

**SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF
DOMESTIC WOMEN SERVANTS -
A CASE STUDY OF THRISSUR
CORPORATION**

**SUBMITTED TO KERALA RESEARCH
PROGRAMME ON LOCAL LEVEL
DEVELOPMENT, CDS,
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

VIMALA.M.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It gives me much pleasure to acknowledge my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to KRPLLD which gave me approval for the pilot study.

I owe a great deal to Dr.K.N.Nair, Programme Co-ordinator of KRPLLD for his inestimable help and candid suggestions for doing the project.

May I make use of this occasion to express my deep gratitude to the experts of KRPLLD for their valuable suggestions.

I express my sincere thanks to the domestic servants for their whole-hearted co-operations extended to me during the period of survey.

I owe a great deal to my family members for their support during the work.

Above all I am highly indebted to God Almighty who I believe is always with me without whose blessings this work would not have been materialised.

VIMALA.M.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page No.
1	1
1.1	2
1.2	7
1.3	8
1.4	10
1.5	11
1.6	12
1.7	12
REFERENCES	13
2	15
2.1	15
2.2	16
2.3	16
2.4	17
2.5	18
2.6	19
2.7	20
2.8	21
2.9	24
2.9.1	24
2.9.2	26
2.9.2.1.	26
2.9.2.2.	28
2.9.2.3.	30

2.9.2.4.	Wage Rate and Age	31
2.9.3	Food for work	32
2.9.4	Help or Gifts	33
2.9.5	Experience in other jobs	34
2.9.6	Leave and Holidays	35
2.9.7	Working environment	35
2.9.8	Unionisation	36
2.10	Income and Management of Expenses	36
2.10.1	Income	36
2.10.2	Savings	40
2.10.3	Repayment of Loans	41
2.10.4	Other expenses	41
2.11	Health status	42
2.12	Rest and Leisure	43
2.13	Housing conditions	44
2.14	Other problems faced by the Domestic servants	46
3	Summary and conclusion	48
3.1	Summary of findings	48
3.2	Conclusion	52
	Appendix	
	Bibliography	

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Title	Page NO.
2.1	Community Composition of Domestic Servants	15
2.2	Marital status of Domestic servants	16
2.3	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their position in the family	17
2.4	Age Composition of Domestic servants	18
2.5	Agewise Distribution of Domestic servants according to their Marital status	19
2.6	Agewise Classification of Domestic servants according to their position in the family	20
2.7	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their family size	21
2.8	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their Education	23
2.9	Distribution of Part-time Domestic servants according to the number of houses they serve per day	24
2.10	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their working hours in a day	25
2.11	Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their wage rate	27
2.12	Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their experience in Domestic service	28
2.13	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their wage rate and experience	29
2.14	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their	30

education and wage rate

2.15	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their age and wage rate	32
2.16	Distribution of Domestic servants according to the types of job they engaged before entering the domestic service	34
2.17	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their monthly income	37
2.18	Distribution of Domestic servants according to the percentage of their income to the family income	39
2.19	Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their savings in different categories	40
2.20	Distribution of Domestic servants according to their savings as a share of their income	41
2.21	Distribution of Domestic servants according to the nature of their diseases	43
2.22	Distribution of Domestic servants according to the land holdings	44
2.23	Distribution of Domestic servants according to the Housing condition	45

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Women, along with man from times immemorial has formed an integral part of social structure throughout the world. In Indian society, she has played and continues to play an important role. It is true that the progress of a country can be judged to a great extent by the status of her women. She plays manifold role in the society: as a mother, as a sister and as a wife. Thus she is the foundation stone of the family in particular and the society in general.

While women represent 50 per cent of the adult population and one third of labour force, they perform nearly two - third of all working hours and receives only one-tenth of the world income. Human Development Report for the year 2000 on the amount of time that women and men spend on market and non market activities by considering 31 countries reveals that women work longer hours than men in nearly every country. Women carry on average 53 per cent of total burden of work in developing countries and 51 per cent of that in industrial countries. Also, roughly two-third of women's total work time is spent in unpaid non system of national accounts activities.

There is no exaggeration in saying that the backbone of Indian work force is the unorganized sector. According to 1991 census, the total women work force of 87.77 million, their share in the organized sector was only 4.2 per cent while the rest of 95.8 per cent were in the unorganized sector where there are no legislative safe guards even to claim either minimum or equal

wages along with their male counterparts. Thus the unorganized sector in India is the women's sector¹.

The plight of the women in unorganized sector is miserable as they work at extremely low wages, with total lack of job security and unprotected by any government labour legislations. The women workers in unorganized sector covers most of those activities which are carried out by small and family enterprises, partly or wholly with family labour, which are largely non-unionised. The most common characteristics of this sector are the small size of establishment, often consisting of only one individual, with perhaps a couple of hired workers, casual nature of employment, ignorant and illiterate workers, superior and dominating employer and scattered nature of establishment.

1.1 Review of Literature

Numerous studies have been made in the last few decades about the role of women in emerging labour market. Haque² has analysed the concentration of women in low paid occupations. He argued that the socio economic conditions of women workers in South Asia are poor because they are concentrated in low paid occupations. This is primarily because the society has discriminated against women by not allowing them to act as major players in economic activities.

Nirmala Banerjee³ argues that the emerging labour market is likely to prove even more problematic in the case of women workers than for the rest of Indian workers.

Jaya Arunachalam⁴ has an opinion that the issue of informal sector are common to the developing countries, but have to be understood in the context where informal systems of work are promoted and encouraged among the working poor. The character of this sector is connected to highly exploitative irregular working conditions and wage discriminations.

According to Sathya Sundaram⁵, the workers in unorganized sector remain unprotected by law. They are the most vulnerable section of the society and they enjoy no job or income security with little bargaining power.

The unorganized sector is divided into institutionalized and non-institutionalized sectors. The non-institutionalized unorganized sector comprises workers doing casual work like domestic workers, sweepers, scavengers etc. A key factor in the growth of informal activity in most developing regions has been the plummeting value of wages. The informal sector has not only offered the possibility of work to the unemployed, but has permitted survival of many households with wage earners. Some division of labour exists between formal and informal sectors on the basis of gender. It has been suggested that women tend to stay within the informal sector because of the flexibility of working arrangements and diversity of opportunities⁶.

Atanu Thaker⁷ has made an enquiry into women's workforce participation and she concluded that the proposal for participating in the workforce made by feminist literature and the gender empowerment measure (Proposed by UNDP) may not empower the women; rather it will burden

the women more and more. The paper prepared by the Sandra Rothboeck and Surthi Acharya⁸ tries to argue that the gender segregation of jobs has two distinct elements. One referring to bunching of workers in jobs and the other to the social and occupational hierarchy that permeates it.

Women's economic tasks in India can be divided into three categories – as an entrepreneur, as a participant and as a contributor to the family's real income. There is no uniform official policy as to whether or not all these three categories of tasks are to be taken into account for measuring women's employment. Nirmala Banerjee⁹ has made an enquiry about women workers in the unorganized sector of Calcutta's economy. She found that the employment was regular for working women and their wage rate was significantly lower as compared to those for men with equal qualifications. The working women in the informal sector included a significant number of children and old people and over 60 percent of them were illiterate.

Leela Gulati¹⁰ has made an attempt to study the women in the unorganized sector in Kerala on the basis of micro-level observations. It appeared that women go to work because of the irregular nature of employment that their men are involved in and the low incomes they make. Regarding the kind of work opportunity open to women in the unorganized sector, very often they choose the type of work that their parents or relatives are involved in. Also they prefer to stick on the same kind of work they are similar with and pick closer by locations.

Jeemol Unni and Uma Rani¹¹ have made an attempt to study the informal sector in the light of structural adjustment programme. With steady decline in the growth of the formal sector in India following the introduction of the SAP, a large section of the growing labour force is being absorbed in agriculture and the unorganized informal structure resulting in a progressive increase in employment in the informal sector.

However, the most important and the large sector of employed women is the unorganized sector which includes the landless agricultural labourers, workers in traditional Crafts, Village and Cottage industries, migrants to the cities employed as domestic workers and vendors.

