

Socio-Economic Conditions of Domestic Workers: A Case Study of Dabwali (District Sirsa)

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Introduction

The number of domestic workers in India has increased over time, although they are unskilled very poor but despite this, the domestic workers who are in the informal sector have a very important and it is increasing day by day with the development of the country. Because with time, the families are becoming nuclear, due to this the demand for their domestic workers has increased. The demand for domestic labor to do all the household chores and to take care of the children has increased.

In particular, increasing urbanization has increased the demand for domestic labor, the demand for domestic labor has increased in big cities, but along with this, the demand for domestic labor in small cities has also increased. Despite having such a big role in the informal sector of the Indian economy, their work has not been so recognized and with this, they are still known as unskilled workers in the society. This section has always been a deprived section of the society. But the situation goes to become worse when their status in their houses is taken into consideration. The socio-economic conditions of this section is worse and despite earning so much in the house, they do not get proper respect. In their homes, it is seen that their husbands are intoxicated, they are beaten and treated badly.

Understanding all these circumstances, it becomes necessary to conduct a study to understand their social-economic conditions. Keeping these objectives in mind, the present study has been conducted in Dabwali city of district Sirsa in which efforts have been made to deal with important issues.

Methodology

Selection of Area

The study is pertained to the Dabwali od district Sirsa of Haryana. The study has been conducted in on female domestic workers concentrated area namely Public Club area, Kabir Basti and other slum areas of Dabwali city. From each area respondents have been selected randomly for evaluating the specific objectives of the study. So, a total of 120 female domestic workers have been selected by using the random sampling. The data have been collected by survey method from all the respondents. Personal interviewed were conducted on female domestic workers with the help of well-structured schedule. Exploratory research design had been used.

Sources of data

The study is based mainly on primary data. The primary data have been collected from well-structured schedule and questionnaire.

Time Period of the study

To collecting the primary data, the time period has been selected from 2021 to 2022 through scheduled questionnaire and interview and high sampling procedure.

Analytical Tools and Techniques

To achieve the specific Objectives of the study, data collected has been analyzed. For the purpose of analysis, logical tool and techniques such as per average, percentage, ratio and other required method tools have been used. The formula for calculating the simple arithmetic mean is as follows:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where, \bar{X} = sum of the values of the variables considered

N = number of observations.

Results and Discussion

The present section deals with the final results related to the socio-economic conditions of female domestic workers that are presented through the following heads:

Residential Status of the Respondents

The furnished result related to Residential Status of Respondents is depicting in table 1. It is found that 44.17 per cent of domestic servants are native while 55.83 per cent have migrated from other states. The most influential reason of migration of female domestic workers is marriage.

Table 1
Residential Status of the Respondents

Status	Respondent	Per cent
Native	53	44.17
Migrant	67	55.83
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

Reasons for the Adoption of the Profession

The furnished result related to reasons for the adoption of working as domestic servant is reflected through the figures presented in table 2. It has been found that 19.17 per cent of the domestic workers have chosen the occupation in point to supplement their family income. 10 per cent of the respondents have been observed to find their livelihood in that profession because of lack of the other employment opportunities for them in the market. It is worth mentioning here that a large

proportion of the respondents expressed their feeling with heavy heart and shared that it is the inefficiency of their husbands to earn enough to meet both ends of the family that forced them to work menial work in other's houses. Another surprising fact emerged from the survey that their male counterparts are remained busy in one or other types of addiction which affect their capacity to work.

Table 2
Reasons for the Adoption of the Profession

Reason	Respondent	Per cent
Supplementing family income	23	19.17
Lack of other Employment	12	10
Lack of Education	24	20
Husband is not working properly	61	50.83
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

Sample Population across Age Groups

The furnished results related to sample population across age groups are depicted in table 3. The demographic structure of the Domestic labourers shows that 5.83 per cent of female domestic workers lie between the age group of 18-30 years, 27.5 percent of female domestic workers have been found in the category of the age group of 18-30 years, and 40.83 per cent of female domestic servant lie between the age group of 31-45 years. The least percentage of female domestic workers has been found in case of below 18 while maximum percentage of that respondents found in the category of age group of 31-49. It shows that initially with the increase in the number of years, more female joins the group of work force as domestic help but after attaining a certain point, it starts causing negative impact on the working capacity of the female domestic workers. So, it led the results that increase in the age of these labour force causes to decrease in their working capacity.

Table 3
Sampled Population across Age Groups

Age group	Respondents	Per cent
Below 18	7	5.83
18 to 30	33	27.5
31-45	49	40.83
46-60	31	25.83
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

Distribution of the Husbands of the Respondents according to their Addiction

The furnished results related to the distribution of the husbands of the respondents according to their addiction of drugs, tobacco, alcohol and etc. are reflected through the figures presented in table 4 and it is found that the condition of the respondents is very vulnerable as in many cases their male

counterparts have been found to be intoxicating in many types. It is very deplorable that the husbands of the 22.5 per cent respondents have been found to consume drugs. Besides, 14.17 per cent respondents shared that their husbands consume alcohol while in 15.83per cent cases, they are consuming alcohol and drugs both thatmakes the condition more socking.

