CHAPTER – 6

FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
6.1 Introduction

The Indian constitution guarantees democracy and confers the right of equality to all strata. It is disheartening to note that domestic workers as a part of unorganised work force remain the most exploited ones even after six decades of independence.

Domestic workers, estimated to number over a 100 million, formed one of the largest yet unprotected segments in the global workforce. Working in the confines of private homes, unprotected by the labour laws of the country, India’s domestic workers are a silently suffering lot. The increasing demand of domestic workers in cities has played a major role in the migration of women from far flung rural areas. Girls are seen as natural domestic workers, seemingly trained at home in doing housework.

One of the low-ranking occupations assigned to the poorest class of society is "Domestic Service". Employment of servants has become very common in the urban areas; and in many cities there are a large number of housewives going out for jobs. The employment of servants saves much of the time and energy for the working housewives of modern cities. Thus, the servant maid employed in household labour is playing a significant role especially in small towns of India.

It is difficult to gauge the exact number of women in the occupation, as workers in the category have not been enumerated as such by the census. Human Development Report (UNDP) points out some common problems faced by the domestic servants such as deplorable wages, high level of insecurity, illiteracy, and lack of marketability, lack of confidence in securing other productive jobs, long and unregulated working hours, lack of paid holidays and
sick leaves, immense work load, lack of maternity benefits, health problems, and social exploitation.

In addressing these issues, the Domestic Workers (Regulation of Employment, Conditions of Work, Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2008, came as a ray of hope for domestic workers. This bound to do some good in improving the lives of domestic workers. There are a large number of maid servants in the country, working in the middle and upper income households in urban areas in particular. In view of its developing phenomenon, it is proposed to study the socio-economic conditions of the servant maids in the urban informal sector in Vijayawada Municipal Corporation of Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, as a case study.

They are a good number of studies that dealt with workers, working in the informal sector. However, there are no substantive studies, concentrating on women working as servant maids. The present study is pursued in this direction.

6.2 Objectives and Methodology

The main objectives of the present study are:

1. to examine the structure and various dimensions of the informal sector in India,
2. to examine women work and development with special reference to domestic work,
3. to study the living pattern of servant maids in Vijayawada city, Andhra Pradesh,
4. to examine the child abuse among servant maids with reference to Vijayawada city, Andhra Pradesh,
5. to examine the legal perspective of domestic workers, and
6. to suggest policy measures to improve the working conditions of servant maids in the study area.
The present study of servant maids of Vijayawada city is based on both primary and secondary data. The study was conducted during the months of June and July, 2008.

The sample households were selected using the random number tables. The house list of the wards was used as the basis for selecting the sample. The servant maid of the house holds is the unit of analysis for the present study. The stratified random sampling technique is used in the present study. Statistical tools such as mean, correlation, diagrams, etc., are used for interpretation and analysis of data, wherever necessary.

Several studies in the past were conducted covering informal sector, but mostly outside the home. Some of the works undertaken earlier, on women in the informal sector, are reviewed here.

6.3 Informal Sector and its Significance

The recent phenomenon in many of the developing countries in the world is the rapid growth of informal sector. Urban sector is growing faster than the rural sector. The demographic feature of the urbanization process, namely, natural increment of population and rural-to-urban migration has resulted in a substantial increase in urban labour force. A large part of the rapidly growing urban labour force remains unemployed and under-employed due to the excessive growth rate of urbanization, lack industrial production, and urban employment. The surplus labour including most of the rural-pushed migrants, unable to get absorbed in the formal sector. They are forced to find their own source of employment and livelihood in a variety of productive activities in urban centers which constitutes, what is now designated as informal, murky, grey, marginal sector, and so on.
Employment insecurity is a pressing problem for millions in India, but the most severely affected are the unorganised sector workers. This sector is characterised by the temporary, seasonal and changing nature of employment often resulting in long periods of unemployment, absence of a fixed employer-employee relationship, failure of wages to meet minimal requirements, poor work environment, long working hours, irregular incomes, etc. which contribute to poor employment security of the workers. The central and state governments have taken many steps to address the problem of employment insecurity. Employment-generation programmes have always been given high priority.

