

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS: SOME OBSERVATIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A large number of domestic workers are increasing in urban, semi urban and metropolitan cities in India due to unequal distribution of the national dividend among the people in the country. Domestic work has accepted as an important service of the livelihood in India. There has been reduction in agriculture production, declining employment opportunities on account of use of technology and machinery in the rural area women workers are migrating from rural area to the so called cities for employment. Therefore, the number of domestic workers has been increasing in the urban area in the informal sector. However, domestic workers are unorganised, low paid, unrecognised, lack of safety measures, lack of domestic trade association, huge exploitation and less state interferences multifaceted problems are facing in the country. Hence, the present paper aimed to examine the socio-economic condition of the domestic workers at the micro level in Haveri city of Karnataka state. The paper used both primary and secondary data; primary data collected through the interview scheduled 300 respondents selected from the study area. It also used the sample random sampling method.*

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**Keywords:** *Domestic Workers, Informal Sector, Unskilled, Low Paid, Indian Social Problem.*

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### **Introduction**

The domestic worker in India has been increasing recently over 50 million and they were illiterate and low skilled, poorest ruthlessly exploited people and look down in the country. However, the role played by women worker among the total work force in the informal sector is significant. One of the main reason for the increasing the number of domestic workers form nuclear families and there is a greater demand for women workers in all types of improved cities, urban and many towns in India, also across the countries. The majority of the work force exists in informal sector in India. Their contribution is more in the national income. But domestic work is not recognised because of low paid, deprivation, unskilled, and lack of knowledge. They came from vulnerable sections of the society, also work is not considered as a productive work. In Karnataka region also the numbers of domestic workers have been increasing. The domestic workers have deprived by the number of reasons i.e. wage discrimination, long hour working, no holiday, low dexterity, poverty and job security etc. Henceforth, the present paper made an attempt to deal with the socio-economic status of domestic workers at the Haveri city in Karnataka state.

### **Research Issues**

Following are the research issues;

- The Domestic worker contributes more in the informal sector in Karnataka and at national level which mitigate the unemployment problem in the country.

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- There are number of problems of domestic worker such as wage discrimination, long hour working, no holiday, low dexterity, poverty and job security.
- Domestic workers are illiterates and low skilled, poorest ruthlessly exploited people and look down in the country and also lack of knowledge on related to the government schema.

#### Methodology and Objectives of the Study

The present paper is based upon the both primary and secondary data. The secondary data were collected from the district, state and national level concerned offices and various department manuals, journals, news paper reports and e-sources .The primary data were collected through uses interview scheduled from selected samples in Haveri city in Karnataka state. The random sampling method was used and selected 300 respondents for the study .the pictures tries to deals with the socio-economic conditions of the domestic workers in the study area.

#### Discussion and Analysis

##### Analyses of the Age of Respondents in Haveri City

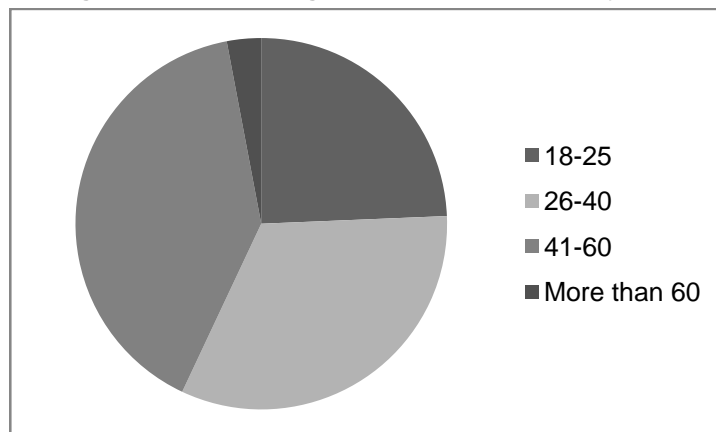
The socio-economic conditions of the respondents in Haveri city of Karnataka includes the characters like age, religion, marital status, educational status, nature, size of family and sources of income of the family have been analysed. According to some experts and the government the working of the people age starts from the 18 to 60 years. In informal sector particularly in the domestic women worker and their age factor is also influence on their work and the same also proved from the micro level study in Haveri city of Karnataka. The following table No. 1 and figure 1 shows the age wise distribution of the respondents selected for the study in Haveri city.

