

## An Empirical Study on Socio-Economic Conditions of Women Domestic Workers in Tamil Nadu, India

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**Abstract:** *Women have always been contributing to the economy to achieve remarkable progress. But it is the gender prejudice that still prevails at every social division, although in the most educated and developed society. It is also unable to absorb this noticeable participation of women in all spheres of her life. In some regions, male-biased societies reduce the part of women in significant matters in the economy and also in the family. Fifty women domestic workers were selected. The researcher used self-prepared questionnaire for collecting data on demographical details and the standardized tool on Problem Checklist for Working Women by Vishwa Vijaya Singh (1997), was used to assess the problems of working women for the purpose of this research work. The government should come forward to raise the standard of living of women domestic workers by introducing sustainable wages with limited working hours.*

**Keywords:** *women domestic workers, problems of women workers, socio-economic problems, health issues*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Women play a significant role in a nation, which includes a part of a homemaker. Homemaker is the largest workforce in the world which remains unpaid and undervalued. The domestic chores of women do not be considered as an occupation by the nations. It is also considered as an unproductive work. But the domestic work is the most productive work done by women for the development of the nation. The workers who are doing the same service of the homemaker in other's home are known as the domestic servant, workers and maids. Normally, women entered into these types of domestic workers for their own survival and the survival of their family. This is because of the illiteracy or less educational awareness among women. On this regard, the women domestic workers has important place to play in their life as well as the employer's life, in which they are occupied.

The domestic work / house care work is not considered as a productive and appreciated occupation by the nations of the world. It is considered as an unproductive work. But, in reality, the domestic work is the most productive work done by women, especially, less educated women, for the development of their family as well as for the growth of nation. Normally, women enter into these types of domestic works in a large number. This is because of the illiteracy or less educational awareness among women in the world. On this regard, the women domestic workers has important role to take part in their own life as well as in the employer's life, in which they are occupied also in turn to the country's development.

The domestic work or the house care work is one of the most convenient and comfortable job of the women society, compared to men. They are earning some reasonable revenue for their family in this job. In some of the families, the income of these domestic workers is necessary for the smooth running of their family, because they are the main income earners of their family. Especially, women who migrated to some other places, due to social reasons, like marriage and livelihood, doing this kind of domestic work for their improvement and to upgrade the standard of living of their families. In some cases, while mother is a domestic worker, she keeps her daughter or daughter-in-law with herself for helping in her domestic work and making a way to create another domestic worker. For instance, because of women domestic workers' unhealthiness and old age, they allow their daughter to go to the employer's house for doing her part of domestic work and in turn they slowly turn their daughter also being a domestic worker.

The women domestic workers also struggled with a number of social problems. The low wage is one of the problems of domestic workers in the economy, more than ever for women domestic workers. Even though, they are working for long hours, may be in one or multiple houses, they are earning a very minimal income. They were not guaranteed for weekly day of rest. In some cases, women domestic workers were exploited in terms of physical, mental and sexual abuse. Some of them are faced discrimination in the lines of sex, race and caste too.

As a domestic worker, a woman faces some health issues due to the nature of her house service. They are suffering from some physical problems like fatigue, skin diseases, body pain, fever and cold, injuries and even sometimes chest pain. They are also affected by some psychological problems like finding difficulty in the completion of daily work, particularly, while working in more than two houses, time spent with their family members, in maintaining punctuality, overload of domestic work due to some special occasions and functions in employer's houses, their own priorities and in satisfying the employers.

The major issues faced by these workers are corrupt recruitment practices, lack of work contracts, withheld salaries, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse at the workplace. Most often, the migrants become the victims of scams of the fly-by-night brokers. These brokers often cheat the migrants by falsely promising job abroad and do not take necessary steps to secure the appropriate paperwork so that these migrants can legally work as domestic workers. In India, procedure for migrating abroad for work remains largely unregulated. The government has not implemented a pre-migration program for educating migrants of their rights.

## **2. CONCEPT OF DOMESTIC WORK**

The exact definition of a 'domestic worker' was one of the most controversial items on the agenda of the International Labour Conference in June 2010. The ILC 2010 stated that the employers' group attempted to restrict the definition, while the workers' group advocated for an inclusive definition. They referred to the reality that the domestic sector is characterized by an enormous mixture of solidly unequal, but those workers' rights need to be granted for all workers.

## **3. DOMESTIC WORK: BY CHANCE OR BY CHOICE**

In India, most of the women domestic workers are involved in domestic work because of poverty. Poverty is the core factor which forced many women from the low socio-economic background to select this employment especially, the migrant women. The lack of other choices of employment for women with low education or illiteracy and lack of skills push women into this employment. The woman, who migrates from the rural and tribal areas to urban areas, domestic work is the key employment for them to fulfil their needs and for the survival of their family. National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM) has identified the socio-economic circumstances which make an individual to select the domestic work as their employments especially the women domestic workers are as follows.

