

An Analysis of Socio Economic Condition of Women Domestic Workers - With Special Reference to Mysore District

Dr.R.H.PAVITHRA

Assistant Professor

Department of Economics

Karnataka State Open University

Muktha gangotri, Mysore-570006

ABSTRACT

Women domestic workers cannot claim to their job security as workers in offices, schools and other establishments can claim. Therefore, women domestic workers do not enjoy any job security, as these matters on the moods and fancies of the employers. An hike in the pay of the women domestic workers again depend upon the mood of employers. There are several women domestic workers who have working for long years under the same employer, without any hike in pay. Hence, has lead to economic and social exploitation of these workers, The economic exploitation further has extended that they donot have bargaining power in terms of wages. They do not have any organisation of their own which can protect their rights. This paper makes an attempt to look into the socio economic conditions of women and also tries to give suggestions to improve the socio economic conditions of women domestic workers in the case study area.

INTRODUCTION

Despite all provisions in the constitution and various legal and instructive measures to improve the status of women, a 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.

DEFINITION OF WOMEN DOMESTIC WORKERS

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

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In ancient times, domestic work, in India, was largely performed by “serfs” who generally belong to lower category and denied to access education (Gothoskar, 2005). Domestic maid servants are better known in the feudal ages as “Dasis”, are not new to the country (Mahadevan, 1989).

In the recent past, the trend shows that all big cities of India have become centres to recruit poor women domestic workers. The non-availability of jobs in rural, tribal areas facilitates continuous supply of women workers to these cities. A major reason for this is being sharp increase of middle class women in employment. (Deshkal and FES, 2002).

METHODOLOGY

The Present study is on empirical investigation based on sample interview 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 second largest city in Karnataka after Bangalore, the capital city of Karnataka. This city is 140 kms away from state capital Bangalore. The present study is based on both primary and secondary data and a systematic random sampling method has been adopted for survey. The primary data has collected from 5 extension areas of Mysore city. Where large numbers of female domestic labourers are preferred by the home makers as well as working women. The 5 extension areas are Vijayanagara, Kuvempunagara, Saraswathipuram, Gokulam and Siddarth Layout. Firstly majority of the people of this area are economically well off and are affordable to manage maid servants secondly, 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 method are used to analyse the result and have been depicted by simple bar graph and pie chart.

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

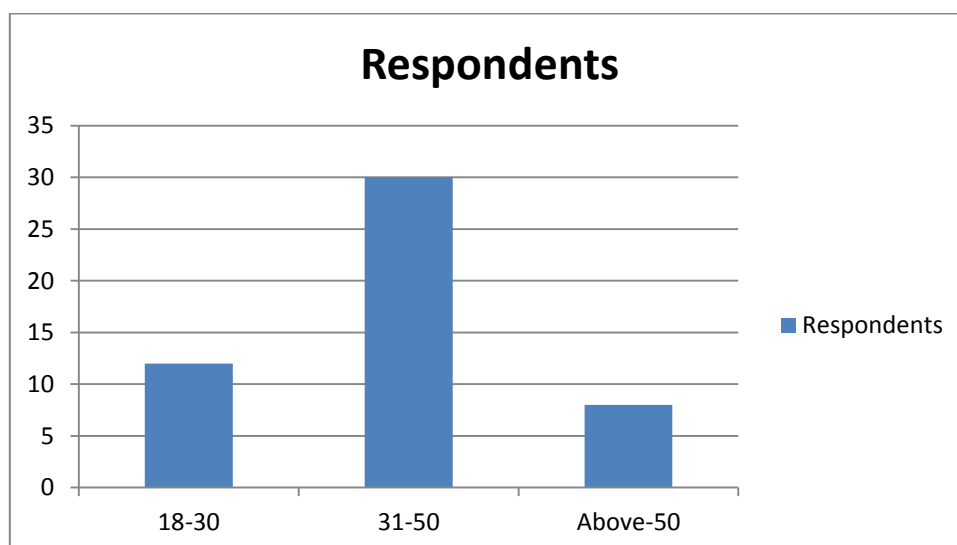


Table 1 explains that out of 50 respondents 30 of them belong to the age group of 31-50 years followed by 12 respondents belonging to 18-30 years and 8 respondents coming under the group of above 50 years.

