

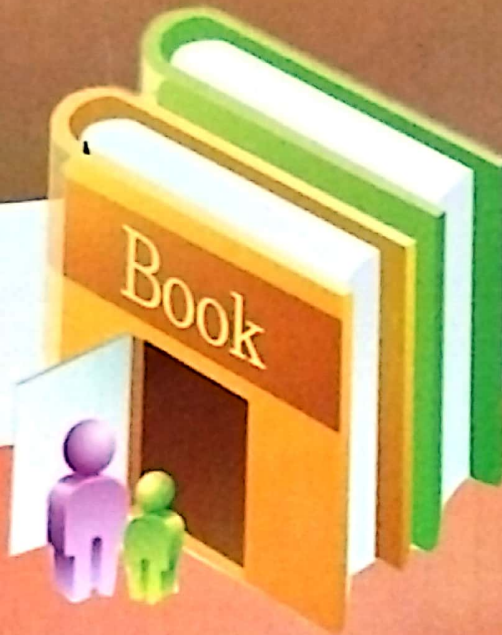


MAH/MUL/03051/2012  
ISSN-2319 9318

# VIDYAWARTA®

International Multilingual Refereed Research Journal

Issue-29, Vol-04 Jan to March-2019



Editor  
Dr. Bapu G. Gholap



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## Domestic Workers: Plight & Prejudice A study in Santipally Slum, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

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### Abstract-

The study of socio-economic condition of domestic women workers is important to formulate programme and policies regarding human resource development and women empowerment. Odisha is one of the poorest state of India as per the gross domestic product per capita. It is rich in culture and tradition. Informal sector constitutes a pivotal part in Odisha economy. Current study aims at understanding the socio-economic condition of domestic women workers in Odisha. To fulfil the objective a sample of 100 domestic women workers collected from Santipally Slum in Bhubaneswar, Odisha has been studied. The result have shown that the condition of domestic women workers is vulnerable in Odisha. The wage rate they get is very low compared to their vulnerable condition are caste difference, unequal gender relations, Gender Discrimination at workplace, Harassment at workplace, poor economic background, irregular work, drug addiction of their male partners, death of husband, social prejudices. The status of women domestic workers an increase of their wage rate, working condition and economic empowerment needs to go along with political empowerment.

**Key words:-** Domestic worker, Socio – economic, Female Domestic worker, Exploitation.  
**Refereed Journal Impact Factor 6.021(IJIF)**



### Introduction:

Women play a pivotal role in the society as a mother, sister, wife and in particular in the continuity of the society. The success of a person or a society is always backed by women. Therefore, women are worshipped as mother as symbol of power and dignity. But in reality they are chained in different ways i.e. biologically and socially and now are described as the weaker section and are provided with reservation to improve their status.

No country can develop without the development of a major chunk of its population. Jawaharlal Nehru has rightly told "By educating a man a person is educated by educating a woman a family is educated."

It is said a commentary of events, yet is true that "there is no section of our society more neglected than women in general and domestic worker in particulars." In every segment, class or community women suffer all the disabilities implicated on that group and in addition also suffer the consequences of gender discrimination yet their contribution in economic life, social well being, cultural continuity and ethical standards is greater than their share of the population.

When we are discussing the status of women domestic workers, we can say every not and then the women in rural and urban areas, upper caste and lower caste married and unmarried, separate and divorced inside the house and outside the house are facing all types of violence or atrocities.

The status of women as domestic workers in the population context is a burning issue confronting the nation. Therefore, steps should be appropriately taken for their upliftment. For the study of their problems and position in the society needs to be undertaken after which steps and measures be prescribed for their progress. Keeping in mind the status of women domestic worker in our society a small attempt has been made her to study the

women domestic worker of Santipally Slum, Bhubaneswar.

### Objective of the study:

1. To find out the status of female domestic workers in the capital city of Bhubaneswar.
2. To access the level of awareness among these domestic workers regarding the welfare and protection measures available for them.