The informal sector, on the other hand, is the residual sector derived after deducting the registered labour force from the total labour force. The distinction is based on the size of the employer and security of job in unionization. The above description of the informal sector as a residual sector does not include – the casual, contract and irregular workers in the formal sector establishments, who have similar characteristics. All formal sector organizations today engage contract labour, and the current trend indicates that more and more jobs are now being off-loaded to contractors and small suppliers.

People in the informal sector have suffered with low unregulated wages, unregulated working hours, and no paid holidays. The number of people working in the informal sector in the country is a sizeable number; though exact figures are not available. A huge section of our population belongs to this sector with domestic workers contributing a huge chunk of this population.

6.4 Women Development and Child Abuse

The Constitution as well as symbolic structures give women a high status in society while the reality is something very different. While law alone may not be able to bring about a social and attitudinal change it is a catalytic
agent, but there has to be a clear understanding of the purpose for which the law is being used. Where, the change is brought about mechanically with little understanding of how law has to be used, society remains static and the law a dead letter. Coordination of the three branches—legislative, judiciary and executive is absolutely essential, if the beneficial effects of a legislation is to have an impact on the concerned persons. But often the lack of coordination due to absence of commitment to the policy of the Constitution has led either to non-implementation or to watering down by the judiciary and the executive of the beneficial effects. Women are agents of change and not just victims of change. The United Nations has realised that the role and status of women are central to changes in population and development of society. Law is an effective instrument to bring about change so as to make it suitable to the changing needs of people in society.

Women play a crucial role in all societies. It is very difficult to define the term "domestic" because it is very vague. The term "Domestic" denotes a class of "Menials" which includes many types of workers, like ayah, kitchen helper, cook and sweeper. So we would define the term Domestic Servants as "those servants who do cooking, care the children, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cleaning and sweeping the houses in return for the payment of wages". Thus servant maid is the person or immediate attendant to do any type of work in the house.

There are two types of domestic servant maids. Part-time servants and full time servants. Part-time servants are those who are employed at one or more than one house to perform some definite duties and go away when the assigned work is over. They are not residential helpers. Full-time servants are attached to one house only. They are present for the whole day at the employer's house, and do whatever work is assigned to them.

Domestic servants are engaged in household's activities which the housewives are unable to perform either due to personal or physical reasons or
due to lack of time. The activities they perform include utensil cleaning, floor cleaning, washing of clothes, cooking, and attending to outdoor tasks such as purchase of vegetables, and accompanying the children to school and back. However, requirements as well as capacity in the households differ. Accordingly, the domestic servant is engaged on part time or full time basis.

What perhaps distinguishes child domestic workers from children in other forms of labour is that even as this form of work is extremely exploitative, the children are amongst the most difficult to protect. The difficulty in protecting child domestic workers emerges from the fact that it is carried out within the confines of private homes.

What makes it even more difficult to protect child domestic workers is that civil society, government and legislation alike do not recognize them as workers. It is frequently considered charitable to provide employment to children as domestics. Given the cultural and social acceptability that surrounds Child Domestic Work, and the fact that it occurs within private spaces, makes interventions for protection of Child Domestic Workers extremely complex.

Nothing in the article shall prevent the State from making any special provisions for women and children. Women are considered to be the disadvantaged gender group whose social identity derives from comparisons with men, because men are dominant and more powerful, and women are the less powerful and subordinate. Thus group identification brings with it negative characteristics and inferior status. Hence women need to take action in order to develop a sense of positive distinctiveness. Social Change has been employed by women for this purpose.

Child Domestic Work must be understood in conjunction with issues of trafficking in children, child sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children.
Abuse, even sexual abuse, is accepted as a professional hazard to be endured. The only alternative is to leave the job. All child domestic workers are hesitant to talk about their jobs even after they have left them. They fear they will not only lose their present jobs but will be ‘branded’ by the local employer community.