Table-2
EDUCATIONAL STATUS

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

Source: Field Survey

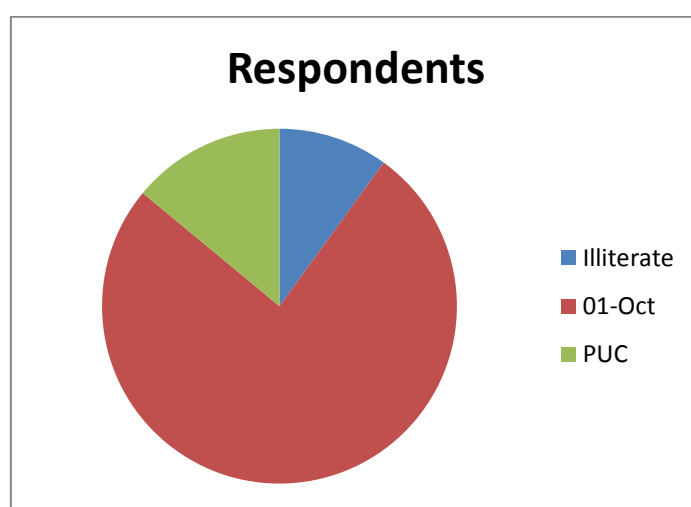


Table 2 analyses the educational status of the respondents, out of 50 respondents 38 of them have studied between 1 - 10th standard of their schooling followed by 7 respondents studied PUC and 5 are illiterate.

Table-3
TYPE OF HOUSE

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

Source: Field Survey

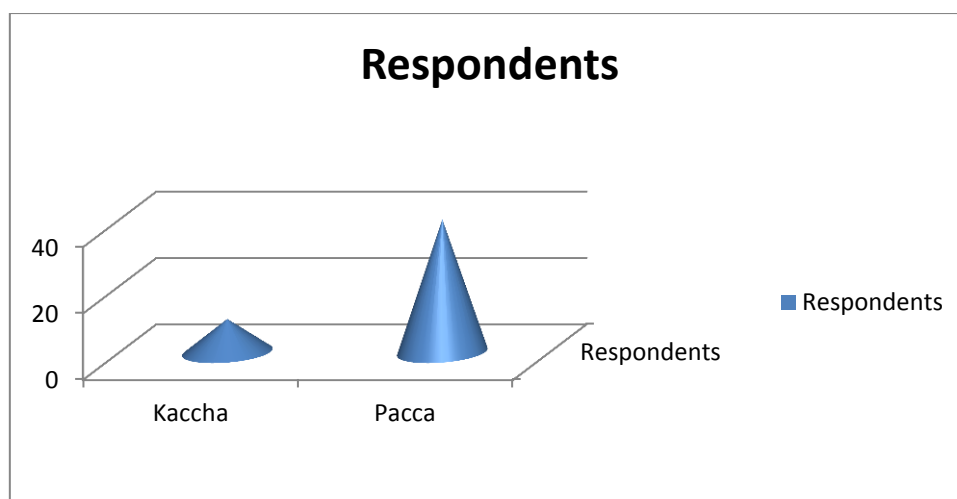


Table 3 highlights that out of 50 respondents 40 of them lives in pacca houses and only 10 of them still lives in kaccha houses.

