chi^2 = 0,95$ df = 1), and so it is concluded that there is no difference between the sexes and numbers of years picking.

The data show that in all age groups, the majority of pickers had only been picking for a relatively short time, between 1 and 3 years. Exceptions did, however, occur, for instance 1 percent of pickers between the ages of 21 and 50 years said that they had been picking for more than 6 years.

The fact that 50 percent of pickers under ten years had been picking for between 7 and 10 years, indicates that these children have more than likely spent most of their lives collecting garbage on the city's dumps. Since mothers work for themselves and are not supervised, the children are taken to the dump where the mother can keep an eye on them. The author saw young children playing on the dumps. It is then only natural that these children should start collecting items, either to play with or to sell for pocket money.

Table 3.4 contains data relating educational levels to the length of time the picker had been picking on the dumps.

Table 3.4 : Level of Education by Number of Years Picking

Level of Education	Number of Years Spent Picking				Total %
	1-3 yrs %	4-6 yrs %	7-10 yrs %	Over 10 yrs %	
Less than Std. 3	22,0	4,2	3,1	1,0	36,5
Std 3 - 5	21,0	2,2	-	1,0	30,1
Std 6 - 8	22,0	2,2	-	1,0	31,3
Matric	2,1	-	-	-	2,1

The data confirms the earlier findings and shows again that irrespective of the educational level reached, the majority of pickers had only been picking for one to three years. Those pickers who were functionally illiterate were found in most categories indicating length of time involved in picking. Although 72 percent had picked for only between 1 and 3 years 13 percent had picked for from 4 to 6 years and 10 percent for 7 to 10 years, and 3 percent for more than 10 years.

4.0 THE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF GARBAGE PICKING

4.1 Items Collected, the Use thereof and the Links with the Formal and Informal Sector

The survey showed that the scavengers will collect anything that is of value either because it can be of use in their homes or because it can be sold. They do, however, tend to concentrate on collecting specific items which can be sold in the townships and squatter areas, to recyclers, to scrapyards, to garages and to hawkers/brokers. The following table indicates the items collected and the number of scavengers, who stated that they collected that particular items.

Table 4.1 : Items Collected by Pickers by Frequency¹

Item	No of pickers Collecting	Percent of Total
Paper/Cardboard	5	4,8
Bottles	19	19,8
Metal	9	9,4
Plastic	32	33,3
Clothes/material	42	43,8
Organic/food	29	30,2
Wood	22	22,9
Other	30	31,3
Items collected and classified under 'other' were:		
Copper	61.5	
Sail	34.3	
Valuable Items	4.2	
Planks	11.5	
Soap	1.0	
Buckets	4.2	

The category, "paper cardboard" also includes what the pickers refer to as "wall paper". These are sheets of printed cardboard with waterproof plastic lining used to make milk and fruit juice cartons. "Sails" refer to large sheets of black PVC (Poly Vinyl Chloride) Plastic. A large number of pickers (43,8 percent) pick up clothes and material, this is regarded as very valuable since most pickers dress in clothes found, on the dump. Shoes and gloves are prized items which if found are worn immediately. Shoes and gloves are important to the picker because they need to protect their hands and feet from being hurt while scavenging on the dump.

1. The majority of pickers gave multi-responses: for example, a picker might collect paper, food, clothes as well as copper.

'Own use' include food picked up on the dump. From answers to other questions one can conclude that many, if not most of the pickers eat off the garbage dumps.¹ Embarrassment may be the reason why many pickers did not respond to this question.

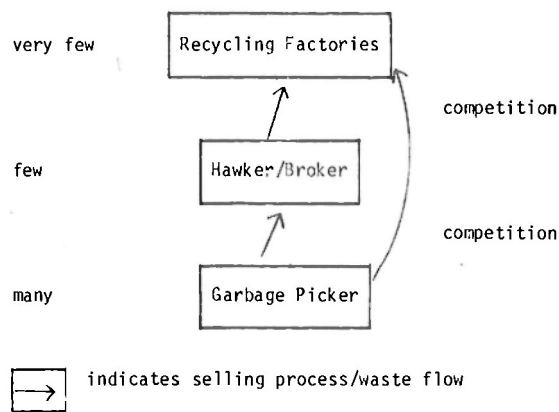
The multiple use aspect of garbage picking is further illustrated by the answers obtained from a question to which 60,4 percent said that some items were used at home; 91,7 percent said they sold part or all of their collections and only 1 percent said they used the items found, to manufacture a product for sale, (see p.24).

4.2 Informal/Formal Sector Links

In the waste industry we find that not only is the removal of waste and the safe disposal thereof important, but also of importance is the recycling of waste. The picker plays an important role in the waste recycling process. The picker not only recycles the waste by making personal use of it, but also sells it to recycling companies and brokers/hawkers. The garbage picker plays an important role in the sorting of waste for recycling purposes. The picker thus deals with waste at the grass-roots level. Figure 4.1 illustrates the relationship between the garbage picker and other dealers in waste.

