

UGC APPROVED MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT
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SOCIO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND REMEDIES OF
MAID SERVANTS
IN SOLAPUR CITY - A STUDY

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Executive Summary

The aim of this minor research project was to investigate the reasons behind selecting the job of domestic helper and to study the problem faced by them at work place and at home. The study also laid stress on analyzing the socio economic and the demographic profile of maid servants. Finally an effort has also been taken to discuss the problems faced by the people employing maid servants and seeks their suggestive opinions. A survey covering all the above aspects of 200 maid servants was conducted. The results indicate that economic compulsion was the main hardship for taking the job as maid-servants. It was also observed that the maid-servants have to face a lot of problems at the work place which include low level of wage, a minimal pay or no pay for extra work, absence of leave facility, and sexual as well as physical harassment by male employer etc.

Introduction:

‘Domestic Work’ is gaining importance as a source of occupation today. While domestic work was not insignificant in India before independence, the demand for domestic workers has drastically increased in India since independence. In pre-modern times, domestic workers were mostly associated with rich aristocracy like kings in the medieval era and landlords in the colonial era. But in independent India, despite the era of kings and landlords coming to an end, the demand for domestic workers is increasing. Employment of servants has become very common in the urban areas of any cities where a large number of house wives are going out for jobs. The employment of servants saves much of the time and energy for the working house wives of modern cities. Domestic servants have proved to be a necessity for non-working housewives also. In urban areas, there are commonly engaged domestic servants to keep them in carrying out their household chores, partly due to physical inability and partly due to lack of

time. Moreover, in nuclear families there is no stand-by in the family, if the housewife falls ill. Also we can argue that the new middle classes have developed a life style which has increased the demand for domestic servants

Methods:

This research was conducted by using interview schedule and investigated the problems faced by the Maid Servants both at work place and at home. A survey of 200 maid servants was conducted. The data collected were processed and analyzed using statistical tools like percentages, Chi square Test, Nominal Regression etc.

Findings of the Survey:

- The women domestic workers surveyed are the part time contractual and non-residential workers who served one or more households in a day.
- Majority of the maid servants i.e. 79% are in the age group 26–45 followed by 13% in 46–50 age groups.
- The general educational status of the maid-servants in the area of research i.e. Solapur City is not satisfactory. 45% of the maid servants are illiterate, 34% have completed their education up to Primary Level
- Most of the servants i.e. 68% are found to be married, 24% are widow, and 3% each belong to the group Divorced and Separated from Husband.
- It was noticed that the monthly income of 82 percent of the respondent servants was between 1000-4000 Rs.
- 38 percent of the respondent servants reside in their Own House, whereas 62 percent of the domestic workers live in Rented House. It was further noticed that 59 percent of the respondents live in Kaccha House and remaining 41 percent lived in a Pakka House.
- 67 percent of the respondent domestic workers responded that they had proper availability of sufficient and clean drinking water. It was noted during the survey that the majority of the slum households used ‘**Tap**’ as the main source of drinking water
- During the survey it was found that majority of the respondents i.e. 62 percent had no latrine facility within the premises and the household had to defecate in the open.

- With regard to electricity supply it was found that 90 percent of the respondents had electricity facilities at their house.
- Out of the 200 maid servants interviewed, 64 percent of them worked 1-4 houses every day, 28 percent of the respondents worked 5-8 houses and the remaining 8 percent worked for More than 8 houses.
- 82 per cent of the Maid Servants opined that they get help during difficulties from their owners.
- Majority of the respondents i.e. 68 per cent of the servants viewed that they get/take vacations in times of need and difficulties.
- Only a small percent of domestic workers i.e. 33 percent have a Bank Account. The respondent workers who had not opened an account with the bank opined that **Residential Proof and Ration Card** was the main problem for opening a bank account.
- The servants were interviewed on the Nature of Bonus they get. It was found that Bonus is received by the domestic workers in the form of small amount and in kind also.
- During the survey the maid servants were questioned on health problems. Majority of the respondent domestic workers were of the opinion that body pain, and fungal skin infection due to excessive use of soaps and water are the major health problems faced by them. At the same time some of them faced stomach pain problem due to stale food provided by the employers.
- 39 per cent of the husbands of maid servants are affected by anti social habits such as playing cards, drinking liquor etc.
- Majority of the maid servants i.e. 53 percent were satisfied 'To some extent' as they had to take up this job due to no job options available due to lack of education and skills and to look after their underprivileged family.

During the minor research study the researcher has also taken efforts to find out the problems faced by the employers hiring the services of maid servants. The researcher has discussed their problems liberally at a short notice. The following problems have been traced:

- Irregular Service;
- Late arrival to work or frequent demand for days off;
- Aggressive attitude and tail carriers;
- Unclean work;

- Low Retention percent in jobs

Conclusion:

The results indicate that economic compulsion was the main hardship for taking the job as maid-servants. It was also observed that the maid-servants have to face a lot of problems at the work place which include low level of wage, a minimal pay or no pay for extra work, absence of leave facility, and sexual as well as physical harassment by male employer etc.

Recommendations:

With a view to improve the socio-economic status and working conditions of maid-servants the following recommendations are recommended:

- Appropriate wages should be fixed to keep up their economic status.
- Annual incremental, Minimum Leave facilities should be provided to all maid-servants.
- Legislation should be passed for the welfare of the maid-servants.
- Awareness campaign should be organized to aware them about education.
- The study has found that majority of the respondent's families i.e. husbands/ fathers/brothers are affected by anti social habits like drug addiction. There is a need to start some Drug Counseling Centre's in the area so as to cover these families and to overcome their problems.
- There is need for '**Placement Agencies**' managed by private entrepreneurs and voluntary associations. To reduce the problems faced by the employers.
- Government should start 'Pension Yojana' for the Domestic Workers apart from the two benefits provided i.e. Sanman Dhan Rs. 10000/- for maid servants in age group of 55-60 years once in life time and Funeral expenses of Rs. 5000/- to the legal successors.

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