Domestic services has been, and still is, an important field of employment for many women. Yet, the ways in which it is organized have changed considerably throughout history and these changes have followed different trajectories. CLARA workshop on Domestic Services and mobility involving scholars from Europe, Asia and America, brought a rich contribution to studies about domestic workers¹². The increased economic and political interconnectedness of different parts of the world has enabled a rapid increase in the number of labour migrants amongst domestic workers. The status of domestic workers and the statistical categories under which they fall have a direct impact on different state regulations and their status as citizens. The conditions under which domestic workers are defined as citizen are often linked to the larger political context such as fascism, religion and colonialism.

Bulgovind Baboo and Laxmi Panwar¹³ have studied the maid servants in Haryana. The study emphasizes that they are leading a miserable life. They suffer from low wage, long hours of work, shift in nature of job, lack of freedom and low prestige due to inferior status of the job. Due to lack of coordination their children are neglected and familial relations becomes tense. The fragmented nature of their job, lack of education and low bargaining capacity refrain them from organizing collectively.

According to the Report on Working Condition of Domestic Servants in Delhi by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India, nearly 90 per cent of domestic workers are women¹⁴. According to the National Survey conducted by the School of Social Work¹⁵, women constituted 87.09 per cent of domestic workers in Karnataka, 82.38 per cent on Ranchi, 75 per cent in Kerala and 90.78 per cent in Andhra Pradesh.

The domestic workers face various problems and one of them is deplorable wage level. The wages of domestic workers have not kept pace with the spiraling price-rise. Every price rise cuts their real wage and further nutritional deficiency for them. The studies¹⁶ conducted in Bombay and Pune indicate that women domestic workers are often the sole supporters of their family.

According to National Survey conducted by the School of Social Work¹⁷, in Calcutta only 6 per cent of the workers had made some contract with the employers, while, in other regions, it is a mere 1 to 2 per cent. The contract is made with a third party of agent and so the exploitation runs beyond the employer-employee relationship. According to the survey, in domestic service rest is considered a luxury by the employers and this problem has serious consequences on her health. The National Survey commences that though hours of work were regularized in Kerala, 76 per cent of its workers did not enjoy any holidays.

A study of women domestics in Delhi¹⁸ indicates that women do not go to hospital due to fear of the hospital and long delays there. Most of the women hold a number of jobs and time is of great value to them.

Dhanalakshmi¹⁹ pointed out some general issues concerning women in labour market. The issues include the segregation of women in to certain occupation, wage differentials between men and women for the same job, low and falling work participation rates of women etc. She made an attempt to study the domestic servants in Thiruvananthapuram city. The socio economic conditions of domestic servants and the need of servants in city have been studied.

According to Padmini²⁰, of all services in India, there is not a more unregulated or disorganized form of work than the domestic service. There are no regulated hours of work for women in domestic service, nor have laws been passed to protect them. Murugaiah²¹ has analysed occupational risk of domestic servants in Tirupathi selection grade Municipality in Andhra Pradesh. The risk areas include high level of insecurity deplorable wages, long working hours etc.

1.2 Definition of Domestic Servants :

It is very difficult to define the term “domestic” because it is very vague. The term “domestic” denotes a class of “menials” which includes many types of workers, like ayah, kitchen helper, cook and sweeper. So we would define the term Domestic Servants as “those servants who do cooking, care the children, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cleaning and sweeping the houses in return for the payment of wages”.

There are two types of domestic servants – Part-time servants and full-time servants. Part-time servants are, those who are employed at one or more than one house to perform some definite duties and go away when the assigned work is over. They are not residential helpers. Full-time servants are attached to one house only. They are present for the whole day at employer's house and do whatever work is assigned to them.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The 51st round survey of NSSO reveals that the number of women regular employees in urban area is 10 times those in Rural areas. Also the regular women work force in urban area has been increased by 15 per cent over the period from 1977 to 1995²². So we can argue that the rapid process of urbanization led to such an increase in the number of urban work force.

A substantial number of women in rural areas have little skills and practically no education. One of the low-ranking occupations assigned to the poorest classes of society is “domestic service”. Employment of servants has become very common in the urban areas of any cities where a large number of house wives going out for jobs. The employment of servants saves much of the time and energy for the working house wives of modern cities. Domestic servants have proved to be a necessity for non-working housewives also. In urban areas, they commonly engaged domestic servants to keep them in carrying out their household chores, partly due to physical inability and partly due to lack of time. Moreover, in nuclear families there is no stand-by in the family, if the housewife falls ill. Also we can argue that the new middle classes have developed a life style which has increased the demand for domestic servants.

Thus the maid servant employed in household labour are playing a significant role especially in small towns of India. It is difficult to gauge the

exact number of women in the occupation, as workers in the category have not been enumerated as such by the census. However, some studies bring about the information regarding the domestic servants in different parts of our country.

Human Resources Development Report points out some common problems faced by the domestic servants which are;

- Deplorable wages
- High level of insecurity
- Illiteracy and lack of marketable skills,
- Lack of confidence in securing other productive jobs,
- Long and unregulated working hours.
- No paid holidays
- No paid sick leave
- Immense work load
- No maternity benefits
- Health problems and
- Social exploitation

Also elements of stigma of degradation is very much there in this occupation. This stigma is the main reason for lack of standardization. Domestic service in our country is individualistic and unorganized to a certain extent and gives no norms to the workers who take it up. NGOs have an important role in creating economic organizations for them. SEWA has helped their members to form economic organizations and find a wide variety of organizational forms depending on the area, the activity and the capacity of the members. But, in our country only very few domestic workers come under such organizations.

Under this situation, there arises certain questions such as what sort of people engaged in domestic service relations? What is the background of employers and domestic servants? And which are the socio economic factors responsible for choosing this occupation and thus earning low wage income?

No more studies have been made to analyse the socio economic status of domestic women servants and problems faced by them. The present study is an attempt on that way.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are :

To analysis the socio economic profile of the domestic women servants

To understand their occupation structure and wage structure

To examine the social problems being faced by them

To examine their working back ground and the type of contact made by the employers to make the service of domestic servants available.

Data and Methodology

(A) Data:-

The study was based on primary data collected from the domestic servants by direct interview. A schedule had been prepared by including the questions regarding their socio-economic factors. Fifty women servants were selected from Corporation area by purposive sampling method. Since the secondary information regarding the servants was not available and this was a pilot study, we depended on purposive sampling method.

(B) Methodology:

Simple arithmetic tools like percentage, average etc. have been used throughout the study. Chi-square test has been executed for examining the association between wage rate and education, wage rate and age, wage rate and experience etc.

To analyse the significant of variables like age, education, marital status, experience in domestic service and health status on monthly income of servants, regression model has been fitted. The specification of the model is:

$$Y_i = B_0 + B_1 X_{1i} + B_2 X_{2i} + B_3 X_{3i} + B_4 X_{4i} + B_5 X_{5i} + U_i$$

Where Y_i = Monthly income

X_{1i} = Age

X_{2i} = Education

X_{3i} = Marital status

X_{4i} = Experience in domestic service

X_{5i} = Health status

U_i = Random disturbance term.

1.6 **Limitations of the Study:**

Since it was a pilot study, an efficient sampling method had not been adopted. By purposive sampling, it was difficult to get a true representative sample. We could trace only 12 full-time servants out of 50 and migrant servants could not be found out. Also it suffers from the usual drawbacks of primary data.

1.7 **Plan of the study:**

The study consisted of three chapters. The first being an introductory one gives a preface to our study. It consists of review of literature, importance of the study, objectives of the study, data and methodology, limitations etc.

The second Chapter provides socio-economic profile of the domestic servants. It tries to analyse the socio economic conditions of both full-time and part-time servants.

The third Chapter presents summary and conclusion of the study.

