CHAPTER – III

CONCEPT AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1 General

The researcher has reviewed the relevant literature, which enabled him to formulate the problem and develop tools for improvement. This would facilitate the identification of the gaps in the earlier work and the present study may help to fill them, however modest the contribution may be in that direction.

In the present chapter, an attempt is made to survey and appraise the literature emerging from status and problems faced by the domestic worker them in working place, socio-economic and associational contexts. It traces out the literature and deliberates upon various dimensions of domestic labour which are common across the nations as well as those specific to the nature of work, cultural and political contexts.

3.2 Status of the Domestic Workers

Mehta (1960) felt that domestic work was largely a male job in the post-independence period as men dominated rural urban migration over time; domestic service has become more feminized. Although no data on gender composition exists at the macro level, data from several surveys supports this trend. As per 32 round of NSSO (1977-78) there were 6.8 lakhs domestics as against the Catholic Bishops Conference in 1980 estimated that 78 per cent of domestics in 12 cities were females and in Bombay 90 per cent were females. The study also pointed out the gender stratification as cooks and drivers, while the low paying operations of cleaning and caring are left to females. According to 1991 census there were 5.76 lakh women engaged in domestic service industry. Domestic service as wage labour in most of the countries, particularly the third world continues as a major sector of low wage female work. Domestic work in 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 work, as a part of unorganised work force, remained the most exploited one even after six decades of independence.
Beechey (1978) in his article mentioned that, the labour market is segmented and has two sectors – primary and secondary. The primary sector offers jobs with relatively high wages, good working conditions, chances of advancement, equity and due process in the administration of work rules and above all, employment stability whereas jobs in the secondary sector by contrast, tend to be low paying with poorer working conditions and little chances of advancement, and have a highly personalized relationship between the workers and the supervisors which leaves a wide latitude for favoritisms and is conducive to harsh precarious work discipline, and characterized by considerable instability in jobs and a high turnover among the labour force.

Gangrade et.al., (1983) “Women and Child Workers in Unorganised Sector : Non Government organisation’s perspectives”  This book explains that are engaged in household tasks, which include washing utensils, floor cleaning, washing of cloths, cooking as well as some outdoor tasks such as purchase of vegetables etc. Most of them live in slums, lead a monotonous life without colour, struggle every day for their survival and face numerous problems in their day to day life like long hours of work, insecurity regarding jobs low status within the house as well as in the outside world.

Dighe et al., (1988) in this study found that there was an increase of 21.8 per cent in the number of female workers in the UT of Delhi from 1971 to 1981. These women, who occupied the domestic work sector, belonged to the lowest stratum of society and are often considered as cheap labour. In the recent past the trend shows that all big cities of the country have become the centers to recruit poor women as domestic workers, major reasons for this being a sharp increase in middle class women work participation. These middle class women’s have shifted their household work load to the poor working women as their maids. In some cases it is seen that the middle and upper classes in order to keep their upward mobility and status symbol have withdrawn themselves from household duties.

Mahadevan (1989) in his study on the plight of domestic workers pointed out that the plight of women domestic workers is bad. Each of them is employed by several people at the same time and they are exploited by the employers in terms of pay (wages) working hours, physical abuse, sexual abuse, etc.
‘Domestic Workers’ Society of Delhi’ (1989) a study shows that the push factors causing domestic labour are drought conditions in villages, capitalist farming, and the vicious circle of indebtedness; the pull factors are the glamour of city life and the promise of better wages. Domestic workers face the problems of alienation, isolation, fear due to lack of education, becoming prey to suspicion, and being called dependent on their employers. They are subjected to the indignity of being called ‘ayah’ and not workers, are vulnerable to exploitation, and are treated as bonded labourers. There is a conceptual myth that they are workers on charity. They are also unorganized and invisible, neglected by all sections including political parties, and are low paid.

Elens (1990) in his study reveals that “Sri Lankans in the Middle East” is based on an analysis of sixty case studies. Though physical or sexual assault, confinement indoors, deprivation of passport and non-payment of salary are illegal in Kuwait, one-third of the domestic workers have suffered rape and sexual assault by the employer or men having access to their homes; and two-thirds of them endured physical assault or non-payment of salary. Such unfavorable working conditions have created a psychological impact resulting in low self-esteem, guilt feeling, anxiety, fear, loneliness, depression, tension and family disintegration.

Cole, Melissa (1992) in “Inthuthuko” means that we are going forward: Hearing the voices of domestic workers in “South Africa” sheds light on the lives of domestic workers in Johannesburg, such as the working hours, wages, food and accommodation of live-in workers, separation from their families, their relationships with their employment, their experiences of violence and harassment, the cultural and social status of African women, and their hopes for change. The findings of the study were that most of the domestic workers were girls from poor families and were forced to work for up to fifteen hours a day, with no break and little or no pay. The majority of the respondents faced physical abuse and most of them faced severe abuse that had led to injuries. About 32.2 percent were subjected to sexual abuse and many of them were not allowed to meet their families even.
Thorpe (1993) conducted a study entitled “Exploitation of domestic women workers-A case study from Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu”. The survey revealed that exploitation of women domestic workers occurs when bargains are not freely made and when transformation in one economy makes one party better off at the expense of another. In this study, he found two major reasons for the existence of exploitation of women domestic workers. One reason is that when a male bread winner of the family dies and the women take up domestic work, chances of exploitation are very high. Another reason stated was that in non-familiar structure the chances of the likelihood of exploitation are more when they are made to stay with the employer. The chances of being exploited were 58.69 per cent for those who were staying with the employers. The study concludes by saying that the chances of exploitation are greater with the social vulnerability of women and their dependency on the employers.

Sundaram (1996) “The Plight of Unorganised Workers”, It is found that among all categories in the informal sector, domestic servants’ income is the lowest and the problems are many.

Anderson et.al., (1997) in his study entitled “Migrant domestic workers: A European perspective” has pointed out the complaints of domestic workers, in the European context, ranging from constant and close supervision to harassment. Common problems of the domestic workers studied were unpaid hours, salaries less than the minimum wage, sexual harassment, pressure to do additional work for friends and colleagues, excessive workload, etc.

Singh (1997) in “Tribal women labour: Problems of tribal domestic help, Delhi” highlights the sufferings of domestic labours like exploitation, indignity from co-workers, employers and labour agents, long hours of work, low pay, delay in payment, physical assault, sexual exploitation, etc.

Domestic Workers’ Movement (1998) “Domestic workers: A modern day manifestation of slavery” is a study jointly carried out by Domestic Workers’ Movement and India Centre for Human Rights and Law, Bombay, based on secondary data collected from reports and case studies. It found that domestic labour was feminized as women are already proficient in housekeeping and childcare. Domestic labour, although treated as one single category, actually consists of several sub-categories such as live-in, live-out,
part-time, and full-time. The predominant reasons for the rise of domestic labour are urbanization, rise of dual-earner families, drought, poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, etc. Domestic workers remain victims of unmitigated injustice, and are totally powerless and voiceless. They are treated as objects and not as persons. As a result of the nature of their work they suffer from a high degree of loneliness and alienation from their own people. They have no job security and they are constantly vulnerable to verbal, physical and sometimes even sexual harassment. Legally they are not even accepted as workers and are conveniently called ‘servants’, ‘maids’ or ‘ayahs’. They do not have fixed hours of work, leave benefits, proper wages and medical benefits. Domestic workers carry the stigma of ‘non-persons’ involved in non-work and, consequently, most of the time suffer inhuman living conditions.

Chin Christine (1998) Conducted a study “In service and servitude: Foreign female domestic workers and the Malaysian Modernity project” highlighted that many foreign domestic workers were working in the Country illegally without any legal protection, they are often subjected to harsh and unregulated treatment.

Ray (2000) in his study “Masculinity, femininity, and servitude: Domestic workers in Calcutta in the late twentieth century” explored how the construction work created gender identities. Ray argued that the relations between the worker and the employer are seen through the lens of gender and are used by the workers to build and reflect upon their gendered selves. Domestic workers judge themselves by the extent to which they have achieved or failed to achieve hegemonic gender norms. Domestic work in Calcutta, and indeed, in India, is individualized, unorganized, and made familial. This is particularly true of those who do live-in work. Taking this into account and the stigmatization of this occupation, it is not surprising that these domestic workers minimize their identities as workers and instead, think of themselves as women and men, mother and fathers, wives and husbands, daughters and sons. Their identities were constituted through their class location, the work they do, and their particular relationship to a domestic space, which is also their place of work. Unlike other workers live-in domestic workers had little autonomous space outside bhadralok culture. Unlike part-time workers, they had no homes to return to at the end of the day. They were therefore materially and evasively constrained within a universe that was not of their own making.
Regardless of whether they ultimately accepted or rejected the bhadrakalok evaluation of themselves, they judged their lives by the very ideals which were designed to out of their reach. The study concludes that they held two ideas about womanhood and manhood and in this process female and male domestic workers were simultaneously defeated by and partially victorious over hegemonic gender ideologies.

Lazar (2000) in his study found that, “I’m a citizen” analysed the consciousness, resistance and identity in the domestic service sector in post-apartheid South Africa. The new theoretical frame work of accommodation and resistance was developed based on the cross-national literature drawn from the survey, conducted on domestic workers, employers, government officials, possibility for movement towards transformative politics in this sector in the future of unions, church workers, etc., in the Johannesburg region. The findings of the study suggest that while the domestic workers are on the margins of South Africa’s new social contract, there is related to slavery, using a number of neo-Grimacean concepts.

Murugaiah (2002) “Women Domestic Workers” An attempt has been made in this Study to present the occupational risks of the domestic servants and the relevant studies conducted in the field. A Study has been conducted in Tirupati, chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. Slavery has been abolished but the woman domestic worker is almost like a slave. Year in and year out she struggles with the daily grind of existence, performing the lowest paid and most menial tasks which would not be taken up by any other person. She is unprotected by any sort of labour laws and has no resort to any justice from exploitation. It is now urgent move to frame some comprehensive legislative measures to organise these domestic servants and take concrete steps to change the situation.

Mary P. Clarke (2002) “Domestic work, Joy or Pain? Problems and solutions of the workers ” The study examined the standard of living and coping strategies of domestic workers. It found that they are faced with many difficulties to do with the terms and conditions of employment, cost of living, housing, transportation and relationships both personal and at the workplace. In spite of the difficulties only two of the twenty-three who participated in the focus group discussions, were taking any action to improve themselves strategically. One was doing evening classes and the other hoping to join her
husband in the United States. The workers were, however, quite creative and ingenious in adapting and developing survival strategies which included prioritization in use of funds, saving, depending on social network, and religion. They recommended several measures which would improve their standard of living such as an increase in the minimum wage (to about 4 times what it was at the time of discussion) and the provision of affordable housing solutions.

Teeganita (2002) in this survey a workforce in Malaysia aiming to empower women conducted a survey on Indonesian and Filipino domestic women workers in Malaysia. The study, entitled “Servants or workers” points out that the domestic workers were portrayed as objects and subjects of larger economic forces at work and were not defined as workers in the Employment Act. As a result, domestic workers were ignorant of their rights and were denied week end holidays. They were subject to psychological abuse of scolding, threat ousting , deportation; social abuse of indoor confinement , seizure of passports and denial of access to family and friend ; physical abuse of beating, sexual violence; and economic abuse of long hours of work, non-payment for overtime work, denial of holidays, salary cut and joint bank account with the employer. The long hours of physical work and mental stress caused severe psychosomatic illness among several domestic workers.