**Table 1: Age Group of the Respondents**

Age Group	Respondents	Percent
18-25 years	73	24.33
26-40 years	98	32.67
41-60 years	120	40.00
More than 60 years	09	3.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Sources: Compiled from the field study data

**Fig: 1 Particulars of Age of the Respondents (In years)**



The 40 percent of the women domestic workers are belongs to 41 to 60 years of age group followed by 32.67 percent of the respondents are belongs to 26 to 40 years age, 24.33 percent are in the young age group between 18 to 25 years of age and the remaining 3 percent of the domestic workers are belong to the age of more than 60 years.

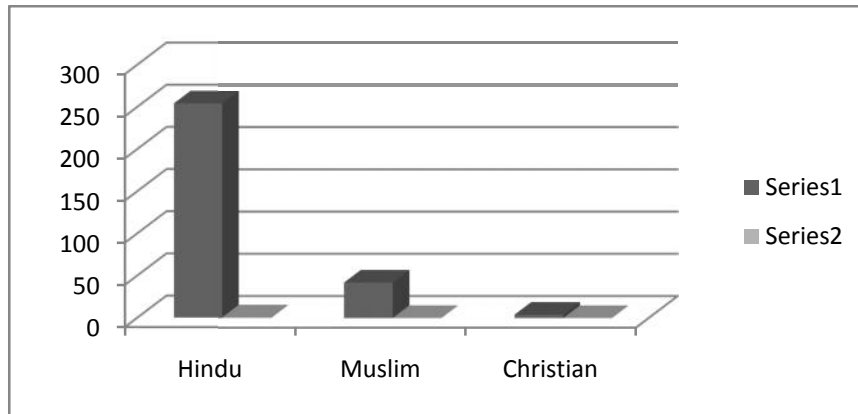
##### Religion of the Respondents

The religion is an important factor which effects on the human behaviors in the society. Different kinds of religious people are in the Indian society. Such as Hindu, Muslim, Christen, Bhudhisism, Sikh, Jain, etc. But Majority of the people belongs to Hindu religion in the study area. The table No. 2 and figure 2 exhibits the status of religion in Haveri city.

**Table 2: Religions of the Respondents**

Religion	Respondents	Percent
Hindu	254	84.67
Muslim	42	14.00
Christian	04	1.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Sources: Compiled from the field study data.



The table 2 and figure 2 evident that women worker from the various of the religion are engaged in domestic work. Religious distribution of women domestic workers revealed that the majority i.e. 84.67 percent of workers are belongs to Hindus followed by 14 percent of workers belongs to Muslims and only 1.33 percent of the respondents are Christians. Hence, most of the women domestic workers are belong to Hindu religion.

• **Marital Status of Domestic Workers**

Marital status plays a vital role in every human being; married persons have got the graceful status in the society. It reveals that, the majority of the respondent's i.e.6 percent of the workers were married, 12 percent of workers were widows, the remaining 8.67 percent of workers were unmarried and single and only 3.33 percent of respondents were divorced respectively.

**Table 3: Marital Status**

Marital Status	Respondents	Percent
Unmarried	26	8.67
Married	228	76.00
Widow	36	12.00
Divorced	10	3.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Sources: Compiled from the field study data.

It is prominent that almost all the respondents were married, but few of the respondents were deceased or divorced from their husband. Probably, the divorced respondents and widows don't have any economic security for their livelihood and hence, they are working as domestic worker. In case of married workers, who are living with their husbands, may be poor and as such, they are working as domestic workers so as to support family income. Still, few of the respondents were not married and due to illiteracy or low-education and poverty, they were compelled to work as domestic workers.