- Family disputes, ill treatment and loss of parents are the factors which make them to as domestic worker
- Widowhood, separation from husband and if husband is alcoholic, then women are forced to work as a domestic worker for their survival and to take care of their children and family
- Rural and male unemployment also pushes women into the domestic work
- Debt and failure in agriculture / loss in agriculture also encourage them to select this employment
- Lack of education and other skills and also low level of socio-economic condition has turn up women to take this job, as domestic workers
- Conflict situations and natural calamities also force for migration. The loss of livelihood and other things such as land, house, and lack of rehabilitation programs will make them to work as a domestic worker

## **4. DOMESTIC WORK: AN INDIAN SCENARIO**

There is no dispute that the majority of domestic workers in India are women. This was because of Indian society's thought that the household work is still accustomed to the domain of the women sector. Women domestic workers, in huge numbers, usually come from India's less developed states, such as Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar and

Assam. They travel to other places and transnational, as they seek work as servants and maids in well-off homes. They were, often barely of legal working age and their wages less than the minimum fixed by the government. Their employers range from India's best to its worst, many of who still believe in the usual divide between servants and masters.

In those days, the upper class people keep several servants and maids for household services and for other works. It is also a status symbol for them. In the typical middle class or upper middle class household in urban areas, where the family members, includes both men and women, go to work, they together would share the household work among them. These are very usual practice in ancient India. But in recent decades, even a middle class woman joined the workforce and attained financial independence. She was not able to liberate herself from housework, but only by transferring it to women less economically fortunate than herself.

In India, generally domestic workers were classified into three major categories. They are Live-in / Resident Domestic Workers, Part-time / Live-out Domestic Workers and Migrant Domestic Workers. Out of these three, the third category was divided into two as Inter-State Domestic Workers and Overseas Domestic Workers.

A live-in / Resident domestic worker lives at the place of their domestic service. They are occupied in all types of domestic work starting from housekeeping, washing clothes, cleaning vessels and utensils, cooking and even taking care of a baby, children and elders. They depend on their employers for basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter at their work time. Almost all the live-in domestic workers are women who have migrated from villages to cities in search of employment. They are, to large extent, the children, unmarried women, married young girls, separated women and widowed women.

Part-timers are less dependent on their employers than full time workers. They live with their families and return to their homes, as those of other workers and employers. However, these domestic workers are not to a great extent to be dependent on their employers for their fundamental requirements and are characterized with a huge extent of independence than the live-in domestic workers.

Inter-State Domestic Workers migrate from rural areas to towns and cities to work as domestic workers among the numerous states of India. They usually migrate as a consequence of debt bondage, poverty, unexpected death of their family persons, natural disasters, male unemployment and man-made crisis situations, such as riot and insurgency. The attraction of city life also acts as a pull factor for young girls and women to migrate to big cities in some cases. For them, working in cities would be regarded as a solution to their poverty. Migrants to overseas were normally live-in / resident domestic workers. Many of them are from tribal areas and less developed regions of India. Sometimes in case of overseas migration, the women workers have to face so many problems. These women domestic workers go to the place where they get job, even overseas. The increased demand for domestic helpers in richer industrialized countries provides opportunities for the women domestic workers to poorer and less developed countries in the world. India is also one among them, where the women domestic workers from India are migrate to other foreign countries.

## **5. ACTS AND LAWS IN INDIA**

India has merely couple of laws that to understand about the domestic helpers as also the workers. The first one was the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act of 2008 (UWSSA) and the second one was the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013. Both of these Acts recognizes domestic helpers as rights-bearing workers. About 50 percent of the states in India have incorporated domestic workers as labourers, under the Minimum Wages Act. In turn this sets out terms of disbursement, hours of work and casual leaves to domestic workers. However, until now this law was grossly inadequate to satisfy the demand of the domestic workers. The law does not check whether both parties, that are, the employer and the employee, are fulfilling their contractual obligations and for adjudicating conflicts.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) was announced the Domestic Workers Welfare and Social Security Act of 2010. The complaints about unpaid wages, starvation, inhumane work hours and verbal, physical and sexual abuse were faced by the Domestic Workers Welfare and Social Security Act. The projected law was inevitable for domestic workers above 18 years of age and obviously affirmed that no one below 18 years should be employed as a domestic worker.

The Domestic Workers Regulation of Work and Social Security Bill, 2016 was drafted by the National Platform for Domestic Workers. This bill ensured the compulsory registration of the domestic workers with the District Board for regulation of domestic workers. This structure included the objectives of security and documentation of identification data as well as the police verification. It provided the basic terms of employment like minimum wage, hours of work, notice period and grounds for termination and also the offences and penalties in the case of crimes.