Lutz et.al., (2002) in “At your service Madam! The globalization of domestic service in the European context” studies the domestic labourers as cases of children and elders in the household and informal labour market in the private sector. Migrant domestic workers suppress the anticipation of danger due to their inability to solve problems. In the absence of their membership or citizenship in the destination countries, domestic work is rendered insecure and marks collective’ action difficult because government laws are less favorable regarding their wages and safety, wages paid are meager in the cities; and only half of that in the countryside. Also, payments made are in kind in the form of table scraps, castaway clothes and a shack in the garden as the living place.

Machado (2003) in “Domestic work, condition of work and employment” highlights the working conditions of domestic workers as they are specified in the national legislation of sixty countries around the world. The study identifies the
limitations of legal protection, current insecure status of migrant workers and the need to protect them from HIV/AIDS. The author observes that despite national and cultural particularities domestic workers throughout the world share and suffer from the basic problems of invisibility marginalization, lack of social and legal recognition and exclusion from national labour laws. Migrant workers in general encounter the problems of inadequate and low quality of food, poor and inadequate accommodation, and lack of privacy attending to menial jobs, mental and physical violence and insecurity. Migrant women and child workers are more exposed to harder conditions of work and physical as well as psychological abuses.

Sayres (2004) in his study entitled “An analysis of the situation of Filipino domestic workers, Manila” analyses the situation of Filipino domestic workers in Singapore, Hong Kong and other South East Asian countries. The survey conducted by both government and non-government organisations forms the basis for the analysis. Income from domestic work is of critical value to Philippine households and the country as a whole. But there are no standard terms of employment in the Philippine and the working conditions of domestic labour are characterized by physical and psychological abuse, exploitation and violations of the Labour Code.

Anne Loveband (2004) “Nationality Matters: SARS and Foreign Domestic Workers’ Rights in Taiwan Province of China “ This Study explores the centrality of issues of nationality to understanding the migration experience of Indonesian and Filipino domestic workers in Taiwan by considering how SARS played out for them in terms of their occupational location, their national background, their access to support and information networks regarding rights, and their official representation. The Study seeks to expand our understanding of the experiences of migrant domestic workers in Taiwan by means of my research on Indonesian domestic workers. However, he would argue that this case study is not just an empirical curiosity but that it is instructive in a broader theoretical sense. Understanding the nationality issue stands at the core of understanding the diversity of experiences of migrant domestic workers in any given geographic and temporal location. If we combine this factor together with the key variables of the relationship to the state and the relationship to the employer, as Bridget Anderson (2000) suggests, we move closer to a more incisive and less reductionist understanding of the
factors which shape the living and working conditions of migrant domestic workers. In this paper, he has sought to expand our understanding of the experiences of migrant domestic workers in Taiwan by means of his research on Indonesian domestic workers.

Banerjee (2004) in his study reveals that “Down memory lane: Representations of domestic workers in middle class personal narratives of colonial Bengal” explored one of the many facets of employer-servant relationships through a selective reading of middle-class persons narratives. She focused on a sample of Bengali personal narratives by both the male and female members of the bhadralok population that described the strength and authority of servants within colonial families. The servants’ characters were not transparent because none of the writers wrote with the intention of narrating the life-stories of the servants. They determined their tone of representation in a persuasive mode that downplayed the marks of coercion and exploitation inhering in the domestic-employer relationship. It is here that the discrepancy between the discursive practice and the day-to-day living of the Bengali middle class has been noticed. The authors in fact redefined and extended the boundaries of the home and the family to incorporate the intimacies and emotional connections with the domestic workers instead of portraying them as a subordinated group in a hierarchical household.

Human Rights watch (2005) reports in 2005 at least 147 migrant domestic workers died of workplace accident or suicide. The report was drawn on the basis of empirical data collected through an extensive survey conducted on domestic workers in Singapore. Domestic workers were subjected to working hours of 13 to 19 hours a day, seven working days a week, and poor working conditions. They were exploited by the recruitment agent and harbored anxiety about debts owed to employment agencies, social isolation, prolonged confinement indoors, physical violence, and inadequate food. Human Right Watch urged the Singapore government to provide comprehensive legal protection to migrant domestic workers in accordance with international labour standards. It also provided guidelines for government, recruitment firms, diplomatic missions, police stations and helpline for stakeholders in the welfare of domestic workers in respect of their legal protection.
Madhu et.al., (2005) “Nirmala Niketan- a Ray of Hope for women Domestic Workers”. In this study reveals that the condition of women of women domestic workers is worthy of concern. Although there have been recent attempts to organise these women through the establishment of employment bureaus, the vast majority are still suffering gross injustice. It is increasingly playing a wider role in the mobilisation of domestic workers and pressing the case for enactment of suitable legislation for them. The various existing laws for workers also need to be properly used for promoting the welfare of domestic workers and its sister organisation Nirmala, this is also part of a wider struggle for improving the working and living conditions of all unorganised workers.

Gregory Gaines et.al., (2006) they are conducted a study on the working conditions of domestic workers in Montgomery County, Maryland. The objective of this research was to determine whether the working conditions of domestic workers are unfair and if so, the extent and magnitude of such problems. The goal of this study was to move beyond anecdotal evidence and provide the Montgomery County Health and Human Services committee with sound empirical data on domestic working conditions in order to inform public discussion of these issues and potential policy solutions. The findings of this study showed that there were substantive difference both among types of domestic workers as well as between domestic workers as a class and the general population of Montgomery County. Domestic workers are consistently divested of health, retirement and regularized leave provisions. Therefore, it is imperative to the improvement of domestic worker protections, rights, and welfare that this specific population is targeted for future research and analysis. However, should the country decide to take legislative action it may create mandated work standards.

Amit Kundu (2008) conducted a study on the Conditions of ‘Work and Rights of The Female Domestic Workers of Kolkata’. This study focused on women working as domestic helps in private houses. The Endeavour was to know about working the conditions and rights of women domestic workers. The findings revealed that they were not getting facilities like timely salaries, overtime payment, public holiday, standard daily working hours and prior notice before dismissal from work. The study tried to cover all parts of Kolkata district and surveyed 300 part-time domestic workers as well as 100 full-time domestic workers and suggested that the Government of India should implement schemes, rules and rights for betterment of their working and living condition.
Musooka Moses Kimera (2010) conducted a study on the ‘Dignity of Workers in WakisoTown: Wakiso District’. The study contributed to the management theory and practice by establishing the thesis that regard for workers’ dignity by the tripartite partners (employers, employees and the government) is indispensable for the improvement of the workers’ conditions. The study was conducted to change the prevailing plight of workers. A combination of qualitative and quantitative method was applied and data was collected via interviews, questionnaires, observation and literature review. The study relied on both secondary sources and government publications related to economic policy and labour rights. Data was summarized and coded into themes and sub-themes from which conclusions and recommendations were drawn. This study found that the lack of awareness, less salary, late payments, underemployment, violence against employees, dignity and rights, casualness, lack of freedom of association and poor working relations account for the poor condition of workers. Due to the limitation and the scope of the study, these issues are recommended for further research.

Seepana Prakasham (2012) “Domestic Women Workers in India with Special Reference to Chandigarh”, in this study says domestic work, largely performed by women labourers in urban areas, is becoming a major and growing activity in developing countries but also in the industrialized world. Majority of domestic workers are migrants and belong to ethnic minority communities. Their working conditions are disgusting with long working hours, low pay and absence of social security. The volume discusses the magnitude of informal sector and urban poverty in India; and studies the living conditions, problems and prospects of live–in and live–out domestic workers. This study has randomly selected 250 domestic working in Chandigarh city. Among the total domestics 200 are live-out and 50 are live-in domestic workers. Almost all the domestic workers’ daily earnings are less than that fixed by the Chandigarh administration (not less than Rs. 173 per day). Even though sex ratio is favourable to females; they are not getting favourable treatment in day- to- day life. Their housing conditions are precarious and dilapidated especially located in slum areas. Wages are stagnant for many years; workers have no independence, legal rights and protection, social security. It can be said that live-in domestic’s per capita income is also more than that of live-out domestics. Most of the live-out domestic’s male counterparts have regular jobs so that there is certainty of monthly income. Most of the male counter parts of live-outs are daily wagers, unemployed and living in slum areas. Live-out domestics have no proper housing and
living in slum areas and no definite supply of electricity and water. Most of their children are not going to school or dropouts. Live-out domestics during working hours are away from families and spend minimum 1 hour and maximum 2 hours of journey. Workers and employer relations are good in case of live-in domestics, so they manage to get regular jobs and are relatively living peacefully; but in spite of all this, they are also living below poverty line and work many hours per day. Poverty among female domestic workers is multidimensional in nature; hence, multi instruments and strategies are required to tackle the problem. Eradication of poverty not only increases social harmony but also increases politico-economic stability and development. Inequality and poverty are different forms of exploitation and injustice. If these two evils sustain in any society for a long time then these lead to social conflicts and violence. Maximum numbers of workers migrate from rural areas, so develop these areas by using labour intensive techniques/developments programmes to stop distress migration. Make right to decent work’ as Fundamental Right, for the enforcement of right to live as fundamental right. Cash transfer system and other social safety and security measures should be strengthened. Increasing capabilities, assets and entitlements, good governance, sound credit system, political commitments, pro-poor growth strategies are essential to reduce poverty among female domestic workers in particular and urban poverty in general to achieve inclusive growth.

Kamala Sankaran (2013) “Domestic Work, Unpaid Work and Wage Rates” In her view a comprehensive law for domestic workers in India covering all aspects of their working conditions is yet to come. However, the debate on legislative protection for domestic workers has focused unduly on labour laws and wage rates, ignoring the valuation of unpaid care and domestic labour performed by women in the household. The rights of women in matrimonial property are also overlooked. A consequence of such a lack of recognition of un paid labour is the effect it has on determination of wage rates for domestic workers. It is important that the current impetus to put in place legislative protection for domestic workers within labour laws draws support from developments in family law, torts and insurance law. Very often, law and economics traverse parallel tracks, with the law unmindful of the work done by statisticians and economists in the area. Drawing these different strands to gather is bound to have significant cascading
effects on the legal and economic value assigned to women’s unpaid work in the household, and the wage rates of domestic work.

Kavitha Muralitharan (2014) “If we are Servants, Who are you? “In this article there are about 10 lakhs of women domestic workers in Chennai alone. But there is no proper data for domestic workers throughout state. In many Urban areas domestic workers working in middle class families do not have many problems but those who work in the houses of rich people have to face many hardships. Even the children in these homes treat the domestic workers without giving respect. Some are even tortured. There is no increment for them. They find it very difficult to support their families. During festival time such domestic workers are not allowed to have their own celebrations. Many child domestic workers are engaged as domestic workers. When they are not well they send their daughters otherwise there is a cut in their wage. There is no law governing the working hours, wages, holidays and other rights. A few years back legislation was passed allowing Rs.50 per hour for such workers. In 2007 a separate welfare board was started for 15 unorganised workers. If they registered in this welfare board they would have many benefits. But the fund allotted was not sufficient for them. So they are demanding a separate welfare board for domestic workers. In 2010 it was recommended that at least Rs. 30 should be paid to such workers per hour. There are some welfare societies and NGOs functioning for their development. But only if they turn political they can enjoy the benefits.

