

A REPORT ON

Study on status of
Women Domestic
workers in
Jharkhand

2022

SPARK/JHARKHAND ANTI TRAFFICKING NETWORK

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Preface

Domestic work is a hope of employment for lots of poor women. This is one of the few sectors which have a female majority and one of the largest employment providers for women and girls in Jharkhand. Various factors are responsible for the pathetic conditions of women in unorganized sector such as gender discrimination, poverty, lack of basic knowledge, ignorance of government, inadequate laws which are failing to prevent them. Thus, the plight of domestic workers will change, when they will be united to fight for their rights.

The domestic labor market in state and India reflects how various classes of women manage their daily lives, whether as employers of domestic workers or as employees. The cultural underpinnings of various intersecting relationships implicated in this scenario have remained under researched in Jharkhand. Based on a qualitative study in a specific neighborhood of Jharkhand, this article shows that certain cultural strategies pursued by female employers explain their differential behavior towards specific groups of maids. Observing that these female employers in among different district of Jharkhand, even if the latter are willing to work for lower wages, we set out to analyze why and how these employers evaluate.

One occupation is gaining importance day by day i.e. Domestic work. Before independence, domestic works were not significant; the demand for domestic workers has drastically increased in India since independence. The role of women in the development of economy and society is not less important than men. They constitute almost the half of the total population. Women, especially the urban women work variety of tasks getting little time for household work. Over last few decades, there has been a rapid growth in the number of women

employed in Jharkhand state due to socio-economic changes, increase in women rights and spread of women education in Jharkhand. Due to which the demand for domestic workers are increasing day by day. This Study is an attempt to study the socio-economic condition of female domestic workers in Jharkhand and to explore the problems faced by them. The study also discusses some issues and challenged faced by female domestic worker in Jharkhand state and argues why it is important to create a comprehensive social security system for domestic workers. The study is important to suggest policies regarding human resource development and women empowerment also.

Acknowledgement

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We are grateful to Swati Shikha for helping us design the report. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Md Shamshad and Md Firdaush for managing the administrative and financial aspects of this study. All opinions expressed, and mistakes in the report, if any, remain the responsibility of the authors.

H.I.Fatmi

SPARK/JATN

Table 1- List of Participant organization

Organisation name	Address	Contact person (name and contact number/email)
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Society for Participatory Action Research and Knowledge. (SPARK)	Ramzan Colony, Kantatoli, GPO Sadar, Ranchi- 834001	Hussain Imam Fatmi Contact No. 8340379778 sparkranchi@gmail.com
AALI (Case work support organisation)	20- Dr. Rungta lane, Cheshire home Road, Ranchi.	Ms. Reshma Contact No.9693853019 Jhk.coordinator@aaillegal.org

1. Introduction

ILO defines domestic work as housework such as sweeping, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cooking, caring for children and other similar work carried out for an employer for remuneration. A domestic worker can perform multiple tasks and often, they perform different combinations of tasks in different households. It becomes further complicated because the quantum of labor involved in some tasks is related to the number of persons in the household (like washing utensils and clothes). In some cases, it depends on the area/space of the residence of the employer (like sweeping or cleaning) (Kiran Moghe 2006).

There are also different types of paid domestic workers. The 'part-time' or the 'live-out' domestic workers are the ones who work for certain hours every day. They might be working in one house or many houses. The 'full-time' or the 'live-in' domestic workers are the ones who stay with the family. The family provides them with accommodation, food and a minimum salary in exchange for their services. The contracted workers are also very similar to them. They also stay with the family on a full-time basis. But they are contracted through Domestic-Help agencies.

1.1 Why Women Choose this Work

Many factors lead women to enter domestic work. Poverty and reduced livelihood opportunities for women in rural areas have forced them to migrate to urban areas in order to secure viable options for employment. Saskia Sassen-Koob (1984) says that female migrants are characterized by a double disadvantage, one of gender and another of class. They don't get the opportunity of being employed in highly mechanized forms of production work that pay higher wages. Owing to the gendered division of labour, women have been distanced from such forms of work, limiting their employment options. With formal jobs available and

facing gender discrimination, often coupled with discrimination based on caste or class, race or ethnicity, their options for decent work are a few. And, as most are from poor households, they generally have low levels of education and few marketable skills, other than their skills in keeping house and caring for others (Elin Peterson, 2007). Cleaning, cooking, looking after children and the elderly is almost universally regarded as women's work, which means that men rarely compete with women in this job market. Domestic work is therefore one of the few employment opportunities open to poor women. As more and more women go out to work, they need domestic workers back at home to take care of their households. Therefore, the rise in the demand for domestic workers can also be attributed to this reason. The government framed Jharkhand Nizi Niyozan Abhikaran and Gharelu Kamgar (viniyam) vidheyak 2016 (Jharkhand private employment agency and domestic employee bill) which was passed by the assembly recently, an official release said today. The bill was taken up at the behest of Chief Minister Raghubar Das who advocated for strong actions against such agencies. The bill is aimed at removing the stain of human trafficking from Jharkhand and putting a curb on placement agencies involved in the act, the release said. Under the new act, a license or proof certificate is required for placement agencies, and they should take license within 90 days of the notification of the act, including those existing before the notification, the release said.

Chief Minister Announces Placement Agency Law to be enacted at TIP Conclave Ranchi

The state of Jharkhand passed its Private Placement Agencies and Domestic Workers (Regulation) Bill-2016. The Bill comes at a time after Chhattisgarh and New Delhi notified their Act and the Delhi High Court

Executive Order, respectively to regulate the functioning of placement agencies, while affording legal protection to domestic workers. Jharkhand is yet another state with a large tribal population, hailing from remote areas and villages, and mostly from illiterate and uneducated backgrounds.

Ground realities of unemployment, lack of livelihood and difficulty in sustenance make Jharkhand a hunting ground of traffickers, luring vulnerable groups into exploitative situations. While the Bill is similar to the Executive Order and the Chhattisgarh Act in many respects, it works to strengthen the response mechanism at the source and the destination, by pinning liability on all erring stakeholders.

The Bill is divided into eight chapters, subdivided into 17 sections, dealing with specific subject matters. This article is a summarized introduction to the various aspects of the same. Under section 3, the state government shall appoint an officer not below the rank of a Labour Inspector to be the Controlling Authority, while defining the jurisdictional limits of their adjudicatory powers. Section 4 mandates every Private Placement Agency (PPA) to have a Registration Certificate for commencement and operation issued under the tentative Act. For those already in existence, the Certificate must be obtained within 90 days of the notification of the Act. Section 5 enumerates the necessary information to be furnished before the Certificate can be granted. They are as follows:

1. Information regarding Private Placement Agency
 2. Number, Names, Age and Address of persons employed.
 3. Details of salary fixed for each worker
 4. Address of person employed within and outside Jharkhand
 5. Minimum Bank Guarantee prescribed by Government.

6. Any and all other Registers maintained by the Agency.

The Controlling Authority (CA) will conduct enquiries regarding the aforementioned requisites for grant of certificate, to be completed on the fulfillment of prescribed terms and conditions. The Certificate shall be valid for 5 years to be renewed from time to time. Every PPA should have an office in Jharkhand with verifiable legal documents.

Under section 6 (i) (a), if the Controlling Authority is satisfied in the reference made to them or otherwise that the Registration Certificate was obtained through misrepresentation or suppression of material fact; and under ss. (b) if the certificate holder fails to comply with the applicable conditions and contravenes provisions of the Act without reasonable cause, after being given an opportunity to be heard and produce his case before the CA, shall have his registration cancelled by a written order from the CA and the charges settled against the Bank Guarantee submitted by the PPA. The same shall be conveyed to the PPA. The proviso to the subsection states that upon the discretion of the CA, the same shall stand revoked for the duration and time period as they think fit, via a written order with reasons which shall be sent to the Certificate holder by registered post. The CA shall, within the Rules prescribed under the Act, make the necessary/required amendments to the Certificate.