1. The author saw a man carry a carcass from the dump on his back, which had probably been dumped by a butcher, it was assumed that the bones were going to be used to make soup.

Figure 4.1 : Relationship Between the Garbage Picker and Dealers in Waste



The pickers will collect waste, which they then sell to either hawkers/brokers or the recycling company, depending on who offers the the best price for the picker's collection. The hawkers/brokers are often also members of the informal sector and represent a way in which the picker can move up the hierarchy in the industry. Some hawkers/brokers have managed to obtain the necessary licencing, and can therefore obtain contracts to salvage garbage from certain dumps.

At both the Westville and the Pinetown dumps Indian hawkers/brokers had a contract to buy all the waste paper and plastic collected on the dump. Twenty pickers at Westville collect plastic and paper for a hawker/broker (Mr. A) who buys from them. These pickers are also the only ones who are legally allowed to pick by Waste-tech, since Mr. A has a contract from Waste-tech, who manage the dump, to work the particular dump. This is an attempt by Waste-tech to control the

number of pickers present. When Waste-Tech started working the Westville dump they were opposed to the idea of pickers and did not allow anyone to pick on the dump. This decision was, however, strongly resisted by the pickers. The dump was set on fire, a nightwatchman was stabbed and Waste-Tech machinery was damaged. Waste-Tech compromised by allowing twenty people to pick for Mr. A. These pickers carry identity cards with them, which they show police during raids by the authorities.¹ Waste-Tech is however, still finding it very difficult to control the number of pickers on the dump, despite the above mentioned strategy and police raids.

At the Pinetown dump an Indian businessman (Mr. B) has a contract with the Pinetown Municipality to salvage all garbage that can be used for recycling purposes. He has nine pickers who collect for him on a regular basis. These pickers are, however, not employed by him, because according to him, they do not possess the necessary passes and he is not prepared to run the risk of prosecution. Nonetheless these pickers work on a regular basis and are at least assured of a regular buyer.

Mr. B paid his pickers at the end of the week. They were paid R2 per bag of rubbish. These bags/sacks were provided by him and were $\pm 1m^2$ by 750mm high. A good picker fills up to 6 bags a day. Mr B. re-sells the plastic for an average of 22c per kg and paper at 6c per kg.

The pickers do however, also sell directly to large recycling

1. More details see p.32.

companies. They were unable to say who these recyclers were, but after contacting three large recycling companies in Durban, it was learnt that they do indeed buy from garbage pickers. Many pickers go to the company's branches and depots, where their garbage (in this case plastic and paper) is bought after being weighed.

Metal collected by pickers is sold to scrapyard owners as well as to recyclers and/or salvage companies. Copper is regarded as very valuable and is much sought after, since it can be sold at R1,20 per kg. Aluminium can be sold at 80c per kg.

From the above it is clear that links between the Informal Sector, as represented by the pickers, and the Formal Sector (recyclers and scrapyard owners) not only exist but are substantial. However, the relationship is not an equal one, to quote Davies;

"The informal sector, on the one hand, represents a subsidiary, peripheral and dependent mode of production, having to exist within a social formation it cannot directly influence. The informal sector's nature and existence depend on the formal sector. This is not to suggest that the informal sector is irrelevant to the formal sector..." (R. Davies:1979, 89).

The recycler and picker are dependent on one another, the picker needs a buyer for his/her collection and the recycler obtains his raw material (paper and plastic) directly from the picker or indirectly through hawkers/brokers. As is shown in the Pinetown case the pickers

are not employed by the hawker/broker, even though they work for him and so have no security of employment. Many pickers have been selling to, and picking for, the same recycler for several years.

The pickers appear to be working for themselves, and not withstanding the obvious dependent relationship that pickers have with the recyclers (some even gave 'independence' as the reason why they liked picking as opposed to wage employment). The picker can decide whether or not to work, at what times to work, where to work and what to collect and these factors probably create an illusion of independence. However, it must be remembered that the picker is in fact not independent but firmly linked into the industrial system by his/her dependence on the recycler, or scrapyards owner as buyers. The picker is also affected by trends in the market. "If the steel industry, for example is in a crisis so will the scrap metal collectors be, likewise if the demand for waste paper increases it is likely that they will be earning more" (Birbeck, 1979:181).

The question arises why these pickers are not employed on a more permanent basis by the recyclers. The Pinetown dump - recycler's answer, regarding influx control measures, may be valid, and reflects the desperate situation the picker finds him/herself in. Under the influx control laws, which were enforced at the time of the survey, if the picker does not possess a pass, he/she can be excluded from the labour market. This also places the picker in a more vulnerable economic position, in that he/she cannot be formally employed, even though the result of his/her labour can be bought and this undermines the relative bargaining strength of the picker.