3.3 Socio-Economic Status of Domestic Workers

The Labour commission of Chennai Archdiocese (1978) in its report “The National Socio-economic Survey of Domestic Workers in Tamil Nadu” portrayed the conditions of domestic labour in parts of Chennai and Madurai. It was found that mostly children, boys in the age group 5-15 years, were employed for errands, while girls were brought into labour for domestic chores. Their skills and standards were low as they lacked education. The employers were caste conscious and employed children from the lower classes. Because of parental introduction or compulsion they became labourers. The employers were educated and mostly belonged to middle and upper middle classes. The nature of work included washing, cleaning, baby care and running errands. The
wages ranged between Rs.50 – 100 a month. Among the full timers, 30 per cent were residents and were given a place to sleep. The part-timers lived in slums and they were expected to send substitutes during their absence. Studies reveal an expression of the severe power and status differences in the region. Planned intervention by legislators or social workers was necessary to find a solution to the problems of women domestic workers.

Ravichandran (1979) in his study on women domestic workers in Chennai (Madras) slums revealed deplorable socio-economic conditions of women domestic workers. It further indicated that 60 per cent of the women domestic workers belonged to Schedule Castes. More than 50 per cent were illiterates and the remaining had primary education. The lowest salary paid to them was Rs.20 and the maximum was Rs.70. More than half suffered from some physical problem.

The Commission for Labour under the CBCI (1980) conducted a “National socio-economic survey of domestic workers” in covering eight states in India. Disintegration of the joint family system and women taking up jobs were cited as major reasons for the demand for domestic work. The findings of the study suggest that often young boys and girls were in domestic service. They worked either to support themselves or to bring supplementary income to their parents. Based on the survey, the commission developed suitable programmes for the welfare of domestic workers.

Tellis-Nayak et.al. (1984) conducted a study on “Women domestic workers in South India: The paradox of bonding and bondage” The study, exclusively dealing with live-in servants in Navanoor seeks to highlight the nature of domestic work within the socio-cultural ecology. The researchers premised their investigation on the assumption that domestic labour of a particular kind was culturally rooted and sustained. The results were derived from a survey which elicited 240 responses from Catholic homes in eight out of fourteen jurisdictional subdivisions of the local Church. The study found that the initial agreement was often vague and casual and bore no formal contractual elements. Only27 per cent had their salary paid to them and another 13 per cent did not even know the amount. The servants were loaned, often on presumed consent, to another relative, friend or neighbour for special occasions or when the employer’s family went on a
vacation. Families were found to inherit a servant along generational and lateral lines. However, in this starkly unequal arrangement, mutual affection and attachment were high. Though an emotional and spiritual bond may develop between the mistress and the worker, for a young girl the initial placement might indeed be traumatic. There was little evidence that urban domestic work promotes the servant’s career or social mobility. Domestic service in the context studied was an expression of the severe power and status differences in the region. Planned intervention by legislators or social workers was necessary to find a solution to the problems of women domestic workers.

Nayak (1984) conducted a study on women domestic workers in South India and found that only 27 percent employed women were paid salary, while 13 percent did not even know the amount received as salary. The socio-economic conditions of these workers indicated their helplessness. Most of the families incurred heavy debts. Alcohol abuse and domestic violence were the common practices in many families. Their families looked poor and ill fed.

Banerjee (1985) this study reveals that the most of female domestics are widowed, deserted, and older women. As family migration has increased, younger women have come to occupy a larger proportion of domestic workers (Banerjee, 1993). The survey conducted by Indian Social Institute in 1991 indicated that only 20 per cent of the total men migrated to Delhi were engaged in domestic work. Moreover, the survey revealed that employers showed a preference for young women as they were more reliable, obedient and efficient in domestic work especially in child care and nursing the elderly.

Alphonse et.al., (1988) in “Socio-economic survey of families in Tank Bund Road slum” shed light on the socio-economic and health conditions of woman in Chennai City. The study revealed that more than 50 per cent of the employed women were part-time domestic workers and most of them were employed in more than two houses. Stomach ailments, menstrual problems, anaemia and general weakness were the common problems they reported.
Kothari (1991) in “Women’s paid domestic work and rural transformation” in South Gujarat has shed light on the exploitation of women domestic workers on the basis of class and caste. The Patidar and Halpati castes were taken up for study. The Patidars own and control most agricultural lands. The Halpatis are bonded through debt, and they are required to live on the farmer’s land and work as agricultural labourers and domestic workers. They have to be available for 24 hours for work. Their payment is irregular and not specified. When a Patidar household accumulated wealth, its women discontinued agricultural work and supervised Halpati women working in their homes. Significantly, while most of the upper-caste and class members allowed domestic labourers to fetch water and clean grains and vegetables, they did not allow them in the kitchen due to normative regulations of purity and pollution.

Behura et al., (1991) in “Incidence of child labour in Orissa: Case studies for Bhubaneswar in Pati” indicates that out of 165 women studied, 32 were domestic workers. Caste, religion and family background of the women were considered during recruitment. Due to increasing poverty in rural areas, they migrate to urban areas and get absorbed in any kind of jobs available to them.

Gracious (1992) in this study “Status of female domestic workers” in Stuna community of Indore, Madhya Pradesh, found that illiteracy was common among the respondents. More than 75 per cent belonged to the backward castes. In most cases, women were the sole bread-earners. Thirty-six per cent had six to eight dependent children and in some cases their husbands were either unemployed or under employed as many as 57 per cent reported that there were frequent quarrels in their houses. The women had developed cracked hands, which became sore due to continuous work in water and use of strong abrasive powders and soap. Nearly one-third of them did not even know their salary amount. They were made to sleep under the staircase or on a verandah; they had no fixed time for work nor were they given care during illness. They were not treated respectfully. Nearly 25 per cent of them belonged to rural areas; when they returned to their native places, they were looked down upon with suspicion and in many cases marriage proposals were rejected.
Everett et.al., (1994) in their book emphasized that the workers in informal sector, irrespective of their sex are exploited, but women suffer more because of their gender. Developmental processes have pushed women to the brink of survival. The movement to value women’s home based work and the need to give them an identity and pave the way for appropriate legislation and welfare measures is gaining momentum. Critical questions have been raised concerning the struggles of labouring women, their contribution to the economy and their participation in development.

Singh (1995) in his study of migrant workers in a Delhi slum indicates the limited nature of employment offered to women when compared to men. Among all the female migrants studied, 87 per cent were domestic workers; and they formed 84 per cent of the total labour force. Women migrants were hardly seen in higher paid jobs. Lower status and lower paid jobs seemed to be available to women migrants.

Cox David (1997) in his study, “The vulnerability of the Asian women migrant workers to a lack of protection and to violence” has thrown light on the legal, economic, physical and social deprivation of Asian women migrant domestic workers. Their adverse conditions have been attributed to vulnerabilities such as illegal recruitment, low socio-economic status, debt trap and the state powerlessness. Absence of legal supervision of the working conditions and lack of support system for re-entry into the family and community contributed further to the adverse conditions of migrant domestic workers. The study recommended appropriate intervention strategies through suitable legislative measures, control by state agencies, close monitoring, training for domestic workers and empowerment programmes for domestic workers.

Arunodhaya (1999) conducted a study on child domestic workers in Chennai city. The study found that most of the child workers belonged the age group 11-14 years, from the social categories of Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes. Most of them were school dropouts. They entered the labour force at the age of 9 and above. Their wages ranged between Rs. 100 and Rs. 400. Their working hours ranged between 8 and 11 hours. Their parents were mostly illiterate. School-going children employed as domestic labourers had a triple burden of work at home, work for employer, and studies at school.
Samshath et.al., (2002) in this research studies a sample of 100 girl child domestics in the age group of 8-14 years in Chennai city. A large majority of the girl child domestics (72%) were in the age group of 9-12 years and 28 percent in the age group 13-14 years. Of them 86 percent were Hindus 10 percent were Christians and 4 percent were Muslims. With regard to the level of education 74 percent of the child domestics had their education up to the primary school level and the remaining had no formal education at all. Majority of the sample (84%) were from nuclear families (12%) and extended nuclear families (4%). About 68 percent of the samples belonged to families consisting of 4 or 5 members followed by 22 percent of families having more than 8 members. All the girl child domestics were below the poverty line. However they were obtaining a household monthly family income of below Rs. 1000/- . Regarding the educational level of the parents, majority of the parents (59% of fathers and 62% of mothers) old girl child domestics’ had no education. 21 percent of father’s and 26 percent of mothers had education up to middle school. The remaining 20 percent of the fathers and 12 percent of mothers had education up to the elementary school. Poverty was the reason for child domestics. The reasons stated by the sample were to supplement family income, death of the father, no one to look after, no other earning person in the family, to escape from attending school and large family. The results of the study reveal that, majority of the girl child domestics in the age group of 8-14 years worked to supplement their family income and most of them performed almost all the household tasks which made them describe the works as moderate to heavy. The girl child domestics had no say over conditions of service, no question of their earnings, no freedom, no opportunity to go to school, no social interaction with peers and saw the parents rarely. The other two major problems encountered by them were no education and no time for play. Hence it can be concluded that of the hard work, low rewards and lack education impinge adversely the development and welfare of the young children and destroy all the hopes for a better future.

Renuka (2002) “The Plight of women workers: A case study” In this study a general survey reveals the fact that most of the domestic servants are women. A survey was done to identify and describe the socio-economic conditions of domestic women workers, and the types of work assigned to them; to study the wage structure and working
hours and to study the extent of exploitation of women domestic workers. A sample of 110 domestic women workers working in Coimbatore City were identified for an interview schedule and a questionnaire method was used to collect the data. Illiteracy and poverty are the two Major causes for this category of women to go for this type of work. Apart from poverty unemployment or low income of the male members in the family has been a major reason for the women in taking up this type of employment on account of the prudency associated with this work and the very low payment they get. Domestic work has become unattractive to men. As a result there is no competition from the side of male workers. The present study validates some of the observations made on the domestic servants in Coimbatore city, the reasons for taking up employment etc, data regarding the reasons for taking up this type of work, working for economic reasons i.e. to support the family, to supplement the meagre income of the male members of the family and in some cases it is the only means of livelihood. The present findings of the study confirm that problems of domestic women servants are broadly categorized into three i.e. personal problems, family problems and social problems. Though the burden on the part of the servants is very heavy and payment is low, these workers are unable to raise voice against their employers for their rights because there is no other alternative and there is no union to represent their grievances.