Section 8 attempts to encapsulate the essence of the Act by determining the 'Functions and Duties of Private Placement Agencies'. It comprises a list of Do's and Don'ts such as no charging of any fee from any worker registered with the PPA, no employment of persons below 18 years of age, provides details of registration of any worker to the CA within 7 days (as under the

Jharkhand Social Security Board, as well); and in case the worker is not yet registered, a written application signed by their hand must be submitted along with the Registration Certificate. Every PPA shall publicly display the name and registration details of the Agency outside its office, maintain and provide details of the workers/employee and their employers, ensure minimum wage to the workers with respect to the state laws, ensure compliance with labour laws so that workers receive double the minimum wage if they work beyond the designated 8 hours, ensure healthy working conditions and safety during travel. Under section 8 (9) every registered worker shall be issued a passbook from the PPA, with a passport photo bearing the following details:

1. Name, Age & Address of worker
2. Name of Employer, Address, Contact details, etc.
3. Proposed duration and terms of employment, weekly holidays, leaves, recesses, etc.
4. Payment structure and method, albeit no salary cycle to exceed a month.
5. Details of Relative of worker, along with details of Aadhar card (if any).
6. Bank Account details of worker, in which the employer shall deposit the wages of worker.
7. Lastly the pass book shall have, if available, the address and contact details of the Block Development Officer/ Local authorities/ Police Superintendent/ Women or Child Helpline.
8. There shall be an MoU to be signed and entered into with terms and conditions clearly laid down between the PPA, employer and the employee; provision for redressal of complaints/litigation arising out of the employment; provision for travel allowance from home to employer's which shall be considered a duty of the PPA, and lastly under section 8 (12) details of any contractor's or broker's or agent's

services if taken for recruitment and employment of any worker shall be provided to the CA, at the earliest.

9. **Section 9** provides for the appointment of an Inspector, by the state government, not below the rank of Labour Enforcement Officer/ BDO/Zonal Officer Etc., who is empowered to monitor and enter premises along with persons notified by the state government, where domestic workers are living or are employed, or at the PPA. The Inspector, if he/she has reason to believe that the records and details of wages maintained by the PPA violate provisions under this Act, then he/she can acquire such documents and/or records and copies of the same. Any documents or records sought by the Inspector under section 9 from the PPA shall be considered bound to do so under sections 175 and 176 of the IPC, 1860.
10. **Section 10** provides for a Grievance/Litigation Redressal/Execution Authority. It states that any workers aggrieved due to non-performance of duties of the PPA as laid down u/s. 8, shall by themselves or any other person or parent/guardian or Inspector file a complaint through the officer-on-duty at the local police station to be submitted before the Grievance Redressal Authority. The Inspector shall gather all relevant information regarding the complaint, and summon PPA to fill in missing details as required. Notwithstanding, anything contained under the Act, the Redressal Authority shall after giving reasonable time and opportunity to the Certificate holder or the employer to be heard against the complaint shall dispose the same within 30 days of its filing. A minimum penalty of Rs. 10, 000/- shall be levied against contravention of the order passed by the Authority, to a maximum of Rs. 25,000/-, against the employer or PPA, which can be recovered as land arrears. Moreover, the CA has the authority to cancel the registration of the PPA, prohibiting its operation anywhere across Jharkhand.
11. **Section 11** deals with the roles and responsibilities of the Jharkhand Women and Child Development department and the State Human Rights Commission. Under ss. 1, any person

aggrieved against the order passed u/s. 10 by the Authority, shall file an appeal within 30 days in the prescribed manner and form, which can be extended if the appellant can reasonably prove and submit in writing the reason for the delay. The appellant shall be given ample time to present their case, after which the order in question may be amended or suspended or delayed, as the case may be. Section 7 which deals with Appeal provides for the same procedure to be followed against orders passed by the CA under sections 5 and 6.

12. **Section 12** deals with '**Offence and Penalties**' levied under the tentative Act. Any contravention of section 4 shall attract imprisonment for a term which shall extend to 2 years and a fine up to 1 lac. Or both. Any person found in violation of the Act and any Rules made there under shall be punished with imprisonment up to 1 year or a fine up to Rs.20,000/- or both. Under **Section 13**, no court shall take cognizance of any case without taking prior permission of the Controlling Authority or State Government, except litigation filed by any person. Lastly, No court below the Court of First Class Judicial Magistrate shall hear the case punishable under this act.

2. Objectives of the Study:

- To study the socio economic conditions of female domestic workers in Jharkhand state.
 - To analyze the government policy initiatives and suggest policy measures to improve their conditions
 - To examine the socio-economic problems and issues faced by them.
-

3. Methodology of the study

Study area and participants

The participants were only women. The study involved collecting quantitative data through structured questionnaires. The questionnaire for women included items on socio-economic details and domestic violence experience. To assess domestic violence exposure, women were asked several questions on various behaviors of violence. Questions were posed to get their experience with a specific act of violence during their lifetime as well as during work time. These behaviors and corresponding questions have been identified to constitute domestic violence based on previous studies in other settings a multiphase process was used to develop these questionnaires to ensure that it was culturally and linguistically appropriate. These questionnaires were prepared initially in English and translated into Hindi. The questions, which were in the above languages, were back-translated to English, by those who are not involved in this study to ensure semantic and content validity. The translated questionnaires were further reviewed for linguistic reliability and correctness by the study staff. Later the questionnaires were piloted to check the appropriateness, clarity and flow of questions among some respondents. In addition, piloting provided practice to the research staff, which collected data using these questionnaires.

All the interviews were held in the local language of the field. Interviews took place in a private place in or outside the respondents' homes, and care has been taken to avoid the presence of other family/community members during interviews. If someone comes nearer during an interview, the discussion on a general topic was made and the interview was restarted after the third person has retired. Interviewers stressed that honest responses were needed during an interview to gain insight into the issue. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. To attain all these, care has been taken to establish

rapport with every participant prior to interviews. **These fieldworks were carried out from December 2021 to Feb 2022**

3.1 Sampling

The sample size was calculated based on the available estimated prevalence of Female domestic workers in these districts. Random sampling strategy was used to attain the required samples. Twelve districts were selected from different corners of the Jharkhand state.

Table:-2 Distribution of Surveyed Woman domestic major in Jharkhand

Name of District	No of women domestic worker participated	Percentage
Dumka	10	7.3
Godda	10	7.3
Hazaribagh	13	9.5
Giridih	10	7.3
Lohardaga	10	7.3
Ranchi	11	8.0
Khunti	10	7.3
Simdega	24	17.5
Chatra	10	7.3
Deoghar	10	7.3
Koderma	10	7.3
West Sighbhum	9	6.6
Total	137	100

From each district; rural and urban samples were selected randomly. In every urban area, certain pockets belonging to different socio-economic strata were identified. These strata were high-income group, middle-income group; low-income groups were identified

based on the information obtained from the local key informants and the physical appearance of housing.

After selecting the village/urban pocket, the research team met village/community heads and elders before initiating the data collection, and the purpose of the survey was explained. Rapport is established with the community and especially the women were taken into confidence.

4. Literature review

5. Previously, many authors have written on female domestic workers, their work and socio-economic conditions. To understand it in a better way, it is essential to review previous literature about female domestic workers to broaden the knowledge and build a better perspective. The domestic labour market in India reflects how various classes of women manage their daily lives, whether as employers of domestic workers or as employees. The cultural underpinnings of various intersecting relationships implicated in this scenario have remained under-researched in India. Based on a qualitative study in a specific neighborhood of India, this article shows that certain cultural strategies pursued by female employers explain their differential behaviour towards specific groups of maids. Observing that female employers in Delhi prefer domestic workers.
6. This study contributes to the growing literature on the cultural underpinnings of the labour market in India ([Harriss-White, 2005](#); [Jodhka & Newman, 2012](#); [Thorat & Newman, 2012](#)). It adds a surprising new element to knowledge by documenting how female Hindu middle-class employers of domestic helpers in Delhi engage in what we call 'cultural work', as we find them engaged in distinguishing their maids, and in the process discriminating between them, in terms of whether or not they are deemed to belong to 'our' culture. This activity reflects, we argue, choices embedded in plural South Asian imaginations of the self and the other, as these Hindu women as

employers use a particular cognitive frame of reference to rationalize their choice of domestic servants from the current locally available pool of women willing to work in the employer's home. In screening potential female domestic workers, what becomes crucial, as we observed and discuss, is the dominant concern of whether domestic helpers will match the socio-cultural preferences of the employing woman and her family. As culture is neither secular nor neutral, we find evidence here that 'religion' seems to have become the new 'race' when it comes to acts of discrimination.