Despite these efforts, majority of domestic workers still remain outside of the purview of labour laws. Much more care to be taken in case of women domestic workers even today. Regulation of domestic work through legislation can be the only way out to address the abuses faced by the domestic workers.

## **6. WELFARE PROGRAMMES**

Along with these acts and laws, the government of India has implemented some programmes for the welfare of the domestic workers such as:

- Rashtriya Swasthya BimaYojana (RSBY): It is a health insurance programme. It is specially designed for the BPL (Below Poverty Line) families including urban and rural areas.
- Atal Pension Scheme: It is implemented in 2015 to provide the economical support after 60 years of their life as pension for the people who are working in the unorganized sectors.
- Swavalamban Yojana: It is for all citizens of India who employed in the unorganised sector who join the New Pension System (NPS) administered by the Interim Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA). Benefits under the Scheme Government will contribute Rs. 1000 per year to each NPS account opened in the year 2010-11 and for the next three successive years. The benefit will be available only to persons who joined in the NPS with contribution, that is, a minimum contribution of Rs. 1,000 and maximum of Rs. 12,000 per annum.

## **7. SIGNIFICANCE AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In general, the argument for domestic work makes the basis from unfavourable conditions of poverty and the disappointment of the government to eradicate their poverty conditions or make their position enhanced. The women workers have no reimbursement of work contracts, social security and security of employment to their jobs. It is the age-old patriarchal and societal systems in India that the domestic work is as unskilled and downgrade job. Because of which, it draws the poorest compensation and unorganized working hours. A large number of women are subjected to mortification, abuse (physical, verbal and sexual) and mistreatment. This circumstance of work has brought down the confidence of women and making them uncertain towards this job.

According to the estimates of ILO 2005, there were at least four million domestic servants in India at 2004-05. Domestic work, as an economic activity, is too enormous and employs too many employees which remain unregulated. Many people choose domestic work because of their low literacy level and also the turn down of employment opportunities in the agricultural and other manufacturing sectors. Domestic workers are to be provided not with just sustainable wages but with humane working conditions. The wages paid to them are well below the minimum wages because they are unskilled or semi-skilled workers and also depend on the nature of work. In addition, most of them are made to work for a minimum of 15 hours a day, seven days a week. In average of full-time and part-time domestic workers, their working hours ranges between four to eighteen hours a day. Their wages and rest time are at the employer's mercy.

The women domestic workers faced some structural exploitation, in the form of low wages, heavy workloads and long working hours. These are the serious issues of women domestic workers apart from their daily routine. They face serious dangers, as it is evident from cases of employers confining and assaulting them coming to light with frightening regularity. The inequality of domestic workers' circumstances was drawn attention to the fact that, their place of work was surrounded by the privacy of the homes of people that are invariably more privileged than they are. Although successive governments have drafted policies for domestic workers and they are yet to become law. India is also a member of the International Labour Organization's 189<sup>th</sup> convention, which was called as the 'Convention on Domestic Workers', but has not ratified it yet. Daily and weekly rest hours, minimum wage payment

and the choices of choosing the place of living and enjoying the leave facilities are the measures suggested by the convention for domestic workers.

## 8. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Shrayana Bhattacharya and Shalini Sinha (2009)** have done the research paper under the title, 'Domestic Workers in India: Background and Issues'. In that paper, it was revealed that services provided by domestic workers were made in allowing greater degree of female labour force engagement. However, by providing these services, many female domestic workers could not provide quality care for their children and elderly. One of the key findings of the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) studies Ahmadabad and Delhi was in relation to childcare. Women often had left their children alone at home or in the care of neighbour while they go to work. Many women interviewed have stated that they could not take up further tasks or households simply because they had to come home and take care of their children.

**Sindhu Menon (2010)** has analyzed that the caste and language plays an important role in the lives of domestic workers. Indian society was still far from being caste free and although some changes had taken place in urban areas. Most of the villages were still plagued by casteism and feudalism. As domestic workers, they got only food and shelter. Part-timers were those who work for two to three hours at a time in different houses. They work like machines, running from one house to another. They were paid according to the tasks they undertake, for example, they earn Rs. 300 for sweeping and mopping, washing utensils and washing clothes whereas they earn Rs. 200 for dusting. These rates also were not fixed. The worst part was that in the end, nothing was recognized. The workers were only cursed, blamed and fed with leftovers.

**Nisha Varia (2011)** has made an attempt to study about the millions of women migrate to destinations in Asia and the Middle East to earn for the life as domestic workers. In host countries, the combination of significant gaps in labour laws, restrictive immigration policies and socially accepted discrimination against migrant workers has contributed to alarming human rights violations, including excessively long hours with no days off, non-payment of wages, confinement in the workplace, physical abuse, sexual abuse, forced labour and in some cases, the slavery. While some governments started to improve standards incrementally, most have failed to adopt comprehensive reforms.