Bipul Hazarika et.al., (2002) “Women Domestic workers: Their Life, Problem and Dream”, this survey has been conducted in five areas of Mumbai. The researcher has taken the sample size of 50, out of which 3 case studies have been done to gather detailed information. Samples are chosen randomly 10 from each of the five areas mentioned above. Interviews are taken either at the working place or at the residence of the domestic maids. Two types of domestic maids can be easily identified from our survey work. One group of women is not the bread winners of their family but willing to do the work for “additional income, on the other hand most of the domestic maids are working to earn their livelihood”. This study shows that, out of the total respondents 60 percent are migrants. 64 percent of the women are either illiterate or primarily educated and the rest have more than five years of schooling. Working hours increase with age. Most of women are from nuclear family and their husband’s efficiency decreases as age increases the in unorganized sector. 80 percent of the women are not satisfied with their present
salary and expect more. 10 percent women expressed their grievances for doing ‘extra work’ when guests come. Salary of 20 percent women gets reduced for their absence in work. They want at least one holiday per week. But 90 percent of the employers are not in favour of this demand as expressed by the respondents. Women working to add to the family income, as mentioned earlier, are satisfied with their present job. They praised their employers being friendly, cordial, helping them by providing breakfast, tea, clothes, medicine and valuable suggestions. After doing analysis of the survey data we can say that 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 that they want. At work place they have a heavy workload with less remuneration. They want to make their children educated but an increasing cost is a great concern. Migration is a big concern from our point of view. As studies show (UNFPA, 1996) 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.

Nilanjana Chakraborty (2006) “Human Rights and Domestic Workers of North Calcutta”. Human Rights and the present conditions of the Domestic Workers in India, an actual study was carried for a long period to find out the conditions in North Calcutta. A survey was made personally by locating known households in four areas visiting them and talking to the domestic workers employed by the households. Six workers in each area were interviewed, totaling 24 persons. Average earning is 1220.00 per month. They work individually in large numbers of establishments (Hotels and Restaurants) with long working hours with an average income of Rs. 2640.00, as otherwise the average monthly income of the other 20 workers is less than Rs. 950.00. The “live-in” workers earn less as they are provided with food and lodging. In this connection please note in multiple households, they accept the “live-in” ones. The average age is 33 years: The percentage of child labour below 20 years is 25 percent i.e from six out of 24 persons surveyed. The percentage of child labour below 15 years is eight percent. The percentage of women workers is approximately 80 percent i.e, 19 out of 24 persons surveyed are women. The percentage of “live-in” worker is 37 percent and it has also been observed the “live-in”
workers are engaged in affluent households. The study revealed that the households belonging to the affluent section will reveal that there are more “live-in” workers in this area and they are mostly below the age of 20. In most of the cases, the “live-in” employees have a strong family connection with the employers. The “live –in” workers have no specific work load and work timings. The part time workers have more or less specified workload and working time. There are practically no benefits. The small benefits, if any depend on the benevolence of individual employers. There is existence of sexual harassment. The percentage of workers subjected to sexual harassment is 38 percent i.e., 9 out of 24 persons interviewed. Workers working in mutable commercial establishments are mostly subjected to sexual harassments. There is hardly any sexual harassment in old established families. Domestic workers, though omnipotent, are rarely seen/observed/taken notice of by the enlightened section of the society. This sector is essential but totally neglected. They can never earn enough to become financially independent. They are very poorly paid but in general work harder than the other workers. There are no known benefits. The social recognition is minimal. Even she is not properly recognized in her own family, though in most of the cases, the female workers take up this profession to stave off starvation in her family. This extreme step of selflessness goes totally unrecognized. They really need closer studies. Legislation is a must. After legislation, the same must be implemented in its true spirit.

SailajaNandini Jena (2007) “Women at the Grass root part time female Domestic workers” In this Article there is an attempt to study the socio economic condition of part time Female domestic workers. Since secondary data is not available the study is based only on primary data collected during 2007 January – February. The workers were personally interrogated randomly from some of the slums of Cuttack town. From a sample size of 56 workers basic information was and collected regarding their income, expenditure, health, education, sanitation problems decision making power etc. The socio economic condition of women domestic workers is rather sad and deplorable. They are very poor. Their husbands mostly belong to the wage earning class. If they fall ill or need leave for an emergency they are expected to bring substitutes. The nature of work keeps them busy throughout the day. Their job condition is insecure. At any time they may be thrown out of employment. The wage is determined through negotiation between the
employer and the worker. The findings suggest that they work longer hours and their work is arduous and drudgery prone. The biggest problem facing them across the country is their non-recognition as workers. They do not come under the labour laws. They have no right to worker’s compensation, weekly holidays and minimum wages. On the whole their socio-economic problems are deep-rooted covering several interlocked aspects such as illiteracy, health hazards, low wage, extra work burden, unsanitary and unhygienic condition of living, uselessness, lack of bargaining power, undernourishment, uncertainty and insecurity of job, sexual harassment and social disadvantage. To overcome their problems, an integrated and balanced development-oriented policy must be channelized. Development programmed in the form of benefits is not reaching these women. The actual beneficiaries are staying at the gross root level.

Vinita Singh (2007) “Women Domestic Workers within the Household”. The present study aims at finding out the method of recruitment of domestic workers, the nature and types of work performed by the domestic workers, the duration of the work, working conditions, wage structures, and modes of payment. Another objective of the study is to understand and explain the socioeconomic conditions of domestic workers, their participation in political activities, membership of an organization, exposure to the mass media and awareness of governmental or non-governmental agencies and programmes meant for them. The study also aims at finding out the employer-employee relationship prevailing between women domestic workers and their employers. This study is confined to Ranchi town and further, for the operational point of view, different types of study designs are used in different situations. Here, multiple methodologies have been used for studying the domestic workers holistically. Since the universe is scattered, the sampling method is used for the selection of cases. The study is based on field work conducted on two hundred cases of domestic workers residing and working in Ranchi town. To conclude there is the persistence of the ‘tradition-modernity continuum’. Yogendra Singh’s ideology, views and assumptions are well established here. The relationship of domestic workers with their employers and others is changing. To exercise Dipankar Gupta’s views on modernity, the relationship between the domestic worker and employer is definitely ‘mistaken’ here and nobody is modern, neither the domestic worker nor the employer.
Bharat Jyoti (2008) conducted a study on the socio-economic status of the women domestic workers. This study was exploratory in nature and provided valuable insights into the working and living conditions of women domestic workers. There was no legal protection system. A two stage random sampling scheme was adopted in selecting the sample slums and Index Women as the first and second stage study units respectively. Secondary data collected from the Urban Local Bodies provided the database for sampling framework. The first stage of sampling included selection of the urban slums in the selected townships. Thirty slums from each of the five townships were selected randomly for the study. The second stage of sampling dealt with selection of the individual women domestic workers. Ten women per slum were selected randomly. The findings of the study will be useful in providing inputs for improvement in the working and living condition of domestic workers.

Saima Nazir (2008) conducted a study on ‘Socio-economic Conditions of Female Domestic Workers Before and After Migration in Faisalabad City’. The study revealed the generality of domestic employees working in private residences and the predominance of females as domestic help. They faced problems like health expenditures, working at more than one place, no overtime payment or timely payment and no local holiday. The principle focus was to examine the work situation, compensation configuration and impact of “internal migration” and other aspects of this unorganized sector. Convenient random sampling technique was used for this study. Results indicated that they were not getting their salaries in accordance to the working hours. However, a clear connection between “internal migration and higher social, economic status, better living conditions and children education was found”

Bharat Jyoti (2008) in this study is exploratory in nature and provides information about the profile, nature working and living conditions of women domestic workers. The female domestic workers surveyed are the part time contractual and non-residential workers who serve one or more households in a day. A major stumbling block in providing a solution to the problem is the absence of a legal protection system. The women domestic workers are excluded from key labour protections afforded to the workers such rights including guarantees of a minimum wage, over time pay and rest days, annual leave, fair termination of contracts, benefits and workers compensation instead of guaranteeing their ability to work with dignity and freedom from violence. The major finding of the study is on the socio economic Status of the women domestic workers in Orissa. The women domestic workers surveyed are the part time contractual
and non-residential workers who served one or more households in a day. The study was conducted in 5 major townships in the State of Orissa namely Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Berhampur, Sambalpur and Rourkela. Majority (46%) of the WDWs are SC followed by OBC (33%) & ST (13%). A small 8 percent of the WDWs belong to the Hindu upper castes. The majority of the WDWs (45%) are in the 30-45 age group followed by 33 percent in 18-30 age groups. The WDWs above 45 years of age are a recognized group (18%). Young girls as domestic workers form an insignificant group (4%). Most (82%) of the WDWs are illiterate. About 14 percent of the workers are educated up to the primary level. A small proportion (4%) of the WDW has education above the primary level. About one fifth of the WDWs is the chief bread earner of the family. Over half of the WDWs report their husband as the chief breadwinner of the family. They are working as domestic aids to supplement household income. Over 3/4th of the WDWs go without a BPL card, city-wise the proportion being the highest in Bhubaneswar (87%) and lowest in Berhampur (52%). The average household income of WDWs is arrived Rs.2118/- of which Rs.700/- is from domestic work, Rs.760/- from wage labour, Rs.650/- from other sources. The monthly income from domestic work per se is arrived at Rs.700: city wise Rs.850/- in Bhubaneswar followed by Rs.750/- in Rourkela, Rs.670/- in Cuttack, Rs.650/- in Berhampur and Rs.580/- in Sambalpur. The average household expenditure of WDWs is arrived at Rs.3478/- Expenditure on food comprises the highest amount (Rs.2640) followed by expenditure of fuel (Rs.261/-), house rent (Rs.96/-), health (Rs.82/-), intoxicants (Rs.60/-) lighting (Rs.65/-) and education (Rs.63/-). The household saving (including saving in the SHG) of WDWs is arrived at Rs.54/- per month. No. wise only 8 out of 300 WDWs in Bhubaneswar are found saving against 20 in Sambalpur, 67 in Cuttack, 100 in Rourkela and 165 in Berhampur. 99 percent of WDWs report migrating from their native places with their entire family.58 percent of the household reports migrating for a period over 10 years. The majority (43%) of WDWs are found in their profession of domestic services for about 5 years. WDWs in their profession for 5 -10 years account for 29 percent of the total workers.Among the WDWs as high as 18 percent are in their profession for over 10-20 years. About 10 percent of them are pursuing their profession for more than 20 years. Lack of skill for other profession (47%) and need to supplement family income (47%) are the major reasons for
their being in the profession as stated by the WDWs. Over 90 percent of WDWs had no economic profession prior to their present occupation. About 5 percent of them were engaged as the wage labourers before working as domestic aids. During festival occasion, the employers usually give gifts in cash or kind as reported by 40 percent of WDWs. Clothes (32%), food (7%) etc. are the various gift items usually received during fairs and festivals. There is hardly annual increment over wage as reported by about 96 percent of WDWs. Despite low earning about 1/3rd of WDWs consider that the wages they receive is somewhat insufficient to meet family expenses. A small 7 percent of the WDWs are found leaving their employers on their own. Low payment (47%), irregular payment (11%), no annual increments (13%) are the usual reasons reported for leaving the work. WDWs are usually subject to various maltreatments by their employers as reported by over 40 percent of the WDWs surveyed. However, almost all reported that the mistreatment meted to them was very infrequent and occasional. None of the WDWs surveyed reported ever been physically assaulted by their employers. The employers rarely subject WDWs to sexual abuse/exploitation. Almost all the workers surveyed reported not being sexually abused at the work place. About 93 percent of the WDWs like to continue with their present profession of domestic services. A small 7 percent are not sure whether to continue or discontinue with their present profession. Over 3/4th of the WDWs reported that there is no association/union representing them to fight for their legal rights. There should be a legal enactmet to promote and protect the rights of WDWs as held by about 90 percent of the workers. About 10 percent of them are unaware of such legal implications. Governments have systematically denied them key labour protections extended to other workers. The findings of the study will be useful in providing approaches for qualitative improvement in the lives of women domestic workers.