7. The notable element identified and discussed here is that immigrant Nepali maids in Delhi are deemed to be preferable because, from the perspective of the middle-class Hindu employers, they belong to 'our' culture, whereas Indian low-caste Hindu and Muslim women are dismissed and treated as 'others', decidedly less desirable as domestic workers. Our article first provides an overview of the complex field of domestic labour worldwide and in India, and then turns to a contextualized assessment of the evidence from our field study. We conclude with some thoughts about what this specific kind of 'cultural work' on the part of female employers means for future studies on the intersectional ties of a family's culture and home environment, interposed relations and the potential for seeking effective domestic help.
8. Elite and well-to-do families in India, and elsewhere, have used domestic labour throughout history. Such domestic helpers could be men, women or children, but worldwide, women have been preferred as domestic servants ([Devasahayam, 2005](#); [Dutta, 2006](#); [Lan, 2003](#); [Yeoh et al., 1999](#)). Widespread patriarchal perceptions, institutions and practices mean that women are thought of as having 'natural' nurturing skills and qualities ([Kandiyoti, 1988](#)). The middle-class employers involved in our study emphasized this 'naturalness' of women for domestic work but also employed certain additional socio-cultural criteria to assess the suitability and desirability of maids. **The patriarchal logic of 'women's work is reproduced and passed on to maids, as they become the labour substitutes of their female**

employers. Even when men are positively evaluated as suitable domestic servants, Indian domestic employers highlight their infantilized demeanour, innocence and/or effeminate characteristics such as submissiveness and ‘caring nature’ ([Chopra, 2006](#); [Qayum & Ray, 2010](#)) as desirable traits. This caricature of the ideal maid is constructed in relation to the position of the female employer, signifying the process in which middle-class female employers become ‘Ma’am’ ([Huang & Yeoh, 1998](#)) or ‘Madam’ ([Lan, 2003](#)), a form of address bearing the colonial legacy of the master-servant relationship ([Nggakayi, 1991](#); [Whisson & Weil, 1971](#)).

9. Statistics fail to show the actual numbers of Indian domestic workers since informal employment is largely invisible and the actors involved manage to escape any quantitative scrutiny ([Mahanta & Gupta, 2019](#)). Scholars agree that India’s maids’ market has rapidly expanded in recent years ([Naidu, 2016](#)). Since this field is highly gendered, male domestic worker involvement in India is presumed to have remained stagnant at less than half a million between 1983 and 1999, while the number of female domestic workers almost doubled from about one to two million women in the same period ([Soumi, 2014](#)). More recent developments reflect significant economic growth and social change. Palriwala and Neetha ([2009](#)) estimate that the share of domestic workers in the total female labour force in India increased from 11.8 per cent in 1999–2000 to 27.1 per cent in 2004–2005, adding about 2.25 million domestic workers within just five years.
10. As is also widely discussed in newly industrialized countries and North America ([Bakan & Stasiulis, 1995](#); [Yeoh et al., 1999](#)), the growing maids’ market in India is closely related to structural transformations of the country’s economy and society. Key factors include the rise of ‘middle-class’ households, the proliferation of nuclear families, entry of educated women into the formal labour market and the lack of affordable alternatives for supporting children, the sick and the elderly. In decisions to employ a domestic servant, feudal ‘big house’ imaginations still grip the minds of ordinary middle-class householders, modern corporate managers and even feminist activists ([Ray & Qayum,](#)

[2009](#)). Employing domestic helpers is implicated in reproducing middle-class perceptions of status and identity ([Devasahayam, 2005](#); [Dickey, 2000](#)).

11. Scholars have long argued that neoclassical economic theories that describe the labor market as atomistic and perfectly competitive do not depict the reality of existing markets ([Harriss-White, 2005](#)). They have shown that the labor market is enmeshed in ethnic, national, religious and patriarchal practices and ideologies, which are used to classify, recruit, reward and discipline workers ([Mills, 2003](#)). These ideologies and practices are not mere aberrations in an otherwise 'perfect' market. Harriss-White ([2005](#)) argues that they are integral to the functioning of the market economy. In fact, workers themselves actively construct these identities and ideologies, as they scramble to safeguard their precarious livelihoods ([Adib & Guerrier, 2003](#)). Such processes have been observed in diverse cultures and geographical locations such as Singapore ([Huang & Yeoh, 1998](#); [Yeoh & Huang, 1998](#); [Yeoh et al., 1999](#)), Malaysia ([Devasahayam, 2005](#)), Canada ([Bakan & Stasiulis, 2003](#); [Bauder, 2005](#)), the USA ([Gurung & Purkayastha, 2013](#)) and the Middle East ([Frantz, 2008](#); [Garner & Gurung, 2003](#)).

12. Industrializations and urbanization encourage the demand for domestic services, with a servant-employing middle class and a surplus of unskilled workers (Neetha 2008). The growth of domestic service often increases inequality both in the rural and urban areas (ILO and IHD 2017; Wadhawan 2013). The rise of the nuclear family and dual-career couples has also increased the demand for domestic work. A study done by the Indian Social Institute (ISI) in 1993 had revealed that employers showed a preference for young women, especially young tribal girls, as they were seen as more reliable, obedient, and efficient in domestic work, especially in taking care of babies and the elderly. Further, they would also stick with the job for more extended periods, agree to work for lower wages, and could be controlled more easily (ISI 1993). The perception of the tribal woman as a better domestic worker on a cheaper wage is still prevalent.

13. The data on domestic workers show the feminization of the service with the share of female workers having increased sharply over the period covered by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) 61st (2004–05) and 66th (2009–10) rounds. There is also a wage gap between male and female domestic workers due to men engaging in more skilled work, like driving and gardening, compared to the women working (cleaning and cooking) in the same household. This gendered division of labor is the product of the patriarchal nature of the society (ILO and IHD 2017). The work done by women domestic workers are considered unskilled, and, therefore, it attracts mostly uneducated or less educated tribal women. Domestic work occurs in an isolated, largely non-regulated, and privatized environment, and most domestic workers negotiate job terms and pay on an individual basis. There is no provision of social security in terms of provident funds, health insurance, or pension. The conditions of work and poor socio-economic conditions of the workers expose the workers to physical and sexual violence, which remains mostly under-reported (Gupta 2019). The tribal pockets of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are recruitment hubs for women tribal domestic workers, picked up by recruitment agencies (Neetha 2008). These women often work in large cities. In Jharkhand, the majority of migrants are young women, some even below the age of 16, who leave home mainly because of a lack of work opportunities locally and for mere survival (ILO 2015). According to a study by the ISI (1993), there is a preference for young girls as they are easier to control and they also obey their employers.
14. Studies in different geographical and cultural contexts have shown that employers engage in the cultural construction of an ‘ideal maid’ by deploying racial, ethnic, religious and national ideologies ([Adib & Guerrier, 2003](#); [Huang & Yeoh, 1998](#); [Mills, 2003](#)). The local Delhi employers we interviewed narrate their maid preferences in terms of those who share ‘our’ culture and those who do not. Identifying ‘our culture’ with the Hindu culture that Nepali maids supposedly possess and practice, ‘our culture’ seems informed by a secularized version of Hindu ‘clean’ caste ideals, in which low-caste *bhangji* and Muslim

maids constitute the cultural other. We see this specific form of discourse as secular since caste is increasingly decoupled from the Hindu religion under the influence of secular and modern ideologies ([Beteille, 1996](#)). These middle-class employers do not directly speak of untouchability and ritual purity in religious idioms, but emphasize 'our' and 'their' culture in abstract terms or linked to behavioural traits concerning honesty and hygiene.

15. Data Collection and Quality insurance

To ensure that quantitative survey data collection is of the highest possible quality, we have instituted the following procedures:

- A full-time supervisor for each fieldwork team dedicated solely for monitoring, mentoring and assistance, in daily contact with the survey in charge.
- Very close supervision by senior staff for the initial week of field work; experience suggests that earlier identification of mistakes, timely correction and immediate feedback dramatically improves the quality of data.
- The fieldwork supervisor checks all data entry at the end of each survey day, aided by the in-built consistency checks written into the data capture software.
- Immediate transfer of data electronically to HQ for the data processing team to check the data entry for inconsistent, impossible or unlikely data points
- Time allocated for re-visiting interviewees in the case of queries over the data
- On a daily basis, each team will have a meeting where the day's experiences will be discussed and corrections made.

Training will include both classroom based training and field based training over a period of 2 days, including one day of hands on field

practice and debriefing, to double ensure that the objective of the questions in the tools are well discussed, understood and asked.