REFERENCES

1. D.P.Sing Mor, "Women and the Unorganized sector" *Social Welfare* Vol-48, No.9, (2001)
2. T.Haque, "Labour Employment and Human Development in South Asia" *Issues Concerning Employment of Women in South Asia*, Edited by Asoka Chanda, Horst Mund, Tripurari Sharan and C.P.Thakur, B.R.Publishing Corporation for Institute for Human Development.
3. Nirmala Banerjee, "Women in Emerging Labour Market", *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol.42, No.4 (1999)
4. Dr. Jaya Arunachalam, "Women in the informal Sector – Need for Policy Options", *Social Welfare*, Vol.44, No.5 (1997)
5. Dr. Sathya Sundaram: *Unorganised Women Labour In India*, S.N.Tripathy (Ed.), Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, (1996)
6. Susan Bullock, "*Women and Work*" Zed Books Ltd, London (1994)
7. Atanu Thakar, "A Post Modernist Enquiry into Women's Work Force Participation", *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol.42, No.4 (1999)
8. Sandra Rothboeck and Sarthi Acharya, "Gender Based Segregation in the Indian Labour Market", *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol. 42, No.4(1999)
9. Nirmala Banerjee, "*Women Workers in the Unorganised Sector – The Calcutta Experience*", Sangham Books Pvt. Limited, Hyderabad (1985)
10. Leela Gulati: "Women in the Unorganized Sector with special reference to Kerala, C.D.S.W.P. No.172.

11. Jeemol Unni and Uma Rani, "Informal sector Women in the emerging labour Market", the Indian Journal of Labour Economics, Vol.42, No: 4 (1999)
12. Annelies Moors and Ratna Saptari, CLARA workshop Report: *Domestic Service and Mobility*, Agenda, (2002) Publications General
13. Balgovind Baboo and Laxmi Panwar, "Maid servants: A Case Study in Haryana" *Mainstream*, Vol 23 No:1 (1984)
14. Dept. of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resources Development, "Occupational Health Issues of Women in the Unorganized Sector". Report of the Task Force on Health (1988)
15. A National Socio – Economic Survey of Domestic Workers; School of Social Work, Roshini Nilaya , Research Department, Mangalore (undated)
16. *ibid*
17. Bhise Lata and Bhonsle Leela: "A sign of things to come", *Manushi*, May-June, New Delhi (1980)
18. Das Guptha Aparna, *Profile of Women dwelling in the slums of New Delhi*, PIDIT New Delhi (1980)
19. S.Dhanalakshmi, "Women in the Informal Labour Market – A case study of Domestic Servants in Thiruvananthapuram city", M Phil. Dissertation, Kerala University (1988)
20. Padmini Senguptha, *Women Workers of India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay (1960)
21. Dr.K.Murugaiah, "Women Domestic Workers" *Social Welfare*, Vol.49, No:2 (2002)
22. NSS 54th Round, *Survey Results on Cultivation Practices in India*, Sarverkshana, 24 (1), 84th issue, July-September (2000)

CHAPTER 2

SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE

This Chapter deals with the Socio economic status of domestic servants. Since the sample includes both part- time and full- time servants an attempt has been made to compare the status of both with respect to each characteristic, viz; religion, marital status, role in the family, age, education, wage rate, income, savings etc. Also their housing conditions health status, working environment and their personal problems have been studied.

2.1 Community Composition:

The domestic servants were classified according to their religion in table 2.1 It shows that majority of them were Hindus, (78 persons) out of which 94.87 per cent belonged to backward castes, viz; SC, ST and OBC. Also 18 per cent and 4 per cent were from Christian and Muslim religions respectively.

Table 2.1: Community Composition of Domestic Servants

Religion	No. of servants		
	Full - time	Part - time	Total
Hindu			
(i) Nair	0	2	2
(ii) OBC	6	12	18
(iii) SC	1	17	18
(iv) ST	1	0	1
Christian	3	6	9
Muslim	1	1	2
Total	12 (24)	38 (76)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage of total.

Source: Sample Survey Data.

2.2 Marital status:

Table 2.2 shows the marital status of domestic servants .

Table 2.2 : Marital Status of Domestic Servants

Marital Status	No. of Servants		
	Full -time	Part -time	Total
Married	5 (41.67)	24 (63.16)	29 (58)
Unmarried	3 (25.0)	6 (15.79)	9 (18)
Widow	3 (25.0)	5 (13.16)	8 (16)
Divorcee	1 (8.33)	3 (7.89)	4 (8)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage of total
Source : Sample Survey Data.

The sample consisted of married, unmarried, widowed and divorcees. About 42 per cent of the full-time servants were married whereas 33.33 per cent were widows or divorcees. But with regard to the part-time servants, most of them (63.16 per cent) were married. However, the whole sample constituted of 58 per cent married, 18 per cent unmarried and the remaining 24 per cent widows or divorcees.

2.3 Role in the family:

It is necessary to examine the role of servants in their family. Table 2.3 shows that 58 per cent of them played the role of 'wife' at their homes. 24 per cent of them played the role of 'Head in their families with much

responsibility. It has come into notice that two unmarried servants played the role of head of the families which, consisted of only unmarried women.

Table 2.3 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their position in the family.

Position in the Family	No. of Servants		
	FT	PT	Total
Head	3 (25)	9 (23.68)	12 (24)
Wife	5 (41.67)	24 (63.16)	29 (58)
Sister	–	2 (5.26)	2 (4)
Daughter	4 (33.33)	5 (13.16)	9 (18)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage of total.

Source: Sample Survey Data.

2.4 **Age composition:**

Age composition of domestic servants is shown in table 2.4. Most of the servants (74 per cent) included in the age group between 31 and 50. Only one full-time servant came under the age group of below 21 and two part-time servants belonged to the old age group of above 60. However, majority of the sample servants were constituted by young or middle aged persons

Table 2.4 : Age Composition of Domestic Servants

Age group	No. of Servants		
	Full – Time	Part –Time	Total
Below 21	1 (8.33)	–	1 (2.0)
21-30	1 (8.33)	5 (13.16)	6 (12.0)
31-40	4 (33.33)	21 (55.26)	25 (50.0)
41-50	4 (33.33)	8 (21.05)	12 (24.0)
51-60	2 (16.67)	2 (5.26)	2 (18.0)
Above 60	0	2 (5.26)	2 (4.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total

Source : Sample Survey Data.

2.5 Age and Marital status:

In table 2.5, servants are classified according to their age and marital status.

Table 2.5 :Agewise Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their Marital Status

Age group	Marital Status														
	Married			Unmarried			Widow			Divorces			Total		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Below 21	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
21- 30	-	4	4	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	5	6
31 –40	2	15	17	2	3	5	-	2	2	-	1	1	4	21	25
41 –50	3	3	6	-	2	2	1	2	3	-	1	1	4	8	12
51 –60	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	1	1	2	2	4
Above 60	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	2
Total	5	24	29	3	6	9	3	5	8	1	3	4	12	38	50

Source: Sample survey Data

In the age group 21-30, there was one divorcee, working as full-time servant. Also in the age group of 41-60, 43.75 per cent were married whereas the remaining 56.25 per cent were unmarried or widowed or divorced.

2.6 Age and Role in the family:

Table 2.6 shows the role of servants in relation to their age.

Table 2.6 : Agewise classification of Domestic Servants according to their position in the family .

Age group	Position in the family														
	Head			Wife			Sister			Daughter			Total		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Below 21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
21- 30	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	5	6
31 –40	-	4	4	2	13	15	-	-	-	2	4	6	4	21	25
41 –50	1	3	4	3	3	6	-	2	2	-	-	-	4	8	12
51 –60	2	1	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	4
Above 60	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Total	3	9	12	5	22	27				4	5	9	12	38	50

Source: Sample Survey Data

24 per cent of them were “Head” of their families in which 66.67 per cent came under the age group of 31-50. These servants were either unmarried or widowed or divorced ladies. However, they were trying hard for looking after their home mates.

2.7 Family Size:

From table 2.7, it is clear that 62 per cent of the servants belonged to small sized families consisting of two to four members. Two part-time servants belonged to large families consisting of eight to twelve members. The remaining 34 per cent belonged to the families having five to seven

members. When we make a cross sectional analysis, it can be realized that 6 houses were constituted by only female members and 12 houses were headed by the females. Also females were outnumbered in 18 houses and equal to the number of male members in 16 houses.