Table-4
ACCESS TO POTABLE DRINKING WATER

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

Source: Field Survey

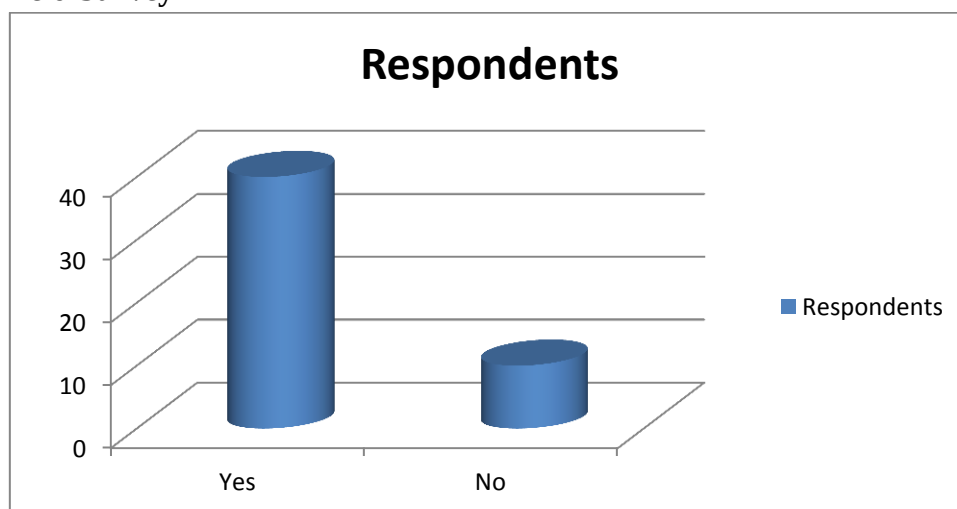


Table 4 explains that 40 respondents have access to potable drinking water and hardly 10 of them donot have access to potable drinking water

Table-5
ACCESS TO SANITATION

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

Source: Field Survey

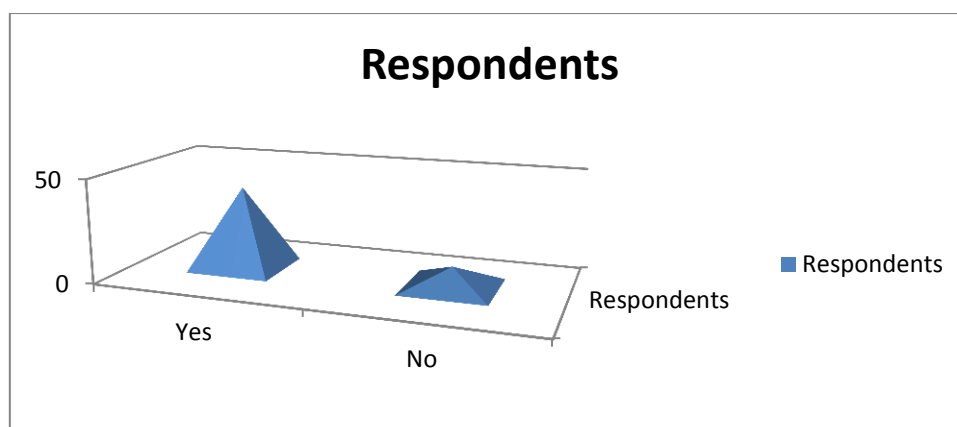


Table 5 reveals that 40 respondents have access to sanitation facilities and 10 respondents do not have access to sanitation.

Table-6
Access to TV

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

Source: Field Survey

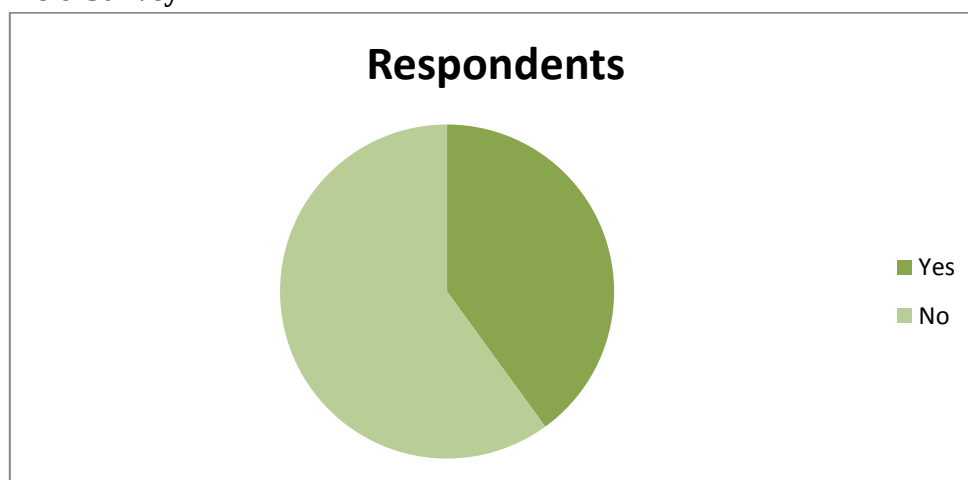


Table 6 explains that 20 respondents have access to TV and 30 respondents do not have access to TV.

