CHAPTER – II

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 General
The study entitled “An Analysis of the Socio-Economic Status of Domestic Workers in Thoothukudi District in Tamilnadu” is undertaken with the general objective of analyzing and examining the socio-economic conditions of domestic workers before and after joining domestic work. The specific objectives are studying the working condition, wage payment, association activities of domestic workers and problems encountered by the domestic workers in the study area. Keeping in view the above objectives, the study design was made. The methodology includes Statement of the Problem, Objectives of the Study, Hypothesis, Sampling Design, Data Collection, Tools of Research Analysis, Definitions of the Concepts, Significance of the Research, Research gap, Theoretical framework, Limitations of Study and Chapterisation of the Research Work.

2.2 Statement of the Problem
Millions of women across the world are involved in one of the oldest and most important occupations of the world, namely domestic work. The work, which has roots in the global history of slavery, servitude and colonialism, today is performed by an increasing workforce that is imperative for the functioning of the economy outside of people’s homes. Despite the importance of the work and the large amount of workers, especially in the developing world, domestic work to a great extent remains undervalued and largely exempted from labour legislation. The work, which consists of chores that traditionally have been performed unpaid by women in their households, takes place behind closed doors in the homes of the employers. These facts help explain why the work is in the informal sector, undocumented and on many occasions not perceived to fall within a regular employment relationship. The lack of protection makes the workers easy targets for underpayment, bad working conditions and abuse.

There are more than four million domestic workers in India as per the latest official statistics (NSS 2011). Domestic household workers are one of the few
occupational groups not yet covered by national minimum wage law in India despite a lot of debate regarding the same at the national level. In 2011, the ILO passed a convention on decent work for domestic workers but India has not yet ratified this convention. In India one of the primary reasons for the non inclusion of domestic services sector under the National Minimum wage act of 1948 has been the fact that it is a very personalized (informal) service within a private household. In India, Domestic work sector is one of the largest sectors of work in urban areas and majority of the workers are women. The sector is growing rapidly in urban areas and it is an important source of employment for the migrant workers who come in search of livelihood opportunities. Despite its growing size and importance both for workers and families who benefit from their labour, domestic work remains unregulated and workers are unprotected by labour laws. It is in this context, a study on the socio economic conditions of domestic workers in the state of Tamil Nadu with special reference to Thoothukudi District has the significance. In a district like Thoothukudi which is socially and economically backward, attempting to study one of the most deprived working communities’ viz. domestic workers is the need of the hour. In this context the study has more relevance to find out socio economic issues of domestic workers in Thoothukudi district.

2.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to analyse the Socio and Economic Conditions of domestic workers in Thoothukudi District. The following are the specific objectives of the research study.

a) To analyze the socio-economic conditions of the domestic workers.

b) To identify the occupational conditions of domestic workers in the study area.

c) To study the extent of participation of domestic workers in trade association.

d) To study the problems encountered by the domestic workers in their work place.

e) To suggest some policy initiatives to promote the welfare of domestic workers.

2.4 Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the above objectives, the following hypotheses have been formulated to analyses the socio and economic conditions of domestic workers especially the women workers.
1. The per capita income of the domestic women workers is determined by the family size, educational status, occupation registration, number of earning members, regulation of employment and number of dependents in the study area.

2. The Marginal Propensity to Consume (MPC) is comparatively high for the women domestic workers in the study area.

2.5 Sampling Design

Regarding the selection of sampling technique for the data collection, the researcher has used the convenient random sampling method to get explicit and in-depth answers that would reveal the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the respondents. A Schedule consisting five parts, namely part I, with the statements of social and economic particulars and part II with the statements of occupational conditions and part III, with statements of changes on socio economic and health condition and part IV, with the problems encountered by the domestic workers and part V, with the associational activities. Multi-stage stratified random sampling technique has been adopted for the study taking Thoothukudi District as the universe, the block as the stratum, the village as the primary unit and domestic workers as the ultimate unit.

Thoothukudi District comprises of eight Taluks. Domestic workers are mainly spread in Kovilpatti, Sattankulam, Thoothukudi and Tiruchendur because the highest numbers of industrial and service units are concentrated only in those taluks. Hence the selection of sample respondents was restricted only to these four taluks. The total number of samples selected from these four taluks is 447. Number of samples from each taluk differs according to the size of domestic workers of the selected taluks.