Table 2.7 Distribution of Domestic servants according to their family size:

Family size(No. of members in the family)	No. of families of PT Servants	No. of families of FT servants	Total
2 – 4	23 (60.53)	8 (66.67)	31 (62.0)
5 – 7	13 (34.21)	4 (33.33)	17 (34.0)
8 – 12	2 (5.26)		2 (4.0)
Total	38 (100)	12 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage to total

Source: Sample Survey data

2.8 Education:

Domestic servants are classified according to their education in table 2.8. 12 per cent of them were illiterates and 64 per cent had got only primary education. With respect to the full-time servants, we can see that none of them were illiterates and about 67 per cent of them have got primary education. Though 40 per cent of the servants were educated at lower primary level, they were not able to read, write and comprehend things well.

The servants who were educated at S.S.L.C. or above constituted 8 per cent of the total.

However, it has been found out that 18 persons were satisfied with their low level education while the others were not satisfied. They cited certain reasons for their lower education, viz; financial problems and other family problems. But 34 per cent of the servants were educated at a lower level because of their 'unwantedness'. Servants educated at S.S.L.C. or above, were interested to continue their studies. But the financial difficulties hindered them. It has come into notice that one unmarried full-time servant educated at Pre-degree level has done her degree course under 'distance education system'. Her house-matron has given her moral and financial support for this.

Only three out of 50 servants, had training in craft work. But they did not want to accept that as a job because of meagre income they earned from that. However, most of them have realized the importance of getting well educated. They responded that if they had a good education, they could get a better job. About 80 per cent of them were interested for further education, but they had no time to spent on that because of their work load.

Table 2.8 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their Education

Education	No. of Domestic Servants		
	Full – Time	Part –Time	Total
(i) Illiterate	–	6 (15.79)	6 (12.0)
(ii) Below Lower primary level or with L.P education	5 (41.67)	15 (39.47)	20 (40.0)
(iii) Below Upper primary level or with U.P. education	3 (25.0)	9 (23.68)	12 (24.0)
(iv) High School Education	3 (25.0)	5 (13.16)	8 (16.0)
(v) SSLC passed	–	2 (5.26)	2 (4.0)
(vi) Pre-degree level education	1 (8.33)	1 (2.63)	2 (4.0)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage of total.

Source: Sample Survey Data.

2.9 Occupational and Wage structure:

2.9.1 Occupational status:

Full-time servants had to do all types of works including food preparation in the houses. In some cases, their works included taking children from and to school and fetching things from shops. Three full-time servants were appointed for caring small children in the day time.

With regard to the part-time servants, they had to do the work such as cleaning the house, washing clothes, cleaning bath rooms, washing utensils, fetching articles from the shops etc. All part-time servants in the sample were doing almost all works excluding kitchen work in the houses. So we could not classify them according to the nature of their works.

Most of the part-time servants (84.21 per cent) had served in more than one house in a day. About 63 per cent of them had worked in two or three homes daily. There were 21 per cent of the servants who had worked in 4 or 5 houses daily. This is clear from table 2.9.

Table 2.9 : Distribution of Part – time Domestic Servants according to the number of houses they serve per day

No. of Houses per day	No. of part –time Servants
1	6
2	13
3	11
4	5
5	3
Total	38

Source: Sample Survey Data.

For getting a specific picture of their work load it is necessary to classify them according to their working hours per day. Table 2.10 shows that the full-time servants were working 6 to 10 hours daily. But the part-time servants worked 2 to 10 hours per day, in which about 75 per cent of them were working 4 to 8 hours daily.

Table 2.10: Distribution of domestic servants according to their working hours in a day

Working hours Per day	No. of Domestic Servants		
	F.T	P.T	Total
2 – 4	--	7 (18.42)	7 (14.0)
4 – 6	--	16 (42.11)	16 (32.0)
6 – 8	7 (58.33)	12 (31.58)	19 (38.0)
8 – 10	5 (41.67)	3 (7.89)	8 (16.0)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage of total
Source : Sample Survey Data

It is important to enquire about the type of contact they had made in getting this job. Of 12 servants, 4 of them were recruited by non reputed agencies in the Corporation area. The remaining 8 persons contacted the house matrons through their neighbours or friends or relatives. The part time workers also secured the job in the same way.

2.9.2 Wage structure

The wage structure of domestic servants varied between Rs.400 and Rs.2800 irrespective of the type of their service (i.e. full- time or part-time). Regarding the full time servants, their monthly wage varied between Rs.600 and Rs.2000. The full time servants who were appointed for caring the children had received monthly wage between Rs.600 and Rs.1000/-.

Four servants recruited by agencies received Rs.1500 as monthly wage. These servants had been exploited by the agencies. The house matron reported that they had to pay Rs.2250 per month to the agency for getting service of their recruits. But the servants had been getting only Rs.1500 per month, but some times that was not regular. Some agencies acted as the exclusive guardians of their recruits and they used to mortgage the ornaments of servants. Personal contact between these servants and house matrons was comparatively low. Though the other full time servants had received an amount of less than 1500 rupees as their monthly wage, the love, consideration and the gifts and helps from house matrons were large.

Regarding the part time servant they secured a monthly wage in the range of Rs.400 to Rs.2500.

2.9.2.1. Wage rate:

We can get a clear picture about the wage structure of domestic servants when we examine their wage rate. Table 2.11 shows the wage rate of full time and part time servants. The wage rate of full time servants ranged between Rs.4 and Rs.10 per hour. Most of them (about 92 per cents) came under the wage rate category of Rs.4 to Rs.8. But the wage rate received by part time servants ranged between Rs.4 and Rs.14, in which 74 per cent of them came under the wage rate category of Rs.4 to Rs.8.

Table 2.11 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their wage rate

Wage per hour	No. of Domestic Servants		
	F.T	P.T	Total
4 –6	5 (41.67)	8 (21.05)	13 (26.0)
6 – 8	6 (50.0)	13 (34.21)	19 (48.0)
8 –10	1 (8.33)	11 (28.95)	12 (24.0)
10 –12	–	4 (10.53)	4 (8.0)
12 –14	–	2 (5.26)	2 (4.0)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage of total

Source : Sample Survey Data

Now we can compare the labour hours and wage rate of domestic servants with that of the other female labourers engaged in agricultural and non-agricultural activities . In Corporation area, they have received a wage rate of about Rs.17 per hour and they worked for 7 hours in a day. So we could conclude that on an average, the work load of domestic servants was higher or equal to that of the other female labourers. But the wage rate was much less in the case of domestic servants.

2.9.2.2. Experience in domestic service and wage rate.

Table 2.12 presents the distribution of domestic servants according to their experience in this field. It reveals that 48 per cent of the servants had an experience of 2 to 5 years in the domestic service. About 16 per cent of the part time servants had a long experience of 11 and more than 11 years. With regard to the full time servants, about 92 per cent of them had an experience of less than 5 years.

Table 2.12 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their experience in Domestic Service

Experience in years	No. of Domestic Servants		
	F.T	P.T	Total
Less than 2 years	5 (41.67)	--	5 (10.0)
2 - 5	6 (50.0)	18 (47.37)	24 (48.0)
5 - 8	1 (8.33)	9 (23.68)	10 (20.0)
8 - 11	--	5 (13.16)	5 (10.0)
11 & More than 11 years	--	6 (15.79)	6 (12.0)
Total	12	38	50

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total

Source : Sample Survey Data

Full time and part time servants are classified according to their wage rate and experience (2.13). Out of 12 full time servants, five with less

experience had been receiving lower wage rate of 4 to 6 rupees per hour. And about 67 per cent of full time servants with two to five years experience had been receiving a wage rate of 6 to 8 rupees per hour. But one servant receiving the same wage rate of 6 to 8 rupees per hour had an experience of 5 to 8 years.