**Neetha (2013)** has stated in her paper on 'Minimum Wages for Domestic Work' that apart from labour market issues that govern legislative interventions, a critical factor in understanding the responses of the state to the issues domestic workers face was the social understanding of household work. In India, few states are followed the Minimum wages for domestic workers in the informal sector. This reflected the undervaluation of housework even when it entered the market. Better statutory minimum wages for domestic workers would not only help protect their rights, but could also shake the social and political foundations of household work, leading to a new valuation of it.

**Mahua Venkatesh (2017)**, on his article on 'India Ranks 120<sup>th</sup> among 131 Nations in Women Workforce' has stated that according to World Bank, there were some hurdles to enhance women participation in the Indian workforce. They were in need of safe and conducive environment and also incentives. The World Bank opined that India had one of the lowest female participation in the workforce, ranking 120<sup>th</sup> among 131 countries for which data was available, in its India Development Report released on May 2017. The primary sector in India was the agriculture sector. Thus, the report highlighted that increase in the women work force in India, led to its potential GDP growth rate.

**Angel D (2017)** has analyzed that the workforce in the unaccounted sector in India was classified as four divisions. They were in terms of occupation, nature of employment, particularly distressed categories and service categories. In adding up to these four divisions, there exist a large section of unorganized labour force such as cobblers, hamals, handicraft artisans, handloom weavers, lady tailors, physically handicapped self employed persons, rickshaw pullers, auto drivers, sericulture workers, carpenters, tannery workers, power loom workers and urban poor.

## 9. RESEARCH DESIGN

Tiruchirappalli District is chosen for the study. The survey period was from March 2016 to January 2017. The study was based on primary data as well as on the secondary data. Initially the Tiruchirappalli District area was divided

into four divisions, that is, Palakkarai and surroundings, Puthur and surroundings, Woriyur and surroundings and Main guard gate and surroundings.

As the population is infinite, the researcher had used the non-probability sampling and adopted convenient sampling method for collecting the sample. Fifty women domestic workers were selected. The researcher used self-prepared questionnaire for collecting data on demographical details and the standardized tool on Problem Checklist for Working Women by Vishwa Vijaya Singh (1997), was used to assess the problems of working women for the purpose of this research work. Primary data were collected from 50 respondents by using Problem Checklist for Working Women by Vishwa Vijaya Singh (1997). The tool consists of 79 items. Among them 1-27 items were to assess the personal social problems, 28-52 items were to assess the familial problems and remaining 53-79 items were to assess the occupational and personal problems. The collected data for the study were both quantitative and qualitative in nature. These collected data were tabulated and analyzed using percentage analysis and appropriate statistical tools. Secondary data from the previous studies, related literature, concept related to problems from books, journals & websites were collected.

Data were collected from the four parts of the Tiruchirappalli District. A detailed schedule was prepared and the primary data was collected. Since the women domestic workers were illiterate or educated at low level, schedule method was the most appropriate technique to collect the primary data. Finally the respondents were met personally and the data collected. The data related to the socio-economic status of the respondents were collected with the use of schedule from 50 domestic women workers in Tiruchirappalli District.

This particular study includes only the analysis of women domestic workers of Tiruchirappalli, so all the respondents are female. For this sake, the researcher does not have any separate table or discussions on this regard.

### **9.1 PERIOD OF THE STUDY**

The data was collected between the periods of five months, that is, November 2017 to March 2018.

### **9.2 OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of the study are

1. To study the social and demographic background of women domestic workers
2. To analyze the economic aspects of women domestic workers
3. To study the health issues of the women domestic workers
4. To suggest policy measures for the development of women domestic workers

### **9.3 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. The problems of women domestic workers are high
2. There is significant relation between the income and the expenditure
3. The socio-economic conditions of the women domestic workers are low in the study area

### **9.4 STUDY AREA**

Tiruchirappalli district is one of the oldest inhabited cities located in the centre of the state of Tamil Nadu. It is a place of historic, cultural and economic importance. The district has a rich and varied cultural heritage. It is also known for its exquisite handicrafts, castings and South Indian musical instruments. The economy is mainly agrarian. The agriculture practice is sustained by a network of irrigation sources and improved methods of cultivation. The district has an area of 4,509 square kilometres. It is bound by Perambalur district on the north, Thanjavur district on the east, Pudukkottai and Dindigul districts on the south and Karur district on the west. Being a place located centrally in the state, it has excellent transport link to all other districts of the state. Tiruchirappalli district is having a population of 24,18,366 as per 2001 census and 27,13,858 as per 2011 census. The recorded population density was 5,768/km<sup>2</sup> (14,940/square metres) while the sex ratio was 975 males for every 1,000 females. According to the composition of urban and rural population, Tiruchirappalli district ranked 10<sup>th</sup> among the

other districts in Tamil Nadu. Tiruchirappalli district comprises of eight taluks, 14 blocks, 408 Village Panchayats and 1,590 Villages. This district consists of four municipalities.