However, one must accept that the lack of a pass can also provide the recycler with a convenient excuse for not employing pickers. The recycler tries to keep his costs low and if he had to employ pickers he would, in all likelihood, have to pay the picker more and have to take out some form of insurance to cover pickers against injuries on the dumps. He would also have to provide some form of pension and he could run the risk of labour organization among pickers. Consequently, quite apart from the issue of the pass, it may well be that it suits the recycler to make use of the present system whereby he buys waste from the picker on an informal basis. In this respect, it will be interesting to note what happens once influx control has gone. Will the recycler then employ the pickers?

All other items are sold among the pickers' neighbours in the townships or in the squatter areas. Wood (planks), 'sails' and 'wallpaper' are sold to squatters as building material. Wallpaper is sold for about 50c per metre, the sheets being 1,25m wide. Food and clothes are usually for own use, but are also sold in some instances.

The pickers do not sell from a shop or stall or even a specified place, as some hawkers do. Some sell from their homes to old customers, others merely sell their wares in the street.

The picker who said that he manufactured something from the items he collected was a man who had been a carpenter before he became a picker. He made doors, tables and chairs out of planks and wood found

on the dump, which he then sold to his neighbours.

The fact that nearly 92 percent of the pickers sell their collections, clearly indicates that they are a part of the monetised segment of the informal sector of the economy.

5. INCOME EARNED FROM GARBAGE PICKING

The pickers were asked questions directly pertaining to their income from garbage picking. Since the majority of pickers - 57,3 percent - sold their collections once a week, and those picking for recyclers were also paid per week, all income figures given below will be given on a weekly basis.

Of the twenty-nine pickers who pick for recyclers, 45 percent earned on average R15 per week. Whilst the earnings of the others ranged from between R2 and R30 per week. Even though these pickers were not specifically asked whether they also sold items elsewhere, in addition to what they sold to the recyclers, one can assume that they did, in view of the fact that 64,6 percent of all pickers said that they sold to their neighbours as well as in other townships, 52 percent sold to scrapyards and 8,3 percent said that they sold goods in squatter areas.

The following figures given in Table 5.1 show the average weekly earnings of the scavengers interviewed.

Table 5.1 : Usual Weekly Earnings of Garbage Pickers¹

'Usual' Weekly Earnings Amount	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percentage
R10 or less	42	43,8	43,8
R11 - 15	18	18,8	62,5
R16 - 25	22	22,9	85,4
R26 - 40	12	12,5	97,9
over R40	2	2,1	100,0
Total	96	100	

From the above it is clear that the majority of pickers live in conditions that can only be described as destitution. Particularly when one relates the earnings given to the fact that sixty-nine percent of pickers interviewed said that they were the only one in the family bringing in money. Of these pickers (the sole breadwinners) only 10,4 percent earned more than R100 a month.

5.1 Earnings From Picking by Family Size

Table 5.2 contains data relating income levels to family size.

-
1. The pickers' income, however, is not stable, and their earnings differ from one week to the next. There are distinct differences between what is usually earned (R15); what is earned during a "good" week (up to R60) and/or a "bad" week (as little as R5 is earned).

Table 5.2 : Earnings from Picking by Family Size

Income	Family Size			Total	Cumulative Percentage
	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 16		
	%	%	%		
R10 or less	21,0	17,7	5,2	43,8	43,8
R11 - 15	10,4	7,3	1,0	18,8	62,6
R16 - 25	8,3	10,4	4,2	22,9	85,5
R26 - 40	5,2	7,3	-	12,5	98,0
R40 +	1,0	1,0	-	2,0	100,0
Total	45,8	43,8	10,4	100	

As is clear from the above table, the pickers generally have large families to support. The earnings of families from picking were very low and most pickers (85,5 percent) earned less than R100 a month. When one compares this with the obtained minimum subsistence level for an African family in Durban which was R339,10 a month in September 1985 and, bearing in mind the high proportion of families who said they had no other source of income, once again the data illustrates very dramatically the poverty and hardship that the picker and his/her family faces (Institute of Planning Research, University of Port Elizabeth).

5.2 Earning from Picking by Age of Picker

Table 5.3 contains data relating income from picking to the age of the picker.

Table 5.3 : Weekly Income by Age of Picker

Weekly Earnings	Percentage of Sample in Category						
	0-10 yrs	11-20 yrs	21-30 yrs	31-40 yrs	41-50 yrs	51-60 yrs	60 + yrs
R 10 or less	1	11,5	9,4	12,5	3	3	3
R11-15	1	4,2	6,2	3,0	1	2	1
R16-25	-	7,3	9,4	3,0	2	1	-
R26-40	-	2,0	5,2	2,0	1	1	1
R40 +	-	1,0	-	-	-	-	1

The data show that there are no real differences in income earned between the different age groups. It does seem as though those in their twenties earn a little more than the others, but the difference is not significant.

5.3 Earnings From Picking by Sex of Pickers

Table 5.4 relates weekly earning to the sex of the picker.