• **Educational Level of Domestic Workers**

The educational level of the domestic workers plays significant role in socio-economic, political and network life of each human being. Education is considered as one of the social intuitions. It has become major factor in deprivation of persons. As the present paper is tries to reveals deprivation of women domestic workers, they had little education and some of them have not possessed any kind of education. Therefore, the illiterates and low-educated worker consequently are coming under the deprived class in society. The table No. 4 depicts the status of education of the domestic workers in Haveri city.

**Table 4: Educational Qualification**

Educational Qualification	Respondents	Per cent
Illiterate	69	23.00
Lower Primary	104	34.67
Higher Primary	73	24.33
Secondary	41	13.67
Degree	00	00.00
Other	13	4.33
<b>Total</b>		<b>100.00</b>

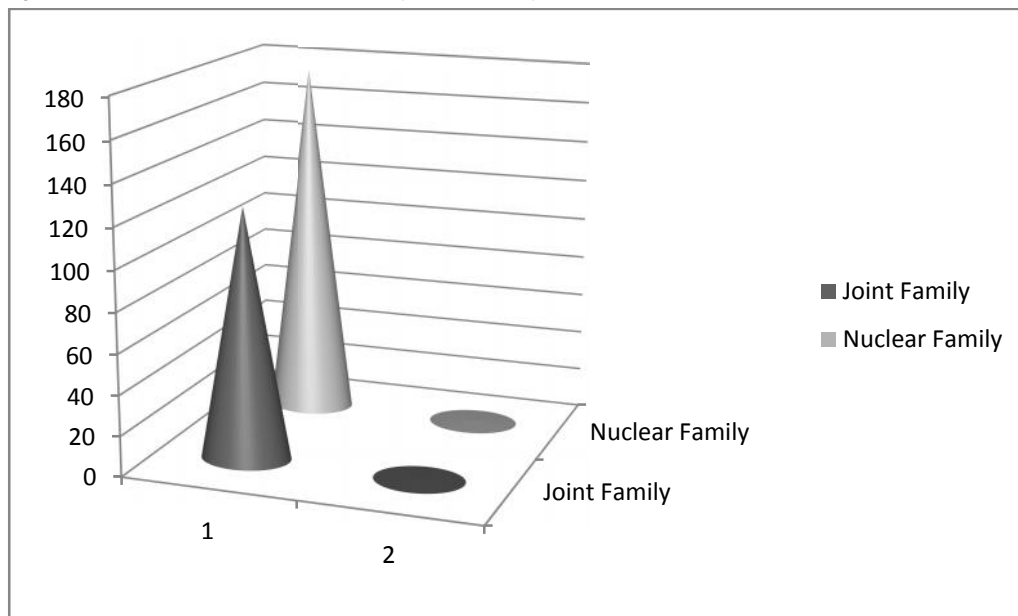
Sources: Compiled from the field study data.

It is observed from the table that educational level of the women domestic workers in the study area is classified in to six groups on the basis of their level of education.

It is evident that, 34.67 percent of the respondents were completed their lower primary education followed by 24.33 percent of the respondents have completed higher primary education, the 13.67 percent have completed their secondary education, 23 percent of the respondents were illiterates and the remaining 4.33 percent have completed means diploma, and certificate course other types of education. Domestic work is unskilled work and they do not required education and hence, majority of the women domestic workers have low-educated. Due to lower education, they become deprived in society. The impact of low-education resulted in unawareness of women domestic workers in social welfare schemes, rights, privileges, terms and conditions of their work, fair wages, legal commitments with employers, etc. In this way, lower education of women domestic workers has adverse impact of deprivation the society.

- **Nature of the Family**

The majority of the women domestic workers were migrated from other villages and towns in the study area. Some of the workers have travelled from their native place in every day. The other women workers are living in their native places and for the sake of work and employment they settled in Haveri. The figure 3 shows the nature of the family in the study area.