### 10. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following tables show the data of the respondents in connection to their socio demographic conditions.

**Table 1: Social Demographics of the Respondents**

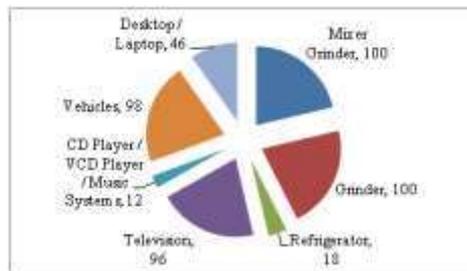
| S. No | Factors                            | Particulars                   | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1.    | Age                                | 20-25                         | 02                 | 4.0        |
|       |                                    | 26-30                         | 13                 | 26.0       |
|       |                                    | 31-35                         | 08                 | 16.0       |
|       |                                    | 36-40                         | 27                 | 54.0       |
| 2.    | Religion                           | Hindu                         | 44                 | 88.0       |
|       |                                    | Muslim                        | 06                 | 12.0       |
| 3.    | Community                          | BC                            | 04                 | 8.0        |
|       |                                    | MBC                           | 17                 | 34.0       |
|       |                                    | Reserved Category             | 29                 | 58.0       |
| 4.    | Marital Status                     | Spinster                      | 10                 | 20.0       |
|       |                                    | Married                       | 29                 | 58.0       |
|       |                                    | Widow                         | 07                 | 14.0       |
|       |                                    | Divorced                      | 03                 | 6.0        |
|       |                                    | Separated / deserted          | 01                 | 2.0        |
| 5.    | Education                          | Illiterate                    | 38                 | 76.0       |
|       |                                    | I - V Standard                | 04                 | 8.0        |
|       |                                    | VI - X Standard               | 05                 | 10.0       |
|       |                                    | XI, XII Standard              | 03                 | 6.0        |
| 6.    | Family type                        | Joint Family                  | 09                 | 18.0       |
|       |                                    | Nuclear Family                | 41                 | 82.0       |
| 7.    | Family Size                        | less than 3 members           | 09                 | 18.0       |
|       |                                    | 3 to 5 members                | 18                 | 36.0       |
|       |                                    | More than 5 members           | 23                 | 46.0       |
| 8.    | House Facility                     | Own House                     | 28                 | 56.0       |
|       |                                    | Rental House                  | 18                 | 36.0       |
|       |                                    | Leasing                       | 04                 | 08.0       |
| 9.    | Housing type                       | Thatched                      | 13                 | 26.0       |
|       |                                    | Concrete                      | 28                 | 56.0       |
|       |                                    | Asbestos                      | 09                 | 18.0       |
| 10.   | No. of Rooms in Respondents' house | One                           | 39                 | 78.0       |
|       |                                    | Two                           | 11                 | 22.0       |
| 11.   | Drinking Water Facility            | Own tap                       | 38                 | 76.0       |
|       |                                    | Common tap                    | 12                 | 24.0       |
| 12.   | Toilet Facility                    | Own toilet                    | 43                 | 86.0       |
|       |                                    | Common toilet                 | 07                 | 14.0       |
| 13.   | Electricity Facility               | Yes                           | 50                 | 100.0      |
| 14.   | Drainage Facility                  | Underground drainage system   | 12                 | 24.0       |
|       |                                    | Surface drainage system       | 31                 | 62.0       |
|       |                                    | No drainage system            | 07                 | 14.0       |
| 15.   | Mode of Cooking                    | Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) | 42                 | 84.0       |
|       |                                    | Kerosene                      | 08                 | 16.0       |

The above table shows the age wise distribution of the respondents. The respondents' age ranged between 20 and 40. These ages are classified as above and the respondents are grouped under this classification. It is obvious from the table that more than 50 percent of the respondents' falls under the age group of 36 to 40.

It was apparent that majority of the respondents (54 percent) were between the age group of 36 to 40 years. 88 percent were from Hindu religion and 58 percent of them were fall under the reserved category, that is, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe. 58 percent of them were married. 76 percent of the respondents were illiterates in the study area. And 82 percent of the respondents were living in a nuclear family and nearly 50 percent of the respondents were having more than five members in their family. According to the census 2011, the average size of

the family was 3 to 5 members in a family. Based on that information, in the study area, only 36 percent of the respondents were had the average size family.