Indrajit Bairagya (2009) conducted a study on “Measuring the Informal Economy in Developing Countries”. The goal of this study was to measure the economic importance of the informal sector in Indian economy by its share, growth and composition from the year 1970 to 2006. Another objective was the measurement of efficiency performance of the unorganized sector.
Mukherjee Piu et.al., (2009) conducted a study on the migrant workers’ working condition in informal sector. The objective of the study was to understand their socio-economic status in urban India. The aim was to explore whether migration to urban areas had substantially altered their working and living conditions as also the labour market and human development issues. The study reviewed how the migrants survived the expected deficiencies and dispossessions and also the role of labour brokers in this arena. The research examined the seasonal construction workers and ‘naka’ workers in Mumbai and concluded that there was no social security and sustained human development.

Sophorn Tous et.al., (2009) conducted a study on ‘Living and Working Conditions of Domestic Workers in Cambodia’. In Phnom Penh, the study on working conditions of domestic worker covered four districts and a total of 30 Communes. Information was collected from members of 9 Trade Unions. Main findings of their search were: Employing someone to undertake domestic household chores is a long-time practice in Cambodia, associated with gender stereotypes on the traditional role of women in the household as caretakers and caregivers. Domestic work is still considered in the Cambodian culture as a form of servitude rather than as real “work”. The results of the studies confirm the need for action to promote and protect the rights of domestic workers required.

Reshmi (2009) in his paper entitled Gendered Vulnerabilities, Discrimination and Abuse among Women Migrants – A Special Reference to Return Domestic Workers in Kerala, explained difficulties that are being faced by the female emigrants and return migrant Domestics hailing from six villages of Thiruvananthapuram district in Kerala.

About domestic work (2010) in this recent study (Institute of Social Studies Trust 2009 “Key findings from survey of live-out domestic workers in NCT of Delhi”). In Delhi, the monthly income reported by domestic workers on an average is Rs. 1875. This varies based on the number of tasks, types of tasks, number of households and the locality where work is performed. The workers are slow to get recognition as workers and there are no policies to regulate and protect workers employed in this sector. Domestic workers are often exploited at the hands of so the called placement agencies that lure workers from rural areas to the cities, promising them lucrative salary, life style and benefits. Significant workers of these women migrate from states like Jharkhand, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Most come from vulnerable communities, lower caste or ethnic minority communities. Keeping in mind their workload in a house for a day or so, their wage rate should be fixed and there must be a provision for time to time increments in
their wages. Further, these workers must be covered by the Minimum Wages Act 1948 & 2015 (Anti human trafficking) by respective State governments. To improve the economic conditions of the families of the respondents, the Self-Employment should also introduce some additional employment schemes in the area, so that their husbands and children can get some profitable work. In the present study, the economic conditions of widows/separated respondents are found to be very poor. Hence, to improve their economic conditions, they must be provided some financial help. These respondents and their children must also be specially considered in the provision of social security benefits. The female domestic workers must be registered under the Trade union Act 1926. This effort will enable them to enjoy their strength, unity and also satisfy grievances towards their employers through different kinds of pressure building and bargaining strategies. The study has found that exactly half of the respondents’ families are negatively affected by the anti-social habits of their husbands/fathers (like drug addiction). There is a need to state some Drug Counseling Centre in the area, so as to cover these families and to overcome their problems. Thus the state government must take immediate steps, including the above mentioned recommendations, so that the condition of this section of the society improves.

Shashibala (2010) studied the employment conditions of domestic help of 649 female domestic workers in 4 metropolitan cities (Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata) in 2008. This study reveals that the daily working hours of domestic workers were between 12 to 18 hours, earnings of domestic help depend on number of households and colonies they were working. Monthly earnings of majority of workers vary between Rs.2000 and Rs.3000. Full time domestic workers are not getting proper food despite cooking food for all family members. About 66 per cent of them are illiterates, majority of them belong to ST, SC and come from nuclear families and are being exploited in terms of non-payment and abuse.

Geetha (2010) conducted a study on Women in Informal Sector-A Case Study. This study was focused on different types of socio-economic problems of female workers in urban informal sector. The study was based on the primary data collected. An interview schedule was administered to 100 female workers working in various activities in the informal sector in urban areas. Findings revealed that females in informal sector were overburdened with work and exploited. It was
recommended that at the policy maker level, required policy should be prepared and appropriate steps
should be taken to improve the working and living condition of female workers in this sector.

Manjima Bhattacharjya (2010) “Doing the dirty work of a globalised economy”. The globalised economy of conspicuous consumption requires the outsourcing of domestic labour to migrant women— the Thai, Filipino and Ethiopian migrants in Europe and the tribal’s in India. Low wages and exploitative conditions are recognised problems, but what about the ethics of passing domestic work ‘down’ to another oppressed category? 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. Low wages, exploitative conditions at work and a series of rights violations led to the organising of domestic workers in various states. Without doubt, domestic workers face a range of vulnerabilities given the unique nature of the ‘workplace’ on the cusp of the public and private domain. Reports show that there exists a wide net of exploitation, especially in the case of migrant domestic workers. There are dubious ‘placement agencies’ that traffic women to work in circumstances that are slavery-like. There are employers who abuse women, lock them up, sexually harass them or make them live in less than human conditions. These are realities we cannot ignore, and without doubt mechanisms need to be put in place to address these. At the same time, we have to think about some deeper questions about the existence of this sort of work itself. Is it a trend that is here to stay, a product of globalisation’s pushes and pulls as much as anything else? Or can it phase out as societies become more self-sufficient and equal? In a study that also looked at the demand side of domestic work (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson, 2003), we found through our interviews with women who employed full-time domestic workers, that women—of a particular socio-economic background, are arranged for childcare in the absence of any state or corporate mechanisms. It is another difficult issue for feminists on one hand, women should be able to go out and work and have fulfilling lives, on the other hand, and which women are we talking about? Surely not all women, because women of a certain race/class/caste have to fill in for you to perform those gendered domestic tasks. This outsourcing helps people over the question of gender division of labour, and maintains harmony in the relationships between the woman of the household
and her husband, or others in the household. The unpleasant questions remain: the ethics of passing domestic work ‘down’ to another oppressed category.

Bino Paul et.al., (2011) conducted a study on the working and living conditions of Mumbai women domestic workers. Here primary data was collected from 1510 female domestic workers in Mumbai. Based on the findings, the need to create a comprehensive social security system for domestic workers in India, against the backdrop of working and living conditions of labour belonging to this occupational category was highlighted. The study covered themes such as basic demographic features, nature of services, work profile of the domestic workers, access to social security, consumption of edible items, consumption under PDS system, health, union awareness, time use, household assets and liability, habitat, attitude of domestic workers towards gender and domestic violence.

Dave Vandana (2012) conducted a study on Women Workers in the Unorganised Sector. The study focused on female construction workers, agriculture workers and domestic workers. The objective of this study was to know the socio-economic, working and living conditions of workers. The multistage stratified random sampling technique was applied; data was collected from 350 female workers from urban and rural areas of 3 districts of Haryana namely Panipat, Kaithal and Kurukshetra. Workers faced problems like disparity in wages where female workers were paid less. Working hours were not fixed and harassment at work place was common.

Jayati Ghose (2013) in “The plight of Domestic Workers in India” says however both public policy and labour mobilization can play roles in improving such conditions even when the overall employment scenarios are bleak. At present, domestic workers are unprotected by almost all labour legislation. None of the main national labour laws are applicable to them, although they have recently been included in the unorganized workers social security Act 2008. Admitting domestic work under the provisions of Minimum wages legislation can play some role in improving the remuneration of these workers. It is true that such minimum wage legislation is more honoured in the breach in India, where the conditions of excess labour supply and poor generation of decent work opportunities have combined to create desperation on the part of those engaging in such work. Even so, coverage under the minimum wage law increases the bargaining power of domestic workers and can begin to contribute the improvement in their working conditions. Mostly such legislation and ever official recognition of domestic work as economic activity that
should be subject to labour regulation and provide some degree of labour protection has not come on its own as a “gift” from officialdom, but has resulted from prolonged efforts at mobilization or workers and lobbying the government. In India minimum wages are determined by state governments and there is wide variation in both coverage and level of wages across states. What is required is also some sort of formalizing of the Labour contracts, professionalizing the relations between employer and employee, which can only be done through a combination or organization, legislation and institution building. The ILO convention on Domestic work was passed by the International Labour Congress in 2010, but the Government of India has still not ratified it. This convention clearly outlines the basic rights of domestic workers and provides guidelines on terms and conditions of employment, wages, working hours, occupational safety and health, social security and the avoidance of child labour ratification is obviously just a first step in a longer process, but it is still likely to be an important step in ensuring the dignity of all workers in the country. They delay in simply ratifying such an obviously desirable convention suggests that there is not sufficient seriousness about the matter in official policy circles in India. Ultimately, ensuring basic rights for domestic workers obviously has been based on their social and political mobilization which can affect the labour market conditions. But it also requires a significant change in the attitudes and behaviour of their employers who constitute not just the rich elite group in the country but also a growing number of middle class beneficiaries of the economy’s growth process.