Child abuse includes a vast area of study and intervention, involving a range of acts of violence and maltreatment. The three main categories of abuse are physical, emotional and sexual.

Child abuse is a major issue impacting the lives of millions of children across the country today. Though all children are vulnerable to abuse, children in marginalized and especially difficult circumstances are at a higher risk. The profile and vulnerable conditions of child domestic workers have been well documented in a number of recent reports.

They are different types of child abuse. They are physical, emotional and sexual. Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Emotional abuse includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potential, and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. There may also be acts toward the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society.

The study clearly indicates that there is a substantial population among the Child Domestic Worker participants in the research that has faced sexual abuse. The sexual violence faced by them includes a whole gamut of sexual activities such as someone touching their private parts (for instance fondling, molestation), someone forcing or tricking them into touching their private parts (such as masturbation), forcing or tricking them into having sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal or oral) and showing pornographic materials to them (whether in printed form or as movies etc.). The identity of the abuser is a crucial factor.

Policies have been made, documents have been written, and International Conventions have been ratified to see this young girl her dreams. But even after all that, there are still many hindrances that stand between her and her dreams. Hindrances such as having been beaten up by her employer mercilessly and then being asked to hide her wounds, being yelled at all day and being told what a mistake it is to have her in the house, being molested, fondled and forced into sexual intercourse.

Child abuse, especially when it happens within the context of a relationship of power and trust, is the most fundamental violation of childhood. However abhorrent it may seem, the reality is that it exists. And the tragedy is that it is most often perpetrated upon innocent and vulnerable children by adults who are ideally supposed to uphold the rights of children, and work in their best interest. All children are vulnerable to abuse. However, child domestic workers are even more vulnerable, given their social and economic powerlessness. The vulnerability factors and prevalence of different forms of abuse are a few factors that this research attempts to bring to the foreground.
Most of the findings, especially those concerning the conditions of work of Child Domestic Workers, are consistent with findings of other organisations from across the country working on the issue. Regarding findings concerning prevalence and dynamics of child abuse, there is a strong non-availability of information on child abuse per se, and especially among the target population of Child Domestic Workers. A few recommendations that can be made on the basis of the results of this research are

6.5 Analysis and Discussion

An attempt is made in the present study to examine various social and economic characteristics of the respondents such as age, religion, community, education, parental background, and reproductive history, health care, assets, income, expenditure, savings, debt, and so on.

In the present study of servant-maids all the respondents are females. The average age of the respondents is 29 years, with a minimum of 12 years and a maximum of 62 years. The average age of the respondent’s husbands is 37 years, with a minimum of 17 years and a maximum of 75 years.

The average age difference between the respondents and their husbands is 8 years with a minimum of one year and a maximum of 23 years. The cross tabulation of the age and the other social variables show that. There is a positive relationship between the age of the respondent and the income earned by the respondent up to a certain age group, and become negative thereafter. There exists high occurrence of sexual harassment among the middle-aged people in general as compared to women in advanced age groups. Among the middle-aged women the breastfed period is more as compared to the young.

The practice of getting married at an advanced age is observed among the present generation of women. The inter-religious marriages are negligible
or none in the present study. Only a negligible percentage of inter-caste marriages are taking place in this society.

Joint type of family is still an accepted type in the Indian culture. The average number of male persons in the household is 2.24 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5. The average number of female persons in the household is 2.3 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 6. On an average, the female members in the household are more than the male members. However, in the general population, the number of females is less than the males. The average number of persons in the household is 4.43 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 9. It indicates that the average household size was larger in the earlier times.

The average number of elder sisters of the respondents is 1.74. The average number of younger sisters of the respondents is 1.37. The average number of sisters is 2.76 which is very large by any standard. The average number of elder brothers of the respondents is 1.17. The average number of younger brothers of the respondents is 1.17. The average total number of brothers is 1.78. This is much larger than the average number of sisters possessed by the respondents.