Regarding the housing facility, 56 percent of them were living in their own houses. It was clear from the above table that more than 50 percent of the respondents were living in the concrete houses and 78 percent of the respondents were had only one room in their houses. On the subject of the drinking facility, 76 percent of the respondents were had the drinking water in their compound wall. Regarding the toilet facility, 86 percent of the respondents were had the toilet facility in their houses. All the respondents in the study area were had the electricity facility. On regards of the drainage facility, it was classified into two grounds as underground drainage system, surface drainage system. 62 percent of them were had the surface drainage system. On the account of the mode of cooking, 84 percent of the respondents were using LPG as their energy for cooking.



**Figure 1: Gadgets / Amenities in the Respondent's House**

The figure explains the gadgets and amenities used in the respondents' house. All the respondents were using mixer grinder and wet grinder in their houses. 98 percent of them were using vehicles, that is, two wheelers and bicycles and 96 percent were using televisions. 46 percent of the respondents were having desktops / laptops in their houses, followed by refrigerator by 18 percent and CD/DVD players by 12 percent of the respondents.

**Table 2: Economic Details of the Respondents**

| S. No | Factors  | Particulars      | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|--|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1.    | Salary of the Respondents based on Time Period | Weekly           | 07                 | 14.0       |
|       |  | Monthly          | 43                 | 86.0       |
| 2.    | Monthly Income                                 | Rs. 2000 – 3500  | 12                 | 24.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 3501 – 5000  | 32                 | 64.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 5001 - 7500  | 06                 | 12.0       |
| 3.    | Monthly Family Income                          | Rs. 2000 – 4000  | 12                 | 24.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 4001 – 6000  | 09                 | 18.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 6001 - 8000  | 29                 | 58.0       |
| 4.    | Increment in Salary                            | Once in 3 months | 12                 | 24.0       |
|       |  | Once in 6 months | 04                 | 08.0       |
|       |  | Once in a year   | 34                 | 68.0       |
| 5.    | Standard of Living before and after            | Improved         | 43                 | 86.0       |
|       |  | Not Improved     | 07                 | 14.0       |
| 6.    | Household Expenditure                          | Rs. 2000 – 3500  | 05                 | 10.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 3501 – 5000  | 17                 | 34.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 5001 - 7500  | 28                 | 56.0       |
| 7.    | Monthly Savings                                | Rs. 1001 – 2000  | 38                 | 76.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 2001 - 3000  | 12                 | 24.0       |
| 8.    | Modes of Saving                                | Bank             | 07                 | 14.0       |
|       |  | Employer         | 19                 | 38.0       |
|       |  | Self Help Group  | 21                 | 42.0       |
|       |  | Cash on Hand     | 03                 | 06.0       |
| 9.    | Amount of Borrowings                           | Rs. 1001 – 2000  | 27                 | 54.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 2001 - 3000  | 23                 | 46.0       |
| 10.   | Financial Advance                              | Availed          | 35                 | 70.0       |
|       |  | Not availed      | 15                 | 30.0       |
| 11.   | Amount of Advances availed                     | Rs. 1001 – 2000  | 29                 | 58.0       |
|       |  | Rs. 2001 - 3000  | 06                 | 12.0       |

It was clear from the above table that 86 percent of the respondents were getting their salary in monthly basis and 64 percent of them were earned between Rs. 3501 to 5000 per month. 58 percent of the respondents' family earned an income between Rs. 6001 to 8000 per month and 68 percent of the respondents were getting increment in their salary once in every year. 86 percent of the respondents were opined that their life has improved with this domestic work. 56 percent of the respondents were spent money between Rs. 5001 to 7500 per month. All the respondents in the study area were saving, of them, more than 75 percent were saving Rs. 1001 to 2000 per month and 42 percent of them believed that saving in self help group is the best mode of saving mode. 54 percent of the respondents were borrowed money between Rs. 1001 to 2000 per month. Out of the total respondents, 70 percent of them were availed the facility of getting advance from the employers. Of them, 58 percent were getting amount between Rs. 1001 to 2000 per month.

**Table 3:** *Distribution of Respondents by the Level of their Problem in Various Proportions of Problem Checklist of Working Women*

| S. No | Working Women Checklist and its proportions           | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|---|--------------------|------------|
| 1.    | Level of personal social problems (1-27)              |                    |            |
|       | Low   | 14                 | 28         |
|       | Medium / Average                                      | 20                 | 40         |
|       | High  | 16                 | 32         |
| 2.    | Level of family problems (28-52)                      |                    |            |
|       | Low   | 17                 | 34         |
|       | Medium / Average                                      | 15                 | 30         |
|       | High  | 18                 | 36         |
| 3.    | Level of occupational and personal problems (53 - 79) |                    |            |
|       | Low   | 13                 | 26         |
|       | Medium / Average                                      | 15                 | 30         |
|       | High  | 22                 | 44         |

The table shows that levels of working women checklist with regard to women domestic workers. It was analyzed in three levels, namely low, average and high. The respondents opined that their level of personal social problems was about 44 percent, level of family problems was about 32 percent and level of occupational and personal problems was about 36 percent. The first hypothesis was validated with the above working women's problem checklist.