Table 2.13 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their wage rate and experience

Wage rate	4-6		6-8		8-10		10-12		12-14		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Experience in years												
Less than 2 years	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5	--
2 – 5	1	4	4	6	1	6	--	2	--	--	6	18
5 – 8	--	2	1	4	--	1	--	2	--	--	1	9
8 – 11	--	--	--	2	--	2	--	--	--	1	--	5
11 & More than 11 years	--	1	--	1	--	2	--	1	--	1	--	6
Total	6	7	5	13	1	11	--	5	--	2	12	38

Source: Sample Survey Data

In the case of part time servants, persons having the same experience had been receiving different wage rates. A part time servant with lower wage rate of 4 to 5 rupees per hour was a person with 12 years experience.

However, to examine whether here existed any association between these attributes wage rate and experience chi-square test has been executed. The test was done by taking the hypothesis that there is no association between experience and wage rate. The value of chi-square statistic was 0.269, which is less than the table value of chi-square at 5 percent level of significance and the hypothesis was accepted . Hence it was found that there was no association between experience and wage rate .

2.9.2.3. Wage rate and Education:

Table 2.14 shows the distribution of domestic servants with respect to their education and wage rate.

Table 2.14 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their education and wage rate

Wage rate	4-6		6-8		8-10		10-12		12-14		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Education												
Illiterate	--	1	--	5	--	--	--	--	---	--	--	6
Below LP or with LP	1	3	3	3	--	5	--	3	--	1	4	15
Below UP or with UP	2	1	2	3	--	4	--	1	--	--	4	9
H S	1	2	1	1	1	2	--	--	--	--	3	5
S.S.L.C.	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	2
P.D.C	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Total	5	8	6	13	1	11	--	4	--	2	12	38

Source: Sample Survey Data

Of the 12 servants having above high school level education, only 33.33 per cent of servants were getting more than 8 rupees as their wage rate. At the same time, 43.75 per cent of servants with primary education had got a wage rate of more than 8 rupees. The wage rate of illiterate servants was below 8 rupees per hour.

When we consider the full time servants, most of them (91.7 per cent) came under the category of low wage rate (below rupees 8) irrespective of their education level. Regarding the part-time servants, about 47 per cent of them having primary education and 38 per cent with above high school education had received higher wage rate.

The association between wage rate and education was tested using chi-square statistic based on the hypothesis that there is no association between these variables. The calculated value of chi-square was 0.99, which was less than the table value of chi-square at 5 percent level of significance. Hence the hypothesis was accepted.

29.2.4. Wage rate and Age:

It is necessary to assess the wage rate of servants in relation to their age. Table 2.15 shows that 62.8 per cent of the total servants under the age category of 21 to 50 years had got low wage rate of below 8 rupees per hour. In the case of full-time servants, only one out of twelve came under the high wage category of above 8 rupees per hour who was in the age group of 31 to 40 years. Regarding the part-time servants, 47 per cent of them in the age group of 21 to 50 years got only low wage rate.

Here we took a hypothesis that age and wage rate were not associated and chi-square statistics has been found out. The calculated chi-square value was 0.99, which was less than the table value. Hence the hypothesis was accepted and found that there was no association between these variables.

Table 2.15 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their age and wage rate

Wage rate	4-6		6-8		8-10		10-12		12-14		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Age												
Below 21	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--
21- 30	1	--	--	2	--	3	--	--	--	--	1	5
31 - 40	1	6	2	7	1	5	--	2	--	1	4	21
41 - 50	2	2	2	2	--	2	--	1	--	1	4	8
51 - 60	1	--	1	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	2	2
Above 60	--	--	--	1	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	2
Total	5	8	6	13	1	11	--	4	--	2	12	38

Source: Sample Survey Data

2.9.3 Food for Work:

It was found that all of the full-time servants exclusively depended upon their house matrons for food. Only a few of them (about 17 per cent) had been getting nutrient food items from the houses while others were offered low quality food. They were given food only after all members of the house had taken food. Also their dining place was work area in most of the cases.

But a very few part-time servants had received their full day meal from the houses. Of the 38 part-time servants, five of them had got full-day meal from the houses while another 5 had not received any food from the house matrons. The remaining 28 servants had received some light food items from their working places. However, most of the part-time servants had responded that they were not given nutrient food items from the houses.

2.9.4 **Help or Gifts:**

The approach and consideration of house matrons to their servants can be assessed from the information collected regarding the help or gifts that the servants had received from the house matrons.

Full-time servants who had been appointed by the non-reported agencies had not received any help or gifts. But those who secured the job directly had received gifts on festival occasion and help in difficulties.

Some part-time servants (about 35 per cent) who had served their matrons for 8 to 20 years reported that though their wage was not increased much during their working period, their matrons were their soul supporters in all respects. But 50 per cent of the part-time servants were not satisfied with the approach of their house matrons to them. They hardly got help or gifts from their masters. About 15 per cent of them complained that their masters were not regular in paying wages to them.

2.9.5 Experience in other jobs:

Out of 50, twenty servants had engaged in some other jobs before entering into their field. Their previous jobs included agricultural labour, construction work, sales girl, beedi making etc. (Table 2.16).

Table 2.16 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to the types of job they engaged before entering the domestic service.

Category	No. of servants		
	Full – time	Part - time	Total
Agricultural Labour	2 (33.33)	7 (50.0)	9 (45.0)
Construction work	3 (50.0)	6 42.86)	9 45.0)
Others	1 (16.67)	1 (7.14)	2 (10.0)
Total	6 (100)	14 (100)	20 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage to total.

Source: Sample Survey Data

Of the 12 full-time servants, six had engaged in other jobs before entering this field, 50 per cent of them were construction workers and 33.33 per cent were agricultural labourers. But 36.84 per cent of part-time servants shifted their field from agricultural labour or construction work.

However, there were some factors responsible for their job shifting 20 per cent of them responded that the other jobs were tiresome and 40 per cent responded that there was instability for other jobs. Some others (30 per cent) had health problems which hindered them to continue in other jobs.

2.9.6. Leave and Holidays:

About 54 per cent of the servant-maids responded that holidays upto 4 days in a month were given with full payment. Generally, employers cut wages whenever the servants did not turn up for work, even when the reasons were genuine, such as sickness, function in the house etc. In a few cases, the servant-maids had sent substitutes whenever they fell to turn up. Some times, continuous leave for one or two weeks led to the loss their job.

2.9.7. Working Environment:

The full-time servants recruited by agencies reported that they were not satisfied with the working environment. In the case of two such servants, there was some threat against their moral life. At the same time, the part-time servants were some more free to choose a secured environment as their work place.

About 70 per cent of the house matrons were employees either in government sector or in reputed firms. They appointed servants for getting them rest and saving time. But 20 per cent of the employers appointed servants due to their health problems.

It was clear that 60 per cent of the servants were working in nuclear families. But the accommodation or visiting of employer's relatives or cousin or visitors had not increased servants' wage though their work load was high.

Though the employers owned enough equipments that facilitate the domestic work, all of these were not available to the servants. For instance, though there were mixie, washing machine etc. in the employer's house, these were not being worked in the presence of servants. However, it was clear that the electric charge and other cost of working these equipments were very large when compared to the servants' wage level.

2.9.8. **Unionisation:**

The servants weren't the members of any political party or union. They had'nt any political awareness though they were the voters.

The servants who were engaged in construction work earlier had membership in Labour Welfare Fund. They were renewing their membership by remitting a small terminal amount. But others had'nt membership in any union and so they were not united. The domestic servant were not in a position to argue for their rights under a unique power.

2.10. **Income and Management of Expenses:**

2.10.1 **Income**

Monthly income of the domestic servants varied between the range of Rs.400 to Rs.2800 in which 58 per cent of them was under the income group of 400 rupees to 1200 rupees. There was only 12 per cent of the servants having an income of more than 1600 rupees per month. Table 2.17 reveals

this fact. The monthly income of 92 per cent of the full time servants was below 1600 rupees whereas 87 per cent of part-time servants came under this income range.