5.1 Data management includes standardization of data management and data cleaning protocols so as to facilitate reproducible research. Cutting across all stages of surveys conducted by team, from design to dissemination or results, are three essential themes:

Quality Control: Throughout all the stages of the project implementation, the aim of the survey leadership and management is to ensure constant quality control. Mistakes made in any one part of the study considerably diminish the quality and therefore the usefulness of the study findings. For example, well-designed questionnaires if poorly translated and piloted to address the local context will lead to poor quality data; similarly, poor quality fieldwork can be avoided through high-quality training, fieldwork manuals, field supervision, independent monitoring, desk-based data monitoring and comprehensive data checks.

16. Findings

6.1 Socio-economic Profile of the households

Data were collected on a number of community-level and individual-level variables that have been linked to female domestic workers. The community-level variables included are residence (living in rural or urban), religion (Hindu, Muslim, Christian or any other religion) and caste. During the survey, the individual caste of the respondent was collected and they were categorized subsequently during analysis. The Government of India had categorized some ethnic groups (castes and tribes) into scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward castes, and these categories are entitled to positive discrimination in education, employment and other developmental opportunities for their upliftment.

Table data 3 reveals that among all the reported cases 57.6 per cent are Hindu, 0.73 per cent are Muslim, 14.7 per cent are Christian, and 27.3 are Sarna. It is very clear from the survey, most (41.6 per cent) belong to the ST category. If we include SC and OBC in this, the figure is 57.6 per cent. So it is clear that only 0.73 per cent belong to the general category.

Table 3:- Household characteristics by caste and Religions

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	79	57.61
Muslim	1	0.73
Christian	20	14.7
Sarna	37	27.01
Others	0	0
Caste/Tribe		
SC	44	32.1
ST	57	41.6
OBC	35	25.5
Others (General)	1	0.73

In recent times, employers have not followed this rigidly as the supply of higher caste domestic workers has not kept up with their demand. Various studies, including micro-level studies such as ours, indicate that schedule castes workers (mostly migrants to the city) work as domestic workers. Studies have noted that some do not enter domestic work in their place of origin due to their higher caste status but do so elsewhere. Similarly low castes would not find employment in their place of origin but less strict caste norms in bigger cities would provide them with employment opportunities. Table 4 shows some household characteristics like house type, source of drinking water, the distance of drinking water source and availability of separate kitchens in the households. All these aspects are somehow related to the economic well-being of the household. It is very clear that most of the households live in Kaccha house. This is a sign of the poor economic condition of the households. Around 85 per cent of the

household has kaccha house. Well water has been reported as the major source of drinking water. A large per cent of the households do not have a separate kitchen. Either they are cooking inside the living room, in an open space or Verandah.

Table 4:- House holding characteristics

Own Houses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	123	89.78
No	14	10.22
<i>House type</i>		
Kachha	117	85.4
Semi-pucca	15	11.5
Pucca	5	3.1
<i>Wall Construction</i>		
Kachha	85	62.0
Pucca	52	38.0
<i>Roof Construction</i>		
(soil tiles)Khapraill	61	44.5
Asbestos	42	30.7
Cemented	34	24.8
<i>Source of drinking water</i>		
Hand pump	91	66.42
Well water	18	13.14
TAP Water	28	20.44
<i>Distance of drinking water place</i>		
Within premises	31	22.4
Less than 1 Km	83	60.7
More than 1 Km	23	16.9
<i>Separate Kitchen in household</i>		
Yes	16	11.5
No	121	88.5

Table 5 depicts some other characteristics like fuel source, source of light and toilet facilities inside the house. Figures are quite relevant to the group, which we are dealing

with. Thus it becomes very clear that the socio-economic condition of the household is very poor. This will be definitely a big reason for moving out.

Table 5:- Sources of Fuel

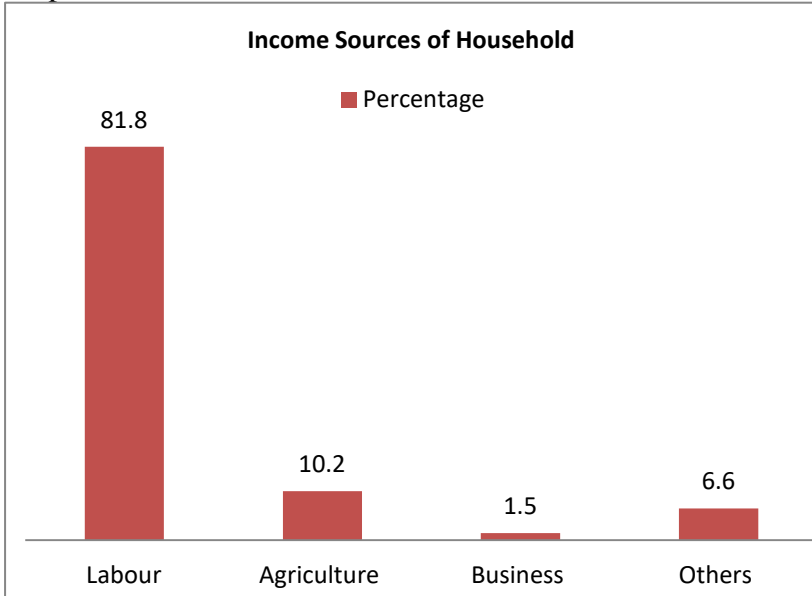
Source of fuel		
<i>Sources of Fuel</i>	Frequency	Percentag
Firewood	97	71.5
Leaves/Straw	24	17.2
Coal	11	7.6
Others(LPG)	5	3.7
<i>Source of light</i>		
Electricity	111	81.02
Kerosene	15	10.9
Others(Torch, battery)	11	8.03
Toilet facility household		
Kaccha	74	54.01
Septic Tank	63	45.99

Table 6 shows ownership of some selected assets in the household. This table supplements the findings that the selected surveyed households belong to the lower socio-economic condition. Cycle is the main asset they have as around 67percent are reported to have cycle. This is an important mode of transportation in Jharkhand. Around 8 percent have pressure cooker, around 34 percent have radio, 10 percent have television, and around 6 percent have electric fan

Table 6: -Ownership of assets

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Pressure cooker	12	8.4
Cycle	92	67.2
Radio	47	34.3
Television	13	9.8
Fan	8	5.7
Two-wheeler	1	0.9
Motor pump	3	2.5
Own Land		
Yes	72	52.6
No	65	47.4
Average land holding(in decimal)	3.59	

Graphs A :- Income sources of Household



6.2 Background Characteristics of Female Domestic Worker Age structure

The survey results found that 7.3 percent of them belong to low age group i.e. less than 20 years. The lowest age reported in the survey is 18years. One can imagine the trajectory of a young girl who is going out far away from parents to work as domestic workers.

Table7: Age profile of Female domestic workers

Age class	Frequency	Percentage
18- 21 Years	10	7.3
22- 27 Years	12	8.8
28- 32 Years	29	21.2
33- 37 Years	26	19.0
38- 42 Years	19	13.9
43- 47 Years	15	10.9

48- 52 Years	11	8.0
More than 52 years	15	10.9
Total	137	100

Education level

Education is acknowledged as the most effective tool in combating child labor. The lack of education opportunities available to children clearly contributes to the enabling of domestic worker. Information on schooling was collected from their parents. As expected most of the sample population were illiterate (60 percent).

Table 8:- Educational background

Educational background	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	81	59.1
Literate	18	13.1
Primary	31	22.6
Matriculate	5	3.6
Intermediate	2	1.5

Table 9:- Satisfaction from education

Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	34.3
No	90	65.7

With respect to the marital status of domestic workers in our sample, 52.6 percent were married at the time of the survey, 31.4 percent were widows, 4 percent had never married and 2 percent were separated. A reading of literature shows that the last three decades have witnessed a change in the age profile of domestic workers. In the 1970s, most women domestic workers were household heads

widows, deserted and older women. The situation began to change in the 1980s with increase in migration of families and also of single women (Banerjee 1982,1992). In their analysis of NSSO data between 1999 and 2005, Palriwala and Neetha (2009) note that the number of widows and separated women in domestic work has increased. In our study, 18 percent women were in this category. Most of the older women in our sample worked either because they were single or their husbands could not work due to ill health.