Table 5.4 : Income Earned by Sex

Weekly Income Earned	Percentage of Sample in Category		
	Male	Female	Total
R10 or less	14,7	28,0	43,0
R11 - 15	9,4	9,4	19,0
R16 - 25	8,3	14,6	23,2
R26 - 40	8,3	4,2	12,5
Over R40	2,1	-	2,1
Total	43,2	56,8	100

The sex of the picker does seem to have an influence on his or her earnings. Of the total number of pickers whose earnings were over R100 per month, 71 percent were men, whereas women comprised 61 percent of those who earned less than R100 per month. The difference in earnings by sex may be due to the fact that men tend to concentrate on collecting scrap metal and planks, (67 percent of men) to a greater extent than women (33,3 of women). Metal is more valuable, and is sold at a higher price than for example paper. Of those pickers selling metal none earned less than R16 per week and some earned more than R40. Planks/wood are also sold at a higher price. These planks are often large and heavy, which is probably why women do not pick these items to the same extent. Sixty eight percent of the men pick wood, where as only 32 percent of women do.

5.4 Earnings From Picking by Education Level

The level of education reached by the picker does not significantly effect his income. This can be seen from the data given in Table 5.5 where a comparison between income and level of education is drawn.

Table 5.5 : Income by Level of Education of Picker

Weekly Income Earned	Educational Level Reached			
	Less than Std. 3	Std. 3-5	Std. 6-8	Matric
R10 or less	13,5	16,7	12,5	1
R11 - 15	10,4	3,1	5,2	-
R16 - 25	7,3	6,3	8,3	1
R26 - 40	3,1	4,2	5,2	-
More Than R40	2,1	-	-	-
Column Total	36,5	30,2	31,3	2,1

5.5 Earnings From Picking by Preference for Picking or Wage Employment

With such low average earning levels, poor working conditions and uncertainty one would expect pickers to be drawn to a regular wage paying job. The pickers interviewed were asked whether they preferred picking garbage to having a job elsewhere, their replies are tabulated below in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6 : Weekly Income by Stated Preference For Picking or Wage Employment

Earnings per week	Percent of Pickers who Preferred		
	Wage Employment	Picking	No Response
Less than R10	39,3	47,4	2
R11 - R15	19,6	18,4	-
R16 - R25	21,4	26,3	-
R26 - R40	16,1	7,9	-
R40 +	-	-	-

Interestingly enough despite the obvious unattractive aspects of the job, 39,5 pickers said that they preferred picking to having a job. Surprisingly, 47 percent of these pickers earned less than R10 per week; 45 percent between R10 and R25 per week and only 8 percent earned more than R25 per week. Obviously income does not play an important role in this stated preference. A sense of independence and the value of items picked up were given by the picker as reasons for their preference. However, one must remember that, one cannot place

too much emphasis on this type of response since people have strong tendencies to rationalise their existence in order to adjust to the emotional stresses caused by unpleasant situations. An outcome of such a rationalisation would be the transformation of a situation of 'no choice' into one in which a choice was perceived to have been exercised - in other words pickers who felt that they had no chance of obtaining a wage job would say that they preferred picking.

5.6 Earnings by Length of Time in Occupation

One might expect that experience in picking would be positively related to earnings. Since pickers would learn which items were more valuable, and would thus concentrate their activities on these items. To test this hypothesis the data relating earnings to time spent in the occupation is given in Table 5.7 and then analysed.

Table 5.7 : Years Picking by Weekly Income

Weekly Income	Years Spent Picking				Percent of Total
	1-3yrs	4-6yrs	7-10yrs	Over 10 yrs	
	%	%	%	%	%
R10 or less	30,2	5,2	2,1	2,6	48,7
R11 - 15	14,6	-	1	-	19,2
R16 - 25	11,5	3,1	-	1,3	19,2
R26 - 40	9,4	-	-	-	11,5
Over 40	1,3	-	-	-	1,3
Total	82,1	10,3	3,9	3,9	100

Rather surprisingly the data show that experience does not play a role

in determining income levels, since those who earn most, (between R26 and R40+) had only been picking for 1 to 3 years.

It is of course possible that the amount of time spent on the dumps is a more important determinant of income and is able to offset the gains from experience, i.e the less experienced pickers work longer hours. This is discussed in Section 5.8 below.

5.7 Earnings From Picking by Time Spent on the Dump

Data relating time spent picking to average weekly earnings are given in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8 : Time Spent on Dumps by Weekly Income

Weekly Earnings	Average Time Spent Picking				Percent of Total
	1-3hrs	4-6hrs	7-10hrs	24hrs	
R10 or less	3,1	4,2	34,4	2,1	43,8
R11 - 15	4,2	1,3	13,5	-	18,8
R16 - 25	3,1	4,2	15,6	-	22,9
R26 - 40	2,1	3,1	7,3	-	12,5
Over 40	1,0	1,3	-	-	2,1
Total	13,5	13,5	70,8	2,1	100

The time a picker spends on the dump does not appear to really affect his income either, most pickers spend between 7 and 10 hours a day, on

the dump and 34,4 percent of pickers still earned less than R10 per week, even though they spent between 7 and 10 hours a day picking. Only two pickers earned more than R40 a week and both said that they spend less than 5 hours a day picking. It is clear that the level of income earned is more dependent on factors such as, the item collected, the buyer, and the effort the picker puts in. Those pickers who do pick everyday seem to earn more than those who pick once or twice a week.