Table 4
Distribution of the Husbands of the Respondents according to their Addiction

Age group	Respondents	Per cent
Drugs	27	22.5
Alcohol	17	14.17
Tabacco	19	15.83
Alcohol+Drugs	7	5.83
Alcohol+Tabacco	18	15
Alcohol+Drugs+others	10	8.33

Source: Field Survey

Occupation of the Husbands of the Respondents

The results surfaced during the survey shows that a large proportion of the husbands of domestic workers are working as labourers on daily wages. It is revealed by the respondents that it depends on the luck that sometimes the husbands of them get work for some days and many are the days when they do not get work on time or for full day. But it is socking that a substantial proportion of the respondents are not able to being regular on their job due to one or more addiction habits like drugs, habit of drinking alcohol etc. The most striking fact emerged from the study is that in case of a large proportion of the respondents, the respondent is the sole earner of the family during most of the days in a year as the earning from husband is get disturbed by their addiction frequently or if they are able to earn something, they spend all their earning on the purchase of drugs, alcohol. Tabacco, etc.A large chunk of the domestic workers shared the fact that the habbit of drugs, alcohol, tabacco is prevailed at large extent in their section and that made them to work at least 7 or 8 hours in others home to earn livelihood to raise their family. So, the sole responsibility for raising up their children in case of a large proportion of the respondents is on their shoulders. Even, the parents or other family members of the family are depended on the income earned by the respondents as the son has already been in the grip of drugs or other types of addiction. It is also observed that from the furnished results that husbands of domestic servant areworking as rickshaw-pullars, auto rickshaw driver. Some of the male counterparts of the female respondents have been found working as Feriwala. It is also revealed from the results that none of them was found to be employed in government jobs.Many respondents reported that their husbands misbehaved with them under the influence of alcohol, abused them and took away their money.When this respondent refuses to give money for intoxication, they beat them up and sometimes threatened to throw them out of the house.

Table 5
Occupation of the Husbands of the Respondents

Serial no.	Occupation	No. of Respondents	Per cent
1	Govt. job	0	0
2	Private job	3	2.5
3	Feriwala	11	9.17
4	Labour	57	47.5
5	Rickshaw	15	12.5
6	Auto	6	5
7	No Work	21	17.5
8	other	7	5.83
9	Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

Respondents whose Children are Getting Education

The results surfaced related to respondents whose children are getting education is depicted in table 6. It is found that 92.5 per cent of the respondents have children out of which 65.77 per cent respondents agreed to the fact that they send their children to the government schools while 18.92 per cent of the respondents replied that they are sending their children to private schools for their education. It is also worthwhile to mention here that the children of 15.32 never attend school.

Table 6
Respondents whose Children are Getting Education

Serial no.	Type of school	No. of Respondents	Per cent
	Respondents having Children	111	92.5
1.	Govt. school	73	65.77
2.	Private school	21	18.92
3.	Not getting education	17	15.32
4.	Respondents having No Children	9	7.5
5.	Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

Income Earned by Domestic Workers per day

The furnished results related to per day income of female domestic workers in Dabwali of district Sirsa are presented through the figures presented in table 7 and it is found from the table that maximum percentage of the respondents has been found in the category of income from Rs.200 to Rs.300 per day as reported by the 67.50 per cent of the sampled respondents. It is also found from the final results that 2.5 per cent female domestic workers has been observed to earn that is less than Rs. 100 rupees per day while 14.17 per cent respondents shared the fact that they are able to earn between Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 per day. It is also worthwhile to note here that a small portion of the total sampled population of the study has been observed to earn more than Rs. 300 per day. The

noticeable fact that emerged from the study is that with the increase in age the working capacity declined due to which the number of houses in which they work decreases with their age and so as their earning capacity. It was also shared by these respondents that they normally charge Rs. 1000 for the cleaning work of the house from a normal house. However, In the house where they clean the utensils and do dusting and the house is little bigger, then they charge Rs. 2000 to Rs. 3000 thousand rupees per house. Some workers work as cooks at home and charge Rs. 3000 to 4000 thousand rupees

Table 7
Income Earned by Domestic workers per day

Serial No.	Income	No. of Respondents	Per cent
1.	Less than 100	3	2.5
2.	100-200	17	14.17
3.	200-300	81	67.50
4.	Above 300	19	15.83
	Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

for it. Those who have less age have worked in four to five houses, but those who have more age work in only one or two houses due to body weakness. Most of them said that they work in other people's homes for six to seven hours and in the morning and evening time, they remain busy in their own household chores and their husbands earn very little due to which they have to work all day because their house cannot run with the husband's earnings because the husband does not work for many days and if he earns, then they give only a little part of money for the expenses in the house because they need money to get drunk themselves or for the consumption of drug. The study found that the condition of these women is very vulnerable because their husbands do not take responsibility of the family at all.

