

A Study on Economic Condition of Maid Servants with Special Reference to Mysore District

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Abstract

Domestic employees are not entitled to the same employment security as office workers, schoolteachers, and other enterprises. As a result, women domestic workers have no job security because they are dependent on the moods and whims of their employers. A hike in the pay of women domestic workers again depends upon the mood of employers. There are several women domestic workers who have been working for many years under the same employer, without any hike in pay. As a result, these workers have been subjected to economic and social exploitation. Economic exploitation has progressed to the point where they have no wage bargaining power. They lack a self-governing organisation to safeguard their rights. This study looks into women's socio-economic problems and makes recommendations for improving the socio-economic conditions of female domestic workers in the case study location.

Keywords

Economic, Government, Workers, Wages, and Development.

1. Introduction

Despite all provisions in the constitution and various legal and instructive measures to improve the status of women, little has been taken in changing the socio-economic condition of the women domestic workers in India. Few of the state governments have taken some steps to uplift the socio-economic status of women domestic workers. For example, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu have introduced minimum wages for domestic workers. Karnataka is the first state to affix minimum wage for domestic workers in 2004 in order to establish some kind of fairness in wages. It was fixed at 600 per month for an eight-hour day of domestic (Hamid, 2006). Hence, it is an important issue to study the social and economic conditions of women domestic workers.

2. Definition of Women Domestic Workers

According to the Social Security Bill 2007 “Wage worker means someone employed for a remuneration as an unorganised non-agricultural worker, directly by an employer or through any contractor or agencies, whether solely for an employer or more employers, whether concurrently paid in cash and/or in kind, whether temporary or casual worker or as migrant workers, workers employed by households including domestic worker”. (GOI, 2007.)

3. Review of Literature

Domestic workers in ancient India was mainly performed by “serfs” who commonly belong to the poor category and were deprived to access education. (Gothoskar, 2005).

Domestic maidservants, also known as "Dasis" in medieval times, are not a recent addition to the country. (Mahadevan, 1989).

All of India's major cities have become centres for the recruitment of poor women domestic servants in recent years. A regular supply of women workers to these cities is facilitated by the absence of jobs in rural and tribal areas. The substantial increase in the employment of middle-class women is one of the key reasons behind this. (Deshkal and FES, 2002).

4. Objectives of the Study

- To study the socio-economic condition of women domestic workers in the study area.
- To suggest suitable measures to improve the living condition of women domestic workers in the case study area.

5. Research Methodology

The present study is on the empirical investigation based on a sample interviews of women domestic labourers in Mysore city. Mysore is a mid-sized south Indian city with a population of about 7.8 lakh and spanning an area of 128 sq kms. This is the second largest city in Karnataka after Bangalore, the capital city of Karnataka. This city is 140 kms away from the state capital Bangalore. The present study is based on both primary and secondary data and a systematic random sampling method has been adopted for the survey.

The primary data has been collected from 5 extension areas of Mysore city. Where there are a large number of female domestic workers, both homemakers and working women prefer them. Vijayanagara, Kuvempunagara, Saraswathipuram, Gokulam, and Siddhartha Layout are the five extension areas. To begin with, the majority of the people in this area are financially secure and can afford to manage maid servants. Secondly, a number of apartments are also more in the study region. The Survey has been conducted by taking 50 women domestic labourers of these areas and 10 respondents are randomly selected from each extension mentioned above. Simple tables, percentage methods are used to analyse the result and have been depicted by simple bar graphs and pie charts.

6. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Age Composition

Age	Respondents	Percentage
18-30	12	24
31-50	30	60
Above-50	8	16
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

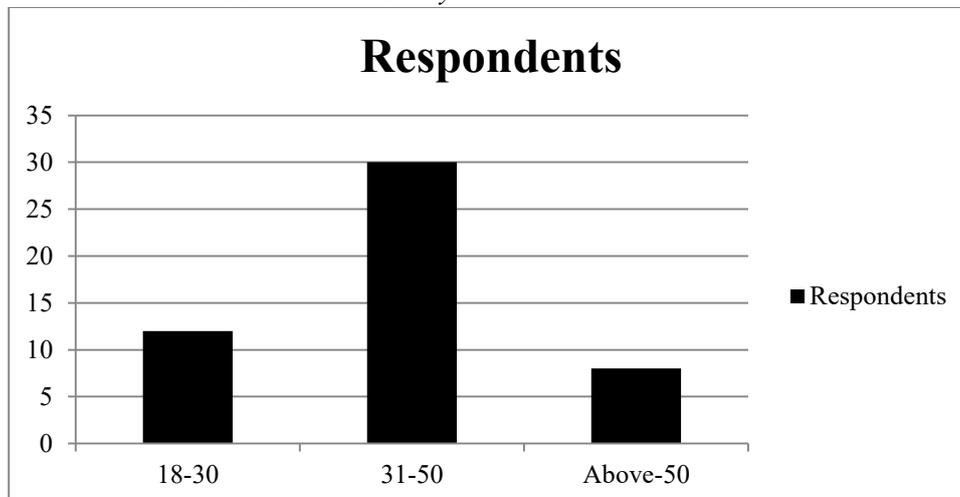


Table-1 explains that out of 50 respondents 30 of them belong to the age group of 31-50 years followed by 12 respondents belonging to the age 18-30 years and 8 respondents coming under the group of above 50 years.