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

Field: Field Survey

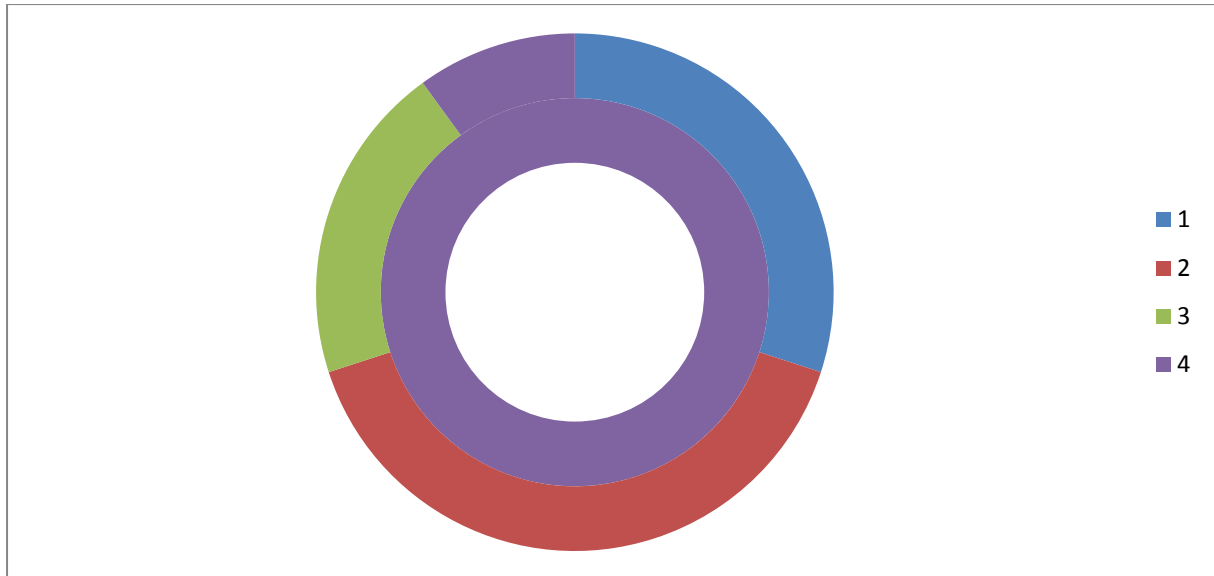


Table 7 explains that 15 respondents have income less than 5000 per month and 20 respondents earn between 5001-8000 rupees every month followed by 10 respondents between income of 8001-10,000 and only 5 of them have monthly income above 10000