**Table 4:** *Correlation between the respondent's income and expenditure*

|                     |                                     | Income per month | Expenditure per month |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Income per month    | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) | 1.00             | .98                   |
|                     |                                     | 50               | 50                    |
| Expenditure pattern | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) | .98              | 1.00                  |
|                     |                                     | 50               | 50                    |

This table 4 shows that there is significant relation between the income and expenditure of the respondents, that is, 0.98. This shows the second hypothesis was validated.

### 11. SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL BEING INDEX OF WOMEN DOMESTIC WORKERS

This well being index is used to analyze the socio economic conditions of the respondents in this study area. There are many specific indicators that are used in analyzing the working of well-being index. Socio-economic indicators have been developed for the following areas: home amenities, kitchen facilities, hygiene, education, housing, health care, income and expenditure.

The well-being index is a composite index which is constructed on the basis of eight well defined parameters clearly make known that the well being index of the domestic women workers of Tiruchirappalli. Credit observed here respondent's weightage given to various parameters.

**Table 5: SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF RESPONDENTS – WELL BEING INDEX**

| S. No. | Socio-Economic Feature                 | No. of Respondents | Score | Average     |
|--------|--|--------------------|-------|-------------|
| 1.     | <b>Home Amenities</b>                  |                    |       |             |
|        | Mixer Grinder                          | 50                 | 100.0 | 470 / 700   |
|        | Grinder                                | 50                 | 100.0 |             |
|        | Refrigerator                           | 09                 | 18.0  |             |
|        | Television                             | 48                 | 96.0  |             |
|        | CD Player / VCD Player / Music Systems | 06                 | 12.0  |             |
|        | Vehicles                               | 49                 | 98.0  |             |
|        | Desktop / Laptop                       | 23                 | 46.0  |             |
| 2.     | <b>Kitchen Facilities</b>              |                    |       |             |
|        | LPG                                    | 42                 | 84.0  | 100 / 200   |
|        | Kerosene                               | 08                 | 16.0  |             |
| 3.     | <b>Hygiene</b>                         |                    |       |             |
|        | Drinking Water                         | 50                 | 100.0 | 286 / 300   |
|        | Toilet                                 | 50                 | 100.0 |             |
|        | Drainage                               | 43                 | 86.0  |             |
| 4.     | <b>Education</b>                       |                    |       |             |
|        | I – V Standard                         | 04                 | 8.0   | 24 / 300    |
|        | VI – X Standard                        | 05                 | 10.0  |             |
|        | XI, XII Standard                       | 03                 | 6.0   |             |
| 5.     | <b>Housing</b>                         |                    |       |             |
|        | Own house                              | 28                 | 56.0  | 56 / 300    |
|        | Rental house                           | 18                 | 36.0  |             |
|        | Lease                                  | 04                 | 08.0  |             |
| 6.     | <b>Health care</b>                     |                    |       |             |
|        | No treatment                           | 13                 | 26.0  | 206 / 500   |
|        | Taking bills on my own                 | 36                 | 72.0  |             |
|        | Private nursing homes                  | 17                 | 34.0  |             |
|        | Government hospital                    | 41                 | 82.0  |             |
|        | Home medicines                         | 09                 | 18.0  |             |
| 7.     | <b>Income</b>                          |                    |       |             |
|        | Rs. 2000 – 3500                        | 12                 | 24.0  | 100 / 300   |
|        | Rs. 3501 – 5000                        | 32                 | 64.0  |             |
|        | Rs. 5001 – 7500                        | 06                 | 12.0  |             |
| 8.     | <b>Expenditure</b>                     |                    |       |             |
|        | Rs. 2000 – 3500                        | 05                 | 10.0  | 100 / 300   |
|        | Rs. 3501 – 5000                        | 17                 | 34.0  |             |
|        | Rs. 5001 – 7500                        | 28                 | 56.0  |             |
|        | <b>Total</b>                           |                    |       | 1342 / 2600 |

$$\text{Well Being Index} = \frac{1342.9}{2600} \times 100$$

$$= 51.6$$

The measurement of well being index with reference to the different features of the domestic women workers shows that they are in a good position in the facilities of home amenities, kitchen facilities and hygiene. And the level of well being is poor with reference to education, housing and health care. The summary figure of the overall well being index only 39.42 and this shows the socio-economic conditions of the domestic women workers are very poor especially regarding the educational level and health care. The third hypothesis was not proved because the socio-economic conditions were more than 50 percent in the study region.