### Materials and Methods:

For the research in-depth literature review was made inputs were also taken from internet and viral media. A desk review was undertaken to know about their size and significance, wage, organization and voice. Along with the demand side the supply side initiative like various ongoing schemes, programme for the worker by government dept of the states.

Female domestic workers who are married are selected for the study as respondents. Total fifty women domestic workers were taken as sample.

The questionnaire that was prepared is a combination of structured and unstructured questions. To know the incidence of the respondents' life, their feelings and ideas emphasis has been given on unstructured interviews.

### Summary of findings

At first personal profile of the domestic women workers have been discussed. Most of the respondents are Hindus and their age between 30-40 years. Most of the respondents of my study are illiterate and their mother tongue is Oriya.

There has been a low literacy rate among the domestic women workers. They are also very often restricted to be educated by their parents and also have less interest for education. The financial condition of the slum people is a major cause of illiteracy of women. Thus this leads to a low position of slum women in the society.



Analyzing a material status of women domestic workers there have been lack of knowledge regarding the age at marriage. Most of the respondents married below the 18 years.

Analyzing the social status of women domestic workers there are lots of problems. Thus problems are electricity, water, shelter, school etc. They were working under the pressure of their family and also due to low financial condition. The relationship between husband, wife and other family members also not so good. There is a primary school in slum. All the respondents children are going to School but most are drop out due to poor economic condition and lack of parent's interest.

Examining the economic status of women domestic worker, the slum women are more independent than the non-slum area women.

Though female are economically independent still then they are to depend financially upon the male member because of their dominance some women have the good look for future. So they are saving money for their future.

Due to inadequate health facilities the health conditions of the slum people greatly deteriorate. The suffering and discrimination that women suffer is beyond the tale. In this slum most of the respondents have face gastrointestinal disease and gynaecological problem.

### **Recommendations**

Women in slums have struggled to establish an identity and create a life, in social educational as well as in their economic condition. We need to work towards equality between women and men in a private sector, establish equal accesses for women to training and education.

Protection of social justice is the mark of civilization. When we find large number of women workers are deprived of proper justice in their day to day life how can we think that we

are marching towards social justice. Hence it is further suggested that the grievances of the workers and NGOs will catch the eyes of the administrator, social workers better justice is expected. For that purpose it is quite important to that the worker should be aware of the legal provisions available in their favour. It is not an easy work but it is not impossible task work.

Mass awareness programmes can be included in election propaganda. During election time most of the political elders concentrate in their labour colonies. Once they become aware of their benefits not only they can try to achieve those benefit they can also think of further measures to facilitate themselves to be workers of semi-organised sector.

### **Holidays for domestic workers**

Holidays are usually enjoyed by people in regular work receiving regular wages even in domestic work the domestic workers enjoyed holiday. Holidays are necessary for spending time with family. In some case the domestic workers who are taking long leaves are requested to find a substitute before taking leave.

### **Provisions given during festivals and functions**

In addition to their income, domestic workers because of their close involvement with every house hold work they get number of extra benefits based on the employer's satisfaction with the performance. Especially during festivals there is a tradition prevailing in many southern states of providing special clothing food and even extra money to domestic worker.

### **Intention to make use of Non-formal Educational facilities**

The non formal educational facilities can be made use of only after the working hours if at all the respondent is willing. So there could be an association between the willingness of the respondents to make use of non formal education and their number of working hours.

### **Conclusion**

The socio economic condition of the respondents is not good. Their life histories also reveal that they experienced the same condition at their young age. They face problems both at home and at work place. At home they do not get the pleasant atmosphere what they want. At work place they have a very work load with less remuneration. They want to make their children education but an increasing cost is a great concern. Migration is big concern from our point of view as studies show (UNFPA, 1996) that many of the urban dwellers, in unorganized sectors particularly women and their children will become the poorest people in the world. However, concentrating on their interest, they are working very hard for a better future.

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