Dey Soumi (2014) in this present study describes a on the Hindu Bengali speaking woman a domestic worker. The research has tried to explore the present situation of the domestic workers from the narratives of the self of the householders and of the domestic workers themselves. Participants were selected by using the snowball technique. A total of hundred respondents of domestic workers and fifty householders were interviewed. The defence statements of the employers were collected to understand the existing situation. By this present study an attempt has been made to know about their present social situation and the experiences of violence, emotions, feelings and aspirations of this vulnerable group of the society having negligible safeguards. Most of them live in slums, lead a monotonous life without any colour, struggle every day for their survival and face numerous problems in their day to day life like long hours of
work, insecurity regarding jobs, low status within the house as well as in the outside world. The domestic workers covered in this study were slum dwellers. They either have their own houses or live in rented ones. These houses have tile thatched roofs, brick-made walls with electricity connection in most of the cases, except where there is no power supply. They don’t have toilet facility inside the homes. They use the common toilet or bathroom situated in the locality and fetch drinking water from the public tap. Some of them use Chula for cooking, others use kerosene stove in most of the cases and very few of them use gas oven. It is found that the majority of the domestic workers are from the lower caste group in the caste hierarchy. The majority of the respondents i.e. 67 are married. Several have admitted that after marriage they were compelled to join this profession to run their household smoothly. Among the 100 interviewees, the maximum left their study at the primary level or middle standard. Their self-income ranges from rupees 1,000 to 4,500 per month and the majority of them are under the income group of rupees 1,000 to 2,000 per month. Their total family income ranges from rupees 2,000 to 8,000 per month. The domestic maids spent 5 to 7 hours daily in 3 to 7 employers’ households but earned a pitiable income. They receive increments only after working in the same household for 2 to 3 years, which vary from rupees 30 to 100 in a year. The increment is granted only when demanded. Domestic workers are sometimes provided food or tea by their employers. Not all but a number of employers provide tiffin to their workers. Very few reported that they never had taken food from any employer at their lifetime. Several workers have narrated that they have been offered leftover food by their employers. The study reveals that the workers don’t recognize this type of incident as offensive. They require an on-time meal that is fulfilling. No matter the food is fresh or leftover. This saggy outlook comes from their poor educational background and, of course, poor economic condition. Caste-based violence is also very common among them. This type of violence is mainly inflicted by the aged of the households. It can be concluded that domestic work is undervalued. They are not recognized as workers as their effort does not take place in a factory or an administrative centre or organization, but inside a home. Their performance does not justify to labour market values. The home is not acceptable as a formal workplace, even more as the domestic workers work in several residences; it is difficult to claim any rights or privileges as formal workers.
Moreover, occupational health and safety for domestic workers will be difficult to achieve. This is a section which is completely ignored by the legislative framework also. Awareness is important for them to organize and empower themselves to fight against their exploitation. They are unaware of their rights and dignity, which is very essential for their healthy survival. Proper education could help them realize their situation. They have to unite to raise their voices in front of the public as well as the Government. The Government should take necessary steps to protect them from any form of violence.

3.4 Associational Activities in the Domestic Workers

Gandhi et al., (1992) in their report advocated that, women’s labour in the home produces a commodity called labour power which when exchanged in the labour market produces surplus value. Women’s household duties regenerate men’s ability to work and to go into the making of profits. Unpaid labour within the household raises the standard of living of the working class family beyond the value of the men’s wage and therefore feminists asserted the need to consider wages for house work.

Bothma et al., (2003) conducted a study in Bloemfontein suburb. It investigated the impact if minimum wages if employment levels of domestic workers. The study, “Minimum wages for domestic workers: A comprehensive analysis” reveals that the minimum wages legislation has not only resulted in job loss but further affected the rural and full-time domestic workers. The authors suggest that minimum wages should be set according to work performed and not according to geographic differentials.

Save the Children (2006) a Non-Government Organization Working for the Welfare of Children, conducted a study, “Abuse among Child Domestic Workers: A research study in West Bengal”. A total of 513 respondents were taken for the study and majority of them were girls. The study revealed that most child domestic workers came from below poverty line families and many of them worked without pay, or for paltry wages. They were made to work for excessive hours with little or no rest. Most often, the children took up domestic work not voluntarily but were forced by their parents or others known to the family. About 41 per cent of the respondents found their employer’s place unsafe. They rarely met their parents or family members and nearly 21.3 per cent of the employers even stopped them from meeting their family. The children were
subJECTED TO PHYSICAL, VERBAL, EMOTIONAL AND SEXUAL ABUSES AT THEIR WORKPLACE. THE STUDY RECOMMENDED LOBBYING AT THE GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT LEVEL, AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AT THE PUBLIC LEVEL TO SPREAD AWARENESS ABOUT THE HARMFUL ASPECTS OF DOMESTIC CHILD LABOUR, WHICH IS USUALLY CONSIDERED A HARMLESS AND HAZARDLESS LABOUR. IT ALSO STRESSED THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL AND POLICY MEASURES ON CHILD ABUSE AND TO PROTECT ALL CHILDREN AGAINST VIOLENCE AND ABUSE.

RAJASEKHAR ET AL., (2006) CONDUCTED A STUDY ON EMPLOYMENT SECURITY FOR THE UNORGANISED SECTOR WORKERS IN KARNATAKA. THIS STUDY COVERED AGRICULTURE, CONSTRUCTION AND DOMESTIC WORKERS OF 4 DISTRICTS OF KARNATAKA. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO EXAMINE THE REQUIREMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR AND THE PROBLEM FACED BY WORKERS WITHOUT EMPLOYMENT SECURITY. IT WAS FOUND THAT INTER AND INTRA-SECTORAL HETERGENEITY AMONG THESE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS WAS THE MAIN FACTOR FOR THE POLICIES AIMING AT ENSURING THEIR EMPLOYMENT SECURITY. RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE SAME POLICY FOR ALL OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS OF UNORGANIZED SECTOR WOULD NOT WORK AS DIFFERENT GROUPS HAVE DIFFERENT PROBLEMS.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REPORT (2007) ESTIMATED THAT 78 PER CENT OF THE DOMESTIC HELPERS IN 12 CITIES WERE FEMALES. THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS IN ALL BIG CITIES AND TOWNS OF THE COUNTRY PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THE MIGRATION OF WOMEN FROM RURAL OR TRIBAL AREAS. MOST OF THEM ARE FROM POOR FAMILIES AND ARE ILLITERATES. DUE TO THE LACK OF EDUCATION AND SKILL THEY BECOME EASY VICTIMS OF EXPLOITATION. THE BIGGEST PROBLEM FACED BY THE DOMESTIC WORKERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY IS THEIR NON RECOGNITION AS WORKERS. THE DOMESTIC WORKFORCE IS EXCLUDED FROM LABOUR LAWS THAT LOOK AFTER Important EMPLOYMENT, RELATED ISSUES SUCH AS CONDITION OF WORK, WAGES, SOCIAL SECURITY, PROVIDENT FUNDS, OLD AGE PENSIONS AND MATERNITY LEAVE. THOUGH THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT’S MINISTRY OF LABOUR HAS ADOPTED LEGISLATIVE MEASURES FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE FOR UNORGANIZED WORKERS, THESE IF AT ALL EFFECTED ARE TYPICALLY APPLICABLE TO THOSE EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE, CONSTRUCTION, TRADE, TRANSPORT, AND COMMUNICATION; DOMESTIC WORKERS ARE LEFT OUT. THEY DO NOT COME UNDER LABOUR LAW AND THEY HAVE NO RIGHT TO WORKER’S COMPENSATION, WEEKLY HOLIDAYS AND MINIMUM WAGES. SOME AREAS FOR IMMEDIATE POLICY INTERVENTION ARE GRANTING STATUS OF WORKERS AND DIGNIFIED WORKING CONDITIONS, DEVELOPING A SUITABLE LEGISLATIVE MECHANISM AND MOBILIZATION TO FORM UNIONS.
Mathew K. Tinu (2008) conducted a study on the role of social movements in organizing the unorganised sector workers LEARN, Dharavi. This study tried to detect the problems as well as the prospects entailed in systematizing the unorganised workers and recognize the part social movements can play in regulating the unorganised sector workers. The intention was to appreciate the troubles and tribulations of the unorganized workers in general and women workers in particular in the state of Maharashtra with Dharavi as the centre of attention. Qualitative methodology of research was used to analyse the conditions of informal sector workers. This was conducted through interview methods, which helped in identifying the positive impact of unions on the workers. This also gave an insight into the obstacles faced by the unions in organizing the informal sector workers. In addition to participant observation, newspaper articles, books, journals and various government reports were referred as secondary data.

Sakshi Vijay et al., (2011) “Silent Slaves: The Domestic Worker”. Domestic workers are a part of every Indian household, unnoticed even in the eyes of law. They are ill-treated and exploited within the four walls. Laws are made but are hardly communicated and rarely implemented. It is unbelievable that the Indian society is taking the services of around 8 crore people for granted. How long will the slaves remain silent? In the wake of present situation, with a number of skeletons being let out of the closet as far as brutality towards domestic workers is concerned, it has become necessary to find a solution to all of it. The recent Domestic Workers Act, 2008 has been a welcome respite with its liberal provisions. However the fact remains that India is a hugely populous country with most of them looking for employment, whatsoever. To encompass all of them within the ambit of this Act would, certainly, be difficult. Yet another uphill task would be to reach out to the masses and make them aware of these provisions waiting for them, to use for their welfare. Administering from the centre to regulate activities of homes in metropolitans, small towns and shanty cities is improbable. An alternative to this could be the formation of local associations, probably initiated by the societies where the workers work or the association, could also be governed by the respective ward offices of the locality. This could bring about more credibility to the idea of the presence of an organization formed by the workers themselves for their own welfare. What The British did to Indians half a century ago is being repeated by the Indians themselves with their own fellow men. Domestic workers are paid to work, but at
the end of it all, they remain human. Society needs to do its own little bit towards their upliftment lest there is a revolution which could jeopardize their now smooth functioning lives completely.

Recognition for India’s Invisible Workers (2011) in these reports reveals that for various reasons, official statistics tend to undercount domestic workers. The case of India is particularly striking given the magnitude of the difference: estimates of the number of domestic workers in this country range between 2.5 and 90 million. Domestic workers play an important part in the economy and they allow others to go out and earn money. Yet they remain invisible, unprotected and their contribution is often not recognized. Domestic workers form a significant part of the working population. Given their vulnerability to dangerous, discriminatory and abusive working conditions, the ILO recognizes the need to promote decent work for domestic workers. To bring the issue centre stage and raise awareness about the rights of domestic workers, a public campaign “Your Work is Important” was launched in India in 2009. To professionalize domestic work and promote better wages and working conditions, the ILO collaborated with the Ministry Of Labour and Employment (MOLE), the Government of India and the Delhi Government to set up pilot training programmes to train and re-skill domestic workers and household assistants. The ILO also collaborates with the National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) and the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) to help domestic workers in selected states get organized and train them to improve their skills, including work discipline and the so-called soft skills that can lead to career progression.

Seepana Prakasam (2011) in “Domestic Workers in Time and space: Concerns and Measures” studied Empower domestic workers by providing education and imparting skills to undertake self-employment. Wage employment other than domestic work creates awareness about the importance of work associations and their rights and duties. Domestic workers should be included in the domain of unorganized workers. Apart from fixing of minimum wages fulltime domestic workers should not be allowed to work more than eight hours per day. Credit availability through micro finance is essential for the generation of extra income. Legislation on wage increments, number of holidays working hours, over time, pay compensation of retrenchment, prior notice for termination, child care system and social security. Revision of wages should be linked
with price index and strict implement ban on school age children as domestic workers is required. At present the supply of domestics is more than the potential demand. Hence newly migrated workers should not enter into this occupation. Government and NGOS should work for the creation of domestic workers welfare fund to provide minimum human needs for domestic workers in the cities by collecting voluntary donations. Maximum number of employers of domestic workers are dived tax payers so that impose” Domestic Workers Cess” should be imposed on them and the accumulated amount can be spent for the welfare of these workers. Maximum numbers of workers are migrating from rural areas so they generate employment by using labour intensive techniques to stop distress migration.