Table 10:- Marital Status of domestic worker

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	72	52.6
Widow	43	31.4
Unmarried	17	12.4
Divorce	5	3.6

Association with Social organization: - Data shows that one-third of female domestic workers are associated with a social organization such as SHGs, farmers clubs and others. A large number of female domestic workers were not associated with any social organization. Further data indicate that more than 65 per cent of female domestic workers were not interested to join any social organization. This shows that domestic workers have multiple misconceptions about social organizations.

Table 11– Association with Social organization

Membership of Social Organization		
	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	32.1
No	93	67.9
Interested to join membership of Social Organization		
	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	46	33.6
No	90	65.7
Cannot say	1	0.7

6.3 Family background of female domestic worker (FDW)

As indicated in the table below, a considerable number performed casual labor (daily wage work) while the rest had more regular work. In such cases, especially the former, the regular work of the domestic worker becomes the stable source of income for these families.

Table12 – Family background

Profession	Frequency	Percentage
Daily wage	45	32.8
Auto driver	12	8.8
Agriculture labor	27	19.7
Labor	28	20.4
Do not have work	20	14.6
Guard	5	3.6

Training and education: - Questions were asked to domestic worker about training and education. Data indicates that more than 98 percent Domestic worker did not participate in any training programs. Further caste wise data shows that slightly half of domestic workers are interested to join in education program.

Table 13 – Training and Education

Have you taken the Training		
	Frequency	percentage
Yes	2	1.5
No	135	98.5
Are you Interested to Join Training program		
Yes	19	13.9
No	118	86.1
Are you Interested to Join educational program		
Yes	19	13.87
No	118	86.13
caste wise distribution of education interest		
Schedule Caste	9	47.4
Schedule tribe	7	36.8
OBC	3	15.8
General	0	0.0
	19	

6.4 Work and Employment

Domestic workers in the sample work in a total of 137 households. They continue to work in some households for a long time, though the narratives indicate that they are forced to leave if the employer moves house or, in a few cases, when employers do not increase

wages. A worker working over a long time might have a combination of older and newer households, while a relatively new worker will have a different profile. Many people claim that domestic workers are working amid physical, social, mental hazards.

Table 14:- Types of domestic Work

Types of Domestic work		
	Frequency	Percentage
Part Time	72	52.6
Full Time	65	47.4
Part time working hours per day		
	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 hours	18	25.0
2- 3 hours	27	37.5
3-4 Hours	16	22.2
More than 4 hours	11	15.3

For the survey, parents were asked if they know about rest hours. Around 6 percent said that they are not aware about this. It is very clear that about half of them are not able to take any rest other than the regular sleeping hours.

Table 15:-Working time

Working time	Percentage
No rest	47.6
1-2 hours	33.0
3-4 hours	5.5
5& above	7.6

Nature of Work

In terms of nature of work, 78% respondents' nature of work was that they were doing the sweeping & mopping, 54 % respondents were doing all works mentioned in the table, 12 % were only doing the cooking, 4% were washing utensils & cooking, and 1% did the sweeping, mopping & washing clothes

Table 16: - Nature of work performed by Female domestic worker

Nature of work	Frequency *	Percentage
Room Brushing	108	78.83
Utensil Clearing	102	74.45
Cloth Washing	75	54.74
Cooking	17	12.41
Pet care	3	2.19
Gardening	2	1.46

*Note : Multiple response possible

Monthly Income

Income and expenditure are highlighted in this study as they affect the quality of life of Female domestic workers in Jharkhand state. Poverty eradication was emphasized as one of the socioeconomic targets to uplift poor households toward the fast-moving modern sectors of the economy. The primary objective of this section is therefore to identify income and expenditure relationships among the households of a female domestic worker in Jharkhand. The study attempts to analyze household consumption as a share of total income and to identify factors contributing to household income and expenditure.

Table 17:- Monthly Earnings

Monthly Salary	Frequency	Percentage
Rs 1000- Rs 1999	13	9.5
Rs 2000- Rs 2999	87	63.5
Rs 3000- Rs 3999	25	18.2
More than 4000	12	8.8

Income related data indicates that more than 70 percent domestic worker are earning less than rupees 3000 per month.

Table 18:- Expenditure Pattern of Domestic workers' families

Expenditure pattern each household			
Items	Average amount (Rs.)	Percentage	
Food	1927.74	30.9	
Cloths	891.06	14.3	
Medicine	624.2	10.0	

Education	640	10.2
Festival	1286.5	20.6
Saving	427.94	6.9
Others	448.47	7.2
Total	6245.91	

A significant and strong relationship between income and types of household expenditure is explored from the socioeconomic perspectives. Expenditure data indicates that expenditure on Food item is a major component of each household. Every household followed by expenditure on festival, 30.9 percent and 20.6 percent respectively.

6.5 Leaves and Benefit

68.6 percent households gave four days of paid leaves in a month, only 12 percent gave a weekly off. 60 percent of employer's deducted wages for taking more leave than agreed.

Table19: - Leave status of Female domestic worker

Availing Leave facilities		
Leave	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	94	68.6
No	43	31.4
Availing casual Leave facilities		
Yes	117	85.4
No	20	14.6

As in other cases, the decision depended on the employer as she may deduct wages for one extra day, or not deduct even for ten days of leave, including no formal leave agreement but taking leaves when required. While some did not take leaves unless they had an emergency as they preferred to be out of their homes for a few hours every day. But those who did not take leave voiced that they should get the monetary compensation in lieu of the leave not taken.

State and District of origin of domestic workers

Studies have noted that rural-urban migration is the fastest growing form of migration in India (Deshingkar and Akter, 2009). In our study, it is significant to highlight that 86 per cent of domestic workers were first-generation migrants with only 14 per cent born in Delhi. As noted above, a smaller number of migrants from Simdega and Dumka tribal districts were the majority of workers. They had to find a place to stay in the city and employment, in some cases without the active support of family or social network, and then face displacement within the city as well. As stated earlier, the working conditions of domestic workers have to be viewed against the backdrop of migration and displacement.

Table 20:- support from migrant domestic workers

Migration from place	Frequency	Percentage
Neighbor	15	10.9
Agency	28	20.4
Relative	19	13.9
Agency	Frequency	Percentage
Swetamber Kothi	12	42.9
13 Panthi	10	35.7
Yatriniwas	6	21.4

From the narratives of domestic workers, it was clear that the issue of leave was limited not only to the number of days of leave in a month but also the leave taken due to their illness, marriage in the family, visits to their native place, and so on. Other aspects related to leaves included the unwillingness of employers to give leave, employers' anger at leave without prior permission or information (even in case of own illness). In some cases, they had to cook meals in advance or wash all the dishes piled up after coming back to work. In some cases, domestic workers sent their daughters' to work when they were on leave. In effect, such employers did not give any monthly off to such workers. In case of illness of family

members, the majority took more leaves though. A few workers shared that when they went on long leaves, the substitute or replacement worker took up their work for lesser wages leaving the original worker without her job on return. A high per cent of workers had left their households due to dissatisfaction with working conditions.

6.6 Respect and Dignity

The notion of respect for domestic workers has different facets - respect within the family for their work and by extension, for them. Do they need to hide their work from their families? Does the extended family in the village know about their work? Does it lead to problems to arrange marriages for their daughters? Equally critical is the perception of respect that they get from their employers. How do the employers and their family members treat domestic workers? Interviews with domestic workers indicate that there is no gap in the workers' perceptions of themselves and the way society or employers perceive them. To begin with, many workers shared that initially, they found their work very demeaning. This is linked to the cultural notion of dirty work whereby washing dishes is considered to be a lowly and menial task performed by the lower castes. Though it is not strictly observed in urban India now, cultural notions can be all-pervasive. From the workers' perspective,

Table 21:- Dignity and respect at work place

Did you feel dignified and respected at your work place as a domestic worker ?		
Dignity and Respect	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	90	65.7
No	47	34.3

n-137

(Community-it is not considered appropriate for women to work. It reflects poorly on the stature of our men). In such cases they do

not allow their daughters to work as domestic workers and do not reveal their own status while fixing the marriages of their daughters. In some cases, the nature of the work per se is the problem. Instead of revealing their identity as domestic workers, they claim to work in schools or factories. Some workers hide it from their marital families but share it with their natal families because they are mocked for working as domestic workers. It is significant to point out that a majority of workers with a history of domestic work did not perceive it as disgraceful or undignified. Women who had no other support systems also did not view it as humiliating or shameful. Older women, especially widows, and women whose husbands were alcoholics or unwell did not hide the nature of their work and were not there about others' perceptions. Those who considered it as a job gave a range of reasons for doing so. To begin with, it enabled them to earn money but most were quick to point out that it was not the same.