Table 2: Educational Status

Educational Status	Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	5	10
1-10	38	76
PUC	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-2 analyses the educational status of the respondents, out of 50 respondents 38 of them have studied between the 1-10th standard of their schooling followed by 7 respondents studied PUC and 5 are illiterate.

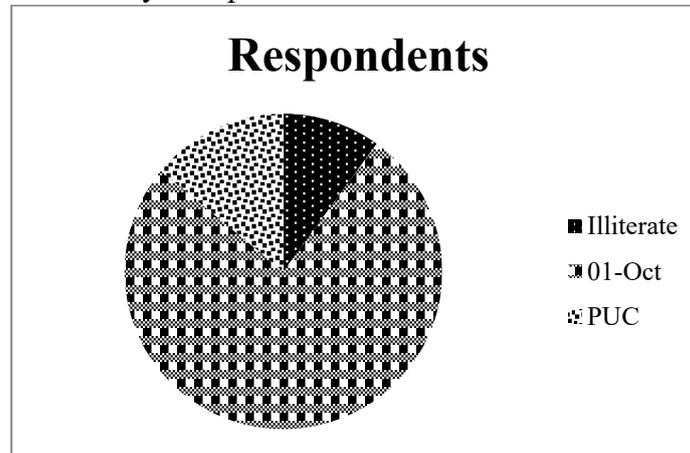


Table 3: Type of House

Type	Respondents	Percentage
Kaccha	10	20
Pacca	40	80
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-3 highlights that out of 50 respondents 40 of them live in pacca houses and only 10 of them still live in kaccha houses.

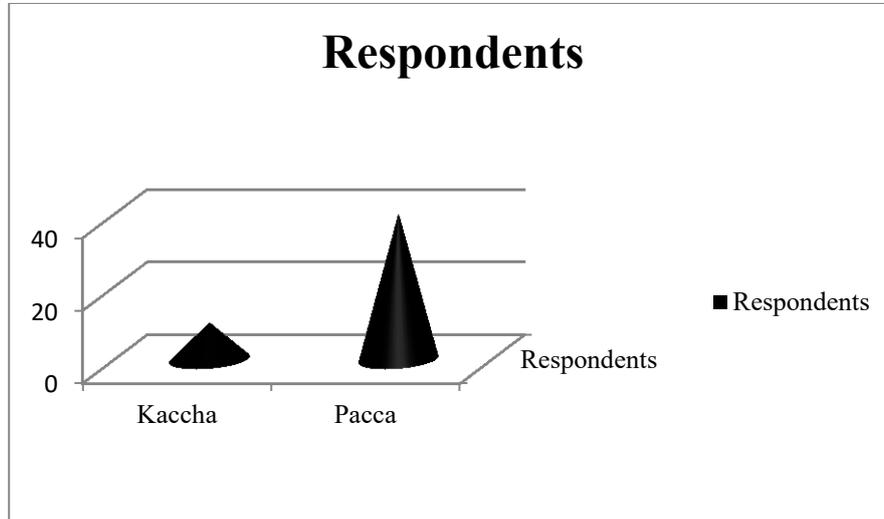


Table 4: Access to Potable Drinking Water

Access	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	40	80
No	10	20
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-4 explains that 40 respondents have access to potable drinking water and hardly 10 of them do not have access to potable drinking water

Table 5: Access to Sanitation

Access	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	40	80
No	10	20
Total	50	100

Table-5 reveals that 40 respondents have access to sanitation facilities and 10 respondents do not have the access to sanitation.