The migration may be due to marriage or employment. The average number of years of the respondents residing here is 11.3 years with a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 40 years. People generally migrate in search of employment opportunities in the place of destination. On the whole unemployment, marriage and poverty are the main causes for migration of the respondents in the present study. Similar pattern is also observed in the general population in the other parts of the country.

The study reveals that the literacy level is higher among the husbands as compared to their wives. This shows the poor education level of the respondent’s husbands. However, it is observed that the husbands are better
educated than their wives. On the whole, literacy level is very low among the parents of these respondents as compared to the respondents and their husbands. Higher the educational qualification of the respondent, more the educational qualification of her husband and so on. It is observed that the number of respondents with primary education are having more number of children as compared to higher level of education.

The average age of puberty is 13 years, with a minimum of 12 years and a maximum of 14 years. The average gap between puberty and the marriage is 6 years with a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 22 years. It indicates that the age gap between puberty and marriage is less. This is associated with medical complications of pregnancy. Because of high chastity attached to girls in the society, parents hurriedly use to perform the marriage of girls at a young age soon after puberty. They are of the opinion that any delay of marriage after puberty is unnecessary and undesirable as it leads to unnecessary problems. Further since parents are not interested in educating the daughters to a higher level they are motivated to perform the marriage at an early age immediately after puberty.

The average age of marriage of the respondents is 18 years with a minimum of 14 years and a maximum of 23 years. Similarly the average age of marriage of the respondent’s husbands is 24 years with a minimum of 17 years and a maximum of 29 years. The difference in average age at marriage between the respondents and their husbands is 6 years, which is the pattern found in the general population also. It reveals that the proportion of widowed and separated is more among servant maids as compared to general population in the society.

The average age of first delivery is 19.6 years. The minimum age of first delivery is 13 years and the maximum age is 27 years. The average number of male children born is 1.5 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5. The average number of female children born is 1.6. The number of children born to the respondents is not large. Because of governmental efforts, the
concept of small family norm is widespread in the society, and the poor people also accepted the same widely.

The average number of male surviving children is 1.50 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 4. The average number of male children born is 1.6. The difference of 0.1 may be due to mortality. The average number of female surviving children is 1.53 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5. The average number of female children is 1.6. The difference of 0.1 is due to mortality. The average number of surviving children is 2.65 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 7. The average number of children born is 2.70. The difference is 0.05 and this may be due to mortality. On the whole, the mortality level is not very high. It indicates that the health situation has improved among the poorer sections also. This can be observed through high survival rate of children.

On the whole, fever dominates the reasons for death of the child. If sufficient care is taken, these deaths can be averted. The child mortality is more at very young ages of one and two, and slowly declines over higher ages.

The average number of months the respondent’s breast feed child is 17.89 months. It is generally believed that breast feed is more desirable to the child as compared to bottle feed. In the present study, only 15 of the respondent’s bottle feed their children. The mother’s health may not be good or the milk given by the mother is not sufficient in quantity. Generally poor people cannot afford to go for bottle feed because of cost consideration. There are also respondents who feed the child for about year and two years also. The average period of bottle feeding is 6.5 months.

There is every need to educate the respondents so that all these deliveries will also occur in the hospitals among the next generation of women. There is need to create awareness so that all deliveries take place under the
supervision of a doctor. The average age at menopause of the respondents is 44 years. Similar pattern is generally found in the general population.

Majority 198 (90.8 per cent) reported stating that they do no suffer from diabetes. Majority 198 (97.1 %) reported stating that they are not suffering from heart problem. Majority 180 (80.4 %) reported stating that they do not suffer from blood pressure. Majority 198 (96.6 %) reported stating that they do not suffer from thyroid. Majority 181 (75.4 %) reported stating that they are suffering from anemia. Majority 196 (93.8 %) reported stating that they are suffering from menstrual problem. Majority 183 (82.4 %) reported stating that they are not suffering from gynecological problem. Majority 151 (57.6 %) reported stating that they are suffering from Allergies / Fungus. Majority 251 (81.2 %) felt that they are interested in educating their daughters and other respondents are not interested in educating their daughters. The percentage of respondents interested in educating their daughters is less than the sons. This shows son discrimination among the respondents.