Table 22: - Dignity and respect in family

In factories, offices or schools; domestic workers get neither respect nor the benefits associated with office jobs such as bonuses or pensions. For instance, a worker in her late forties from Maharashtra describes it as a job as she earns, but it is poorly paid. Yet, she said, lesser wages are better than sitting at home.

Some workers added that they had no pride in their work those who did not consider it to be a job argued that cleaning homes and dishes is not work. This, as discussed earlier, is considered as an extension of

women's work outside her household that is remunerated but considered to be a lowly task. All those who did not like their work cited it as a significant reason for their dislike. Another reason for not considering it was the lack of security. It is unstable—plenty today but none tomorrow. In this context, it is significant to note that they may treat it as a job as it enables them to earn money but it does not give them any dignity or associated perks such as bonus, pension, or maternity leave. A majority of the interviewees said that they would instead like to work as a school ayah (nanny/helper). A few said that they would like to be self-employed, maybe as fruit or vegetable sellers or even work in a factory. Most of them did not want their daughters to enter this profession. Treatment by employers besides the respect that the worker gives to her work and that she receives from her own family, the respect that they get from their employer is critical. In the survey, we asked workers about their treatment by employers. More than half per cent said that they are treated with respect and in a pleasant manner while one-third per cent said that their employers were always angry and disrespectful. In some households, employers spent some time talking with them, while in others the conversations were only limited only to work. Two and

a half per cent of workers reported facing verbal abuse while 0.3 per cent of workers had faced physical violence. They shared similar experiences in the course of the interviews as well. A few workers shared that employers scolded them if they reached late or even used foul language. Some workers highlighted that employers do not like being answered back. A worker in her fifties shared that one of her employers always asked her to work faster which she was unable to do and often ended up having an unpleasant argument with the employer. Another worker in her forties said that one of her employers used abusive language and generally talked with disrespect. This stopped after the worker protested strongly. A worker in her forties was beaten up by her employer's neighbour after a misunderstanding about throwing dirty water on the latter's clothesline. The part-time worker was fired without payment of wages. In the entire above-mentioned situation, workers had no access to any help or complaint mechanism against abusive behaviour. The only option was to quit work at the abusive employer's house. Yet, their need for money forces them to continue working. However, after working for a few years as a domestic worker and figuring out the dynamics of changing jobs, workers

do not like to work in households that do not treat them well. They start looking for work and quit as soon as they have options. Most workers shared that employers test them from time-to-time, especially at the beginning of their work by leaving valuable items around in the house. At times they face theft accusations as well. The only option was to stop working at that house. Another important aspect related to dignity is access to toilets in employers' homes. We have already noted that domestic workers in our sample used toilets. Separate dishes were kept for 22 per cent of the workers, sometimes under the kitchen sink. More than 50 per cent of the surveyed domestic workers eat their lunch (carried by them) at their employer's homes. The employers did not object to their eating food brought from home by the domestic worker. But, in doing so, domestic workers did not use any dishes and also ate their food sitting on the floor. A small percentage also ate it under the steps of multi-storied apartments, others in parks and a few others with other workers such as the dhobi's (person who washes and irons clothes) family. Many find the denial of access to neighborhood parks demeaning. Though only a small percentage of workers reported not being allowed to sit in parks, they find it insulting and were vocal about it in our discussions with them. As discussed earlier, the

definition of workplace and the employer-employee

Did you feel dignity and respect in family as domestic worker?

relationship in the case of domestic work is unique. Even within the informal sector, the case of domestic work is different from the rest of the sector as the workplace is a family's home and the relationship between the employer and employees is a subjective one that varies from case to case. Meeting employers of domestic workers who were part of the study proved to be difficult. We asked domestic workers to give us the telephone numbers of their employers or get them for us. A majority of them refused to say as they did not want any repercussions on their work. Very few workers gave us the phone numbers. We clarified to the employers that the purpose was to gain insight into the employers' perspectives on domestic work in general and not their domestic workers. Except for a couple of them, most employers were not keen to meet. As the next best option, we contacted other employers in the same neighborhood to discuss the above-mentioned issues. Barring a few exceptions, we interviewed employers in those neighborhoods where part-time domestic workers.

Dignity and Respect	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	94	68.6
No	43	31.4

6.7 Employers’ perspectives

Significantly, few employers perceived that in our culture the household is not only the responsibility of women but in fact, men order women around. The women are able to take this workload only with the assistance of domestic workers. Others added that as someone else takes over the house, they have time for their children and themselves.

Table 23:- Background of Employer

Background of Employer		
Family size of Employer	Frequency	percentage
1- 2 persons	12	8.8
2-3 persons	66	48.2
3-4 persons	48	35.0
More than 4 persons	11	8.0

“Those who do not employ a domestic worker are viewed disparaging,” a middle-class employer on the domestic workers as status symbols. Some employers also observed that employing domestic workers is now a lifestyle statement as it is considered odd not to keep one and instead do all housework oneself. An employer of modest means living in a middle-class locality shared that it is also a status statement to have a domestic worker. An upper middle class employer observed that

people view women who clean their own house rather oddly and assume that they cannot employ a worker owing to financial problems corroborates this statement.

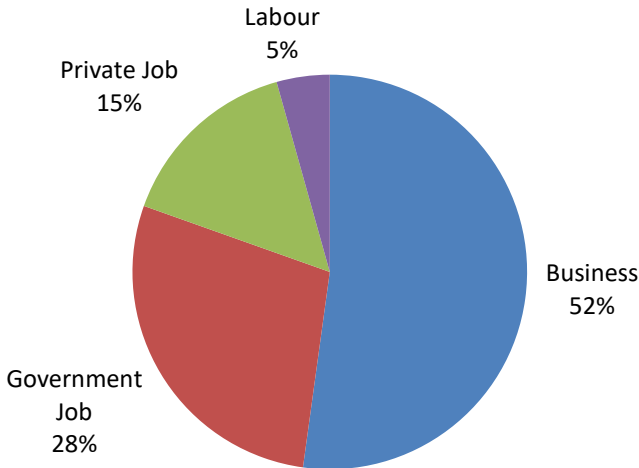
Table 24 :- Engagement status of Employer

Working status	Frequency	percentage
Yes	92	67.2
No	45	32.8

Majority of employers were of the view that in cities the importance of caste has declined over time, though religion may still be a criterion to select a domestic worker. Most of them were of the view that Hindu employers still prefer Hindu workers and similarly Muslim employers would select workers of the same religion.

Graphs B: - Distribution of Employer by sectors

Percentage distribution Engagement of Employer by percent



All employers emphasized that cleanliness of the worker is of paramount importance while selecting a worker. Besides this, some added that they note the tone of the worker as they expect her to speak politely. When employing a new worker, they discussed rates according to the rate of the area, number of leaves in a month (leaves have to be taken with prior notice and permission), quality of work, the importance of punctuality and honesty. Almost all employers would like to have a worker who comprehends instructions properly.

We asked the employers whether they had any regional preferences when selecting a domestic worker. Most employers stated that the personality and cleanliness of the worker is of more importance than the region. They were considered to be a part of the family and were not offended by

the employers' admonishment. They added that scolding them in the current scenario might result in the worker quitting the job. Employers said that in earlier times workers were more honest than now. Sometimes to test them, they leave valuable items around to check whether the worker steals them or not. The nostalgia around 'servants' from their parents' generation surfaced regularly in their narratives. Most employers did not appreciate the change in attitudes of domestic workers over time. The term 'loyalty' appeared often in their discussions, with hints that workers used to be more loyal earlier. They lamented that workers now demanded leave, more wages and respectful treatment from employers. Others observed that they now changed jobs frequently looking for better paying ones, had their preferences of employers and were also aware of their rights. Some employers used the term 'professional' but regretted the change to an impersonal relationship.