A list of domestic workers in the selected taluks was obtained from the records of the District Labour Office, Thoothukudi District. The taluk-wise list of sample domestic workers is presented in Table 2.1.
Table 2.1 - Names of Taluks and Samples selected From the Domestic Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Taluk Name</th>
<th>Total size of Domestic Workers</th>
<th>Sample of Domestic Workers</th>
<th>Total Sample of Domestic Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Registered</td>
<td>Un-registered</td>
<td>Registered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kovilpatti</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>4,665</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Sattankulam</td>
<td>1,036</td>
<td>3,145</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Thoothukudi</td>
<td>1,936</td>
<td>5,450</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tiruchendur</td>
<td>1,121</td>
<td>3,360</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,734</td>
<td>16,620</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District Labour Office, Thoothukudi, 2015 and primary data

In the selected four taluks of Thoothukudi district, there are a total of 22,354 domestic workers’ households. Similarly in Kovilpatti taluk, there are 6,306 domestic workers’ households. In Sattankulam taluk, the total number of domestic workers households is 4,181. There are 7,386 domestic workers’ households in Thoothukudi taluk and there are 4,481 domestic worker’ households in Tiruchendur taluk. Giving due weightage to the number of workers in each taluk, the percentage random sampling technique has been adopted to select 126 samples from Kovilpatti, 84 samples from Sattankulam, 148 samples from Thoothukudi and 89 samples from Tiruchendur. Thus, a total of 447 domestic workers (2%) were selected for statistical investigation. The collected data were carefully processed, edited and tabulated for analytical purposes.

2.6 Nature of Data Collection

The required data for the study has been collected using both the primary and the secondary sources. The primary data has been collected from the domestic workers by direct personal interview method with the help of well structured interview schedule which was pre-tested before it was employed for the data collection. The interview schedule was designed after reviewing the related literature and previous studies conducted along this line of different researchers.
The Research is carried out by the researcher with the collected secondary sources from books, newspapers, research papers published in reputed journals, bulletins, working papers, e-journals, NSSO and Census reports and policy notes issued by the State and Central Governments. The researcher had consultations with the experts of V.V Giri National Labour Institute, Noida, District Labour Officer of Thoothukudi District, and Local Domestic Workers’ Union Leader. Prominently, the researcher has gone through various critical literatures to understand and analyse the interrelatedness of data.

2.7 Tools of Research Analysis

In this study, various statistical tools such as percentage, averages are used for basic analysis and multiple linear regression, logistic regression analysis, Lorenz Curve approach, chi-square test, Garrett Ranking Techniques and factor analysis are used for empirical analysis. Multiple regression models have also been applied.

Chi Square Test

The Chi Square statistic is a non-parametric test adopted here to test the magnitude of the discrepancy between theoretically expected values and observed values. The statistics for the test of independence summarizes how close the expected frequencies fall to the observed frequencies.

The null hypotheses are generally assumed that there is no difference between the expected frequencies (\( f_e \)) and their respective observed frequencies (\( f_o \)). When \( H_0 \) is true, \( f_o \) and \( f_e \) tend to be close for each cell and \( \chi^2 \) is relatively small. If \( H_0 \) is false, at least some \( f_o \) and \( f_e \) values tend not to be close, leading to large \( (f_o - f_e)^2 \) values under larger test statistics. The larger the \( \chi^2 \) value, the greater the evidence against the null hypothesis of independence.

Analysis of Variance

The method of comparing means of the various groups is called the analysis of variance (ANOVA). It compares the variability of the sample means about the overall mean to the variability of the sample observations about their separate means. The test statistics is the ratio of two estimates of the population variance, \( \sigma^2 \), of the measurements in the group. One of the two estimates uses the variability between, and within each sample. This estimate is called within group estimate of variance or simply within estimate. The other estimate uses the variability between each sample means and the
overall sample mean, which is known as between-group estimate of the variance or simply between estimates. If $H_0$ is true, the between estimate tends to be equal to within estimate, apart from sampling error. Within Sum of Squares (WSS) and Between Sum of Squares (BSS) and the respective estimates of variances are given below:

$$\text{WSS} = \sum (Y_{ij} - \overline{Y}_j)^2$$

$$\text{BSS} = \sum (Y_i - \overline{Y})^2$$

$\sum (n_j - 1) s_j^2$

$$\sigma_w^2 = \frac{\sum (n_j - 1) s_j^2}{N-g}$$

$$\sum n_j (Y_j - Y))^2$$

$$\sigma_B^2 = \frac{\sum (Y_j - \overline{Y})^2}{g - 1}$$

Where,

$Y_{ij}$ - are the individual values of the sample

$Y_j$ - mean of the $j^{th}$ sample

$Y$ - mean of the items by pooling all the samples

$I$ - $1$ to $n_j$ ; $j = 1$ to $g$ ; $\sum n_j = N$

$(N-g)$ - Within group degrees of freedom

$(g-1)$ - between group degrees of freedom

$g$ - total number of samples

$s_j^2 = \frac{\sum (Y_{ij} - \overline{Y}_j)^2}{(n_j-1)}$

**Regression Analysis**

In the analysis of estimation of various elements of the income and expenditure of domestic workers, regression is employed. A regression containing one independent variable is known as a simple linear regression, whereas a regression with more than one explanatory variable is termed as a multiple regression.