5.8 Earning Levels in Garbage Picking Relative to Other Informal Activities

Studies of the informal sector in general have shown that on average earning levels are low. Studies undertaken relatively recently in the Greater Durban Area confirm these general findings and it is interesting to see where the garbage pickers fit in to the informal economic hierarchy of occupations.

It was found that in the informal sector in the Inanda and Clermont area, hawking and artisanal activities were the lowest earning categories, whilst building and entertainment were the categories that offered the highest earning levels (Nattrass and Glass, 1986). Table 5.9 contains data comparing the distribution of earnings from hawking and artisanal work in the Inanada/Clermont study with those found in this study.

**Table 5.9 : The Relative Earnings of Garbage Pickers,
Hawkers and Informal Artisans in the Greater Durban Area**

Average Monthly Earnings	Percent in Earnings ⁽¹⁾ Category		
	Hawking	Artisans	Garbage Pickers
Less than R50	43	46	44
R50 - R100	40	21	42
More than R100	17	33	14
	n = 35	n = 28	n = 95

(1) Hawking and artisanal data from (Matrass and Glass (1986) p.57).

From this data in Table 5.9 it seems clear that the earning patterns of the garbage pickers are very similar to those found amongst the street traders interviewed in the Inanda informal settlement area. It appears that garbage picking, like hawking, is a sector that can be entered by those who lack the capital and know how needed to enter the higher earning informal activities like building and small shop keeping. With regard to the artisanal activities, whilst those at the lower earning ends such as the broom and mat makers will be people in the same category, at the higher end of the spectrum, such as welding the opportunities are clearly better.

6. WORK HISTORY

In a further attempt to identify the characteristics of the socio-economic role played by garbage picking, the scavengers were questioned on their work history in general. Fifty-three percent of

the pickers interviewed said that they had never had a steady paying job. Of these 58 percent were women and 38 percent men.

Members of the subsample of 47 pickers who had previously been employed were asked what their last job was, why they left that job, what they had earned and how long ago they had held a job.

Table 6.1 contains data showing the kind of employment the picker had previously held.

Table 6.1 : Previous Employment Of Pickers

Sector or Occupation	Number	Percent of Total
Manufacturing	6	13
Construction	6	13
Domestic	18	38
Sales	4	8
Security	2	4
Messenger	2	4
Labourer	8	17
Railways	1	1
Total	47	100

It is clear from the data that the majority of the pickers who had had formal sector wage jobs had been employed in low skilled occupations since 68 percent had been employed as either domestic servants, builders or labourers.

Only 23 pickers gave their previous earnings. Wages reported varied between R15 and R90 per month. Twenty three percent were paid between

R51 and R70 a month. (These figures can only be taken as a rough indication, since most pickers have been picking for more than a year, and it is difficult to determine just when they become unemployed).

The reasons given for leaving the previous job varied. Ten of the thirty-eight (26%) who answered the question said they had been retrenched - they were all men. Whilst amongst the other reasons given were health reasons (16%), inadequate wages (13%), and firms closure (24%).

Scavenging is clearly one of the last resorts of the unemployed. Those who said that they would rather be formally employed (58,3%) as opposed to continuing to pick, gave the following reasons : (i) picking is not stimulating work; (ii) they need to earn more; (iii) it is regarded as a low status job; (iv) pickers need a permanent job; (v) their work is insecure, in that they can be evicted at any time; (vi) pickers have no access to a workers union and (vii) the picker has an education or trade which he is not using while picking. When asked whether they were actually looking for another job 85,4 percent replied that they were. The possible reasons for this reply will become clear in the next section dealing with working conditions and general hardship the picker has to contend with.

7. WORKING CONDITIONS AND HARSHIP

As can be imagined, the physical environment in which the pickers work is not very pleasant. This is clearly reflected in the answers given

to the questions "What do you dislike about this work?", "What is your greatest problem in doing this work?" and "What would you like to change about this work?" In answer to two of the questions the majority indicated that the smell of the dump was offensive. Many cited the dirt, broken glass, rotten food and poisons, the high risk of becoming ill, as well as the weather.

7.1 Harrassment

From the answers to above questions it was also clear that pickers have to contend with continual harrassment from police, municipal authorities and the waste company working the particular dump. The fine for picking is R20. Although only nine of the pickers interviewed had actually been fined, in reply to the question "What would you like to change about this job?" twenty nine pickers said that they would like the harrassment to stop. Pickers felt that they should be allowed to pick on the dumps freely and that the effect of the harrassment was to prevent them from feeding their families.