Table-8
SAVINGS LEVEL

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

Field: Field Survey

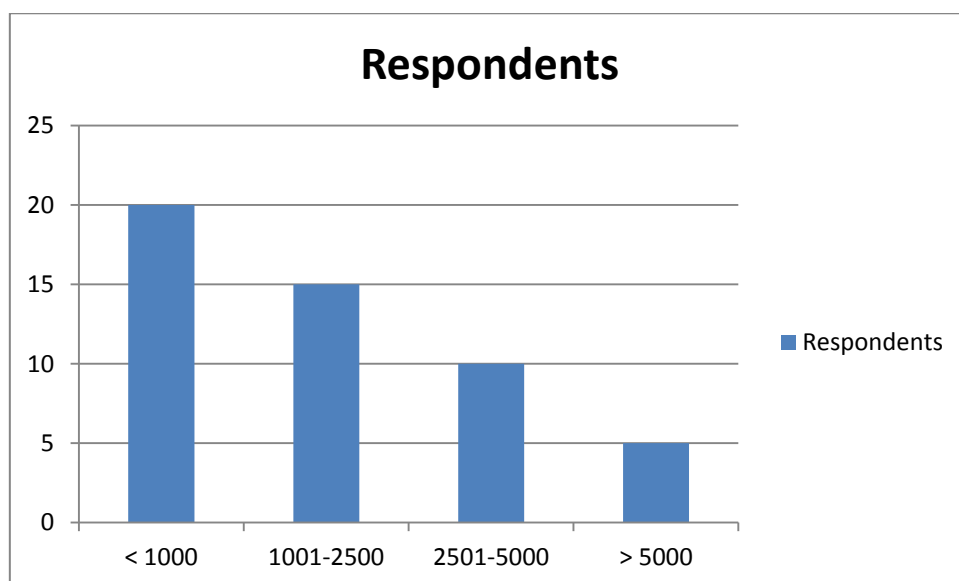


Table 8 examines the savings of the respondents, 20 respondents have less than 1000 rupees of savings every month, similarly 15 of them have between 1001 - 2500 of savings

followed by 10 respondents 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 form Finance	08	16
Total	50	100

Field: Field Survey

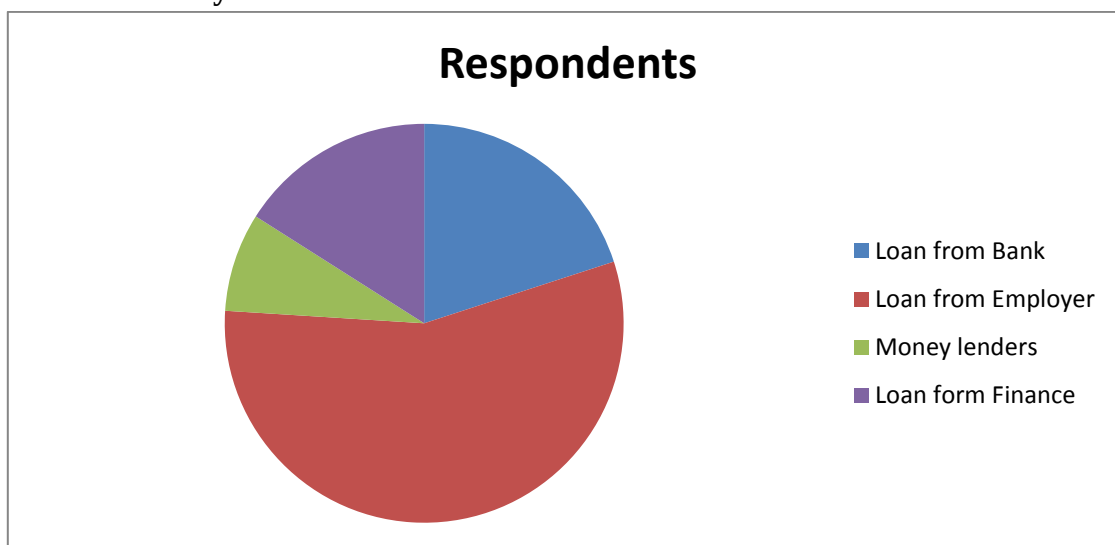


Table 9 explains that 10 respondents have taken loan from banks, 28 of them have taken as advance amount from their employers, 8 of them have taken loan from some private finances and followed by 4 respondents taken loan from money lenders for huge amount of monthly and weekly interest.

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

Field: Field Survey

Table 10 reveals that 19 of the respondents have adopted this job mainly because that it is easy for them to pursue and similarly other 19 respondents said that they do this job since they don't know other skills and followed by 12 respondents considered this job as less tedious compare 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