A few employers reflected on the current political understanding of domestic work. For instance, while discussing the notion of loyalty, one employer stated, "What we consider loyalty was actually a lack of choices. Earlier workers did not have an understanding as today. Now they are beginning to realize that they are workers with rights and have the option of leaving the house where they are not treated well". But she also added that they capitalize on the fact that all households need them. It is important to highlight here that some activists have observed that employers often do not want government intervention as they believe that the relationship between the domestic worker and

employer is a personal and private one. However, most employers were taken aback when we asked them if they considered domestic work to be skilled work and reflected before they answered. Some of them were of the view that they would consider cooking as skilled but not cleaning. Others felt that the workers even learn cleaning in the city as the style of cleaning in villages is very different. Few employers thought that they had to train the workers, especially the live-in worker. Most employers did not think it to be skilled - some did not give it the status of work. They added that they have become workers only because of compulsions and have no desire to learn, adding that it is a woman's work in the home and not an office. Most say that with training, if at all, the worker can improve only marginally better.

Relationship between employers and domestic workers

The relationship between employers and domestic workers is a complex one. It often extends beyond that of the worker and employer as the workspace is a home and the two exchange personal notes and offer emotional support to each other. Employers pointed out that the relationship is very subjective and depended on the individuals involved.

Few others said that their workers offered them emotional support as they shared their problems with them. They talked to them for few hours every day as companions. Another employer said that even though they do not seek them out as companions, working over long periods of time brought them closer with better rapport. On the other hand, some employers said that they did

hear out the problems of workers but did not share their own. Few others said that their conversations were related to work only.

As we have seen earlier in the section on benefits, even when they had stopped working for some employers (especially when the employer moved house), some employers encouraged their ex-workers to continue meeting them and gave gifts on special occasions such as weddings in the family of either the worker or the employer. In some cases, employers also paid the school fees (ranging from ` 20 - 100 per month), or gave them gifts (ranging from cash, clothes, utensils and a new cooking stove) at the time of weddings of their children. They added that they took care of some medical expenses as well. These could vary from brief illnesses to, in rare cases, an expensive surgery. However, as is the case with the entire discussion so far, it all depended on individual employers. The issue of the relationship blurred the work equation and workers often commented that employers get workers to do extra work just by speaking politely or affectionately. It can also be an emotional tie but one where hierarchies of class and power are clear. Our research has shown that though interpersonal relationships between the two are an important aspect of domestic work, the employer always decides the boundaries of such relationships - the extent to which the domestic worker will be privy to their lives, or the extent of benefits to be provided. The hierarchy of the relationship is thus reinforced.

Interpersonal relationships between employer and employee is a major component to build up a good relationship. Another important aspect related to dignity is access to toilets in employers' homes. We have already noted that domestic workers in our sample used toilets in large percent households use employers' toilets while 40 percent households have a separate facility. Separate dishes were kept for the workers, sometimes under the kitchen sink. The employers did not object to them eating food brought from home by the domestic worker. But in doing so, domestic workers did not use any dishes and also ate their food sitting on the floor. Many find denial of access to neighborhood parks demeaning.

6.8 Physical and Sexual harassment

As per the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013, a workplace is defined as “any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment, including transportation provided by the employer for undertaking such a journey” (MoWCD 2015). There has been much debate about the definition of the workplace in the context of sexual harassment. In the past, it was understood that the workplace only consists of the boundary of the premises where the employees work. Others have argued that even public places that are frequented by the employees, which constitute their extended workplace, should also be included in the definition (MFF and Govt. of Sikkim 2016).

The ILO uses the concept of “the world of work” to include the broader place of economic activities. The concept of the world of work helps capture paid productive work that does not take place within the traditional “public sphere” such as a factory or office, but which is employment such as selling products in the street or artisanal production or piece work in the home (PRIA and ILO 2013). It also comprises not just the place of work but related contexts where gender-based violence can take place, such as on public transportation going to work, or returning back home after a night shift (ibid). It is important to recognize and include the broader place of economic activities in any effort to prevent and address sexual harassment.

A domestic worker’s workplace, therefore, includes the residential complexes and houses that she works in. But since a domestic worker works in multiple workplaces (i.e. In multiple households), the constituency of her workplace also extends to the streets and the transportation that she accesses regularly to commute between her multiple workplaces. From the time a domestic worker leaves her own house for work till the time she comes back from work, all the spaces inhabited by her between that time, encompass her workplace. Also, often domestic workers are seen accompanying their employers to restaurants, events and other public places, where they are responsible for the care of the children of the employer. In fact, a domestic worker who visits a market/shop to purchase fruits, vegetables or groceries for her employer is also at work and in her workplace. All these spaces, which a domestic worker visits for the purpose for her work, also become her workplace or the ‘world of her work’, because she is engaging in productive work in all the aforementioned spaces and is

vulnerable to sexual harassment (or any other form of gender-based violence) when she is inhabiting these spaces.

Given how fragmented and expansive a domestic worker's workplace is, she is vulnerable to sexual harassment from not just her employer, but anyone who inhabits these multiple spaces, when she visits them for the purpose of work. There have been instances when a domestic worker has been sexually harassed by the guards of a housing complex or the plumbers, driver or shopkeepers in and around her workplace. They are also regularly harassed on the streets on their way to work. All such instances constitute sexual harassment of a domestic worker at her workplace, because she comes in contact with these people for the purpose of work.

It is widely recognized that women find it very difficult to report sexual harassment at workplaces and are forced to remain silent. This could be because women are often blamed for the harassment. The power dynamics between employers and employees and fear of discrimination or dismissal also ensure they keep silent. Lack of awareness of laws, little confidence in complaint mechanisms or stigma due to breach in confidentiality can also be responsible for the silence (Sanhita 2007)

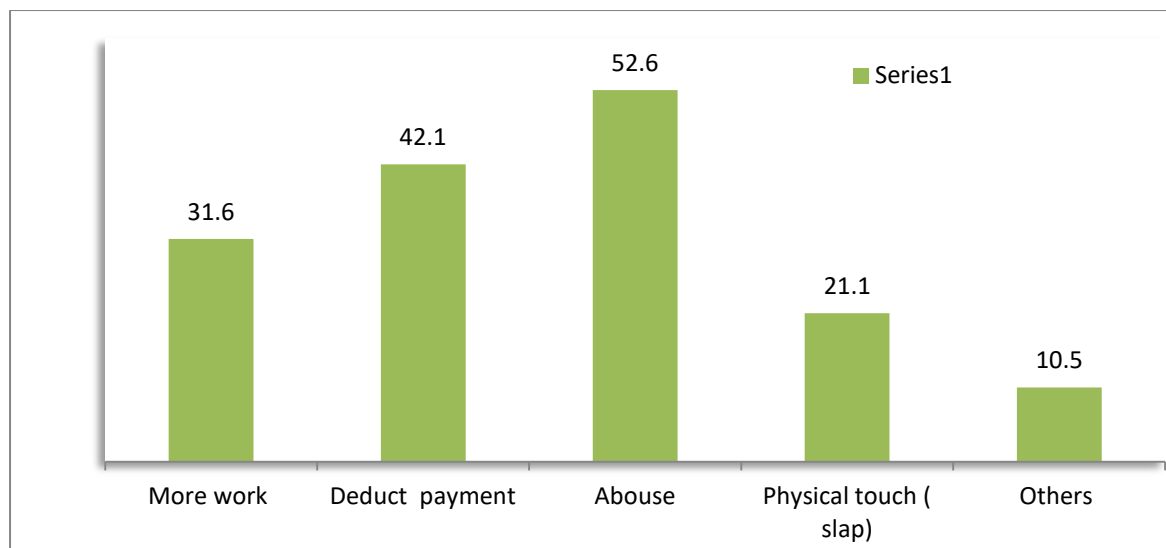
Table 25:- Prevalence of harassment reported by Female Domestic worker

Did you face Harassment		
Harassment	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	13.9
No	118	86.1

Type of Harassment	Frequency	Percentage
More work	6	31.6
Deduct payment	8	42.1
Abuse	10	52.6
Physical touch (slap)	4	21.1
Others	2	10.5

Regarding the harassment of FDWs, 86 % employers did not harass the respondent in any form & only 13% were being harassed out of that 23% respondents 13%. In terms of the behavior and attitude (reactions) of respondents own family members towards FDW, more than fifty percent (52%) respondent's family did not react, 52% behaved badly, 15% behavior was good & 10% respondents did not have a family.

Graphs C- Distribution of physical and sexual harassment reported by FDW



Likewise, cases of sexual harassment faced by part-timers are seldom reported in the survey, we asked workers if there had been any instance of a male member of the employer's household saying or doing something that they did not approve. Some workers answered in the affirmative. These included instances of verbal abuse and sexually suggestive comments. When we asked them about the steps that they had taken thereafter, all of them responded that they stopped working for these households. The only recourse available to them amounts to loss of work and wages.