From conversations with the pickers it appeared that when a rumour reached them that the police or the authorities would be visiting, the pickers simply left the dumps and, waited and watched from a safe distance away, until the police or authorities left the site. Should this happen without prior warning many pickers would simply run away and hide in the surrounding bush.

When questioned on what the attitudes of the police or the authorities were to picking, pickers said that they had been told the following:

1. You are stealing
2. You are not allowed to pick garbage
3. You are illegal, and do not have the right to be in the area
4. You are contravening the provisions of the Group Areas Act
5. You people cause trouble.

From interviews held with the Umhlanga and Pinetown municipalities as well as with Waste Tech it was clear that the presence of pickers on the dumps was not desired. Indeed it was these authorities who, in an attempt to get rid of the pickers, called in the police.

Amongst the reasons given as to why pickers are not welcome on the dumps, are the following:

- 1) Huge tractors, with spoked wheels, are used to crush the garbage and bulldozers as well as tipping lorries, are used on the dump continually throughout the day. It is feared that a picker might be injured or killed by these machines, which is a likely occurrence since the pickers swarm around the trucks, as they tip the garbage and indeed some pickers and employed workers had actually been injured. The municipalities and Waste Tech fear the publicity and the possibility of a large insurance claim resulting from an accident.
- 2) The presence of pickers does not fit the image Waste-tech wants to bring across to the public. The idea is that Waste-tech, by working these large dumps, will improve the environment and

that parks, sportfields and other recreational facilities will eventually be created on the site.

- 3) The dumps are also an unpleasant sight and attempts have been made on other garbage sites to hide the dump. Walls are built around the dump and flower gardens are made to beautify the spot. The presence of pickers makes the picture even more unattractive.
- 4) The health department is concerned about the health conditions found on the dump and regularly warns the pickers against poisons and diseases. As with police harrassment, these warnings do not succeed in keeping pickers away.

In an attempt to stop picking, the strong measures that have been considered, include the erection of electrified fencing and the use of coils of barbed wire, around the dumps.

7.2 Hours Spent Picking, Transportation and Assistance

Table 7.1 contains data showing the distribution of pickers by time usually spent on the dump.

Figure 7.1. : Hours Spent on Dump

Hours	Number of Pickers	Percent or Total
1 - 3 hrs	13	13,5
4 - 6 hrs	13	13,5
7 - 10 hrs	63	70,9
24 hrs	2	2,1
Total	96	100,0

Most pickers picked every day (42%) or twice a week (6,3%), (forty pickers did not respond to this question). Most pickers (70%) spent between 7 and 10 hours a day on the dumps. Two pickers spent 24 hours on the dump, which signifies that they live/sleep in the bush around the actual dump. The rest of the pickers spent between one and six hours on the dump.

Pickers of all ages pick between seven and ten hours a day. Those pickers who only picked 1 to 3 hours a day vary in age from under 10 to 50 years.

Table 7.2 : Hours Spent on Dump by Sex

Category	Percentage of Category Spending				Total
	1-3 hrs	4-6 hrs	7-10 hrs	24 hrs	
Male	24,4	26,8	43,9	4,9	43%
Female	3,7	5,7	92,6	-	56,8%
Total	13,5	13,5	70,9	2,1	100%

Most women picked from between 7 and 10 hours a day (93 percent) in comparison only 44 percent of the men who picked for the same length of time. More men than women spent less than seven hours on the dump.

Only 7,3 percent of the pickers replied that they had someone who helped them pick. These helpers were temporary. Only two helpers were related to the picker. These helpers were not paid. Twenty five

pickers (26%) collect in groups; twenty of them being the group from Westville who sell plastic to the businessman on a regular basis. Those pickers working in groups do not, however, swop items, in fact, none of the pickers swop items.

As far as could be attained the pickers did not have to pay anyone to gain access to the dumps. Although, since bribery is illegal, this question may not have been accurately answered.

The majority of the pickers walked to the dumps (75 percent), 19 percent made use of a bus to get to the dump, 3 percent used the train and the remainder made use of other means of transportation. Collections were transported in the same manner, except that more pickers made use of a bus. It cost the pickers between R3 and R14 a week to get to the dumps and back.

7.3 Reason why person picks

In answer to the question, "Why did you start doing this work?" 59 percent answered that they started scavenging in order to provide for the basic needs of their families: these needs were food, clothing, rent, etcetera. Other reasons given were as follows:

- scavenging because of unemployment; 23 percent.
- enable their children to go to school; 13,5 percent.
- retrenched from their previous jobs; 11 percent.
- no education and were therefore unemployed; 5 percent.

- no pass or permit to work in Durban; 7 percent.
- because of the valuable items they found on the dump; 7 percent.

The pickers were asked what they liked about picking - the answers are listed below:

No comment	3
provides them with basic needs (food, clothes, shelter, etc.)	68
No one to cheat me	2
do not need a permit	1
Independence	3
Can afford to send children to school	8
Nothing - no alternative	11
Extra income	2
Find valuable items	10
"People are kind" - group feeling	11

The bread and butter issue seems by far to be the most important, a clear indicator of the poverty of these pickers.

