

Background and consequences of scavenging and food waste in Iran: A study on scavenging and food waste in Tehran and its suburbs

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Abstract

Food waste is a major factor contributing to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. In Iran, the spread of fast food and canned food lifestyles, along with the marginalization of traditional kitchens, has led to an increase in food waste and extravagance in consumption. This problem is particularly critical in developing societies that are struggling with numerous environmental, economic, social, health, and political crises. The consequences of this encounter impose irreparable consequences on the shoulders of the lower classes of society, especially the weak groups such as children. This research aims to explore the causes of food waste in Tehran and its suburbs, and the consequences of feeding children with contaminated food waste. The study uses the grounded theory method, and the three-step coding method of Strauss and Corbin to analyze the findings. The research findings show that economic factors such as poverty, worsening of class gap, uneven development, boom of garbage mafia, improper consumption pattern, industrialization of cooking, full-time employment outside the home, and inefficiency of waste management laws and practices are the main causes of food waste. The spread of garbage collection, along with systematic economic crises, exploitative work relations, and dire working and living conditions, has doubled the vulnerability of children who consume contaminated food waste. This study highlights the urgent need for simple policies and optimal management to prevent surplus production and promote balanced consumption. By institutionalizing the culture of justice and food security, both the environment and the health of vulnerable groups such as children can be protected.

Keywords: food waste, environment, physical and psychological consequences, food security, capitalism.

References

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