Given the varied nature of sexual harassment and the complexity involved in reporting complaints, we have tried to explore the issue with part-time workers. It was important for us to explore whether domestic workers understood what constituted sexual harassment.

Table 26– Prevalence of harassment during Travel

Did You faced Harassment during Travel to work Place		
Travel Harassment	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	9	6.6
No	110	80.3
Not Reported	18	13.1

Conclusion

The study confirms the high prevalence of all forms of violence against domestic working women across all socio-economic settings in Jharkhand. However, urban residence, older age, lower education and lower family income are associated with occurrence of domestic violence. Women are at risk of violence from the husband than any other type of perpetrator. This situation has public health implications as public health can have a role in preventing the violence and its health consequences. As India has already passed a bill against domestic violence, the present results on robustness of

the problem will be useful to sensitize the concerned agencies to strictly implement the law.

6.9 Major Issues relating to Domestic Workers

The major issue is that working in other people’s houses, considered as private Spaces, makes it difficult to bring the house environment under the ambit of a legal framework. Secondly, since most of the domestic workers are illiterate & uneducated, they are oblivion of their rights and are easily exploited and deprived of wages and humane working conditions.

Since most of the domestic workers are recruited from rural or tribal areas it becomes difficult for them to adapt to new environment, culture, and language which in turn increases their loneliness and anxiety. They have no or very little time to socialize with friends or relatives and most often is prohibited from doing so. Coupled with the lack of state regulation of domestic service, the statuses of the domestic workers have been reduced to nothing short of servility. The lack of redressal mechanism of their grievances also makes them resort to violent forms of agitation as witnessed..

It is estimated that 25% of them are below the age of 20. They are mostly engaged in activities that are traditionally seen as women’s work such as cooking, washing, and cleaning. In Indian society, the stigma associated with domestic work is heightened by the caste system since the chores like cleaning and sweeping are associated with the people belonging to the ‘so-called’ low castes. Labeling domestic workers as ‘servants’ and ‘maids’ compromises with their dignity and individuality.

Table 27: - Major Problem /challenge Faced by Domestic female worker

Problem /Challenge faced	Frequency	Percentage
Less payment	6	4.4
More work	5	3.6
Others	70	51.1

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Domestic workers are not provided just wages and humane working conditions. The wages paid to them are well below the minimum wages for unskilled or semi-skilled workers. In addition, most of them are made to work for a minimum of 15 hours a day, seven days a week. In average, their working hours range between 8 to over 18 hours a day. Their wages and rest time are at the employer’s mercy Domestic workers are also sometimes the victims of suspicion. They are often accused of thefts and are subjected to physical violence, police interrogation, conviction, and even dismissal.

7. Conclusions

This study has demonstrated how these female employers utilize the idea of 'our culture' to screen potential candidates from the available pool of workers. They use cultural work, or a socio-cognitive frame of reference, to rationalize their choice of domestic servants and define the 'ideal maid'. These women rely heavily on existing stereotypes of marginalized communities in Jharkhand, the result of which is the stigmatization and overt discrimination against 'low-caste' Hindu and Muslim women.

This study adds to insights that the labor market is enmeshed in multiple cultural processes and social relationships and shows how female middle-class employers actively construct 'our' and 'their' culture' in relation to 'good' and 'bad' domestic workers. The cultural politics of such informal domestic employment is predicated on clean caste ideals, often couched in the secular language of culture and certain behavioral traits. Stereotyping and cultural politics of the domestic employers in Jharkhand that we interacted with clearly discriminated against Muslim and low-caste domestic workers. This significantly affects the life of specific groups of domestic workers, from their perceived characterization to real wage differences, their treatment and general working conditions. This study, and the domestic service labor market landscape presented, point to the discursive and institutional discrimination against specific groups of women, resting on intersections of caste, gender and religion driven by new urban class relation.

Our findings also illustrate how domestic labor processes fluctuate due to time, space and vagaries of the market. In this sense, given their quite recent availability in the market, the current preference.. This local labor market might change in the future, if either the definition of 'good' maid changes, new contenders enter the maid market or other developments occur. Thus one might wonder about the impacts of the current Covid-19 pandemic in this domain. The history of this particular locality suggests that when in need of labor, employers do accept women from Muslim and low-caste families. Cultural politics take a back seat when there is a shortage of domestic help. Another important implication of this research is that contrary to numerous studies in the Global North showing that citizenship status plays an important role in the well-being of immigrant women as workers,

The evidence presented, however, contains also pertinent insights into related dimensions that future academic work may examine in more depth, specifically regarding the intersectional ties of cultural work and homework undertaken by Indian middle-class women. The present article does not discuss in depth what physical work these maids are actually doing, and what the various cultural implications of such work may be. Apart from the status issue of being able to show that one employs a maid or several domestic servants, the female household manager will benefit from having some laborious or indeed dirty work done for her by those whom she pays. In other

scenarios, an employer may use one woman to cut her vegetables, prepare breakfast and cook meals, while a different woman or several others would wash the dishes and clean the house, with distinctions even of cleaning the house itself and attending to toilets and bathrooms. Subtle socio-cultural distinctions are at play in such scenarios, not unique to India, yet with specific socio-cultural connotations.

There is yet another discussion that the intersectional ties of cultural work and housework will allow future research to explore. We observed tangentially that men play hardly any role in the recruitment of maids and also discussed the example of the maid who used the family toilet. Here, the private/public delimitations of spaces and facilities of and in the home become pertinent. This raises another gender dimension in this article, as one of the anonymous peer reviewers suggested, which has not even been touched. What if Indian men were to become more involved in household work arrangements? Decisions need to be made about whether one even allows anyone to share one's private space, whether for a few hours, at certain times, or by arranging a live-in homemaker, who might of course be a relative, or a total stranger at first. In all of these scenarios, concerns about spaces, privacy, facilities, and of 'our' and/or 'their' culture will remain deeply relevant. Selectively and often very strategically buying in help to manage the household, or doing certain tasks oneself in order to preserve the private sphere and keep it free from 'other' influences, appears as options on the horizon, to be explored in future work.

8. Recommendations

Since the problems of women domestic workers are multifaceted, it should be studied holistically covering economic, legal, social, physical and psychological aspects. To achieve this objective, it is immensely needed to have an integrated approach to understand the issue and it is also important to develop a collective program to improve their social status and working condition of women in general and women domestic workers in particular. It is the need of the hour that government and non-government Organizations (NGOs) must come forward to actively and efficiently deal with the plight of these workers. The Trade Unions and Voluntary Organizations can play a vital role in making them conscious of health, education and above all their rights.

Some of the immediate interventions can be— Firstly, domestic workers are organized and unionized, so they can share solidarity and build their own leadership. Secondly, there is a need to create public opinion with respect to domestic workers so that they will get dignified working conditions and proper status. A proper mutual dialogue may be useful. Thirdly, adequate training should be provided to women workers. Further, the struggles have to start with wages and job security and then gradually to raise the class consciousness of the workers.

In the light of these conclusions the following suggestions can be cited to improve the conditions of Female domestic workers in Jharkhand

- Proper arrangement of Formal/Informal classes for improving the educational status of FDW should be organized by the Govt. & NGO'S.
- Due to poor economic conditions, FDWs are involved in minimum wages sector. Proper skill development programs for them should be organized by Government & Non-government Organizations.
- Domestic work should be recognized as other professions.
- Larger workforce comprises of unorganized sector so keeping this population in mind national level policy, legislation & schemes should be formulated by the Govt.
- Minimum Wages Act should be executed effectively in the field of domestic work by GOs & NGOs so FDWs are not exploited.
- Working conditions of FDW can be improved by the initiatives of Professional Social workers, civil society organizations, Govt. Organizations, Social activists, bureaucrats, policy makers, legislatures & political leaders.
- The harassment of FDW should be covered by The Sexual harassment at workplace Act
- Central Social Welfare Board and National/ State Commission for Women should take initiative for improving the conditions and solve the problems of FDWs.
- The advocacy of FDWs should be done so that they themselves take initiatives for improving their conditions.

- International/National/State/Local NGOs should come up for the protection of human rights and increase the level of awareness in FDW and should play the role of “Watch Dog” in Society.

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