In the study 218 (64.9 %) respondents answered the question on good health habits. The study revealed that they are aware of the good health habits.

The respondents who want to educate their sons up to PG and above level are only two, that is, less than 1 per cent only. It indicates that even though the servant maids are interested to educate their sons, their interest is limited to intermediate level only. Most of them are not interested to educate their sons to higher level or professional education. It indicates that even though the servant maids are interested to educate their daughters but their interest is limited to intermediate level only. 103 (32.0 %) revealed that they are not working with the consent of their husbands. 119 (37.8 %) revealed that there is social stigma associated with the job. Majority 277 (85.5 %) revealed that they do not have freedom to choose their life partner.
The number of respondents who revealed that no dowry was paid was 86 (29.8%). This is significant in the present day type of society. 139 (43.3%) responded stating that they do not have the choice to decide about their family size, i.e., the number of children the women should have.

Love marriages are preferred for sons by the respondents 13 (4.2%). The love marriages preferred for daughters are only 7 (2.3%). The scientific literature provides ample evidence to the fact that marriages among the blood relation will lead to children with disabilities either psychically or mentally. Hence, marriages outside the relationship is preferred as compared to marriages among the relatives, especially kith and kin.

An attempt is made to know how frequently husbands of the respondents take alcohol. It is noticed that all of them take alcohol daily. Similarly, out of 194 respondents who answered the question on smoking, majority 124 (63.9%) revealed that their husbands are in the habit of smoking. Similarly out of 147 respondents who answered the question on chewing tobacco, majority 75 (51.0%) revealed that their husbands chew tobacco. It is noticed that 155 (86.1%) out of 180 respondents stated that their husbands use to drink, and used to quarrel with them frequently, and the matters go to the extent of beating the wife. Majority 175 (52.4%) stated that they are not aware of the protection rights of the women in the country. Majority 179 (53.6%) stated that they are aware of 1/3 reservation of the women in the country.

Majority 197 (58.1%) stated that they voted in the last elections. Majority 55 (91.7%) are not facing any physical harassment from their owner and the remaining 5 (8.3%) are facing physical harassment from their owners.

Out of 339, only 2 (0.6%) possessed asset in their name and others do not have land registered in their name. Most of the SC and ST households in the study area were found to be landless. We, therefore, expect that the workers belonging to the SC and ST are more insecure than those belonging to other castes and communities.
None of the flats is registered in the name of the respondent namely the servant maid. Out of 329 respondents who answered this question majority, 225 (68.4 %) are residing in the rented house, and only 104 (31.6 %) are residing in their own houses. Another 48 (46.2 %) replied stating that the house they possessed is self acquired. The average value of the house possessed by the respondents is Rs. 58,750.00. The average rent paid by the respondents is Rs. 512 with a minimum of Rs.200 and a maximum of Rs. 900. This again shows the poor economic situation of the respondents.

Out of 250 respondents who answered the question with regard to possession of bicycle majority 233 (93.2 %) is having bicycle. Similarly out of 40 respondents who answered the question with regard to possession of grinder, majority 36 (90.0 %) are having grinder. Out of 38 respondents who answered the question with regard to possession of motor cycle / scooter, majority 36 (94.7 %) do not have motor cycle / scooter. Since most of them do not possess of the two wheeler, this again shows the poor economic position of the respondents.

Majority 213 (85.9 %) had white cards, 35 (14.1 %) had Pink Cards. There are 91 (26.9 %) respondents who do not have ration card at all. In fact most of these people belong to poverty group.

However, another 30 respondents are working as servant maids as secondary occupation. These workers were highly marginalized and vulnerable in terms of the competition they faced and the low wages they were paid.