Type of Houses, Sources of Drinking water and Types of Latrines Used

The furnished results related to types of houses, source of drinking water and types of latrines used are depicted in table 8. The study found that most of the proportion of the sampled population reside in semi-pucca houses although some percent of the respondents has a kuccha

Table 8

Types of Houses, Sources of Drinking Water, Fuel Used and Types of Latrines Used

Type of house	No. of Respondents	Per cent
Shed	4	3.33
Semi-pucca house	61	50.83
Pucca house	55	45.83
Total	120	100
Sources of drinking water		
Govt. tubewell	43	35.83
Own Electric motor	57	47.5
From Neighbour	20	16.67
Total	120	100
Type of latrine used		
Own	61	50.83
Neighbor	4	3.33
Open	54	45.00
Total	120	100
Kinds of fuel		
Traditional fuel	25	20.83
LPG	79	65.83
Electric heater	16	13.33
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

house. Although some respondents also have pucca houses, a small percentage of people have only tin to live in. A proportion has said that we get water through the facility provided by the government, and one part also said that we get water by installing our own motor, our own motor pump from which we get water. 50.83 per cent of respondents said that they do not have to go out because they have a latrine in their house, but more than 45 per cent of the respondents also said that they have to defecate in the open. The reasons behind this was remained as lack of sewerage system, lack of public toilets and lack of funds. When asked what type of fuel they use for cooking, a very big proportion said that they use LPG. However, some parts also said that they use their traditional fuel for cooking, such as they use wood.

Durable goods and Availability of food

The furnished results related to durable goods and availability of foods are depicted through the figures presented in table 9. It is found that only 98 per cent of the respondents have basic durable goods like watch, fan, bed in their house. A large proportion of the respondents have accepted the fact

that they have facilities like TV, mobile, refrigerator and cable in their houses but in some cases either they have purchased these facilities second hand or in some cases their owners have gifted their used items. However, many of the respondents agreed to the fact that they have purchased first hand items from market. It is also surfaced by the figures that 75 per cent of the respondents have been found to avail the facility of food 2 times in a day.

Table 9
Durable Goods and Availability of food

Durable goods	No. of Respondents	Per cent
Bed, Watch, Fan etc.	98	81.67
TV, mobile, refrigerator, cable operate	83	69.17
Motorcycle	57	47.5
Availability of food		
2 time in a day	90	75
3 time in a day	30	25
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey

Debt

The results surfaced related to debt on the family of domestic labourers are presented through the figures presented in table 10. It is found that 69.17 per cent of the respondents has taken loans out of which 65.06 per cent respondents have taken the loan from private companies or private people. 18.07 per cent respondents are of the view that they have taken loan from their owners in which houses they work. Some of the respondents have taken loans from their relatives. It was also revealed from the study that 30.83 respondents do not avail the loan facility irrespective of sources.

Table 10
Debt

Serial no.	Debt	No.of Respondents	Per cent
1.	Yes	83	69.17
2.	Through private schemes/Companies	54	65.06
3.	owners	15	18.07
4.	relatives	9	10.84
5.	Bank	3	3.61
6.	Others	2	2.41
7.	No	37	30.83

Source: Field Survey

Conclusion

It is concluded from the study that highest proportion of the respondents lie in the age group of 31-45 and at the early stages of their life domestic laborers are able to earn more. Besides. It was also found that migrated women are more vulnerable to work in others houses and the main reason for adoption

of this occupation was remained as the inefficiency of their husbands to earn sufficient to meet both ends. Their counterparts remain busy in their addictions like drugs, alcohol etc and due to the impact of these substances on their body and mind, they are not motivated and capable to earn better that forced the domestic workers to work extra hours in addition to their domestic works. Regarding facilities in their houses, they have some necessary goods in their houses and some comforts goods also but most of them are second hand or of the low quality. They seem aware about the importance of education and most of the respondents are sending their children to the schools. However, it is different that they send their children to the government schools due to lack of money. So, the study also suggests that fewer respondents are sending their children to private school.

In most of the cases, husbands of respondents involved in intoxication and sometimes work as labourer and they have very casual attitude towards their work and they are not regular. The household expenses have to be run by the respondents from their own earnings because their husbands spend their own money on the substances like drugs, alcohol, tobacco. etc. The household does not run even by the earnings of the respondents. That's why many times they have to take loans from the private sector at a very high interest rate because they do not have banking habits and also lacking in knowledge about government schemes. Many respondents reported that their husbands misbehaved with them under the influence of alcohol, abused them and took away their money. When this respondent refuses to give money for intoxication, they beat them up and sometimes threatened to throw them out of the house.

References

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