Table 2.17 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their monthly income

Income group (Rs)	No. of Domestic Servants		
	F.T	P.T	Total
400 – 800	3 (25.0)	13 (34.21)	16 (32.0)
800 – 1200	3 (25.0)	10 (26.32)	13 (26.0)
1200 – 1600	5 (41.67)	10 (26.32)	15 (30.0)
1600 – 2000	–	3 (7.89)	3 (6.0)
2000 – 2400	1 (8.33)	1 (2.63)	2 (4.0)
2400 – 2800	–	1 (2.63)	1 (2.0)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total
Source : Sample Survey Data

Table 2.18 shows the share of servants' own income to their family income. 44 per cent of them earn 21 to 40 per cent of their total family income. 10 per cent of them earn 81 to 100 per cent of family income. It was found that three part-time servants were the only earning persons of their families.

In order to find out whether the socio-economic variables like age (x1i), education (X2i), marital status (X3i), experience in domestic service (X4i), health (X5i) etc. had any role in determining the monthly income (Yi) of servants, multiple regression model has been fitted.

For the whole sample, the model (I) is

$$Y_i = 987.42 + 2.12 X_{1i} - 9.27 X_{2i} - 37.38 X_{3i} + 1.01 X_{4i} + 135.08 X_{5i}$$

$$SE \quad (378.45) \quad (7.36) \quad (63.18) \quad (58.49) \quad (13.35) \quad (165.92)$$

$$R^2 = 0.018$$

Regarding the part-time servants, the model (II) is

$$Y_i = 993.25 + 2.25 X_{1i} + 6.94 X_{2i} - 105.39 X_{3i} + 0.77 X_{4i} + 254.51 X_{5i}$$

$$SE \quad (423.92) \quad (0.637) \quad (73.05) \quad (78.70) \quad (15.52) \quad (198.82)$$

$$R^2 = 0.069$$

and for the full-time servants, the model (III) is

$$Y_i = 504.30 + 6.49 X_{1i} + 20.58 X_{2i} - 3.66 X_{3i} + 243.06 X_{4i} - 144.45 X_{5i}$$

$$SE \quad (1883.83) \quad (28.84) \quad (218.94) \quad (180.30) \quad (214.82) \quad (372.29)$$

$$R^2 = 0.4465$$

It is noted that the value of coefficient of determination was comparatively higher in the model fitted regarding full-time servants. It shows that the independent variables included in the model were able to explain 44% of the variability in their monthly income. The unexplained part of variability in Y was obviously due to other factors which have not been taken into account. In other two models, R² values were very low and the independent variables had very little impact on the monthly income.

The regression coefficient for variables have been examined along with their respective standard errors. Of all exogenous factors, only health status was significant at 25% level in determining the monthly income of domestic servants. Also, we could see an inverse relationship between monthly income and each of the variables, education and marital status.

In the case of part time servants, only marital status was significant at 25% level. Of all factors, only the marital status had a negative relationship with monthly income.

Regarding model III, it is clear that experience in domestic service was statistically significant at 25% level in determining the monthly income of full time servants. Also, we could see a negative relationship between monthly income and each of the factors, marital status, experience and health status.

However, all these factors had'nt an intense determining power on the monthly income of servants.

Table 2.18 : Distribution of Domestic Servants according to the percentage of their income to the family income

Percentage of income to family income	No. of Domestic Servants		
	F.T	P.T	Total
15-20	--	6 (15.79)	6 (12.0)
21-40	8 (66.67)	14 (36.84)	22 (44.0)
41-60	2 (16.67)	12 (31.58)	14 (28.0)
61-80	1 (8.33)	2 (5.26)	3 (6.0)
81-100	1 (8.33)	4 (10.53)	5 (10.0)
Total	12 (100)	38 (100)	50 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total

Source : Sample Survey Data

2.10.2 Savings:

The saving behavior of domestic servants is as shown in table 2.19. It was clear that only 33.33 per cent of the full-time servants had monthly savings in gold kuri or kuri under “Sthreesakthi”. But 60.53 per cent of the part-time servants had savings in post office, LIC or others including friendship kuri.

Table 2.19 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their savings in different categories

Category	No. of servants		
	Full – time	Part - time	Total
P.O.Savings	--	13	13
LIC Policy	--	1	1
Others	4	9	13
Total	4	23	27

Figures in parentheses represent percentage to total.

Source: Sample Survey Data.

Now it is necessary to compare their savings with their monthly income. Table 2.20 shows the share of their savings to the income. About 48 per cent of them had been saving less than 20 per cent of their income 37.04 per cent of them had saved 31 to 40 per cent of their income. However, none of them saved more than 50 per cent of their income.

Table 2.20 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to their savings as a share of their income

Share (percent)	No. of Domestic servants		
	Full – time	Part - time	Total
10% or below 10%	1 (25.0)	5 (21.74)	6 (22.22)
11 – 20	--	7 (30.43)	7 (25.93)
21 – 30	1 (25.0)	2 (8.70)	3 (11.11)
31 – 40	2 (50.0)	8 (34.78)	10 (37.04)
41 – 50	--	1 (4.35)	1 (3.70)
Total	4 (100)	23 (100)	27 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage to total.

Source: Sample Survey Data

2.10.3 **Repayment of Loans:**

It was found that 27 servants out of 50 had credit under their own risk or the risk of whole members of the family. Most of them (81.5 per cent) took loan for construction purpose while others for marriage purposes. Of 27, seven servants had the sole risk of credit since they were the head of their families. Five of the families of servants were in the thread of recovery of their assets because of the non-repayment of loan.

2.10.4 **Other expenses:**

Other expenses include expenses on food, stationery items, education, medicines, electricity and entertainment. Of these, a major portion of their

income was spent on food items.

Most of them respondent that their income was needful in quenching their appetite. In some cases, their income had helped in the repayment of family's credit and in some other cases, it had helped them to make savings.

However, the income earned by the servant-maids were utilized for the subsistence or welfare of their family rather than for their own needs and welfare. In this respect, we could see that unmarried servants had been exploited within their families by their married brothers, sisters and in some cases, even by parents.

2.11 **Health Status:**

Table 2.21 reveals different kinds of health problems faced by the maid-servants. It was understood that 74 per cent of the servants suffered from different types of diseases in which about 54 per cent had skin diseases. This was because of the continuous use of soaps and detergents and contact with dust and dirt. About 19 per cent of them had back pain due to the lack of rest.

Table 2.21 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to the nature of their diseases

Nature of Disease	No. of servants		
	Full – time	Part - time	Total
Back pain	2	5	7
Leg pain	1	4	5
Headache	--	2	2
Goiter	--	1	1
Old age disease	--	1	1
Diabatis & B.P.	--	1	1
Total	3	14	17

Source: Sample Survey Data

However, while 84 per cent of the part-time servants had health problems, only 42 per cent of full-time servants suffered from the same . Of these 37 servants, only 7 maid-servants under went regular treatment and they had spent 5 per cent to 42 per cent of their income for this purpose. The remaining had not any medical treatment due to financial problems.

2.12 Rest and Leisure:

Since rest and leisure provides good health status, it is necessary to enquire about these factors. About 90 per cent of them responded that they were getting rest only while sleeping at night. Also they hardly got leisure time. They had to work from early morning till night in their own house and working place.

Very few of them (10 per cent) had reading habit. They seldom read newspapers or magazines. About 20 per cent of them had enjoyed watching T.V. but was not regular.

2.13 Housing conditions:

Out of 50 sample servants, 41 possessed land in which about 83 per cent occupied one to five cents or below 5 cents of land. Table 2.22 shows this. Another importance feature of their living place was that majority of them hailed from colonies or slums in Corporation area. The full-time servants recruited by agencies were from distant places in Thrissur district.

Table 2.22 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to the landholdings

Land Area (cents)	No. of Domestic Servants
5 or below 5	34 (82.93)
6 – 10	4 (9.76)
10 – 20	2 (4.88)
20 or above 20	1 (2.44)
Total	41 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage to total.
Source: Sample Survey Data

Their housing conditions are given in table 2.23. While 78% of the houses had tiles or concrete roof, 80 per cent had brick wall and 42 per cent had dung plastered floor. Regarding the drinking water source, it was found that 62 per cent of the houses depended on public well or public tap. Also 70 per cent of the houses were not electrified.