Megha Shree (2012) in her study primarily attempts to explore the trends of the female tribal migration and to explore the reasons responsible for their migration, most importantly, to identify the nature of work and the problems they face in urban areas. The present research is qualitative as well as quantitative in nature. The study consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data includes National sample survey organization, and Government of India reports, viz. As it has been observed that female migration outnumbers the male migration, as the reasons could be associational migration etc. For employment related reasons, the migration rate of women and girls general category is less compared to tribal women. Thousands of tribal women and girls migrate from their hinterlands to urban city centres. The migrant tribal women and girls in big cities live in terrible conditions and situations. This is really a sensitive issue mainly in search of better employment. Unemployment lacks of resources or infrastructure, land alienation etc are reasons for migration. It is providing them some basic educational facilities along with vocational guidance and training for development of their skills with a view to make them aware of themselves and surroundings. Last but not least, there should be proper legislations for the workers in the informal sector.

Das Kabita et.al., (2012) conducted a study on Social Security in Informal Sector. The aim of this paper was to know the degree of social security of the working women in the informal sector in Odessa. Keeping in view the objective of the study, a sample survey was conducted in districts like Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Cuttack. Accordingly 100 women from each district were randomly selected and supplied with structured questionnaire pertaining to their availability of social security
measures taken by the Govt. of Odessa. Available data suggested that social security in the organised sector was steadily shrinking but the major concern was for informal sector which imposes a heavy cost on society in terms of jobs, income and health care.

Remesh P. Babu (2012) conducted a study on ‘Rethinking Social Protection for India’s Working Poor in the Unorganised Sector’. This study gave importance to social security. The characteristics of unorganized sector were low wages, poor working/living conditions, seasonality of employment, contractual employment, lack of social security as well as welfare procedures, repudiation of rights and privileges. Consequently, the sector has developed into “a competitive and low cost device to absorb labour which cannot be absorbed elsewhere and any attempt to regulate and bring it into more effective legal and institutional framework is perceived to be impairing the labour absorbing capacity of the sector”.

Report by BMS (2012) “Decent Work for Domestic Workers”. This report explains that the list of domestic workers is a very old one. They are unprotected workers in the sense that while all the workers are yet to be identified and hence do not get the protection of several legislative provisions. Thus Minimum Wages Act(1948), Equal Remuneration Act (1976), Interstate Migrant Workman Act (1979) Bonded Labour System (Abolition & Regulation) Act (1970) etc. are all there, but do not cover, all these workers. Secondly implementation of these Acts is also a very big problem for want of adequate Government machinery. Thirdly even trade unions have not been able to look after these workers, to the extent necessary, through these protective measures. Moreover, domestic workers are facing serious problems in both rural and urban sector. It is not by choice that these people have undertaken the vocation they are engaged in. It is a matter of compulsion that they have to do the jobs that they have undertaken. They are not trained formally or systematically for the jobs, but somehow manage to do it because of opportunities to be in the vicinity of sites where such job is done. They get migrated to other places where they can work or get work and face difficulties of shelter etc. They are isolated and scattered and do not even have the social ties to feel secure. Even then, the basic cause of concern here is the non-availability of continuous jobs all the yearlong, not to speak of other aspects of decent work like environment, Health, and Safety.
Pankhuri Tandon (2012) in this study analyses whether formalization of domestic work is feasible, and beneficial. To check the benefits received and costs borne by workers in informal and formal sectors (in this case, placement agencies) of domestic work, they conducted a survey in which they compared the monetary and non-monetary benefits received by those working directly under employer (henceforth they will be referred to as non-placement agency workers) versus those working through a placement agency. They surveyed 10 non-placement agency workers in Morna (a JhuggiJhupri area in NOIDA) and Delhi, and 8 placement agency workers in Delhi. This report dwells on the solutions to the problems faced by domestic workers. It analyses the steps taken by the government of India. The research findings indicate that informal sector is better for the domestic workers than the formal sector for their welfare. It then goes on to study two different models of formalization, which might be of great assistance in solving the problem of domestic workers in the Informal sector.

Divya Trivedi (2013) in this article titled “The invisible workers” says household work has never been considered work in India. It has always been the ‘duty’ of the woman; wife, mother, daughter, or sister too do the chores and expect no pay. Any wonder then that the domestic worker is so blatantly underpaid. Cooking, cleaning, caring for children, these are all skilled jobs but they fall under the unorganised sector; with no law to protect rights, no health cover and no pension. The absence of a targeted law for domestic workers also means that in the case of abuse or exploitation they have no recourse to justice. Some laws can be invoked for specific instances, such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, the Unorganised Workers’ Social Security Act, 2008 and the Juvenile Justice Act. But that’s it. A National policy on Domestic Workers has been formulated by the labour Ministry but is yet to be notified. Karnataka and Kerala have notified minimum wages for domestic labour while Tamil Nadu includes domestic workers in the Manual Workers Act. Some attempts were made to extend the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana to domestic workers but they fell short of implementation. In 2011, the International Labour Organization adopted the Domestic Workers Convention. India supports the Convention but is yet to ratify it. One big reason for the absence of a targeted law, say activists, is that the law-makers-the Babus in Delhi and elsewhere-are themselves employers and a law protecting the right of domestic
workers could be antagonistic to their interests. Belonging to the unorganised sector means that in case of a dispute with the employer, the worker cannot go to a labour court, as she is not technically recognised as a ‘worker’. “All laws since Independence are formulated for the organised sector, which is hardly 5 per cent in this country”, says Subhash Bhatnagar of Nirmala Niketan, which organises domestic workers. The National Platform for Domestic Workers, which includes 30 organisations from 15 states, recently submitted a petition demanding comprehensive legislation. They proposed an autonomous statutory body or Tripartite Board, with compulsory registration of employer, employee and agency. “A full-time worker is more vulnerable to abuse behind closed doors. The responsibility must be pinned on the employer as well who can give one month’s salary annually to the Board. The Board can, in turn, take care of the workers’ quarterly health check-up, shelter, maternity and accident costs, pension and other benefits,”

Uma Joshi et.al., (2013) Domestic servants in India are routinely harassed and exploited by their employers in many ways. In spite of several steps taken by the government to improve their condition, even today they are treated as slaves and untouchables by many. This issue draws our attention every now and then, whether it is about the tragedy of domestic workers or a positive change in their conditions. The article focuses on the present trend of treatment received by the domestic servants from their employers. Under this study, thirty domestic servants were selected from the Vadodara city and information was collected through the questionnaires. It highlights the fact that the development of the community is measured by how it treats its most vulnerable and lays the importance on humanity as a moral of all the professions. The status of the domestic servants in the society is enhanced with the passage of time. Still, there are many households where the servants are considered slaves and untouchables even today. There are several cases of maltreatment and exploitation which can be removed by spreading the awareness of equal rights and humanity. The effective implementation of legal laws can also bring social change to improve the conditions of domestic workers. Beyond that, things can change only when the society accepts the domestic workers as humans and not as ‘servants or slaves’. Surprisingly, we can leave tips in the restaurant
for the great service provided for few hours but we cannot even behave or treat liberally with the humans who provide their constant support for making our life better.

Jayanti Ghosh (2013). in this study explains the estimates from the National Sample Survey of 2009-10. It suggests that year there were around 2.52 million workers engaged in domestic work as their usual principal activity up from 1.62 million in 1999-2000 an increase of more than 150 per cent over the decade. This makes it one of the most “dynamic” sources of employment in the country as a whole growing even faster than construction which emerged as the major employer for men workers. Of the total domestic workers in the country in 2009-10, more than two-third lived in urban India and 57 per cent of them were women. This is a lower rate of female involvement in this type of employment than in many countries, and reflects the combination of several forces: the long history in India of the affluent employing domestic servants, which created aspirations of such hiring patterns also among the newly affluent; low employment generation in other activities as well as uncertain household income generation prospects that increased the supply of such workers, and changes in income distribution and GDP growth patterns that have created a new middle class that is able to afford to demand such workers. However, while overall female share of such works is not as high as in some other countries, the rate of feminisation of such work has been increasing, especially in urban India. Over the decade of the 2000s, 75 per cent of the increase in the total number of domestic workers was accounted for by women. Domestic work also becomes more important in the total employment of women, especially in urban India. Of the total increase in the number of women workers in the entire decade, nearly 15 per cent was accounted for by domestic work. However, both public policy and labour mobilisation can play roles in improving such conditions even when the overall employment scenario is bleak. At present, domestic workers are unprotected by almost all labour legislation. None of the main national labour laws are applicable to them, although they have recently been included in the Unorganised Workers ‘Social Security Act,2008. What is required is also some sort of formalising of the labour contracts professionalising the relations between the employer and the employee, which can only be done through a combination of organisation and institution building. Ultimately, ensuring basic rights for domestic workers obviously has to be based on their social and
political mobilisation, which can affect the labour market conditions. But it also requires a significance in the attitudes and behaviour of their employers, who constitute not just the rich elite groups in the country but also a growing number of middle class beneficiaries of the economic growth process.

The Staff Report (2013) found that “Domestic workers want fixed minimum wages” – A domestic help who is expected to work full time is far from satisfactory work conditions. The movement of domestic workers has not been able to achieve much though they meet periodically, hoping to catch the government’s attention.” Usually, a domestic help has no option but accepts whatever the employer pays. A call to a domestic help service provider in Mylapore, Chennai, listed on the internet, revealed that the domestic help should be paid Rs. 300 for an hour per day; and if she is expected to live with the family then the monthly salary would be Rs. 8,000. The agencies say they background checks on the workers. The domestic helps organised a demonstration under the aegis of National Domestic Workers movement. “We have been asking for a uniform pay structure with fixed minimum wages. We want the government to allot separate funds for domestic workers in the Labour Welfare Board instead of including them with construction workers.” Two years ago the workers had sought Rs. 30 per hour as the minimum wage and now they have raised it to Rs. 50. Minimum wages is just one of their demands. They want a comprehensive national legislation for domestic workers and implementation of Social Security Act 2008 through the State Welfare Board. They want India to ratify the International Labour Convention-189 on domestic workers. Philippines, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Mauritius, Italy, Norway and S. Africa have ratified the convention. India should follow in their footsteps with “India being a country which is a major sending and receiving country” for domestic helps. 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. “Fixing minimum wages is a cabinet decision that the government only can make. Karnataka and Kerala have stipulated minimum wages but it is only on paper. If there is a national policy on domestic workers it would address the issue better”.