7.4 Status in Community

The pickers perceived themselves to be viewed with suspicion, ridiculed and despised by their community. Some accept pickers only because they sell goods cheaply. Others are sympathetic towards the pickers and often give them old clothes. Nine pickers kept the fact that they picked a secret.

Conclusion

The conditions under which pickers work have been clearly outlined. These conditions are unpleasant (dirt and smell) and hazardous. The question arises as to why these people are prepared to do this work. Their income is not very high, they are despised by their communities, they are harassed and fined by police and so forth. The only answer would appear to be that these people have no other alternative to survive.

Most pickers are unemployed, are poor, have large families to support, often with no-one else to supplement the family income, and they are quite desperate. This desperation is indicated by the fact that they eat food found on the garbage dumps.

If the economic recession experienced by the country continues, the number of people living off garbage dumps is likely to increase as more people become jobless. Job creation is essential, but perhaps even more urgent is finding ways in which pickers can be allowed to pick, as well as ways to improve their earnings and working conditions. One such way would be the general application of an experiment in source separation of waste material, known as the Robinson Deep Experiment, being done in Johannesburg at the moment. If the experiment is successful, pickers could be formally employed in the waste industry, and as such will be assured of a regular income and better working conditions and environment. Another example is the

Springfield dump, where a successful compromise was reached. In this case pickers are allowed to pick freely after hours, between 4 and 6 pm, after the machines have stopped and before the gates are locked.

Picking does provide a haven for the unemployed and stands between starvation and survival!

APPENDIX I

SURVEY REGARDING GARBAGE PICKING

We are from the University of Hatai and are doing a study to find out more about the people who pick the cities garbage dumps. To do this we would like to ask you some questions about yourself and the work you do. We have permission from the authorities to do this. All the information you give us will be regarded as confidential and private. We'll appreciate it if you could give us half an hour of your time. Thank you.

Name of Dump:

No. of person interviewed:

Interviewer:

Date:

GENERAL

1) Where do you live?

2) Where were you born?

Rural Area
Durban Area

1
2

3) If born in a rural area; when did you move to Durban?

Less than 6 months ago
6 - 1 year
1 - 2 years
2 - 3 years
3 - 4 years
More than 4 years ago

1
2
3
4
5
6

4) Are you the only one in your family bringing in money?

yes
no

1
2

5) If no, who else earns money in your family?

Husband
Child
Live-in Relative

1
2
3

6) Where does he/she work?

7) Does he/she earn a regular salary?

yes
no

1
2

(ii)

8) How big is your family?

9) Did you go to school?
yes
no

1
2

10) If yes, how long were you at school?

Less than Std 3	1
Std 3 - 5	2
Std 6	3
Std 8	4
Matric	5

GARBAGE PICKING

11) Why did you start doing this kind of work?

12) How long have you been doing this kind of work?

Months	<input type="text"/>
Years	<input type="text"/>

13) Does any other member of your family do this type of work?

yes	1
no	2

14) What do you collect?

1	2
yes	no

paper/cardboard
bottles
metal
plastic
cloth/clothes
organic/food
wood
other (specify) _____

16) What do you do with your collection?

1	2
yes	no

Own use
sell
manufacture
other (specify) _____

16 a) If you sell, where do you sell?

--

b) To whom do you sell?

--

c) How often do you sell?

every day
once a week
twice a week
twice a month
once a month
less frequently

1
2
3
4
5
6

17 a) If, you manufacture, what do you manufacture?

b) Where do you manufacture/work?

c) What do you do with what you have manufactured?

d) If you sell, where do you sell it?

(e) How often do you sell?

Every day
Once a week
Twice a week
Twice a month
Once a month
Less often

1
2
3
4
5
6

18) Where do you collect?

- 19) How often do you collect?
- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Every day | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Twice a week | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More often (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Less often (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 20) How much time do you spend on the dumps?

Hours per day +-

- 21) Do you have anyone helping you?

yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
no	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If yes, do they help you on a regular basis

regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>
temporary basis	<input type="checkbox"/>

- b) How old is he/she? +-

- c) Is the person helping you related to you?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
yes	no

sister	<input type="checkbox"/>
brother	<input type="checkbox"/>
child	<input type="checkbox"/>
cousin	<input type="checkbox"/>
other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

- d) Do you pay the person helping you?

yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
no	<input type="checkbox"/>

22) Do you collect in groups?
yes
no

1
2

23) How big is the group?

--

24) Do you swop your pickings for anything?

yes
no

25) Did you have to pay anyone to be able/allowed to work here?

yes
no

a) If yes, do you still pay?

yes
no

b) Who did you have to pay? _____

c) How much do you pay?

--

26) Do you do this type of work for someone else?

yes
no

a) If yes how much do you get paid?