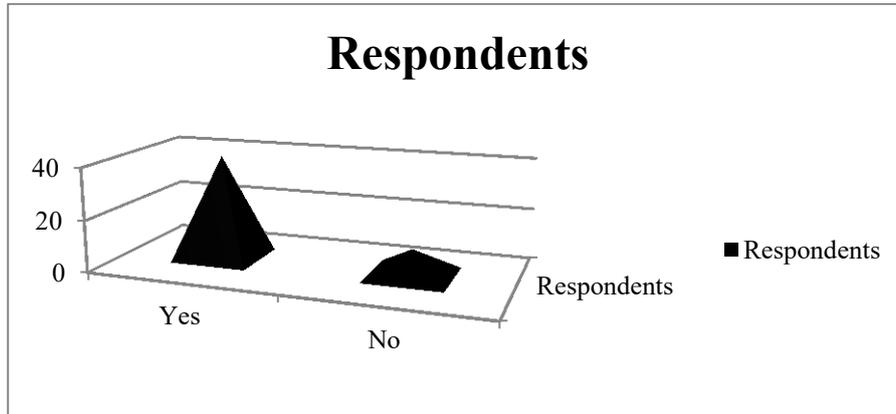


Table 6: Access to TV

Access	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	20	40
No	30	60
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-6 explains that 20 respondents have access to TV and 30 respondents do not have access to TV.

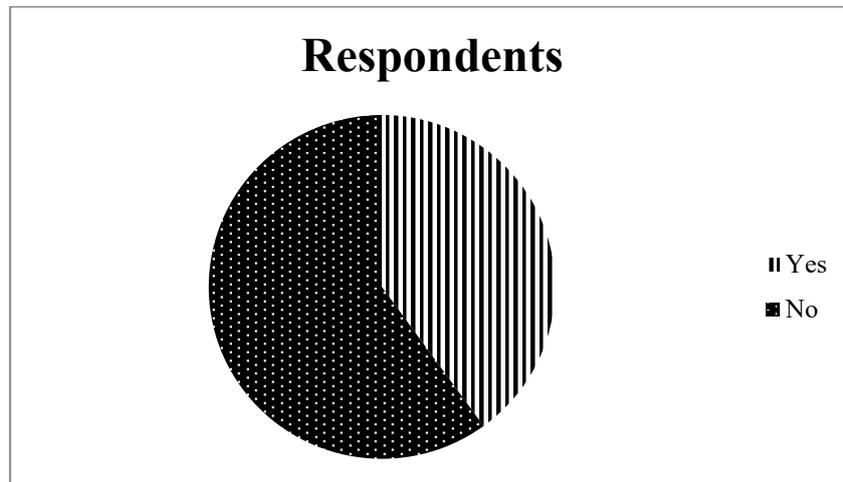


Table 7: Income per Month

Income level	Respondents	Percentage
< 5000	15	30
5001-8000	20	40
8001-10000	10	20
>10000	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-7 explains that 15 respondents have income less than 5000 per month and 20 respondents earn between 5001-8000 rupees every month followed by 10 respondents between the income of 8001-10,000 and only 5 of them have monthly income above 10000.

Table 8: Savings Level

Savings	Respondents	Percentage
< 1000	20	40
1001-2500	15	30
2501-5000	10	20
> 5000	5	10
Total	50	100

Table-8 examines the savings of the respondents, 20 respondents have less than 1000 rupees of savings every month similarly, 15 of them have between 1001-2500 savings followed by 10 respondents who have savings between 2501 -5000 rupees and 5 of them have above 5000 of monthly savings.

Table 9: Sources of Loan

Sources	Respondents	Percentage
Loan from Bank	10	20
Loan from Employer	28	56
Money lenders	04	08
Loan from Finance	08	16
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-9 explains that 10 respondents have taken loan from banks, 28 of them have taken as the advance amount from their employers, 8 of them have taken loan from some private finances and followed by 4 respondents taken loan from money lenders for a huge amount of monthly and weekly interest.

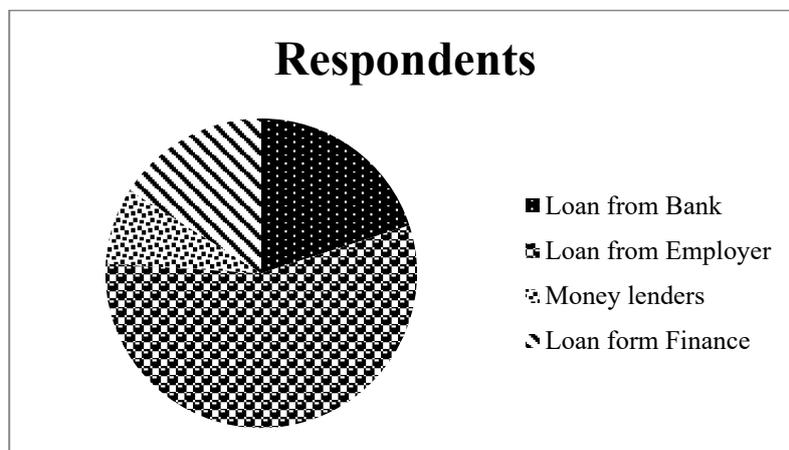


Table 10: Reasons for Accepting this Job

Reasons	Respondents	Percentage
1. Easy to do	19	38
2. Less tedious than casual laborers	12	24
3. No other skill	19	38
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