The non-wage component of the earnings of the workers is an equally important factor. They include items like food and beverages, medicines, transport charge, clothes, etc. It is expected that workers who do receive from time to time some or the other perquisites of this nature would be more employment secure, since this takes care of aspects of their livelihood other than just income. Domestic workers regularly received such perks from their employers.
The average monthly income earned by the respondents is Rs. 1028. Majority 193 (57.3 %) revealed that owners used to offer new or old clothes to her or her children. 96.8 per cent of the respondent’s husband’s annual income is Rs. 35,000 or less. The average annual income of the father is Rs. 13,803. The average number of earning members in the household is 2.2 with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 6. The average income earned by the respondent household is only Rs. 27,195 with a minimum of Rs. 1200 and a maximum of Rs. 50,000.

The average expenditure of the respondent household is Rs. 26,685 with a minimum of Rs. 2,000 and a maximum of Rs. 50,000. The average present debt of the respondents is Rs. 4,542. A big majority 216 (64.9 %) revealed that they are doing extra work with the same wages. A big majority 236 (70.2 %) replied stating that they are not getting any extra incentive for extra work. A big majority 234 (69.9 %) replied stating that they have flexibility at work.

A big majority 212 (63.3 %) replied stating that they have relaxation at work. The average number of hours of work of the respondents per day is 6.7 hours, with a minimum of 2 hours and a maximum of 13 hours. The average number of houses they are working is 3.1. The average distance traveled by the respondents to the reach the work place is 1.18 km, with a minimum of 1 km and a maximum of 5 km.

The average period the respondents are working is 7.6 years. Only 34 (10.6 %) of the respondents felt that the owner is caring. Caring behaviour is always needed for efficient and happy functioning. The salary will be cut, if they do not attend to the work for any reason including ill health. 141 (42.6 %) revealed that they get wages for the period of their absence also. 144 (42.9 %) revealed that there is no ill treatment. However, 192 (57.1 %) revealed that there is ill treatment.
Most Child Domestic Workers get less than 2 hours of rest everyday, and a very substantial slice of the Child Domestic Worker population is made to work everyday without any rest during the daytime.

Even by conservative estimates, the average working day of most Child Domestic Workers is 15 hour long. More than one-third of the children are not satisfied with the food, clothes and stay arrangements provided to them by their employers, and 41 per cent find the workplace unsafe.

In the present study Child Domestic Workers faced all types of abuse. Physical, emotional and sexual. Within each category of abuse also, these children are made to experience a wide variety of abusive situations.

The survey reveals that almost 68 per cent of the Child Domestic Worker participants have been physically abused. The most common type of physical abuse faced by the Child Domestic Workers is beating with an external object slapping and hair pulling.

68.3 per cent of total child participants have faced physical abuse. Nearly 86 per cent of total Child Domestic Worker participants have faced some form of emotional abuse. 32.2 per cent of the participants have had their private parts touched by someone. 22.4 per cent of the respondents have been made to touch the abusers, private parts. 20.3 per cent of the participants were forced to have sexual intercourse with the abuser. On the whole the sexual abuse observed in present study is 74.9 per cent.
6.6 Major findings of the study

Most Child Domestic Workers are girls in the age group of 11 years and above. Most participants are either illiterate, or have studied up to standard. Most Child Domestic Workers started working between 8-12 years of age. Most Child Domestic Workers get less than Rs. 500 per month remuneration.

It is disheartening to note that domestic workers as a part of unorganised work force remain the most exploited ones even after six decades of independence. Child Domestic Work has been recognised as one of the most intolerable forms of child work. There are millions of households in the country who are capable of hiring domestic help. Lack of support systems plays a major role in the lives of abused children.