The 41.33 percent of the women domestic workers are living in joint families, whereas 58.67 percent are living in nuclear families. The number of nuclear family has been increased on account of cost of living and migration for employment without their relatives but they remains in their respective villages. Further, some of the families settled along with their entire family members in the study area. The data reveals that number of members in the family from 4 to 6 is more than 50 percent, 7 to 9 is 28 percent, 1 to 3 is 16 percent and more than 9 is hardly around 4 percent found in the study area.

- **Analyses of Income Status of the Domestic Workers**

Income of the family is one of the indicators of the economic status of family. Family income consists of individual income earned by all the family members. Higher the income and higher will be the standard of living and vice-versa. Higher income influences the level of education, social status and other socio-economic parameters. Hence, family income is determinant of socio-economic status of the family members. The table No. 5 and figure 4 exhibits the aggregate income earned by the domestic workers in the case study area.

**Table 5: Annual Income of Family**

Annual Income of Family (Rs. in thousands)	Respondents	Percent
30 to Rs. 35	15	5.00
35 to Rs 45	47	15.67
45 to Rs 55	57	19.00
55 to Rs 65	88	29.33
65 to Rs 75	35	11.67
75 to 1 lakh	58	19.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Sources: Compiled from the field study data.

The family income of women domestic workers is varied from Rupees thirty thousand to Rupees one lakh, and the total income includes income earned from the other family members. The level of income of different domestic workers depends on the occupations of their family members. The 5 percent of the respondents possess the income between from Rupees thirty thousand to Rupees thirty five thousand per annum. Around 15.67 percent of families annual income is between Rupees thirty five thousand to Rupees forty five thousand, the 19 percent families possessed the annual income between Rupees forty five thousand to Rupees fifty five thousand, the 29.33 percent of the respondents have earned the family income between Rupees fifty five thousand to Rupees sixty five thousand, the 11.67 percent have annual family income between Rupees sixty five thousand to Rupees seventy five thousand and 19.33 percent have the total annual family income between Rupees seventy five thousand to Rupees one lakh. Therefore, it is concluded that the domestic workers family members and their income is low and their earning capacity is still low level and thus majority of the respondents family are living in below poverty line.

- **Monthly wage Earnings of the Women Workers**

The women domestic workers were unskilled, illiterate, lack of knowledge on the prevailing situation of the economy and social structure. Therefore, women workers paid low wages which related to their progress in the society and they look down in the society. Under the present study the researcher has classified the women domestic workers in to five groups on the basis of their earnings. The table no.6 reveals the wage earnings of the domestic workers in the Haveri city,

**Table 6: Monthly Wages of the Respondents**

Monthly wages	Respondents	Percent
Less than Rs 1000	35	11.67
Rs 1,001 to Rs 1500	42	14.00
Rs 1501 to Rs 2000	84	28.00
Rs 2001 to Rs 2500	78	26.00
More than 2500	61	20.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Sources: Compiled from the field study data.

The 11.67 percent of respondents have earning the monthly wage less than Rs 1,000. The 14 percent of the workers have paid between Rs.1,001 to Rs. 1,500 per month, 28 percent of workers earnings was between Rs. 1,501 to 2,000 rupees and 26 percent of workers have given Rs. 2,001 to Rs. 2,500 per month. The reaming 20.33 percent of workers got more than Rs.2,500 per month. Therefore, it is concluded that more than 28 percent of workers comes under the category of Rs1501 to Rs. 2,000. It is inferred from the table that though the domestic workers rendering different services as cleaning, washing, assisting in kitchen etc they will paid low wages, it seems that they don't have stronger vice bargain to increase the pay and perks by the owners. Hence, the researcher urged the government to bring this kind of neglected people in to the main stream of the society and also make an effort to create awareness among them about the government facilities to make use thereby get rid from the pathetic situation.

- **Savings Behavior of the Domestic Workers**

Social security programs in India and Karnataka has not implementing property in unorganized sector, the people working in this area facing a lot of problem in their old age to secure more and more better life they have to save out of their earnings. Therefore, the researcher made an effort to find the saving practices of the domestic workers in the study area.

**Table 7: Saving Habit among the Domestic Worker**

Save Money	Respondents	Percent
Saving	64	21.33
Not saving	236	78.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Sources: Compiled from the field study data.