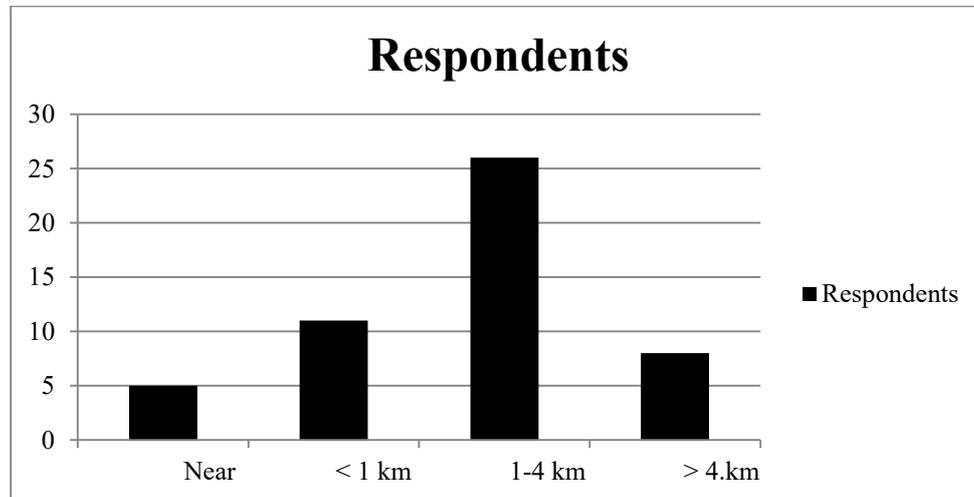
Table-10 reveals that 19 of the respondents have adopted this job mainly because it is easy for them to pursue job and similarly other 19 respondents said that they do this job since they do not know other skills, followed by 12 respondents who considered their jobs as less tedious if compared to casual labour.

Table 11: Travel Distance

Distance	Respondents	Percentage
Near	5	10
< 1 km	11	22
1-4 km	26	52
> 4.km	8	16
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table-11 explains that 5 respondents work nearby their dwelling areas, 26 of them travel between 1 to 4 kms every day for their work-places followed by 11 respondents who travel less than 1 km every day, and 8 of them travel more than 4 kms every day from their living places.



7. Findings

- The majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 31-50 years, because it is the core age for earning and contributing to the income of the family.
- 38 respondents have studied between 1-10th standard of their schooling because of free schooling facilities they have gone up to 10th standard and due to various sociological, economic issues they were not able to go beyond 10th standard.
- The majority of them live in Pacca houses because of various governmental schemes.
- The majority of them have access to potable drinking water and sanitation facilities.
- The majority of them have monthly income between 5001-8000 rupees and most of them have savings less than 1000 rupees per month.
- 28 Respondents have borrowed loan from their employers.
- 38 respondents have the opinion that they adopted their job because it is easy and few of them do not have other skills than this job.
- A large number of respondents travel to their working places between 1-4 KMS every day.

8. Suggestions

- This paper makes an attempt to suggest suitable measures to improve the socio-economic conditions of women domestic workers.
- Non-Governmental Organizations must organize general health camps once in 6 months for these women domestic workers.
- Education plays an important role in the life of every individual to lead a successful life, but in the case study many of them are illiterates, there is a need for making these domestic workers educated which in turn will contribute for them to get better employment and good health. As a result, significant efforts are required to put the measures existing on paper into effect.
- Central Social Welfare Board, National and State commission for women should take proper measures for improving the socio-economic conditions of women domestic workers.
- NGO's and volunteers need to educate the members of the family about the problems faced by the women domestic workers in their working places to make their work secured.
- NGO's should also maintain registered Welfare Association of these women which in turn will help them to get secured in their job places.
- Registered Welfare Association has to register the homes of domestic workers along with their phone numbers so that if an any employer wants the service of domestic servants can approach this association for booking the domestic servants.

9. Conclusion

Education plays an important role in the life of every individual to lead a successful life, but in the conclusion, the modern trend, the demand for domestic workers has increased, mainly because of the lack of time and the physical inability of the housewives and also due to the emerging modern lifestyle among the city habitants. Nowadays, people are very much in need of the help of these domestic workers, but the right recognition is never given to them and their jobs. As a result, domestic workers play an important role in the economy. However, society does not appreciate their worth. They themselves are not aware of the importance, and value of their job. So the necessary steps have to be undertaken by the Government to regard their job as a respectable one. It is also in the hands of the general public of the country to respect these

domestic workers with humanitarian concern. Because many of them are illiterates, there is a need to educate these domestic workers, which will help them find better jobs and improve their health. As a result, painstaking efforts are required to put the measures that are already on paper into effect.

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