Table 2.23 Distribution of Domestic Servants according to the Housing condition

Category	No. of Houses
I. Type of Roof	
(i) Leaves	11
(ii) Tiles	29
(iii) Concrete	10
II. Type of Wall	
(i) Leaves	7
(ii) Mud	3
(iii) Bricks	40
III. Type of floor	
(i) Dung plastered	21

(ii) Cemented	29
IV. Type of latrine	
(i) Pit	15
(ii) Sceptic tank	35
V. Sources of Drinking water	
(i) Own well	19
(ii) Public well	6
(iii) Public tap	25
VI. Electrified	15
VII. Home Appliances	
(i) Radio	23
(ii) Stove	15
(iii) TV	16
(iv) Mixie	4
(v) Motor vehicle	2

Source: Sample Survey Data

Regarding the home appliances, 54 per cent of the households had not any devices even radio.

2.14 Other Problems faced by the domestic servants

Generally, the family life of domestic servants were not satisfactory. Most of the married servants (about 76 per cent) reported that their husbands were drunkards and not co-operative to them. So the responsibility to look after their children was on their shoulders. Out of 29 married servants, 22 servants had small children, below 15 years old. This category included 2 full-time servants. These servants were very enthusiastic about the education of their children. But they regretted that they had no knowledge or time or money for giving the needed facilities to their children. In the case of full-time servants, their children were under the care of their grandparents.

The unmarried servants were very much bothered about their family matters. They shared the responsibility in their family. In some cases, their family members exploited them for personal gains.

In case of four divorced servants, one having children didn't get any support from her family members. Other three divorcees were living with their parents or brothers. The young widow servants were trying hard to make both ends meet.

Though the parents of some of the servants were living with them, they were not healthy. So the servants had to look after them also. The servants were very pessimistic about their future. They felt that their work was demeaning - washing others' dirt. They responded that they were tied to this job because of certain circumstances like low level education, poor family background etc. Being stuck in the working place for a long time, they had adverse effects on their feeling of well-being.

Regarding the relationship between servants and the society, they responded that they had no time or wish to involve in others' matters because they were surrounded by different types of their own problems.

=====

CHAPTER-3

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The domestic service is an unorganized and unregulated form of work which has an individualistic nature. 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.

The study “Socio economic status of Domestic women servants: A case study of Thrissur Corporation” was based on a primary survey of fifty domestic servants. The survey was conducted keeping four objectives in mind. Firstly, to analyse the socio-economic profile of the domestic women servants. Secondly, to understand their occupational structure and wage structure. Thirdly, to examine their working background and the type of contact made by the employers to get the service of domestic servants. Finally, it intends to discuss various problems faced by the domestic servants. The analysis mainly depends on the tabular and descriptive exercises though some statistical techniques had been used.

3.1 Summary of findings:

There were fifty domestic servants including twelve full-time servants and thirty eight part time servants. Most of them (78 per cent) belonged to Hindu religion, in which 95 per cent constituted backward castes. These backward people hailed from Scheduled Caste colonies or slums in Corporation area. Majority of them faced lack of basic amenities like

drinking water, electricity etc. About 54 per cent of the households hadn't any home appliance, even radio.

The sample consisted of married, unmarried, widowed and divorced ladies in which married servants constituted 58 per cent. Also 50 per cent of the servants were from the age group of 31 to 40 years. Out of 50 servants, 24 of them played the role of "head" in their families. They were either widows or divorcees who were confined to much responsibility. The situation of married servants were not different. In most of the cases, the married servants had to carry entire family burden due to the irresponsible nature of their husbands. The servants, who had school going children had'nt enough time to look after their children because of their work load in their own house and in work place.

Regarding their education, we could see that about 50 per cent of them were not able to read, write and comprehend things well. At the same time, we could see 8% of the educated (S.S.L.C. or above) servants. Their poor background hindered them from attaining further education and compelled to accept any job. Though 80 per cent of the servants were interested for further education, they had no time to spend on it because of their work load.

It was difficult to classify the servants according to the nature of their work in domestic service because almost all works in the houses were being done by them. The full-time servants had to do all works including food preparation. Three out of twelve full time servants were appointed for caring small children in day time. The daily working hours of full time servants varied from 6 to 10 hours. The part time servants had to do almost all cleaning and washing works in the house excluding kitchen work. The part time servants were working in more than one house daily; 21 per cent

of them were working in 4 or 5 houses daily and 63 per cent of them in two or three homes. Their daily working hours varied from 4 to 10 hours.

The wage rate of full time servants ranged between 4 rupees to 10 rupees while that of part time servants varied between 4 rupees to 14 rupees, which was below the wage rate of a female labourer engaged in other works. But the work load of domestic servants was high.

It was found that about 16 per cent of the part time servants had a long experience of more than 11 years and 48 per cent of them had two to five years of experience. But all of the full time servants had an experience of less than 5 years. By comparing the experience and wage rate, it was found that there was no relation between these factors. Also it was found that wage rate was not in accordance with their age or education.

The full time servants exclusively depended upon their housematrons for food, though the offered food was low in quality. But most of the part time servants were offered some light food, not nutrient items, sometimes was left-over food.

Very few of the servants were satisfied with the approach of house matrons to them. The full time servants recruited by agencies reported that they were not getting any human consideration from their masters. At the same time, part time servants were some more free to choose their working place. According to a few part time servants, their masters were not regular in paying wages to them. Generally, the employers cut wages whenever the servants did not turn up, though there were genuine reasons. At the same time, the increase in work load in the houses in certain occasions had not increased their wage level.

It was clear that the house matrons appointed servants either for getting them rest or to get enough time for their personal affairs. About 70 per cent of the house matrons were employees and 20 per cent were permanently diseased. Thus we could realize that the servants were needful to them, also in reducing the working cost of modern equipments in the houses like washing machine, vacuum cleaner, mixie, etc.

About 50 per cent of the servants had engaged in some other jobs before entering the domestic service. They shifted their job because of irregularity of the job and their health problems.

The servants were't the members of any political party or worker's union. They were not aware of their rights and not united. They were living inside their small world of difficulties. So they bore the exploitation in working place.

The non-reputed agencies had been exploiting the servants without making a regular payment to them. The concerned house matrons were not satisfactory in the role of these agencies. Most of the housewives used local contacts for getting their servants.

The health condition of 74 per cent of the servants was more or less problematic. About 54 per cent of them suffered from skin diseases. The remaining suffered from back pain, head-ache, diabetics etc. However, only a few of them underwent regular treatment.

The income earned by the servants contributed a considerable share to their family income. The factors like age, education, marital status, experience and health status were not much significant in determining their income. About 54 percent of them had savings and they had been keeping 20 to 40 per cent of their income in this. Twenty seven servants out of fifty had credit under their own risk or the risk of whole members of the family. Most of the servants responded that they had been leading or miserable life

with poor financial back ground.

They utilized their income for the subsistence or welfare of their whole family. In some cases, we could see that they were exploited within their family itself.

3.2 Conclusion

Women domestic servants belonged to the economically disadvantaged group and most of them lived in slums areas or Scheduled caste colonies. There was not a uniformity in their wage structure and their wage level was very low. However, they were compelled to do this job because of lower education or poor financial background. They were exploited at their working place and in some cases, even at their own homes.

In this context, it is necessary to make an awareness of the exploitation faced by the domestic servants and inspire them to organize themselves for protecting their rights and also to work for implementing enactment of laws by the government. Then only they can live with status and dignity equal to that of other members of the society.

=====

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF DOMESTIC WOMEN SERVANTS-

A Case Study of Thrissur Corporation .