The biggest problem facing domestic workers across the country is their non-recognition as workers. Up to 2008 domestic workers don't come under labour laws - they have no right to workers' compensation, weekly holidays and minimum wages. Even the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, does not include domestic workers. The domestic workforce almost always finds itself excluded from labour welfare laws and activities that look after important employment-related issues such as conditions of work, wages, social security, provident funds, old age pensions, and maternity leaves. Though the Indian government's Ministry of Labour has adopted legislative measures for social security and welfare of unorganised workers, these if at all effected, are typically applicable to those employed in agriculture, construction, trade, transport, and communication; domestic workers are left out.

A large part of the rapidly growing urban labour force remains unemployed and under-employed due to the excessive growth rate of urbanization, lack industrial production, and urban employment. A Comprehensive Central Legislation specifically designed to meet the working condition of the domestic workers including registration, who are an important segment of service sector of Indian economy and who have a multiplier impact
on the economy by enabling the women in particular to work by sharing the family burden, can ensure the end of the exploitation of these domestic workers. Most of the labour laws in India apply to workers in the formal sector, and only a few cover those in the informal labour markets.

Domestic servants are engaged in household’s activities which the housewives are unable to perform either due to personal or physical reasons or due to lack of time. People in the informal sector have suffered with low unregulated wages, unregulated working hours, and no paid holidays.

Education forms a very basic indicator for women's equality and empowerment. The relatively higher employment security of the domestic workers as compared to the some other categories in unorganised sector such as construction workers. Domestic work does not follow a seasonal pattern. Domestic workers is the gender dimension. The third is some extra-economic considerations. Often, it is not possible to quantify some factors that play a crucial role in cementing employer-employee relationships, which further contribute to the employment security of workers. Some such factors are trust, faith, mutual respect, etc. Though all children are vulnerable to abuse, children in marginalized and especially difficult circumstances are at a higher risk. The profile and vulnerable conditions of child domestic workers have been well documented in a number of recent reports.

It is very difficult to get authentic data on sexual abuse of Domestic workers. A high 90 per cent of girl-children engaged in domestic work are exploited through different forms of sexual harassment by their employers, or by their cousins or relatives. Most abusers belong to the employer’s family. In the present study, Child Domestic Workers faced all types of abuse - physical, emotional and sexual. Within each category of abuse also, these children are made to experience a wide variety of abusive situations.
6.7 Interventions

There are difficulties in organizing the domestic workers under one umbrella, mainly because they do not see themselves as homogenous groups.

Some immediate interventions can be made at the following levels:-

1. The organization of domestic workers among themselves is very important. A systematic mobilization is needed to help them in making their own associations and unions so that they can share some solidarity and build their own leadership.

2. There is a need to create public opinion on behalf of domestic workers to grant them the status of workers and dignified working conditions. A proper mutual dialogue may be useful in developing a suitable legislative mechanism.

3. There is also an urgent need to sensitize the wider society regarding their attitude towards 'Servant-Master' relationship and change it into a respectable 'Employee – Employer' relationship. Therefore it is extremely important to create an environment where the domestic workers may enjoy their rights, duties and interests like other segments of the society.

6.8 Suggestions

1. The Central Legislation specifically designed to meet the working condition of the domestic workers is to be implemented efficiently and effectively.

2. The labour market operations is unattractive, unjust, and unsatisfactory from the distribution point of view, and that redistribution mechanism needs to be introduced to achieve the social goals.

3. Child Domestic Work must be understood in conjunction with issues of trafficking in children, child sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children.

4. Peer support system is the most sought-after support system for Child Domestic Workers, followed closely by family (mother, siblings and father, in that order).
5. There is need for placement agencies. There should be government control on placement agencies.

6. There is need to curb child abuse of any type. The punishment for child abuse must be severe.

7. There is need for better social security measures for women working in the informal sector, especially as servant maids.

8. The domestic servant maids must be given at least 4 paid holidays.

9. The remuneration for work should be increased.

10. At the work place toilets should be provided.

11. Since these workers mostly deal with water and spend time under unhygienic conditions medicines should be provided for skin diseases including Vaseline or cream for daily use.

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