The table no. 7 shows saving habits and banking culture among the domestic worker, the data revealed that out of 300 domestic workers 78.67 percent of the workers doesn't have any savings in the bank of the study area due to low level of income earned by the workers. In contrast to this only 21.33 percent of the respondents know about the savings and the Jan-Dhan account. It seems that these workers coming under the BPL category but they have not aware of the existing banking facilities. Hence, it is concluded that domestic workers paid low wage and they have lack in government facilities on the benefit of savings. It is suggested to create awareness among the domestic workers getting more wages and other life securities schemes in the country.

**Main Findings of the Study**

- The domestic workers in India has been increased recently over 50 million and they are illiterate low skilled, poorest ruthlessly exploited people and look down in the country.
- Their contribution to the national income from the informal sector has been increasing. The domestic workers have lack of knowledge, illiteracy and they came from vulnerable sections of the society.
- The domestic workers have been deprived by the number of reasons i.e. wage discrimination, long hour working, no holiday, low dexterity, poverty and no job security.
- The socio -economic indicators like age, religion, marital status, educational status, nature, size and sources of income of the family have been used for analysis.
- The 300 random sample sizes were selected for the conduct of the study. The 40 percent of the women domestic workers belongs to 41 to 60 years of age groups, 32.62 percent of respondents belongs to 26 to 40 years age, 24.33 percent are in the young age group, which is between 18 to 25 years and the remaining 3 percent of the domestic workers coming under the age group of more than 60 years.
- Large number of younger and middle-aged women domestic workers are working in the occupation. Due to ageing and biological weakness, the aged women are unable to do physical work as domestic workers in the study area.
- The 84.67 percent workers are belongs to Hindus followed by 14 percent of workers belongs to Muslims and only 1.33 percent of the respondents are Christians. Hence, most of the women domestic workers are belong to Hindu religion.
- The marital status of the respondents reveals that 76 percent of the workers were married, 12 percent of workers were widows, the remaining 8.67 percent of workers were unmarried and single and only 3.33 percent of respondents were divorced respectively.
- Domestic work is unskilled work and they do not required compulsory education, therefore, majority of the women domestic workers are low-educated. Due to lower education, they are deprivation in the society.
- The data reveals that number of members in the family from 4 to 6 is more than 50 percent, 7 to 9 is 28 percent, 1 to 3 is 16 percent and more than 9 is hardly around 4 percent found in the study area.
- The domestic workers family members and their income is low and their earning capacity is still low level and thus majority of the respondents families are living in below poverty line .
- The domestic workers are rendering different services as cleaning, washing, assisting in kitchen etc. they will paid low wages, it's seems that they don't have bargain power to increase the pay and perks by the owners.

- Out of 300 domestic workers respondents 78.67 percent of the workers doesn't have any saving and banking habit in the study area it is due to low level of income earned by the workers. In contrast to this only 21.33 percent of the people to know about the savings and the Jan-Dhan account.

### Recommendations

- It is recommended that the government brings neglected people in to the main stream of the society and also make an effort to create awareness about the government facilities to make use of them thereby they will come out from the pathetic situation.
- The domestic workers paid low wages and they have lack of government facilities from the benefit of savings. It is suggested to create awareness among the domestic workers are getting more wages and other life securities schemes in the study area.
- The monthly earnings is very low, no holiday for the domestic workers, so it is recommend to increase their bargain power along with holiday during their ill health and once in Sunday.

### Conclusion

Every day the numbers of domestic workers are increasing all over the country, but they are illiterate, low skilled, low paid, exploited and they look down in the society. Majority of them belongs to Hindus, the large number of the women domestic workers belongs to 41 to 60 years of age groups, the majority of workers were married and single and only meager percent of respondents were divorced, majority of them is nuclear family, their earning capacity is still low level and they lack in banking habits. Therefore, this is proved at the micro level study in Haveri city in Karnataka state. Hence, there is a good scope for the improvement in their socio-economic conditions of the domestic workers in the study area.

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