## 12. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- More the half of the respondents were in between the age group of 36 to 40. This clearly states that these women have got a vital place in her family

- 88 percent of the respondents were belonging to Hindu religion and 12 percent were belonging to Muslim religion. Nearly 60 percent of the respondents were fell into the reserved category
- Majority of the respondents (58 percent) were married. On regards to educational level, most of the respondents (76 percent) were illiterate
- 82 percent of the respondents were preferring nuclear family than the joint family and of the respondents, 46 percent of the respondents were having above average family size, that is, more than 5 members in their family
- 56 percent of the respondents were residing in their own house, four respondents were living in the house, which was leased and the rest of the respondents were living in rental houses
- More than half of the respondents, that is, 56 percent of them were living in the concrete houses in this study area and 78 percent of the respondents were having only one room in their house
- All the respondents were having toilet and electricity facility. 76 percent of the respondents were having the drinking water facility and 86 percent of them were having drainage facility in their houses
- 84 percent of the respondents were using LPG as their mode of cooking
- The amenities like mixer grinder and wet grinder was there in all the respondents' houses
- More than 90 percent of the respondents and their family were using vehicles and television and 46 percent of them were using laptops / desktops in their houses
- 86 percent of the respondents were earning monthly and 64 percent of them were earning between Rs.3501 to 5000 per month
- 68 percent of the respondents were had increment once in a year and 86 percent of the respondents opined that their socio-economic statuses were improved after this domestic work
- On regards of the household expenditure, 56 percent of them were having a nominal expenditure of rs.3501 to 5000 per month
- All the respondents were having the habit of saving, of them 76 percent of them were saving between Rs.1001 to 2000 per month and 42 percent of the respondents were had opined that self help group is the best mode of saving
- All the respondents were borrowing from various sources and 54 percent of them were borrowing between Rs.1001 to 2000 per month
- All the respondents were availing the facility of getting advance from their employer and 70 percent of them were availed advance between Rs. 1001 to 2000
- 32 percent of the respondents were opined that their level of personal social problems was high, 36 percent were opined that the level of family problems was high and 44 percent were opined that the level of occupational and personal problems
- The close relationship, that is, 0.98, was found between the income and expenditure of the respondents in the study area
- The socio-economic conditions of the women domestic workers in the study area were neither so high nor too low; say 51.6 percent
- The health issue of fatigue stood first with 36 percent of respondents. this was due to working with interval and in multiple houses

### **13. SUGGESTIONS**

- Majority of the respondents were illiterates in the study region. The education is one of the basic qualities which use to lead a successful life, which in terms leads to better employment and health criterion. Continuous and

uninterrupted efforts are necessary to recover the education, health and employment conditions of the women domestic workers.

- Central Social Welfare Board and National / State Commission for Women should take initiative for improving the conditions and solving the problems of women domestic workers.
- Social Worker can educate the members of the family about the problems faced by the respondents in taking upon in secured job in unorganised sector, especially to women domestic workers.
- The Social Worker can to register facilitate meant to form a welfare association through which secured jobs can be ensure for women in these kind of domestic work. The employers who are in need of domestic workers can approach this association for booking the number of domestic workers required.

#### **14. CONCLUSION**

In urban areas, the demand for domestic servants has been increased due to the lack of time and physical inability of the housewives and also due to the emerging modern lifestyle among the city habitants. Nowadays, people are very much in need the help of these domestic workers, but the recognition is not given to them and to their job. Thus, the significant of domestic workers is definite in an economy. But the value is not given to their job. The job of domestic workers is not recognized in the economy.

The domestic workers themselves were not aware of the importance and worth of their job. This is also one of the jobs, which should be recognized and which should be valued and respected and consider to be a job under organized pattern. So the necessary step to be taken by the Government to regard as this job as respectable one. It is also in the hands of the general public in the country to respect these domestic workers as human beings.

Finally it is concluded that in order to meet the planned employment goals, the employment strategy for future and to encourage the labour-intensive and capital-saving technology in general and rejuvenate the growth of the unorganised sector in particular, which at present contributes more than 93 percent to the country's employment and enjoys higher labour intensity per unit of production, as compared to the organised sector. This study indicated that women living below the poverty line (BPL) are highly engaged in domestic works. It shows that the poor living conditions of women in the Indian society. Women domestic workers were inspired the other workers to get involved in this domestic work due to unscheduled working hours. Their work limit is not scheduled. Minimum Wages Act should be effectively implemented by the government to improve the living conditions of women domestic workers. Casual leave and reduction of money from their salary depends on the employer.

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