R

--

per week
per month
per day

1
2
3

b) Do you get paid in kind?

yes
no

INCOME

27) How much do you usually earn?

per week	R	<input type="text"/>
per month	R	<input type="text"/>

28) What did you earn in a good week?

R	<input type="text"/>
R	<input type="text"/>

29) What did you earn in a bad week?

R	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

30) Does your income often change?

yes	<input type="text"/>
no	<input type="text"/>

TRANSPORT

31) How do you get to the dumps?

walk	<input type="text"/>
taxi	<input type="text"/>
train	<input type="text"/>
bus	<input type="text"/>
own car	<input type="text"/>
someone else's car	<input type="text"/>
other (specify)	<input type="text"/>

<input type="text"/>

32) How do you transport your collections?

walk	<input type="text"/>
taxi	<input type="text"/>
train	<input type="text"/>
bus	<input type="text"/>
own car	<input type="text"/>
someone else's car	<input type="text"/>
other(specify)	<input type="text"/>

<input type="text"/>

33) How much does it cost you to get to the dumps and back?

R

EMPLOYMENT

34) Do you have another job?

yes
no

1
2

35) If yes, what is it?

36) If no, when was the last time you had a steady paying job?

6 months ago
1 year ago
longer ago
more recent
never

1
2
3
4
5

37) What was the last job you had: _____

38) How much did you get paid at that job? _____

39) Why did you leave that job?

40) Are you looking for another job?

yes
no

1
2

41) Would you like to go back to a regular paid job?

yes
no

1
2

GENERAL ATTITUDE ABOUT GARBAGE PICKING AND DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

42) Sex:

Male
Female

1
2

43) Age:

44) Marital Status:

Single
Married
Living together
Widowed
Divorced

1
2
3
4
5

45) How many children do you have?

46) Do you live with your family?

yes
no

1
2

47) If no, where does your family live?

48) Tell me more about this kind of work you do:

a) What do you like about this work?

b) What do you dislike about this work?

(Only ask those who do not pick for someone else)

49) Would you rather do this kind of work than working for someone else?

yes
no

1
2

50) Why?

51) What would you like to change about this work?

52) What is your greatest problem in doing this kind of work?

53) How do the people in your community view your type of work?

(Probe : for example) : Do they like it?
They do not like it?
Would they also like to do this kind of work?
They do not regard it as work?

54) Do people try to chase you away from this work?

yes
no

1
2

55) Who does this?

yes no

The police
the municipality
other authorities

56) What do they say? _____

57) Have you been fined for doing this work? _____

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Birbeck, C., and C. Gerry 1981 : The Petty Commodity Producer in Third World Cities, Petit-Bourgeois or "Disguised" Proletarian? in Bechofer, F. and B. Elliot (eds) *The Petite Bourgeoisie - Comparative Studies of the Uneasy Stratum*, MacMillan, London.
- Birbeck, C., 1979 : Garbage, Industry, and the 'Vultures' of Cali, Columbia in R. Bromley and C. Gerry (ed) *Casual Work and Poverty in Third World Cities*, John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Bekkevold, S., 1983 : Source Separation of plastic wastes yield and qualities from a pilot study in Norway, *Waste Management and Research*, Vol. No. 3.
- Carnegie Conference Paper No. 120, SALDRU, Cape Town, 1984, p.40.
- Cilliers, S.P. and Groenewald C.J., 1982 : *Urban Growth in South Africa 1936-2000 : A Demographic Overview*, Research Unit for Sociology of Development, University of Stellenbosch.
- Davies, R., 1979 : Informal Sector or Subordinate Mode of Production? A model. R. Bromley and G. Gerry ed. *Casual Work and Poverty in Third World Cities*, John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Dewar, D. and V. Watson, 1981 : *Unemployment and the Informal Sector : some Proposals*, The urban problems research unit, University of Cape Town.
- Gilmour, D. and Roux, A., 1984 : *Urban Black Unemployment and Education in the Eastern Cape*, Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg.
- Krige, D.J., 1985 : The Urban Informal Sector in S.A. : What options for development? A Case study of KwaMashu, Natal. Master's thesis, University of Natal, Durban.
- Mpanza, Z., 1984 : *A Profile of Registered Unemployment in the Durban Area*, Development Studies Unit, University of Natal, Durban.
- Nattrass, N., 1984 : *Street Trading in the Transkei : A Struggle against poverty, persecution and prosecution*, Working Paper No. 7, Development Studies Unit, University of Natal, Durban.
- Nattrass, J and H. Glass, 1986 : Informal Black Business in Durban.
- Statistical News Release : 20.5.1986, p.374.
- Survey of Race Relations in South Africa; 1984 : South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg.
- Wellings, P. and Sutcliffe, M., 1984 : Developing the Urban Informal Sector in SA : The Reformist Paradigm and its Fallacies, *Development and Change*, Vol. 15.

This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 Licence.

To view a copy of the licence please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>