UtharaGanesh (2013) “Domestic work in India “Over the last decade, India has seen extraordinary growth in the number of its domestic workers. 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. In India the operational context for domestic workers is one that is deeply entrenched in the feudal practice of keeping servants. Domestic Workers are not perceived or treated as service providers; they hold a subservient position clearly “below” their employers. The relationship between the employer and employee is thus characterized by a highly unequal dynamic with the latter having little power to negotiate equitable employment terms. In general, wages for domestic workers tend to be low. While wages for domestic workers in India minimally from to city to city, they are on a whole lower than the remuneration received by other labour. With the exception of few Indian states-Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bihar and Kerala-domestic workers are not included in the purview of state specific minimum wage legislation. The salary a worker is paid thus tends to be at the discretion of the employer or recruitment agent. In the states where wage legislation exists, its enforcement and efficacy has yet been formally assessed. The Act provides for the creation of solid, formal, institutional mechanisms operating at the central-state-and district-levels for the regulation of domestic work. It proposes a three-tier mechanism that comprises of the Central Advisory Committee, s State Advisory Committee and district-level boards, each of which shall be enlisted with the duty of registering domestic workers, employers and placement agencies. The district-level boards will ensure decent working conditions for domestic workers, covering norms for rest periods, weekly leave, food and the maximum number of work hours. They shall also act as arbitrators of dispute to avail of benefits such as accident relief, financial assistance for the education of children and maternity benefits. On a global level, the ILO’s Congress passed the Convention for Domestic Work in2010. The document outlines a desirable, basic minimum standard in employment, wages, minimum hours, occupational safety, social health and social security for domestic workers. The Indian government ‘s non-ratification of the convention-despite the huge presence of domestic workers in the country and the many
problems compounding them—is indicative of the fact that the right of domestic workers in India is simply not seen as a political priority. While regulation of domestic is pivotal to reform, it is also true that socio-cultural codes have a significant impact on the quality of lives experienced by domestic workers. As long as domestic work and workers are perceived through a neo-feudal lens by the persons availing of these services, the problems shall continue to be trivialized. Like all informal labour, domestic work has historically lacked recognition and had been typically undervalued for its significant contribution to urban economics. The impending need is for a regulatory overhaul to be accompanied by an evolution in the way employing households treat domestic work. Domestic Workers constitute a very large and especially vulnerable community amongst the India urban poor. The non-recognition and undervaluation of domestic work has only contributed to their socio-economic marginalization and, more disturbingly the “normalization” of highly denigration work conditions. While some efforts have been made by the government to address the issue, there is a need to orally the more voluble and politically influential urban middle classes-majority employers of domestic workers—for communal awareness and sensitivity. This is a vital, though not the only; step to prop up the prospects of the female domestic workers in the city.

Kamala Sankaran (2013) “Domestic Work, Unpaid Work and Wage Rate” In this Study she examines how the debates over unpaid labour, over the rights of women with in the family, particularly over matrimonial property, and over fixing minimum wages have affected the wage rates of domestic work in India today and also explains that a comprehensive law for domestic workers covering all aspects of their working conditions is yet to be enacted. However, the debate on legislative protection for domestic workers has focused unduly on labour laws, ignoring the debates on valuation of unpaid care and domestic labour performed by women in the household, and the consequences of such lack of recognition and valuation of unpaid labour, which affects the determination of wage rates for domestic work. She also suggests that it is important that the current impetus to put in place legislative protection for domestic workers within labour laws draws support from developments in family law, tort, and insurance law. Very often law and economics traverse parallel tracks, with the law unmindful of the work done by statisticians and economics in the area. Drawing these different strands together is bound
to have significant cascading effects on the legal and economic value assigned to women’s unpaid work in the household, and wage rates of domestic work.

Harsh Mander (2013) The Help “It’s bad enough that we exploit our domestic workers. It’s worse when we employ children. Studies confirm that live in India domestic workers today toil almost every waking hour, often seven days a week. Part time helps are paid so little that they work in multiple houses adding up again to very long working hours. Both have few, if any, paid holidays. They are remunerated well below statutory minimum wages, protected by no labour law regulation and no social security contributions. Cuts are made for property damage; report being denied their earnings by deceitful calculations and they are often accused of stealing. Their work of sweeping, cleaning and cooking entails numerous health hazards, compounded by poor and irregular food and little rest and recreation. Aged domestic help are routinely turning away to fend for themselves, with no question of any pension. Middle-class India’s greatest shame is its employment of underage children as domestic workers. A recent study in Karnataka found that 30 per cent domestic workers were children; in Mangalore, children were as high as 45 per cent. Parents battling hunger and debt in the teeming Indian countryside reeling from endemic agrarian crisis, and especially in tribal regions like Jharkhand, often surrender their children to agents who traffic them for domestic work in cities. Children are preferred because they are submissive and uncomplaining. Employers think nothing of sending their own children to school and play, while another child of the same age is trapped by them in the drudgery of domestic work. Unequal India will begin to change when we teach our children to treat people who care for us in our homes as equal human beings, of the same worth and dignity.

Rohan Ravindra Gudiband et.al., (2015) in this paper, the researchers conducts an impact evaluation of the minimum wage legislation for domestic workers the in urban areas of four Indian states. The researcher has tested the impact of the legislation at both intensive (real wages) and extensive (employment opportunity) margins in both short-run and in long-run. We find that the minimum wage legislation had positive and statistically significant impact on real wages in the short-run. This impact was itself very weak in magnitude. They also found similar impact in terms of the intensity of the treatment itself, measured by wage gap. Higher wage gap resulted in higher treatment impact in the
short-run. However, all impact on real wages seems to disappear by 2012 in these four states. In the case of employment opportunities and the probability of being employed as a domestic worker, the legislation seems to have had no impact in both short and long run. From the ground-level situational analyses of these treatment states, they find that the legislation was not accompanied by any strong enforcement and monitoring mechanisms, which we attribute as the key factor driving our results. The researchers provide several policy recommendations to increase the degree and extent of enforcement of this legislation. They also suggest avenues of future research to expand the nascent literature on minimum wage legislation for domestic sector workers. This conclusion is that minimum wage legislation for domestic workers need not improve the living standards of workers unless accompanied by strong enforcement mechanisms. To our knowledge, this is the first attempt at quantitatively evaluating the impact of minimum wage legislation for domestic workers in India.

All the studies reviewed throw light on the various dimensions of the problems related to women domestic workers in the socio-economic status, conditions, problems, and associational contexts. There has, however, hardly been any study on 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.

3.5 Definition of the Concepts

The following are the important concepts used in the research.

Domestic Work

The fundamental approach to define domestic work is that it is a work that takes place in the ‘household’. Domestic work is a sector which is particularly vulnerable to forms of slavery such as forced labour, trafficking, and bonded labour, due to the unique and specific circumstances of their work inside a private household combined with a lack of legal protection.
Domestic Worker

The term ‘Domestic worker’ refers to those workers employed for household chores like cooking, cleaning, dusting, sweeping, mopping the house and washing, care of the family members and running errands. For the purpose of study, a woman domestic worker is a woman who might be a registered worker or unregistered workers.

According to the New York State Workers' Compensation Board, a "domestic worker" is someone who is employed and paid to perform duties within their employer's private household. Examples of domestic workers include maids, cooks, housekeepers, laundry workers and butlers.

Live-in/Full-time Domestic Worker

Many domestic workers are live-in domestics who reside full-time at the place of employment. They depend on their employers for basic needs such as food and shelter. Though they often have their own quarters, their accommodations are not usually as comfortable as those reserved for the family members. In some cases, they sleep in the kitchen or small rooms, such as a box room, sometimes located in the basement or attic. They are engaged in all domestic works ranging from housekeeping, washing clothes and utensils, cooking and as the case may be baby, children or elderly care. Most live-ins are women who have migrated or have been trafficked from villages to cities in search of employment. They are to a large extent children; unmarried and sometimes-married young girls separated or widowed women. A great number of live-in Domestic Workers are recruited from villages or tribal areas.

Live-out/Part-time Domestic Workers

Part-time/Live-out domestic workers are generally locals or migrants in the city where they are employed. They mostly live in slums and work in different houses of employers to earn their livelihood. They are called part timers/live-outs not because they do only part-time work but because they do not stay with the employer and are not generally on call 24 hours a day. They either work all day for one employer or repeatedly perform specific tasks like washing clothes, dishes, or cooking for a number of employers. Part-timers are less dependent on their employers than full timers. They live with their families, thereby in effect, run their homes, as well as those of their employers.
However, they are less dependent on their employers for their basic needs and are characterized with a greater degree of independence than the live-ins.

**Registered Domestic Worker**

Any domestic worker who registers her name either under the ministry of labour or under any State Govt. Board is called a registered domestic worker.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has included the Domestic Workers (DWs) under the Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Work) Act and provided a separate Welfare Board for the Domestic Workers where the domestic workers are registered and avail the welfare schemes like education benefit, marriage benefit, death insurance, accident benefit etc. The Government has also included the Domestic Work under Minimum wage Act 1948 and notification has been passed. Such efforts give DWs recognition and dignity as workers.

**Unregistered Domestic Worker**

Unregistered workers are domestic workers who are not registered in Tamil Nadu domestic workers welfare Board or under Ministry of Labour.

**Employer**

The term ‘employer’ refers to one who hires a domestic worker for remuneration, with or without any explicit agreement or contract.

The law may define who the employer is. Many countries specify that the employer must be a “natural person”, while others include the entire family. Another challenge is, almost all other types of workers are employed by an employer who is a business head, a factory owner, an enterprise head etc. In case of the domestic worker, the employer is a member of the private household or the entire household.

**Income**

Income refers to the monetary value of the wage received by the domestic workers each month and does not include the materials that may be gifted from time to time by the employer.

**Consumption Expenditure**

Consumption represents the total quantity of goods brought and consumed by consumers during a period that is the expression of total consumption demand. Consumption expenditures include expenditure on food, clothing, heat and light, housing,
social and religious functions, travelling, education, health litigation and other miscellaneous expenditure and also the expenditure on durable goods.

**Indebtedness**

Indebtedness in this study refers to capital expenditure of the family for social functions, investment in profit making ventures and current expenditures made to both ends meet and for other miscellaneous items like education, and transitory items like unforeseen medical expenses.

**Commuting**

Commuting is periodically recurring travel between one's place of residence and place of work, or study, and in doing so exceed the boundary of their residential community. It sometimes refers to any regular or often repeated travelling between locations, even when not work-related. A distinction is also often made between commuters who commute daily or weekly between their residences to work place, and are therefore considered respectively local or long-distance commuters.

**Per Capita Income**

Per capita income or average income measures the average income earned per person in a given area in a specified year. It is calculated by dividing the area’s total income by its total population. In this study the per capita income calculated by dividing the total household income by total family members.

**Per Capita Saving**

Per capita saving measured by the total household saving divided by the total household members of the particular house.

**Per Capita Debt**

Per capita debt measured by the total household debt divided by the total household members of the particular house.

**Poverty**

The term “poverty” refers to a person’s lack of command over adequate goods and services to satisfy his basic needs relating to food, clothing, housing, medicine and education.
The term poverty in the absolute sense, referring to conditions of acute physical want, starvation, malnutrition, disease, want of clothing, shelter, education and an almost total lack of medical care.

In India, poverty is treated as an absolute phenomenon where significant section of the society is deprived of minimum requirements of clothing, cereals, pulses, milk and vegetables required for adequate calorie intake providing a bare subsistence level. All the quantities together expressed in money terms provide the minimum per capita expenditure (Bhattacharya, 1989).

Poverty is multi-dimensional in character, scope and content. Poverty has an economic face, a social face and a psychological face. Poverty’s economic face includes joblessness, unemployment, lack of finances to satisfy the family’s basic needs and child labour. Poverty’s social face is manifested in high levels of illiteracy, violent behaviour, high levels of teenage pregnancy and single parenthood, high levels of subsistence abuse and a large number of idle men and women. Poverty’s psychological face is associated with low esteem, lack of knowledge, feeling of hopelessness and dependency (Mellor, 2001).
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