**Simple Linear Regression**

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_t + u_t$$
Multiple Linear Regressions

It is the simplest multiple linear regression with two explanatory variables. In the following models,

\[ Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1t} + \beta_2 X_{2t} + u_t \]

Where \( Y \) is the dependent variable
\( X_t, X_{1t}, X_{2t} \) are the independent variables
\( \beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2 \) are the regression co-efficients
\( u_t \) is the error variable.

Here, \( u_t \) is assumed to follow a normal distribution with zero mean \( [E (u_t) = 0] \) and constant variance \( [E (u_t^2) = \sigma^2] \) is popularly known as the assumption of homoscedasticity. The other important assumptions are, \( u_t \) is independent of the explanatory variables, the independent variables are uncorrelated to one another (assumption of multicolinearity) and the error values are uncorrelated with their previous lagged values (assumption of auto-correlation).

F - Statistic

The F – statistic for \( H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \ldots = \mu_g \) is the ratio of the between estimate to the within estimate. It is calculated by the following formula:

\[ F = \frac{\text{Between Estimate}}{\text{Within Estimate}} = \frac{BSS / (g-1)}{WSS / (N-g)} \]

A significant ‘F’ value provides strong evidence against \( H_0 \) and an insignificant ‘F’ value provides no evidence against \( H_0 \) at a designated level of significance.

Lorenz Curve Approach

The measure of the degree of inequality in the distribution of income of the domestic workers is carried out by using Lorenz curve. Lorenz curve is given as a box diagram and the 45\(^0\) line represents the line of equal distribution. Actual distribution is represented by their cumulative frequency curve. If the cumulative curve is far from the line of equality, then the inequality is higher for the distribution considered.
Gini ratio co-efficient is estimated with the help of the Lorenz curve. Gini ratio is the ratio of the area between the observed cumulative frequency curve and the line of equality and the area below 45° line. The Gini ratio, nearing zero indicates less inequality and the ratio approaching unity implies greater inequality.

**Factor Analysis**

In Factor analysis each variable is expressed as a linear combination of underlying factors. The amount of variance a variable shares with all other variables included in the analysis is referred to as communality. The variation among the variables is described in terms of a small number of common factors plus a unique factor for each variable. These factors are not overtly observed. If the variables are standardized, the factor model may be represented as

\[ X_i = A_{i1}F_1 + A_{i2}F_2 + A_{i3}F_3 + \ldots + A_{im}F_m + V_iU_i \]

\( Xi \) = ith standardized variable

\( A_{ij} \) = standardized multiple regression coefficient of variable i on common factor j

\( F \) = common factor

\( V_i \) = standardized regression coefficient of variable I on unique factor i

\( U_i \) = the unique factor for variable i

\( m \) = number of common factors

The unique factors are uncorrelated with each other and with the common factors. The common factors themselves can be expressed as linear combinations of the observed variables.

\[ F_i = W_{i1}X_1 + W_{i2}X_2 + W_{i3}X_3 + \ldots + W_{ik}X_k \]

Where

\( F_i \) = estimate of ith factor

\( W_i \) = weight or factor score coefficient

\( k \) = number of variables.

**Garrett Ranking Technique**

Garrett ranking technique was used to rank the problems. The ranks were assigned and points were given in the following order.
1 – Rank = 5 points
2 – Rank = 4 points
3 – Rank = 3 points
4 – Rank = 2 points
5 – Rank = 1 point

After assigning points to various ranks, the Garrett mean score was calculated by using the following formula.

\[
\text{Present Position} = \frac{100(Rij - 0.5)}{Nj}
\]

where,

Rij – Rank given for the \text{i}^{th} reason by \text{j}^{th} respondents

Nj – Number of factors ranked by \text{j}^{th} respondents registered domestic workers and unregistered domestic workers in a comparative perspective. The present study aims at such comparative analysis as the problems experienced by the two categories are both similar and dissimilar. Such an analysis would enable policymakers to take into consideration and pass necessary amendments in concerned acts discussed above and implement them vigorously with regard to the specific problems of both categories of domestic workers.

2.8 Significance of the Present Research

A substantial number of women in rural areas have little skills; practically have no education and no proper earnings. Hence they are forced to migrate from rural areas for the sake of employment. One of the low ranking occupations assigned to the poorest women in urban areas is domestic service. Employment of servants has become very common in the urban areas, where a large number of house wives come out for jobs. Employing servants save much of the time and energy for the working housewives of modern cities. Domestic service has proved to be a necessity for non-working housewives also. In urban areas, they commonly engage domestic servants to help them carrying out their household chores, partly due to physical inability and partly due to lack of time. Moreover in nuclear families there is no standby in the family, if the house wife falls ill. Thus the new middle classes have developed a life style which has increased the demand for domestic servants. The maid servants employed in the house hold labour
policy play a significant role especially in the small towns of India. The number of domestic workers is increasing but their living condition in Thoothukudi district is not known. In this context, the study of socio-economic status of workers has significance to suggest measures for their improvement if needed. It has interdisciplinary relevance between economics and sociology. The problems of domestic workers are social as well as economic in nature. The conceptual and theoretical support from the sociologists and economists can be taken into consideration.

2.9 Research Gap

Domestic work was largely a male job in the post-independence period as men dominated rural-urban migration. Over the time, domestic service has become more feminized. In 2009-2010, the National Sample Survey estimates the total number of domestic workers at 2.52 million, up from 1.62 million in 1999-2000. Of this, nearly two-third resides in urban India, and nearly 57 percent are women. As in other countries, domestic work as a means of employment in India has undergone what economists refer to a “rapid feminization” where almost 75 percent of the increase in domestic workers over the last 10 years is accounted for by women. Domestic service as wage labour in most of the countries, particularly third world continues to be a major sector of low wage female work. Domestic work is a sector of ultra-exploited wage labour as well as a sector of strenuous use value production in the absence of better employment. It is disheartening to note that domestic works, as a part of unorganised work force, remained the most exploited ones even after decades of independence. Low wages and exploitative conditions are recognised problems, but the ethics of passing domestic work ‘down’ to another oppressed category is in question. Apparently, domestic labour is one of our largest job categories-next to farming and construction. There are over 100 million domestic workers in India, more than 50 times the number of people working in the software industry. According to an official at the labour department, at present, only a third of (1, 45,945) domestic workers in the State have registered with the Social Security Board. Low wages, exploitative conditions at work and a series of rights violations led to the organizing of domestic workers in various States. Without a doubt, domestic workers face a range of vulnerabilities given the unique nature of the ‘workplace’ on the cusp of the public and private domain.
A number of studies have been undertaken not only in Tamil Nadu, but in the entire India and throughout the world, to study the socio economic status of domestic workers and problems faced in the work place. All types of exploitations like low wage, abusement and working hours etc. But the other left out area of research study is the place of registered and unregistered nature of domestic workers in influencing the social and economic status, before and after joining in the domestic work. In this context, undertaking a study on socio-economic status and other relating problem aspects has its place in bridging the gap with the present need of the research. The study will be more appropriate to understand the changing status of domestic workers in the context of their registered and unregistered classification.

2.10 Theoretical Framework to the Study of Labour.

Three theoretical perspectives are offered to explain the exploitation of domestic workers and the problems confronting them: (i) dual labour market theory; (ii) patriarchy; and (iii) the Marxian perspective. According to the dual labour market theory, the job structure is classified into primary and secondary sectors and upper and lower tiers. Women are disproportionately distributed into the secondary sector and in the lower tiers. This secondary sector tends to be low paying with poor working conditions, little change of advancement, instability of job, and high turnover among the labour force. Also, it is characterized by highly personalized relationship between the workers and the supervisors, which leave wide latitude for favoritism and harsh and capricious work discipline. The predominance of women in this sector is not due to lack of demand for labour and skill but due to institutional processes.

Marx also said that there is division of labour and different roles are arranged according to hierarchy of the occupational structure. Women and children are employed in the lowest occupational category. The Reserve Army of Labour conjures up a very concrete image of a specific and specifiable army of people who are moved in and out of the workforces at the will of capital.

The institutional processes that push women to lower tiers within the secondary sector can be traced in the patriarchal mode of production. According to Sylvia Walby, women’s labour is expropriated by the community of men in the patriarchal mode of production. Women are excluded from highly skilled labour and are forced to sell their
labour at very low wages. There is a tendency to pay women less, below the value of labour power.

It is necessary to analyse women’s politicization in domestic service and the consequent exploitative practices within the context of institutional practices under patriarchy. The institutional contexts and processes by which women are drawn into labour segments need to be analysed. Female domestic workers’ labour power being paid at a low price below its values can be attributed to the ideological assumptions of women’s role. The informalisation of domestic service and the resultant exploitation of cheap labour reflect the attitudes and ideologies prevailing in society.

Gender role ideologies, sexual division of labour, public-private dichotomy and confinement of women to the private domain can be understood within the context of patriarchal system. The sexual division of labour is an ideological representation of work distribution. Patriarchy as an analytical category inscribes the sexual division of labour as a social division determined by the nature of productive system. Patriarchal system is positively correlated with feudal system. Sexual division of labour divides all work processes into male and female tasks and identifies women as a separate category of workers based on their reproductive role. Women are primarily viewed as housewives; and the work of housewives is not considered as productive work. “Housewification” makes domestic women’s labour cheaper. Additionally, women in the lower economic strata have no choice but to seek paid work to meet the economic needs of their families. This situation is aggravated by lack of skills. In sum, the present study on women domestic workers in India is to be understood in the context of dual labour market, patriarchal oppression and sexual division of labour.

Domestic workers (DWs) are subject to a range of human rights violations. Their numbers are large yet they, majority being girls and women, mostly remain invisible workforce. Their work such as cleaning, cooking, washing, caring for children and elderly members of the family, etc, though essential for their employers’ households is not considered formal employment because of its private nature; it also carries the low value of women’s unpaid care work. Domestic workers are overworked, underpaid, and unprotected by labour laws. As the most invisible sector, domestic work has uniformly been given a low status on the hierarchy of work, by governments and society.
Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis, that analyzes class relations and societal conflict using a materialist interpretation of historical development and a dialectical view of social transformation. It originates from the mid-to-late 19th century works of German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marxist analyses and methodologies have influenced multiple political ideologies and social movements, and Marxist understandings of history and society have been adopted by some academics in the disciplines of archaeology, anthropology, media studies, political science, theatre, history, sociology, art history and theory, cultural studies, education, economics, geography, literary criticism, aesthetics, critical psychology, and philosophy.

Based on Marxian theory on class struggle, the present study identifies the struggle between the employer and the employee that is the Domestic worker. Marxian expectations still under question today in the study area. So the study tries to highlight the different conditions and areas of struggle in the work place of the Domestic Workers.

2.11 Limitations of Study

The followings are the major limitations that the researcher had to come across during the study.

1. Women domestic workers were reluctant to share some of their problems they undergo in their working houses due to that fear that it might affect their jobs and personal dignity.

2. In general, the respondents were relatively hesitant to share their particulars, for fear that revealing such information might affect any benefit or concession from the government side.

3. The respondents were reluctant to share about the particulars of individuals and other family members, as they felt that would affect the esteem and social dignity of the family.

4. Sharing of particulars about borrowing from neighbours, relatives and friends was felt as more sensitive by the respondents which relatively affected the collection of information. Only through some indirect questions the limitation was relatively overcome by the researcher.

5. When asked for particulars, the attitude of the respondents in general was that, ‘what is the benefit they get in return to share their particulars to the researcher.
This had to be overcome only after continuous interaction with the respondents explaining the necessity of the data for the academic exercise.

6. The other important limitation was that as almost all the women folk are caught up with their paid work throughout the day, it was difficult to meet them in their leisure time for data collection.

7. Information on matter pertaining to sexual abuse by the employer was hardly received by the enumerator due to its sensitivity.

2.12 Chapterisation

Research study has been organized and presented in seven chapters.

Chapter One deals with ‘Introduction’ which elaborately provides the macro perspective of global scenario of unorganised labour sector and narrates the condition of unorganized labour in the developing economies.

Chapter Two deals with Research methodology. It includes, Statement of the Problem, Objectives of the Study, Hypothesis, Sampling Design, Data Collection, Tools of Research Analysis, Significance of the Research, Research gap, Theoretical framework, Limitations of Study and Chapterisation.

Chapter Three deals with the literature review which are classified into three parts. The chapter reviews literature on the reasons for choosing domestic work by the workers, problems faced in the working place, socio-economic and health conditions of domestic workers and participation of domestic workers in the associational activities in transnational and national context and Definitions of the Concepts,

Chapter Four deals with the profile of the Thoothukudi district including the particulars of the selected four taluks viz. Thoothukudi, Kovilpatti, Sattankulam and Thiruchendur of the District.

Chapter Five deals with the analysis of primary data under two major headings namely Social and Economic status of domestic workers.

Chapter Six deals with the occupation conditions faced by the Domestic workers and also deals with the associational nature of domestic workers.

Chapter Seven analyses the problems encountered by the domestic workers at various levels.
Chapter Eight presents the summary of findings and suggests alternatives for the identified problems and lacunae of the study area and conclusions. Suggestions for further research are also given in this study.