[A pilot study of 50 Servants]

Ward No. :

Name :

Address :

Age :

Religion :

Caste :

I. Particulars of Family Members

Sl. No.	Name	Age	Relationship with Head of family	Education	Occupation	Monthly income

II. Land and Housing Facilities:

A. Do your family possess own land? : Yes/No

If yes, land area :

- B. (i) Possession of House : Owned/Rented
- (ii) If rented, monthly rent :
- (iii) Number of rooms :
- (iv) Type of Wall : Leaves/Mud/bricks/others
- (v) Type of Floor : Dung plastered/cemented/tiles/ others
- (vi) Type of roof : Leaves/tiles/concrete/others
- (vii) Source of drinking water : Well (Own/public)/Public tap/pond/others
- (viii) Type of latrine : Pit/Septic Tank/Others
- (ix) If your house electrified : Yes/No
- (x) Home appliances you owned : LPG Stove/TV/Radio/Mixie/Motor vehicle/others

III. Details of Educational status:

- (i) Educational qualifications :
- (ii) Are you satisfied with your education : Yes/No

If not, why?

- (iii) Had you any training in craft work?: Yes/No
If yes, details

- (iv) Are you interested for further education?:

IV. Details of Occupational Status:

- (i) Are you a part-time/full time servant?
- (ii) If part time, number of houses in which you are working
- (iii) Nature of work in the house/s
- (iv) Working hours per day in each house:
- (v) Monthly wage drawn from each house:
- (vi) If working in more than one houses, are these houses situated in nearby places? :
- (vii) Have you desired to change the houses frequently? Yes/ No
If yes, why?
- (viii) The period that you have been working in each house at present

- (ix) Are you satisfied with your wage?
- (x) Had you gone to any other job?
If yes, details
- (xi) Why did you quit from that?
- (xii) Had you any bitter experience from the house
matrons or others in the house?
- (xiii) Are the house matrons, loving and friendly to you?
- (xiv) Have you accepted any other help or gifts
occasionally from the house matrons?
If yes, nature of help/gifts:
- (xv) Do you enjoy any holiday : Yes/No
- (xvi) If yes, number of holidays in a month:
- (xvii) Did you get sick leave or any emergency leave
in need without wage cut?
- (xviii) If you are from any other district or states,
why did you come here in search of job?
Who directed you to here?
- (xix) If you are recruited by any agency,
Name of Agency:

The terms and conditions between you and the agency:

The period of appointment

Are you satisfied with the agency's functioning?
Give details.

V. Health and Food:

- (i) Do you suffer from any permanent disease? Yes/No

If yes, nature of disease

Have any treatment?
If not, why?

Amount spent per month for treatment
- (ii) Leisure time in hours that you get per day

(iii) Do you think that you want more time for rest?

(iv) Details of food intake

Food items

Are these food items prepared by yourselves
or got from the houses?

Your dining place in the work place

VI.: Management of monthly expenses

Purpose	Amount spent (Rs.)

VII. Saving Pattern

(i) Have you any chitty/Kuri / P.O. Savings/any other

(ii) Amount of Savings in each:

VIII. Details of Loan/Credit if any:

(i) Loan Amount :

(ii) Purpose :

(iii) Source :

(iv) Interest rate :

(v) Duration :

(vi) Have you paid it without any fail till now?

IX. Other Personal Details

(i) Marital status Married/Unmarried/Widow/Divorcee

(ii) If married, husband's job

- (iii) Are you satisfied in your married life?
Details if any
- (iv) Number of children
- (v) Are they students?
- (vi) Who protects them while you are going to your job?
- (vii) Do you think that you cannot care them in a proper way?
- (viii) Are you anxious about their education?
- (ix) Your expectation about their career
- (x) Number of persons in your family who depend on you?
- (xi) Have you got enough support from your husband or other family members?
- (xii) Is there any person who suffers from frequent disease in your family?

Give details

- (xiii) Are you a Member of any Union? Yes/No

If yes, which Union?

Any help from Union?

If not, do you want to join or form any Union?

Give your ideas.

- (xiv) Do you believe in any political party? Yes/No

- (xv) Do you want to change this job if you get any other job? Yes/No

If yes, which type of job that you are seeking to get?

- (xvi) Have you the habit of listening Radio/Watching TV/reading newspapers etc.?

Give details

(xvii) Are you suffering from any type of attack of anti-social elements? Yes/No

If yes, give details

X. Details of the houses in which you are working:

(i) Sex of the House matron M/F

(ii) Number of members in the family

(iii) Is the house matron employed?

(iv) Nature of employment

(v) Number of other employed members in the family

(vi) Is there all facilities that support your work?

Give details

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- 1 **Dr.Sathyasundaram (Ed) (1996)** **Unorganised women Labour in India,**
Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi
- 2 **Susan Bullock (1994)** **Women and Work**
Zed Books Ltd., London
- 3 **Nirmala Banerjee (1985)** **Women Workers in the Unorganised**
Sector, The Calcutta Experience,
Sangham Books Pvt. Ltd. Hyderabad
- 4 **T.Haque (1993)** **Labour Employment and Human**
Development in South Asia: Issues
concerning Employment of Women in
South Asia,
B.R.Publishing Corporation for Institute
for Human Development
- 5 **Das Gupta Aparna (1980)** **Profile of Women Dwelling in the slums of**
New Delhi,
PIDIT New Delhi (1980)
- 6 **Padmini Senguptha (1960)** **Women Workers of India,**
Asia Publishing House, Bombay (1960)

PERIODICAL ARTICLES

- 1 D.P.Singh Mor (2001) “Women and the Unorganised Sector”
Social Welfare, Vol. 48 (9)
- 2 Nirmala Banerjee (1999) “Women in Emerging Labour Market”
Indian Journal of Labour Economics,
Vol.42(4)
- 3 Dr.Jaya Arunachalam (1997) “Somen in the informal sector: Need
for Policy Options”, Social Welfare,
Vol.44(5)
- 4 Atanu Thakar (1999) “A Post Modernist Enquiry into
Women’s Work Force Participation”,
The Indian Journal of Labour
Economics Vol.42(4)
- 5 Sandra Rothock and Sarthi
Acharya (1999) “Gender Based Segregation in the
Indian Labour Market” The Indian
Journal of Labour Economics
Vol.42(4)
- 6 Jeemol Unni and Uma Rani
(1999) “Informal Sector Women in the
emerging labour market”, The Indian
Journal of Labour Economics, Vol. 42
(4)
- 7 Balgovind Baboo and Laxmi
Panwar (1984) “Maid Servants : A case study in
Haryana” Mainstream Vol. 23 (1)
- 8 Bhise Lata and Bhonsle Leela
(1980) “A sign of things to come”, Manushi,
May-June
- 9 Dr.K.Murugaiah (2002) “Women Domestic Workers” Social
Welfare, Vol. 49(2)
- 10 Rajalakshmi Rama Rao
(1987) “Domestic Servants from Tamil Nadu
in Delhi” Social Welfare Vol 44 (5)
- 11 Alaka and Chetna (1984) “Struggling at every step “Manushi,
March-April

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 12 | Pratima Chaudhary (1986) | “Women Sweepers in Patna”, Social Welfare, May |
| 13 | Johanna Lessinger (1985) | “Caught between work and modesty”
Manushi May-June |
| 14 | Mangala Nori (1983) | “Victims, Not offenders”, Manushi,
No.19 |
| 15 | Prabha Rani and Poonam
Kaul (1986) | “For two meals a day: a report on
Tamil Domestic Maids”, Manushi
July-August. |

REPORTS/WORKING PAPERS/THESES

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Leela Gulati | “Women in the Unorganised sector with special
reference to Kerala”, C.D.S.AW.P. No.172 |
| 2 | Annelies Moors and
Ratna Saptari | “Domestic service and Mobility” CLARA
workshop Report, Agenda (2002) Publications
General |
| 3 | Department of
Women and Child
Development | “Occupational Health issues of women in the
Unorganised sector” Report of the Task-force
on Health (1988) Ministry of Human Resources
Development. |
| 4 | School of Social
work | “A National Socio-economic, Survey of
Domestic Workers, Report, Roshini Nilaya,
Research Department, Mangalore (undated) |
| 5 | S.Dhanalakshmi | “Women in the Informal Labour Market – A
case study of Domestic Servants in
Thiruvananthapuram City” M Phil. Dissertation,
Kerala University (1988) |
| 6 | N.S.S. 54 th Round | “Survey Resolution Cultivation Practices in
India” Sarvekshana, 24(1), 84 th issue, July-
September (2002) |