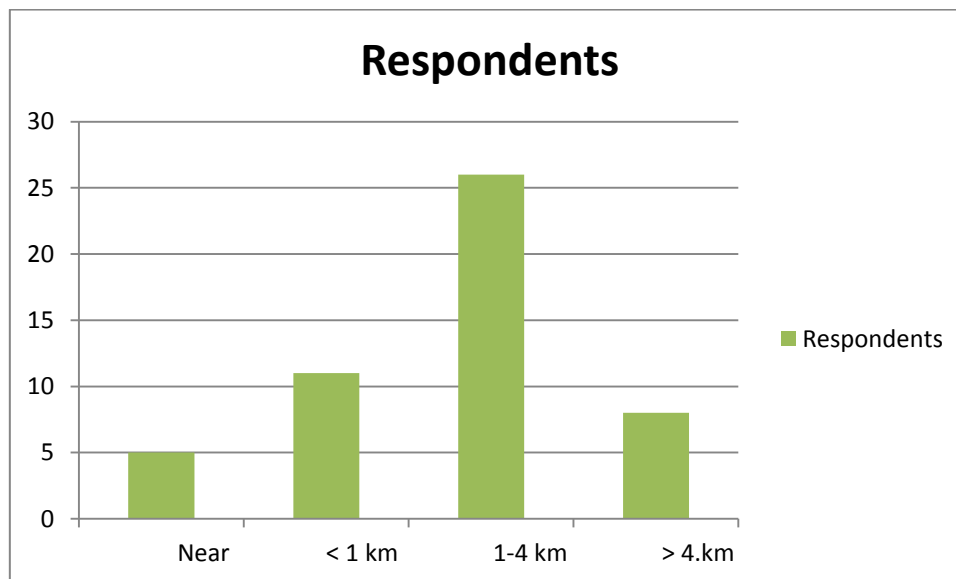
Field: Field Survey

Table 11 explains that 5 respondents work near by 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.

FINDINGS

1. 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.
2. 38 respondents have studied between 1 - 10th standard of their schooling because of free schooling facilities they have gone upto 10th standard and due to various sociological, economic issues they are not able to go beyond 10th standard.
3. Majority of them lives in pacca houses because of various governmental schemes.
4. Majority of them have access to potable drinking water and sanitation facilities
5. Majority of them have monthly income between 5001 - 8000 rupees and most of them have savings less than 1000 rupees per month.
6. 28 Respondents have borrowed loan from their employers.
7. 38 respondents are of the opinion that they adopted to this job because it is easy and few of them do not have other skill than this job

8. Large number of respondents travel for their working places between 1 - 4 kms every day.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. This paper makes an attempt to suggest suitable measures to improve the socio economic conditions of women domestic workers.
2. Non Governmental Organization must organize general health camps once in 6 months for these women domestic workers.
3. Education plays an important role in the life of every individual to lead successfully life, but in the case study many of them are illiterates, there is need for making these domestic workers educated which in inturn contributes for them to get better employment and good health. Therefore meticulous efforts all necessary to bring the measures, which are already on papers to practice.
4. Central Social Welfare Board, National and State commission for women should take proper measures for improving the socio economic conditions of women domestic workers.
5. NGO's and volunteers has 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.
6. They should also maintain Registered Welfare Association of these women which in turn helps for them to get secured in their job places.
7. Registered welfare Association has to register the homes of domestic workers along with their phone numbers so that if any employer wants the service of domestic servants can approach this association for booking the domestic servants.

Conclusion:

In the modern trend, the demand for domestic workers has increased mainly because of lack of time and physical inability of the housewives and also due to the emerging modern lifestyle among the city habitants. Nowadays, people are very much in need the help of these domestic workers, but the recognition is not given to them and to their job. Thus, there is importance for these domestic workers in an economy. But their value is not recognized in the society. They themselves are not aware of the importance and value of their job. So the necessary steps has to be undertaken by the Government to regard as their job as respectable one. It is also in the hands of the general public in the country to respect these domestic workers with humanitarian concern.

REFERENCES

1. Deshkal and FES,(2002). Working Conditions, Coping Strategy and Legal Status of Women domestic workers, a one day eminar presented in Delhi on 12th October, 2002.

2. Government of India (2007a). Unorganised Non-Agricultural Workers' Conditions of Work and Social Security Bill 2007, Press Information Bureau, Governments of India, available at www.nceuis.nic.in).
3. Kaur, H. (2005), Socio-Economic Status of Women (With special Reference to Indian Punjab), in B. Singh (ed), Punjab Economy: Challenged and Strategies, Twenty First Century publications, Patiala, Punjab (India), Pp. 146-163.
4. Mahadevan, U. (1989), Plight of women Domestic Workers, in R.K. Saprú (ed.), Women and Development, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, Pp.127-134.
5. Tripathi, S.N. (1991), Informal Women in India, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi.