DYNAMICS OF PAID DOMESTIC WORK AMONG WOMEN IN KOLKATA

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DECLARATION

I, Sudeshna Roy, hereby declare that the thesis entitled **"DYNAMICS OF PAID DOMESTIC WORK AMONG WOMEN IN KOLKATA"** submitted by me to the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** is my bonafide work and that it has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any degree or diploma of this university or any other university/institution.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of variance
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CSR	Child Sex Ratio
CV	Coefficient of Variation
DFID	Department for International Development
DWI	Decent Work Index
EAG	Empowered Action Group
EMU	Electric Multiple Units
ESI	Employees' State Insurance
EUS	Employment- Unemployment Survey
EWS	Economically Weaker Section
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDWN	International Domestic Workers Network
IDWF	International Domestic Workers Federation
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
JNNURM	Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
KMC	Kolkata Municipal Corporation
KUA	Kolkata Urban Agglomeration
LIC	Life Insurance Corporation
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MPCE	Monthly Per Capita Expenditure
NCO	National Classification of Occupation
NCT	National Capital Territory
NCEUS	National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector
NCW	National Commission for Women
NDWM	National Domestic Workers Movement
NIC	National Industrial Classification
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organization
OBC	Other Backward Class
PAN	Permanent Account Number
PCA	Primary Census Abstract
PDS	Public Distribution System
RSBY	Rashtryia Swasthya Bima Yojana
RWA	Resident Welfare Association
SC	Scheduled Castes
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
SHG	Self Help Group
SNA	System of National Account
ST	Scheduled Tribes
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UTI	Urinary Tract Infection
WEIGO	Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing
WPR	Work Participation Rate

Chapter I

Introduction

In developing countries a huge proportion of working population is engaged in informal sector. Out of the informal workers, domestic workers constitute a substantial portion. Domestic worker or helper or labourer is a term which is very often interchangeably used to locate people who are working within the boundaries of private households. These people are employed in basic daily and mundane work of cooking, cleaning, washing, dusting, baby sitting and other related work of rudimentary nature. The origin of domestic worker has its roots in medieval times. Employing domestics was seen as a symbol of having high social and economic standing. Arrays of domestic workers were to be seen running numerous errands in aristocratic households like that of feudal landlords, Zamindars (landlords) and noble men. With the spread of colonialism, the slaves were hired as domestics. With the emergence of industrialisation, class society emerged and it furthered the cause of sustaining the trend of employing the domestic labour by the upper and the middle class homes. In India the 'jajmani system' or the client-patron relationship under the aegis of caste system, preserved the custom of the lower castes or 'shudras' and 'vaishyas' providing their manual labour to their upper caste or 'brahmin' employers, in return of mostly payment in kind or in miniscule amount of cash. Thus domestic work has always been regarded as a lower order work with very little or no significance accorded to the ones performing it. Though men were employed more in this sector initially but with time women came to replace them in huge proportions. In economic terms, any activity is regarded as non-productive if it is not related with money, wealth or income. Thus work within the domain of households and chiefly carried out by the women and children of the house, is not considered economically gainful activity. But the same work if performed by the hired domestics is a productive one.

Domestic work has been the forte of women since time immemorial. This is not because of their greater ability or skill constraint, but is rooted in the social factor of gendered division of labour. The gendered stereotypes about the nature of work to be performed by the women have usually confined them within the rigid

domain of household chores. Women are thought to be responsible to look after the daily needs of the household, take care of the children and the elderly, and manage the household duties, while men would have the task of performing outdoor activities and earning the livelihood to sustain the family. This attitude towards division of labour is strongly embedded in the social construct of patriarchy, especially for a country like India. But the physical task performed by the women are thought to be trivial and of lesser value, even though these activities if not properly carried out, can adversely affect the pronounced productive work as performed outside the threshold of a house. Thus women have taken the place of men as hired domestic workers working against remuneration in cash or kind. Even in the paid labour market, it is noticed that gendered segregation of domestic work remains unchanged. Females form a sizeable chunk even when domestic work is commercialized. But increased feminization in paid domestic work has not resulted in reduced gender differential in wages and also not changed the limited occupational growth of the women relative to the men who work as domestic workers. It is easy to find men who are engaged in highly professional and commercial versions of paid work related to home maintenance and management and care-work such as professional chefs and master cooks, butler, male attendant and nurse. Gender bias resulted in limited upward occupational mobility of women, even in lower order professions. Very often men who are employed as domestic help or cook are also seen multi-tasking in activities of gardener, driver, care-taker etc that increases their income pool and also allows for easier occupational shift relative to the women maids.

Domestic helper is a more pronounced phenomenon in urban households in India, but is present in villages as well. Middle aged or elderly women especially the widowed, divorced or separated used to constitute greater proportion of domestic workers. But the trend has seen a change with married and migrant women workers taking over the work especially in metropolitan cities. This is attributed to myriad of factors on both the demand and supply side. The growth of nuclear families, greater participation of educated urban women in gainfully employed economic activities outside their homes, institutionalization of the care work, ageing of population due to rising life expectancies, rising standard of living and affordability by the middle and higher income households are some of the demand

side factors. On the supply side, poverty, debt, low skill or no skill requirement for carrying out such activities, easy entrance, cheap labour, lack of local employment opportunities, social networking of the migrant women, availability of work near their residences, part-time work so that they can look after their own household chores as well etc allow greater proportion of women to find work as domestic workers. Data suggests that mainly the scheduled caste (SC), scheduled tribe (ST) and women belonging from other backward classes (OBC), minority social groups and women headed households make up majority of the domestic help. This is directly related with poor economic existence of these vulnerable groups.

Migration plays an effective role in bringing in prospective women maids to the cities. It is a guard against uncertain and poor rural existence. In earlier studies female migration was not given importance in changing the economic structure of the source and destination region. Women were always given the tag of associational and dependant migrants. But it is an accepted fact now that more and more women are migrating especially to the urban areas on their own and for economic factor. They are contributing more in the family wage pool and in running their households. There exists a strong demand pull and an assured market in the cities for these migrant women who are generally low-skilled and with lower educational attainments. But the decision to migrate is often involuntary brought about by compulsion to support their poor family and relocation after marriage. Women may also migrate to the city to join her spouse, a sibling, a parent, or other family members. In most cases, it is the male head of the family or the family as a whole decides to migrate usually in search of a better living. After migrating, the high cost of living in the cities compels these women to take up petty work. Other attracting factors include in search of better opportunities, access to medical and educational services for their family and children, desire for financial and emotional autonomy and to improve their life chances. But some push factors have also been identified that may be the possible reasons behind the women folk migrating to the unknown urban centres. Some of these push factors include domestic violence and cultural practices, such as due to the threat of early and forced marriage, polygamy, and disinheritance from family property of the widows and young women, to escape abusive husbands and disowning by the in-laws after death of the husband. But in either of the cases, that is whether migration

involuntary or voluntary, presence of a social network is an important factor behind the geographical and socio-economic mobility of the women folk. There is a close interconnection between women's migration and increased participation in paid work, even when the migration is associational in character.

A social network, in the form of family members, relatives, friends and even people from the same villages, acts as a cushion for the migrants in the 'terra incognita' (unknown and unexplored) of the city. For the migrating women, especially who move alone, presence of known people in the destination towns, is a significant determining factor. This is because, the choice of destination by the prospective migrant, the motivation to move from village to an unknown far-off urban surrounding, knowledge about urban way of life and availability of suitable employment opportunities are all gathered from the social connections those who already have migrated earlier and are staying in the city. Upon arrival to the new city, often the migrant finds initial shelter in the homes of the social connection. Many a times the social connection works as a middleman or agent in the multitude of placement agencies for domestic work. The social connection forms the important link for the prospective migrant worker to find suitable work, provide for the food, lodging etc during the time when the migrant worker is unemployed and often act as the cushion during times of financial crisis in the alien land. Most of the times, the employer hires the work of the new maid sheerly on the basis of the word of mouth and mutual trust of this known social connection, who may be working currently or prior with the employer.

Domestic work has not been given its due relevance not only in the labour market, but also in the households of the maids themselves. Even though the demand for the maids is on a higher side in the more affluent and larger metropolitan cities like Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai, but the employed workers do not find suitable jobs with adequate wages easily. This is true for the women engaged in domestic work. Being migrants or belonging to economically weaker section (EWS) slum dwelling, illiterate or less educated, and the urgency in order to sustain themselves and their families back home that these women mostly lack the necessary bargaining strength. They tend to accept lower wages for the type of work and number of hours they put in their job.

Women domestic labourers perform variety of household chores in the homes of the employers and then complete all the work in their own homes and take care of

the children and other members of their own family. They usually work all the day, the same monotonous and repetitive tasks carried out in own and the employer home. But in most cases, in general the workers do not enjoy any financial autonomy or a higher status in her family. The women work through 'double-day' (Hochschild & Machung, 1990) and contribute immensely in running their households. But the benefits they get in return of the back-breaking work and the degree of value attached to their work even by their own household members and community is extremely low. Unfortunately, gender-based discrimination in the home and in the community continues to make it very difficult for women to exercise their independent will and make basic decisions over their own lives. The migrant women and mainly the single mover to the cities have to confront myriad of the unwanted biasness in every step of their getting adjusted to the new land. From acquiring a suitable job, finding a decent accommodation usually in the slums, she has to deal with corrupt agents, discrimination and social stigmas and numerous other inconveniences. On the other hand, the in-situ slum born and residing women also face other challenges pertaining to negotiating through class and gender barriers in securing work supporting her family through informal work. Government has enacted few laws in favour of the unorganised sector workers such as the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation Act, 1986 amended in 2006. But except for southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Maharashtra, the holistic pan-India inclusion of these disadvantaged classes of workers under the requisite legal scope of protection of their rights and interests is lacking. The absence of a concrete definition, workplace of the maids being within the domain of private precincts of employer house, scattered nature of distribution of the workers, lack of awareness about the rights and privileges thereby poses as problems in the identification of the domestic workers, creation and monitoring of workers' grievance redressal units, unionizing the domestics under effective trade unions and women's associations and making skill imparting centres accessible to these workers an extremely difficult proposition. Moreover in the wake of mushrooming of numerous unregistered placement agencies and the involvement of multitude of intermediaries and agents between the employer and domestic helpers make it all the more difficult for the government to keep the track of the movement of the workers and addressing their problems.

1.1 Objectives

The study attempts to analyse the distribution of live-out paid domestic workers across the selected slum localities within Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) area and the commuter women workers who journey daily to workplaces located within KMC from the surrounding Kolkata Urban Agglomeration (KUA) districts. The underlying relationships between paid domestic work and their health, social and economic conditions and outcome in terms of degree of empowerment and associated transformations in their lives is also investigated. The focus is placed more on the work place dynamics, work-conditions, and employment related patterns of the respondents. Thus the broad outline of objective is as follows.

A) **To study the social and economic characteristics of the live-out female domestic workers (both train-commuter workers and adjacent slum dwelling workers) in Kolkata.**

B) **To compare the employment/work conditions among the categories of domestic workers in Kolkata.**

C) **To study the economic and social effects or outcomes due to participation in paid domestic work by the commuting and the slum dwelling maids.**

To study the social and economic characteristics of the live-out female domestic workers (both commuter workers and adjacent slum dwelling workers) in Kolkata.

1.2 Research Questions

1. Why do the women in question choose to be domestic worker?
2. What are the characteristics of the live-out/ part-time female domestic workers in terms of age, educational level, caste-tribe group, marital status, language, religion and work participation?
3. What is the state of housing amenities and standard of living of these maids?
4. What are the sub-categories of domestic workers and their characteristic features and the determinant factors for differential participation of women in the categories?
5. What are the characteristics of the family and the family members of these domestic workers?

To compare the employment/work conditions among the categories of domestic workers in Kolkata?

1.2 Research Questions

6. What are the challenges and difficulties (economic, physical and social) of these maids toward attaining employment and safeguarding its tenure?

7. What factors affect the following across the categories of domestic maids: **work pattern and profile, work experience, wage structure and differential, safety and securities**
    (social, economic, psychological/moral, physical/biological/health) involved in the work, working relation with the employer, entry and exit in the profession and employing household, norms/rules of employment, working conditions, source of secondary income and its effect on domestic work etc ?

8. Does commuting for work act as a tool for enhancement or is it oppressive and an obstacle to overall wellbeing of the maids?

To study the economic and social effects or outcomes due to participation in paid domestic work by the commuting and the slum dwelling maids.

1.2 Research Questions

9. Does the bargaining power or decision making power of the maids in their households change in the following aspects: a) running and managing the house b) matters about children c) mobility d) purchase of assets e) continuation of work f) marriage and childbirth/family planning etc?

10. How does the participation of female domestic labours affect their families and household? What are the social costs involved and does commuting to work make any difference to it?

11. Does the social status/standing and inter-personal relations of the domestic maids within their household is affected due to their work and does the effect vary across the communities and social groups?

12. Do women who work as maids and domestics feel that their work is important and valued? And is the same work they do when it is unpaid in their own homes as valuable in their family as the paid work they do?

13. What is the degree of awareness of the maids about their rights, their work-related problems and the interventions by the NGOs and government bodies?

1.3 Hypothesis

Paid domestic workers in Kolkata city has seen rapid increase over time, with much demand from employer households for workers suitable for varied tasks. The presence of distinct two groups of domestic workers; the in-situ slum dwelling women and the daily commuter women from the suburban lower tier towns and villages in KUA districts make the paid domestic market an interesting complex. The study is based on the hypothesis that relative to the slum dwelling women workers the standard of living and economic condition of the commuters is poor. Poverty and lack of suitable earning opportunities in their native places, compels them to enter the labour market and travel from long distances into Kolkata. Though women generally find paid work close to their residences in order to accomplish unpaid care-work and housework responsibilities, but in case of the commuters the income earnings from paid domestic work in Kolkata seems greater than the opportunity and other costs invested. Similarly the levels of decent work conditions and outcomes of work participation vary spatially across the city and between the slum and commuter women groups. Contrary to the common belief, paid domestic work is not a homogeneous totality, but can be disaggregated into 3 broad and many smaller sub-groups of workers; namely ayah/baby-sitters, cooks and domestic helpers or house-cleaners and there exists inter-group differences in wage, skill level, job-market problems, prospects and effects of employment. Likewise, spatial deviation and social heterogeneity across caste and religious groups and marital status, literacy groups in terms of health, work pattern, outcomes exists irrespective of similarity in work profile. Commuting to work can act as a tool and a medium for empowerment in lives of these economically weaker and socially marginalised women, but the degree of benefits drawn and obstacles faced differs according to distance travelled, socio-religious affiliations and geographical location of both place of residence and workplace within Kolkata city.

1.4 Purpose of Study

Much literature is available on female informal workers such as those in construction industry, home-based contractual and casual industry, but exclusive study on female domestics is rare. The pattern of spatial distribution of this class of female workers,

their socio-economic characteristics, their problems and the magnitude of integration of the female domestic workers in the economic development charter is thus required to be studied. Moreover, research on domestic servants account domestic work to be a holistic concept. But it is to be noted that domestic labourers are not a homogeneous group, rather they consist of various sub-categories such as cook, nannies, butler, nurse, governess, house keepers, cleaners, washerwomen, launderers, house helpers, elderly caregivers, domestic animal or pet caregivers, disabled care-givers, personal care workers, house and chamber maids etc. The nature of work, skill level, wage rate and the social status thus ascribed to all of the above categories are varied and they are ranked accordingly in the hierarchical order of domestic work. Even though one may include gardeners, gatekeepers and security watchman, drivers are sometimes included under the realm of domestic work on a broader scale as it is computed by Census of India. But since these occupations are predominantly performed by male workers, they must be excluded in in-depth study on the domestic workers. Exclusion of the domestic workers from labour laws and legislations and the laxity on part of the concerned authority to provide a stringent definitional and legal structure, has resulted in accelerated susceptibility of the huge population of domestic labourers to being marginalised and discriminated. Thus it becomes an imperative step to study the problems, aspirations, prospects and present conditions of this disadvantaged group.

The rationale behind choosing Kolkata as the study area lies in the fact that the city ranks first (28.15%) among other metropolitan cities in India in terms of percentage share of female domestic main workers to total female main workers and also first (6%) in percentage share of domestic main workers to total main workers (including males) in 2001 Census of India. Moreover percentage share of female domestic main workers to total domestic main workers is also 68% in the city. Paid domestic work is an important source of employment among socio-economically disadvantaged SC, ST and OBC communities which leaves them all the more towards inequality and marginalisation. Kolkata acts as an attractive market for paid domestic work demands given the fact that the proportion of aged population in Kolkata according to 2011 Census data (60 years and above) is 11.8% which is much above the figures of urban aged in West Bengal (9.8%) and urban aged of India (8.1%). The elderly population of Kolkata is also much above that of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi (6.8%) and Mumbai (8.2%), and thus the demand for ayah work and associated care-

givers is also very high. The primacy of Kolkata mega-city in eastern India cannot be denied as well which also attracts migrants from surrounding Empowered Action Group (EAG) states for livelihood. Interestingly, there exists an unique feature of commuter women paid domestic workers who travel into the city daily from the adjacent suburbs and KUA districts. There is dearth of research on commuter women maids of Kolkata especially in terms of their work related situation relative to the slum dwelling workers of the city. Thus the study envisages a comparative approach between the slum dwelling and commuter women maids to unravel the work participation and its effect on the women and their households.

1.5 Study Area

For the present study, KMC area has been chosen. The city of Kolkata stretches the eastern side of river Hooghly. Over the census decades the city area has expanded as new areas and new wards were delineated. In 1921, the number of wards was 25 which increased to 141 in 1991 census and today it is 144 covering 185 square kilometres of area and sheltering 4.5 million urban populations (Census of India, 2011). The state of West Bengal of which Kolkata city is the capital lies in the eastern region of India, comprising of 19 districts as per 2011 Census. It is one of the densely populated states, and Kolkata is the third largest urban agglomeration in India. According to Census 2001, West Bengal has 6 municipal corporations. KUA is the largest urban agglomeration (sheltering 14.1 million population, 2011 Census of India) in the state in terms of geographical area, population density, economic contribution to the state domestic product. (**Map 3.1.1 and 3.1.2**) The present study would look into the spatial mobility of commuter domestic worker women from their homes in KUA to Kolkata city for work alongside the in-situ slum dwelling women of KMC.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

Migration is a cause and consequence of various socio-economic and cultural determinants. The notion about women migration has been limited within the social clause of marriage and is primarily associational in nature. But it is seen that migrant women has a greater role playing as family 'breadwinners' (Neetha, 2004) and the search for livelihood is as significant a factor behind women migrating from rural or smaller urban centres, as it is for the opposite sex. Labour force participation of

women thus becomes an important issue for research. City-ward migration and commuting to work of women folk from suburban areas varies on the basis of age, social group membership, level of education, state or region of origin, nature of work, social capital and sometimes transport links. But migration and its after-effects does not bring in favourable position to the women migrants most of the times. They are subjected to diverse economic tensions, conflicts and socio-cultural pressures.

Map 3.1.1   **Map 3.1.2**
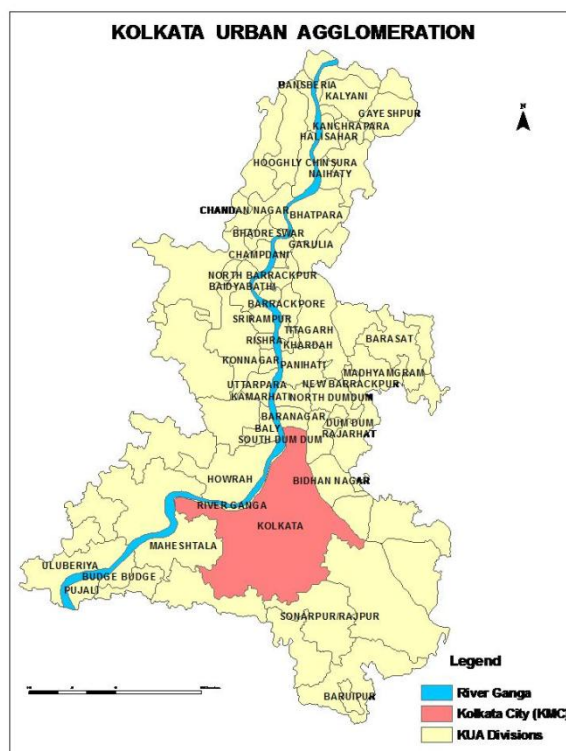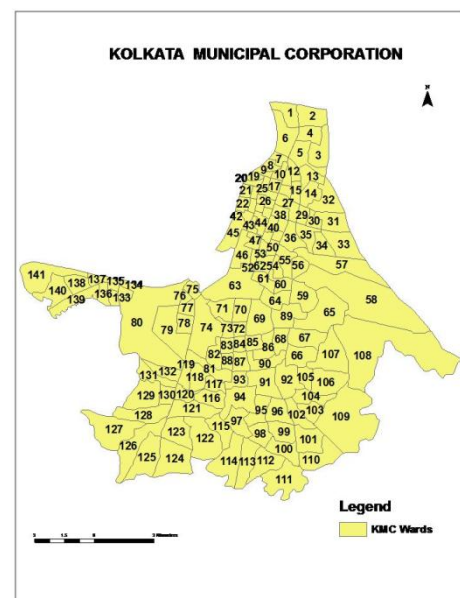
Source: Census of India, 2011   Source: Census of India, 2011

The women taking up employment post-migration phase often have to struggle with increase in work burden, without additional support system. The predominance of females in the informal sector can be justified on terms of lack of appropriate skill training, low educational attainment, no social contacts, lack of bargaining skills, part-time work seeking tendency among others.

1.6.1 Determinants of Participation in Paid Domestic Work

Paid domestic work has been a sphere, where women are heavily concentrated irrespective of the region enumerated and social group membership of the worker. This is because of their inherent skill for performing arduous monotonous work at low

wage and the prevalent gender segregation of division of labour in society. Big urban centres and metropolitan cities account for the presence of large proportion of migrant women engaged as domestic workers. Middle, upper middle class and rich households in posh localities employ women maids in huge numbers. Unlike other informal sector work such as pavement vending, construction labourer, piece-rate production activities within private home boundaries, domestic work is a more preferred livelihood option for migrant women and women belonging to socio-economically backward section of population residing in slums. The nature of work is relatively safer in terms of tenure, easy availability, lower proclivity of health hazard, and the fact that it helps in honing of traditional skills of household chores along with non requirement sunk capital and almost nil social cost as is required for self-employment and training respectively. Domestic work is not thought as a work but as a moral obligation and responsibility of the women. The work is considered to be typically suited to the women for their use of dexterous and lissom hands. Thus the social structure, demand and supply factors operate together to sustain women predomination in paid domestic labour.

Women migrate to alien cities not only as dependent and along with their family and spouse, but most often the separated or divorced and widowed women who are deserted after the death of their husbands, migrate in desperation for livelihood. Migration is thus a survival strategy and so is commutation by village women and women from lower tier towns as in case of Kolkata. Sometimes migration is sought as a last resort to escape poverty due to landlessness, alienation from land, village and family feuds, caste and religious violence, forced marriage etc. Women belonging to the lower strata of society such as SC and ST seek to attain upward social mobility through migration. Commuting by train to work in the core areas of the city also forges almost similar kind of socio-economic impact on the women. The desire to attain financial independence and ability to decide from the range of options about their life and work choices that commutation provides these women acts as a motivation for migrating and journeying to work into big cities and being away from their family. But even though women get access to income and seek wider opportunities in terms of access to urban services like public distribution system (PDS), schools for their off-springs, health care among others, women have to confront greater hardships in the process of accessing jobs and settling down in the

cities. Most widowed and separated women and commuter women in this study are head of the households, and they are the sole earners in their families. Upon arriving to towns, they have to shoulder new role of supplementing not only their sustenance but to bear the living of her family back home. Domestic workers are the worst affected as their work is often unrecognized, temporary and casual in nature. Their services are subjected to the highly elastic demand depending upon the employers' need.

Migrant women face numerous socio-cultural barriers. National statistics shows that it is the illiterate or poorly educated females and women belonging to low-income, socially marginalised groups have greater propensity to migrate to towns. In this context it can be added that the characteristic of the migrant women make them more vulnerable to the physical and mental hardships, sexual abuses, lack of social security, adverse health conditions among others. Women migrating with family or with husband after marriage often seek to earn a living to support their households to suffice for the raised cost of living in the city. Thus even though some women have no prior experience of working, they participate in the labour market post migration. Increased spatial mobility as a consequence of migration and daily commuting brings about not only various opportunities to the migrant and commuter and her family, but exposes her to various challenges as well. Increased cost of living in an urban setting, responsibility to support family back in source region through remittances, health related expenditures, susceptibility to occupational health hazards like chronic ailments and diseases, wage discriminations, lack of supporting facilities like crèche for their children, living in insanitary and unhygienic surroundings in slums etc are some of the barriers in the path of attaining well-being and empowerment through workforce participation in paid domestic labour.

There is a close linkage between migration of women belonging to low economic status and their participation in paid domestic work especially in the cities. The steady stream of women migrating either with family or single to the cities and working as domestic maids can be attributed to the supply side factors like cheap labour, poverty pushing the women into distress migration for survival, gender stereotype of domestic work, lack of alternative job and low, irregular wages in the source regions, traditional low skill requirement in the work, possibility and scope of on-the job training and opportunity of polishing homemaking skills. Simultaneously the ease of labour, the

work pattern being less strenuous than other forms of manual jobs, lower vulnerability to occupational health hazard unlike construction work, greater income source near to own residence, flexibility of managing home with paid work due to part-time nature of the work, presence of social network in the occupation are important determinants as well. Less number of income earning family members, greater safety in work environment relative to other paid work options due to reduced dealings with men at workplace, lack of alternative work options due to reduced scope and finance bottleneck, familiarity with work due to similarity in mother's and family work profile, ease of job market entrance are other associative supply side aspects. On the other hand, demand side factors include, nuclear family structure in urban areas and ageing of urban society resulting in shortage of care-givers within employing family, rising affluence and consequential affordability to hire paid domestic labour, lack of public provision of home management related services or expensive if available, lack of adequate institutionalized services (public or private) in city (crèches, nursing and care centres, cooking and cleaning services) all creating 'care deficit' (Lutz, 2013), seasonality of work leading to demand surges, traditional attitude of high class-caste women not performing degraded pattern of work often associated with domestic labour. (**Figure 2.1.1**)

Migration streams are from rural to urban or urban to urban, either single, with family or relative or children, or with spouse, or with peer group. There are economic and non-economic costs and benefits incurred in the process. Usually the slum-dwelling households are migrant and most women relocating after marriage or are born within the slums to migrant parents. **Economic factors** behind migration include lack of adequate and high paying employment opportunities in origin, wage differential in between source and destination areas, poverty and low asset ownership, less number of working members in family and absence of effective social security at native places. **Social factors** are constituted by the incentive of attaining greater autonomy in life, seeking upward social mobility owing to relatively greater caste-tribe anonymity in urban centres, and reducing the interface of religious and political leverage prevalent in villages, presence of young age cohorts and associational married women migrants. Among the **cultural factors**, linguistic and religious affiliation, influence of social network and inter-personal contacts, attraction to city lifestyle and availability of wider and improved civic facilities and attitude of the

community towards female migration and work participation. Though not considerable, **involuntary factors** such as forced and early marriage, health adversities, natural calamity, forced eviction due to political and social feuds and trafficking can be the cause behind migration.

1.6.2 Experience and Outcome of Women Domestic Workers

Migration causes significant demographic, economic, social and cultural changes in both source and destination regions. Often due to the migration of the women, age of marriage is increased. It is generally seen that women migrants accompanied with family reap greater benefits than single women migrants. The remittances help in the prosperity of the rural households, changes are brought about in the agricultural and rural system of production. At the destination, the cities are overburdened with migrant population, growth in slum communities, progressive changes in perceptions of the migrants and employers towards work and about each other etc are affected. The other beneficial outcomes of migration include acculturation and assimilation, reduction in social distance between the city dwellers and migrant rural population. The costs incurred in the process of migration can be grouped as economic and social. The costs of travelling and settling down away from home, costs incurred on attaining information about job, housing, mortgaging assets or loan liabilities are economic costs. While the non-economic ones are psycho-social problems of adjustment to new city, job and lifestyle, social isolation and alienation, attitudinal conflicts.

In the context of migrant women and in-situ slum- born and slum dwelling women and their participation as paid domestic workers in the urban labour market, Kolkata is chosen as study area. Keeping in mind the geographical factors that affect the migration stream and pattern from the neighbouring states as well as from districts of West Bengal, the administrative importance of the Kolkata city in the country, its economic background and scope of work opportunities, a comparative study is envisaged on the life and work of the slum dwelling women domestic workers within the city and the daily commuting women maids from the suburban areas. The city on micro-level varies widely in terms of cost of living, wage structure, diversity in employment opportunity, degree of homogeneity in socio-cultural environment etc which needs to be studied. The commutation and work participation of women brings transformations at the individual, household and community level. The study will try

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to reveal the factors behind the linkage between the daily commuting and domestic work. Commuting to work, distance covered, time spent and most importantly expenditure on it plays a significant function in determining the physical and mental health and also place of work, decision to take up new employers and amount of time set aside for paid-work, leisure and other activities. Work satisfaction is also affected by commute. Usage of several modes of commute, passage time from one to other mode and access to the mode of transportation is important in attaining 'commuter satisfaction' (St-Louis et al., 2014). In the case of the train commuters, the satisfaction is depended on journey experience with co-travellers and their interaction with the railway officials. This apart, the personal attributes in terms of travel preference, perception about travel, likes and dislikes, concept about personal space and public space and behavioural pattern all simultaneously affect the commuting outcome. It is argued by St-Louis et al., (2014) that commuters who find a separate intrinsic value of the commute to work are more probable to derive greater satisfaction and overlook the negative features of the travel than the ones who perceive the commute as a means to reach their desired destination.

An attempt is made to investigate the effect of the participation in paid domestic work of the working women in terms of their bargaining strength within the family and outside, level of well-being and identify any change in the access to life chances that the workers perceive post migration and on account of commuting and being employed. The study will also disentangle consequences of work participation on their family members living together both at source and in the city slums and future aspirations regarding their children and continuation into or expectations from their job. The degree of variations in terms of the impact of work among the different categories of maids and among the social groups will be studied as well. The research will also focus on the challenges faced by the domestic worker women in the integration with urban surroundings, access to information, compare the lifestyle before and after work participation in the city especially since commuting, level of dependence on relatives, kinship support in gaining entry in this work, difficulties in getting recruited in suitable job, needs and demands that they expect to be fulfilled by concerned authorities etc.

The study also envisages unravelling the changes in the intra-household relations of the domestic workers brought about by their socio-economic relations in the labour

market apart from the perceived gender role, societal norms and customs. Thus as Bina Agarwal (1997) frames it, the relative bargaining power of the women is influenced by 'both cooperation and conflict' from the household members. The negotiating power of the maid depends on the intermix of factors such as her age, relation to the head of the household, degree of contribution to the family income, work profile and notion about the work amongst family and society, personal durable possessions, education level, family ideals and childhood experiences, self perception based on psychological concepts of aspirations, desires and capacities and is apparent via different mannerisms ranging from everyday actions to critical rare choices she makes. Strength and efficacy of bargaining by the women is also dependent on to the extra-familial relations of the maid in the form of neighbours, friends and peers, kinship, membership of union or associations (economic, socio-religious and political) and other social capital ties. The access to external sources of capital such as via microfinance, self-help groups and activities of the NGOs can uplift women's economic stronghold and consequently improve their bargaining ability within the social interactive framework. (Agarwal, 1997) On the other hand, the bargaining power of the domestic worker is also impacted by her intra-familial negotiation aptitude, which shapes her perception about self esteem and value of her capabilities. In this light, it is argued that the sense of realised empowerment among the domestic workers can be narrowed down by the weights of gender bias, low social status owing to undervaluation and invisibility of work which is repetitive and alike of unwaged housework. Thus bargaining power is though expected to increase from the economic freedom that waged work brings forward but given the job and social insecurity in paid domestic work, the bargaining power is unstable and inconsistent. Moreover, the bargaining power is steered by the availability and limitations of those options on which the domestic worker is allowed to discuss and choose from. Within the patriarchal societal orientation, there are few significant choices left open for women's discretion and deliberation.

Thus outcomes can be summarised under positive and negative sub-headings. At personal level, the psychological boost of to be able to contribute in the family income pool and the creation of positive self image and realization of associative self value within the family is the most important positive result of work participation of these women. Venturing into public space helps in breaking away from barriers of

social orthodox and it helps in the learning process of the domestic workers. The earning capacity thus confers an increased relative autonomy and control on the women in marriage and maternity choices on account of increased self-assertion on life matters. The household members also undergo attitudinal shift about female work participation which commands respect with time, and which can be explained as a consequence of reduced economic dependency on the working members of her family owing to rise in personal income of the women. Thus overall the women domestic workers are expected to improve their living standards and consumption basket, enhance savings capacity, able to take charge of their lives, improve self status among own community, and assimilate newer surroundings. The negative adversities that these women face include indecent work structure, class conflict with clash of interests with employer, societal taunt and being looked down upon and isolation, excessive work-load and health problems.

The aspiration of the women consists of attaining social mobility and improved standard of living for their children. Most women maids desire to quit the profession after saving a handsome amount and taking up other dignified work, or to return back to their native places. Paid domestic work indirectly maintains occupational segregation, sustains discrimination and exploitation of women in the labour market. The possibility of extending political and legislative support and services on wider range of facets internationally and nationally is crucial for upliftment of the lives and livelihood of paid domestic workers. Herein the role of NGOs and labour associations and voluntary organizations along with the social researchers in heralding of the decent work culture and dignified living for the women maids has to be discussed enthusiastically. Contributions of the maids in the economic productive value must receive due acknowledgement. It is by transferring the work burden on the domestic workers that the educated higher class women are able to participate in paid work. Though the domestic workers do not produce material outputs but the services they provide, allows for the smooth functioning of other production sectors.

1.7 Database

The present study is based on both the primary and secondary data. Census data released by the office of Registrar General is used. Census provides data about domestic work under the B series. Under the industrial classification of main and

marginal workers following National Industrial Classification (NIC) category 9, occupational sub-category of 95 is reserved for domestic workers including baby sitters, cook, maids, governess etc working in private households. Census also disseminates data for different categories of domestic workers under 5th and 9th division of the National Occupational Classification (NCO) classifications, whereby group 512 (family-5122; cooks) and 513 (family-5131; child care workers, 5133; home based personal care workers and 5139; personal care and related workers) and 913 (family- 9131; domestic helpers and cleaners) are used to denote domestic workers. Separate data for SC, ST at the district level and at the city level is also used to draw a generalized picture regarding the distribution of domestic workers across regions and across the social groups. An overall analysis of sub-categories of this class of workers is also done to find out the concentration of specific groups.

Figure 2.1.1

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
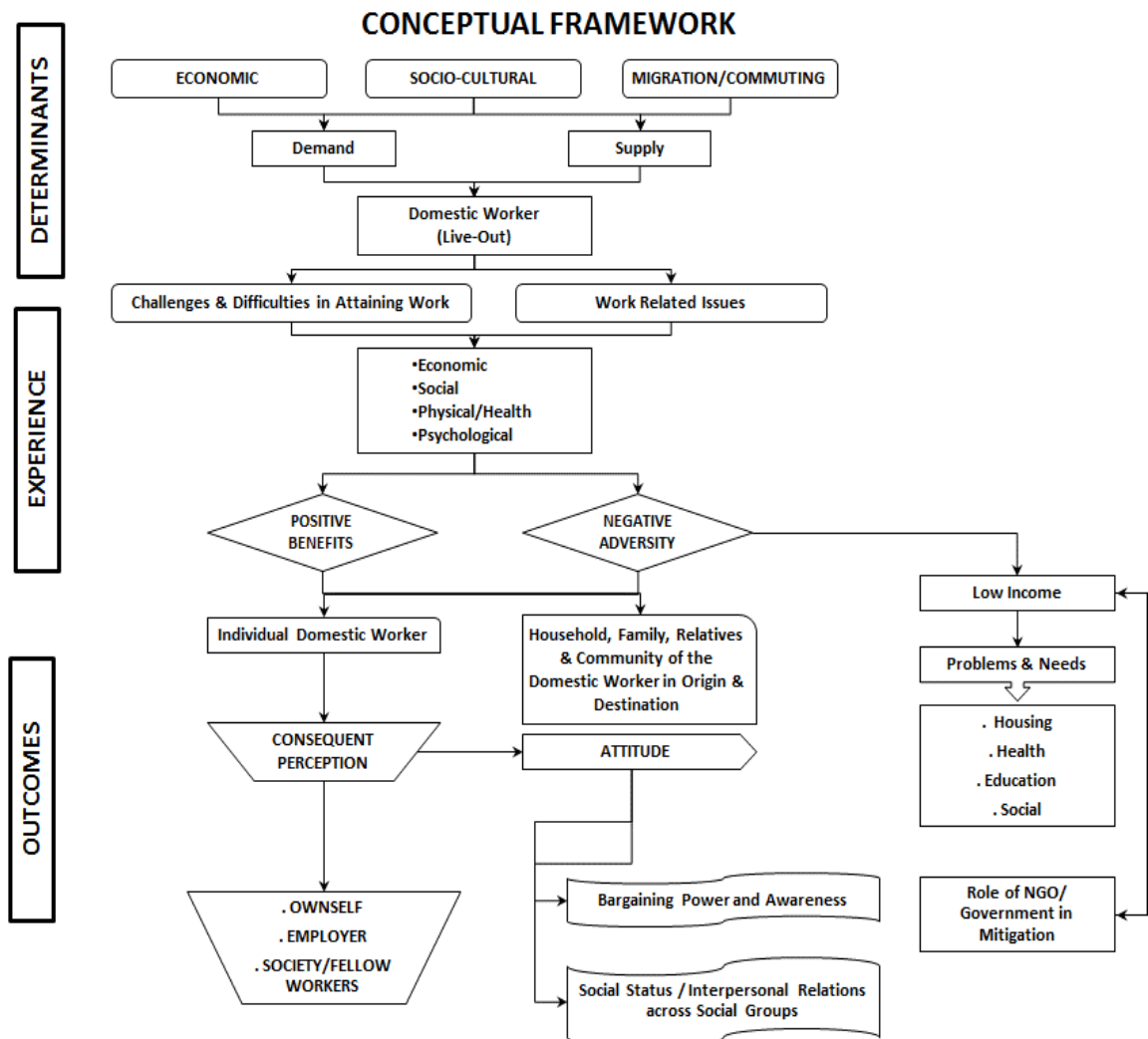
Apart from this, the primary census abstract (PCA) data is used to compute the work participation rate (WPR). For the present study, only Census 2001 data is used as till the study is fully formulated, only 2001 B series is available and 2011 Census data is yet to be made public, thus cannot be used. Apart from that NSSO 68th Round Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) data for the year 2011-12 is also being used for getting a better picture. Within the five digit NIC codes domestic worker category is represented in division 97 and is sub-categorised into sub-classes of 97001, 97002 and 97003 as maid-servant, cook and ayah or baby-sitters respectively.

Major part of the research is based on primary data that was collected from field-survey conducted during December 2014 to April 2015 and in August 2015 within the municipal administrative limit of Kolkata city across the selected slum households wherein women participating as paid domestic workers resided and from interviewing commuter domestic workers across selected suburban railway stations criss-crossing within KMC area. An open and closed structured questionnaire was canvassed and data about the migration, health, work characteristics, problems and their household background and other related socio-economic aspects was gathered. Besides, the meticulous observation, focus group discussions, case studies through elaborate personal interviews and life history of maids and placement agencies to some extent made possible qualitative data collection.

1.8 Methodology

The study focuses on understanding the magnitude of decent work dimensions and the level of difference with the International Labour Organization (ILO) standard norms of decent work among the domestic workers in Kolkata city. Analysis is also done on whether paid employment and access to money income confer bargaining strength to these women or not. Thus use of descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation coefficients, coefficient of variation (CV), independent T-Test analysis, One-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) and of other suitable statistical techniques is made for carrying out the causal analysis. The secondary and primary data is being represented graphically with the help of thematic maps and diagrams and also through cross tabulations, chi-square analysis, five point Likert Scale, Multiple response analysis and Gini Coefficient (G). Bar graphs, star diagrams, pie charts, choropleth maps and

Pareto Chart have been used for data portrayal. Time use survey data collected from field has been used extensively. The time used for various activities in an average working day of these women workers together with the location and in company of other people is collected from survey. The tables, figures and maps in the following chapters IV to VIII are computed using field surveyed primary data.

To understand the situation better and track the life course of women maids, sew case studies are conducted. Similarly, to also perusal the juxtaposition of private placement agencies in paid domestic work, few case studies is also done of them. Around 7 composite indexes are computed pertaining to health, standard of living, nature of work and its consequent outcome and commute using principal composite analysis and weighted techniques which are described below.

1) **Asset Ownership Index** - is computed using possession of 12 specific asset indicators like television, radio, mobile, bed or cot, own vehicle (bike, cycle, auto-rickshaw and rickshaw), land, almirah, light, satellite television connection, fridge, sewing machine and LPG cylinder. For thematic maps, the mean value of index scores for each ward is used and high, medium and low categories are used for classification.

2) **Standard of Living Index** - weighted standard of living index is also generated using 19 selected measurable indicators grouped under three broad heads namely, **asset ownership, living condition,** and **socio-economic condition** which are given weights in decreasing order respectively. Living condition is calculated using presence of indicators such as households practising open defecation, kitchen within living room, use of cooking fuel apart from Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and kerosene and inferior non-tap source of drinking water, no electricity, no toilet within premises, temporary house structure, Asset ownership is computed using indicators like non-ownership of house, television, mobile, land and non-possession of ration/PDS card. While level of socio-economy is measured using illiteracy, percentage of women-headed household, under-employment and non-access to micro-finance. Underemployment is gauged from women who work more than 6 hours per day but who would like to work more number of employer houses if available. Thereafter, the indicator values across geographical zones and worker categories are normalised using the following formula $Z = (X-$

Xmin)/(Xmax-Xmin) where X = value of the indicator for the zone/category, Xmax = Maximum value of indicator, Xmin = Minimum value of indicator, Z = Index for one variable. These Z values are summed separately under three broad heads and average figures for zones and work categories are summed to arrive at index scores. For the individual household, the weighted average method is applied for all 3 broad variables to classify them into fair, bad and worse index categories. For thematic maps, the mean value of index scores for each ward is used.

3) **Socio-Economic Commuting Cost Index** – Using 7 indicators such as women commuter workers travelling for more than 20 kilometres for more than 1.5 hours and spending more than Rs 200 per month in a one-directional journey to workplace from their homes, women who report commuting hassles and suffer negative outcome due to commuting disruptions and using more than two modes of commuting a composite index is computed categorizing women commuters into low, moderate and high cost index. For thematic maps, the mean value of index scores for each ward is used.

4) **Decent Work Index**- To understand the spatial heterogeneity and intra group disparity among the worker categories of paid domestic work a weighted decent work index (DWI) is computed using 55 indicators broadly classified into 6 sub-groups. Principal component analysis is used to identify the weights to be given to all the indictors separately and then weighted average of the 6 broad variables to arrive at weighted DWI is computed. For thematic maps, the mean value of index scores for each ward is used. The broad groups of variables are discussed below in the descending order of weights given in the weighted DWI.

a) **Working Conditions**- This is a vital portion contributing to decent work as it influences the immediate environment of a workplace and affects the health and wellbeing and consequently productivity of the worker. Access to toilet facilities at workplace (employer's or separate or community toilet) is the most crucial element as it not only affects the health but also safety of the women workers from unwanted incidences. Adequate lighting and ventilation ensures healthy work atmosphere and scope of rest time and space is also essential as minor work breaks in between heavy rhythms ensures renewed

vigour and productive energy. Food, beverage and provision of first aid during medical emergency forms the basic right to decent work.

b) **Workplace Discrimination** – This component set includes 11 selected indicators that highlight the passive yet important variables which operate subtly through direct contact with employer household. Nature of relation with the employer and co-workers can determine the level of work satisfaction and psychological health status of the worker. Mistreatment, verbal exploitation and hostile demeanour from either end would create mistrust and disharmony at work and can lead to job loss and other untoward occurrences. Many times nepotism on part of the employers is obvious from the way they specifically enquire about the worker's caste and religious background, adversely affects job availability and hinder wage increments. Finally, the discriminatory behaviour from employers takes place subtly germinated from the class biases that have existed since long backed by inequality in ownership of productive resources and capital across the societal hierarchies. Paid domestic worker are treated unequally with prejudiced mindset and are sometimes given separate utensils for partaking food. The acts such as non-permission to sit at par with the employers on the furniture, restrictions on operating electrical appliances, not allowed to call employer's children and persons below their age with first names and address of the domestic workers as '*kajerlok*' (maids), servants by the employers are proof of workplace discrimination.

c) **Terms and Conditions at Work** – This constitutes the agreements either verbal or written before hiring the maid into work and also the elements that form the work pattern. Hours spent in a week and day in paid work, paid sick leave and leave grants for visits to native place, paid weekly holiday, availability of bonus preferably cash grants and provision of overtime wage upon performing additional tasks are important in determining whether the employment is leading to fair income or not. As considered by ILO, more than 48 hours in paid work per week and greater than 8 hours per day amounts to inhuman conditions and are termed as abnormal hours or excessive hours, asocial or unusual hours respectively, while more than 60 hours per week is extreme hours at paid work. Workers are liable to be physically and psycho-socially fatigued with reduced opportunity for leisure and socialization. Indicators pertaining to wage earnings are ascertained by using a threshold of

median and mean wages in the group. Women domestic workers who earn below the margin of 2/3rd of mean and median hourly wage rate and monthly employment related income are seen to be under indecent work. Non-discussions and no agreements before hiring, frequent pay-cuts, infrequent salary hikes and lack of any benefits from employer are considered to come under indecent work criteria and are signs of precarious employment.

d) **Problems related to Work and Workplace** – The lack of job security and social security in paid domestic work in India is a major obstacle in the finding a pathway for up-gradation of the work and quality of living for the workers. The incidences of job loss without compensatory provisions in times of health related absenteeism from work, unnoticed retrenchment from work, problems in acquiring new employer houses due to external causes, discontinuing work with employer on grounds of underpayment and non-increment and lack of leisure time and activities are used as indicators of work obstacles. Often women maids who are working few hours are eager to work additional employer houses but there is dearth of work due to overcrowding and interplay of placement agencies and labour dynamics. This is termed as 'time-related underemployment' (Anker et al., 2002).

e) **Work related Background Conditions** - In this variable 6 indicators are assembled that highlight on the familiarity with paid domestic work through skill training, learning trade tactics on the job and presence of social network in work introduction, attainment and wage negotiations. The complete lack of legal prerogatives of minimum wage and working conditions along with routes to redress grievances and bargain that presence of fellow women workers into wage conciliations and associated assistances is thought of a supportive mechanism in the process. Child labour is a widely occurring phenomenon among the domestic labourers, most of who accompanied their mothers and started earning at young age. This can be an indicator of non-decent and undignified living as these women were subjected to work and were denied happy childhood and opportunity of better life chances through education.

f) **Work Outcomes** – The degree of decency of work is assimilated in the resultant changes in the lives of the workers manifested in degree of control in leaving the profession by own choice and desire to exit paid domestic due to negative outcomes experienced, degree of work security perceived, presence

of work related pressure and psycho-somatic issues like anxiety. The women are considered to fall within the threshold of decent work regime if they are found to be looking for more work hours over and above 6 hours of paid work and also chip in time to work task based ad-hoc positions which is a proxy for underemployment. This is due to mismatch in the recommended remuneration and nature of work and time invested at paid work. Financial and family constraints prevent women to exit this profession even if they want to and notwithstanding the experiencing dissatisfaction from work; thus cropping up the issue of invisible bondage to work.

5) **Health and Wellbeing Index**- To ascertain the health and wellbeing levels across the work categories of domestic workers and the geographical zones that a composite index has been computed taking into consideration 19 indicators broadly clubbed into four variables. **Physical environment** is comprised of room density with more than 4 persons sharing a room, open defecation, inferior fuel and kitchen inside living room and inferior source of drinking water. **Health conditions** like consumption of tobacco, presence of chronic disease and musculoskeletal condition, non treatment of diseases and amount of sleep time of less than 6 hours per day form another variable. **Working conditions** and workplace related environment of women maids who do not enjoy paid leave per month, no sick leave, incidence of job loss in reference period of last 1 year, work pressure experienced and extreme hours of paid work of more than 60 hours per week are found to have worse health conditions. Lastly **wellbeing** is measured using incidence of domestic violence at home, work related psychological stress, no time and scope of leisure activity and performing unpaid household care work without help from household members. Normalised values for each variable is then used to compute a weighted average for the composite health and well being index. The higher the values for the index, the poorer will be the health condition. For thematic maps, the mean value of index scores for each ward is used.

6) **Decision Autonomy Index**- Selective indicators pertaining to decision making autonomy exerted by these women domestic workers on matters as diverse work and household management is computed. The decision autonomy index is thus computed by addressing 9 indicators concerning degree of decision making authority on matters such as buying household asset, running

day to day household, children's education and future, family planning, on other essential concerns, spending on earned income, choice of starting to work, leaving any employer or completely exiting this paid work profession of domestic work.

7) **Empowerment Index**- 22 indicators grouped under 4 broad variables namely **work decision, workplace relation, change in own household condition and work outcome** are constituted to compute weighted empowerment index classified into high, moderate and low categories. For thematic maps, the mean value of index scores for each ward is used.

Logistic regression is also performed for analysing the factors that influence selected dependent variables. Binomial logistic regression method is applied to understand the socio-economic factors that affect five dependent variables; the standard of living of the domestic worker households and health and wellbeing of the domestic workers. The method is also used to understand the factors and causal determinants and odds ratio of occurrences of whether the domestic workers are employed in decent work or not and also to identify the covariates that determine decent level of monthly income earned by them. Consequently degree of empowerment is also analysed based on factors and other continuous variables. Lastly a multinomial logistic regression is used to identify the varied factors that determine the likelihood of whether a domestic worker would be a cook or an ayah or a domestic helper. Independent variables used in the regression models are grouped into 5 broad categories and they include the following:

a) **Social factors** - Age, education level, marital status, of the domestic worker, education level of the head of the household, gender of the household head, religion, caste, mother tongue, migration status, health and wellbeing index, empowerment index, decision autonomy index.

b) **Economic factors** - monthly income earned from paid domestic work, occupation of the head of the household, standard of living index.

c) **Employment factors** - work category of the domestic worker, decent work index, social network in getting employment and work information, work likeness and work satisfaction, workplace relation, work security.

d) **Geographical factors** – place of residence, spatial region of Kolkata city, slum or commuter worker.

e) **Household factors** - type of family structure, household size, household type, living arrangement, number of children less than 6 years age and less than 15 years age in household.

1.9 Sample Design

The sampling technique for the present study is based on probability sampling i.e. stratified random sampling. The questionnaire is both structured quantitative and qualitative in nature which is used to collect the necessary primary database. The sample for the study is collected from 600 live-out women paid domestic workers who are 18 years of age and above including both who are working full-time and part-time as maid, the principal income being drawn from paid domestic work. (**Figure 2.1.2**) Samples are divided into two broad groups; the slum dwelling domestic workers who work within and in their adjacent neighbourhood and the daily commuting female maids who travel by train and on foot to the employer's house from the KUA districts. The categories thus chosen would be represented by 360 (60%) and 240 (40%) samples respectively considering proportion of slum dwelling maids are greater than commuter counterparts. The samples for both the categories were simultaneously gathered from the same geographical locality in order to attain a standard comparability about the work related issues. Thus commuter women interviewed were chosen from 8 railway stations on the suburban railway network distributed within the city and their immediate surroundings which are lying near to the slum pockets canvassed. About 45 slums have been visited and surveyed. The city is geographically sub-divided into North, West, South and Central zones, from where 33.33%, 21.66%, 33.33% and 11.66% samples were drawn. Most stations being located in south and important slum pockets in both northern and southern parts of Kolkata, thus resulted in greater sample sizes from these two zones, followed by west and central areas. Moreover population distribution across KMC wards as per 2011 Census indicated north and south Kolkata to be densely populated relative to other zones. Then again within the slum household samples in the proportion of 26%, 26%, 28.5% and 19.5% from the north, west, south and central Kolkata regions is collected. Similarly, within commuter women group, 44%, 44% and 12% women are interviewed located in north, south and central region of the city. Within these categories, another disaggregation has been done after the data collection, namely the three sub-groups; baby-sitters/elderly caregivers/disabled and sick care-givers, cooks

and lastly domestic helps in cleaning/washing utensils and clothes/dusting etc. There is identification of multiple work groups and there can be possible overlapping as well. Snowballing method is also used to identify samples in within slum pockets. Women who did not give consent in undergoing interview due to lack of time or unwillingness to participate on account of family objection, were not included in the sample.

Figure 2.1.2

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │         Live – Out Domestic Workers       │
                    │  (Above 18 years of Age and Currently     │
                    │              Working)                     │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                      │
                                      ▼
         ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
         │               Geographical Divisions                  │
         │             (North/South/West/Central)                │
         │            (200 + 200 + 130 + 70 = 600)                │
         │      (33.3% + 33.3% + 21.6% + 11.6% = 100%)            │
         └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
              │                                          │
              ▼                                          ▼
      ╭───────────────╮                          ╭───────────────╮
      │  Slum = 60%   │                          │ Commuter = 40% │
      │ (Total = 360) │                          │ (Total = 240) │
      ╰───────────────╯                          ╰───────────────╯
              │                                          │
              ▼                                          ▼
 ┌──────────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
 │ Zone = (North/South/West/     │        │ Zone = (North/South/West)     │
 │ Central)                      │        │                               │
 │ (26% + 26% + 28.5% + 19.5%    │        │ (44% + 44% + 12% = 100%)       │
 │ = 100%)                       │        │                               │
 └──────────────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────────────┘
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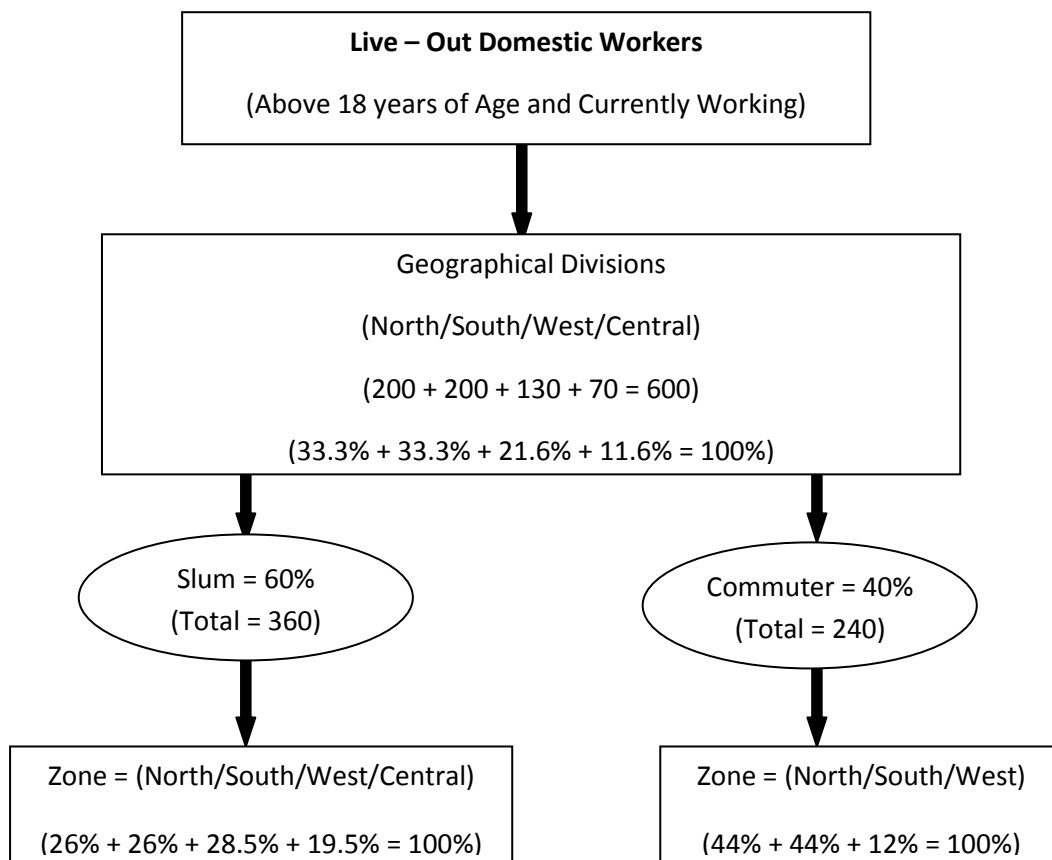
1.10 Layout of Chapters

The present study has been systematically organised in nine chapters. **Chapter one** introduces the background of the study and lays the foundation for conceptual framework, objectives and research questions which the ensuing chapters would discuss further on. The justification and implications of the study along with the hypothesis on which the study is based is also discussed along with the database structure. The methodology adopted in identification and measurement of variables and the tools of analysis of the primary and secondary data have been discussed in detail. The study area is introduced and the relevance of the study is highlighted. In

Chapter two, the literature review has been done. It talks about the definitional criterion of domestic worker, decent work and time-use survey and its importance in analogies in paid domestic work. The participation in paid work by women and how it is different from unpaid work, the discriminations faced by them, how paid domestic work is different from care work, the difficulties of measurement of statistics related to the area are all discusses in detail. **Chapter three** deals with the analysis of secondary sources of data, namely from Census of India (2001 and 2011) and NSSO (68th EUS round). The distribution pattern of domestic workers across rural and urban India, West Bengal and their salient socio-economic characteristics are studied.

From **Chapter four** onwards, the analysis shifts towards primary field-survey data keeping in mind the objective and purpose of study. This section highlights the individual characteristics of the workers, their family and household details and migration aspects. **Chapter five** emphasises the economic condition of the households of the women domestic workers along with access and availability of housing amenities across the social groups. The chapter particularly studies the differences in standard of living across the slum and commuter households and also across the categories of domestic workers. **Chapter six** is entirely devoted to analyse work related aspects of the domestic workers such as wage structure, working conditions, levels of decent work across the selective sub-groups, the problems faced by commuters and the costs entailed by them in return of work participation. The operation of placement agencies and the role of social network in paid domestic occupation, obstacles faced by the women, skill development etc are meticulously examined as well. **Chapter seven** aims to study the life-history of few women domestic workers and takes a case study approach and also understand the time use variance among domestic worker categories. In **Chapter eight**, a comprehensive analysis is attempted whereby the outcome of work participation as domestic workers in the social, family and personal lives of the women is studied. The inference is made on the basis of health conditions, decision making capacity, degree of empowerment achieved, perceptions and aspirations of the women about themselves, their family and towards paid domestic work in general. **Chapter nine**, the final chapter deals with the concluding remarks about the chosen topic and highlights the important aspects that the study reveals. The summary and the

convergence of the findings are brought together in this chapter and also some suggestions are highlighted.

Chapter II
Literature Review

According to ILO, the term 'domestic work' means work performed in or for a household or households. 'Domestic worker' means any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship. A person who performs domestic work only occasionally or sporadically and not on occupational basis, is not a domestic worker' (ILO, 2011). Domestic work entails a variety of manual and tedious basic and daily activities that is necessary to run a household. Gender segregation in society has been manifested in diverse forms, especially in the nature of work to be performed by both the sexes. Women have always been regarded as someone suitable to stay indoors and look after the daily needs of the household such as providing meals, looking after the children and elderly members, taking care of the animals if any and keeping the house tidy and clean. Generations after generations women followed this traditional, patriarchal and conservative code of conduct. But exposure to modern education and especially westernized way of life has opened up avenues to modern women. Women in the towns seek to be employed outside the threshold of their house, in diverse professional and technological fields. Moreover, the adoption of nuclear family norms in the urban setting, slow breakdown of the joint-family structure, fast pace of life has all resulted in growing demand for paid domestic labour. Even though the concept of domestic work to be performed by hired help is old and exists since the medieval times, but the demand for the domestic worker has accelerated in recent past, stimulated with urbanization.

2.1 Emergence of Paid Domestic Work

Domestic working class has emerged as a prominent group since the industrialization in the world. Hiring the services of domestics was seen as a status symbol by the aristocrats, noble men and rich merchant classes in the middle ages. In India and the surrounding subcontinents caste system is deeply inter-woven with the hired domestic labour. Most of the servants employed by the upper caste landlords and rich feudal lords belonged to the lower castes, and were kept under the servitude for generations. In the global scenario, slavery and domestic work

had a strong relationship under colonial rule. Migration was the supporting phenomena that sustained this form of slavery in the west. The slaves who were owned by the rich master class, were made to do menial tasks, often unpaid and treated badly, often physically abused. Even after the abolition of slavery and end of the colonial era in the world, the postcolonial employers still continue the 'legacy to exert their power' over the servants. This is justified as a necessary form of social domination to be exerted in order to anchor their racial, class and caste or even their gender superiority (Lutz, 2013).

Paid domestic work was dominated by the men in the labour market in the first place. But servant's work became female-centric since the 19th century. With more and more men shifted to the factory as labour in the mass-scale production, their places in the paid domestic work were filled up by the women. Women started to migrate to the towns and occupy positions as domestic maids, helpers, cooks, baby-sitters etc. In return the women workers got lodging, food and income in the employer's house. With the colonial conquest, the 'white women maids' migrated to the new lands of Australia, North America accompanying their white bourgeois masters. Thus the international migration of the domestic working class and the related entourage was initiated for establishing the settlement and creation of socio-culturally conducive environment in the 'new world'. Since the international migration of women from the developing Asian and East-Asian, Eastern European countries to the developed Western European countries and U.S.A, Canada has a close connection with the strong sustaining demand for 'care work'. The growth of female share in global migration for sustaining this care chain, is a part of family decision making for survival and has resulted in 'feminization in migration' (UN-INSTRAW, 2006)

2.2 Care Work and Domestic Work

Domestic work is often termed as 'care work 'in recent times. As in a broader sense, it involves not only cleaning but caring, nurturing and looking after the people. Care work is defined as 'multifaceted labour that produces the daily living conditions that make basic human health and well-being possible' (Zimmermann et al., 2006). The term domestic worker or maidservant and the work they perform include a wide spectrum of activities often not acknowledged when they are hired

by the employers. Apart from the basic service that the care givers or the hired maids provide to the care receivers or their employers, the work also inevitably stretches to the establishment of an intimate mutual inter-personal relationship of trust and dependency among both the parties. Moreover, the area of work being primarily confined to the private homes of the employers, that it serves to forge an informal working relation and may be in disguise this is one of the main reasons behind the lower wage payment, additional burden of work without extra compensation and weaker negotiating power for the maids. The remuneration received by the live-in servants is mainly a combination of cash and in kind. The comparatively better wage levels in the developed countries allow the migrant maids to send remittances back home. This is a way that these women contribute in the economy back in their native countries. But often the things that go unnoticed is the compromise these maids make in terms of poor living and working conditions, excessive workloads, overtime without additional wages, social isolation in foreign land and even physical and sexual harassment and emotional abuses. These women maids are brought in to fill up the space of the absent professional working upper-class women who need help in managing the burden of family care and in their career. The archaic notion of household chores being the domain of women's work and the fact that in modern times where under the influence of globalization and information technology, educated women go out to work. In their absence their work in the house is either redistributed to the other female members or is provided for by the institutional structure of the nursing homes, crèches etc, but not to the men folk. Thus in nuclear families in the urban households, this gap in 'care deficit' (Lutz, 2013) is met by employing full-time low-payed immigrant women to look after the house, children and aged family members. This leads to 'care gain' in these industrially developed countries. But simultaneously, this leads a care deficit in the underdeveloped countries sending the women migrants. This phenomenon is nomenclated as 'care drain' by Lutz, which results is a significant social cost in the source regions of migration stream. This gap in the homes of the maids is filled up by an informal network of 'care chain' constituted by the remaining members of an extended family, or even sometimes hired local caregivers (Hochschild, 2000). Sometimes the care-giving or domestic work operates on a seasonal basis, with the employed maids seeking breaks in their job to fulfil their own familial needs, for helping out

with their farm harvest back home, sickness, for reproduction, marriage or shifting with their husbands or family to a new destination. In metropolitan cities of India, the demands for hired help can fluctuate on the basis of the festivals, economic and business cycles, networking out-reach and strength of the placement agencies in the market etc.

But one must apply a sense of caution before using the term care economy and domestic work interchangeably. This is because the people who perform care work also include nurses, teachers, doctors and a 'range of educational, religious and social care givers' (Vasanthi, 2011). Usually these categories of employed people are better educated, better protected by social security measures and legal statutes, require a little more skilled training and expertise and thus are better paid. Unlike that domestic workers are in a weaker position not only because of the menial and degrading nature of the tasks they perform but also from the terminology itself it can be connoted that there sphere of work is confined to private households. Care work can be performed both in private and public sphere. The existence of forced labour due to economic or social compulsions and manifested in the form of slavery, caste servitude or through debt bondage, child labour and by the illegal hand of trafficking makes the enumeration and accountability of domestic work all the more difficult. Moreover since the activities do not lead to any production of goods or services of 'durable value', the dominance of women workers leads to poorer policy formulation. In Indian scenario, the caste system creates complexities in the differentiation between care and domestic work. There exists a hierarchy of care workers and domestic work forms a part of the larger group, lying at the bottom of the hierarchical ordering. Usually the care workers in the higher ranked work enjoy a better social standing and higher pay scale than the menial domestic workers. Thus when researching into domestic work, one must be vigilant to distinguish between 'public and private activities, care and domestic work, productive and unproductive work' (Vasanthi, 2011).

The distinction between care and domestic work is blurred in many instances and the duality is intensified due to lack of formal and legal edifice in society for the latter. The conclusions of the Committee on Domestic Workers of the 2010 International Labour Conference (ILC) define domestic work as 'work performed

in or for a household or households' and domestic workers as 'any persons engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship', but excluding those who do the work sporadically and not as an occupation. Not all care work can be accorded as domestic work, but domestics spend a major part of their imparting care to their employers. The care factor thus assigns much needed value to the services offered by the maids and may help change the perception of the society and the benefactors at large.

Thus even though exclusive hiring of paid domestic work is an old economic and social phenomenon, but under the modern regimes it has come to the forefront due to the sheer rise in number of women involved and being closely linked with national and international migration regime. It is related with the structural changes in the economies both in the developed and less developed regions and migration policies at the macro level, and with the community networking, individual autonomy, and class and caste inequality. In this regard it be said that female labour migration predominantly towards urban centres has resulted in concentration of women in paid domestic work.

2.3 Paid Domestic Work in India

Historically with the rise of capitalist production in Europe, the working class domestic servants came in to prominence as a separate group. With time men were slowly replaced by the women and what came to be known as 'feminization of domestic workers' with increasing proportion of urban population and growing industries (Lutz, 2002). In India, the rural men and women who were casually employed in homes of feudal landlords in villages started migrating to cities in search of better wages and in response to growing demand for domestic help. This had direct bearing with the colonial connections and western lifestyle influences. According to the 1911 Census domestic service accounted for 12 per cent of all occupations in Calcutta, while Bombay, Madras and Delhi showed 7.3 per cent, 6.68 per cent and 6.1 per cent, respectively. Popular literary sources from the last quarter of the 19th century described servant culture in ordinary middle class Bengali homes as an intrusion of foreign elements (Banerjee, 2004). But with the acceleration to urbanization, especially in post independence era adoption of westernized lifestyle and global integration of Indian economy, the demand for

trained and skilled domestic helps increased. This gave the thrust to the emergence of skill-imparting and placement agencies, who delivered semi-skilled and better equipped maids to the prospective employers. The domestic service slowly became commercialized suited to the customized requirements of the clients. Women maids gained prominence not only due to their better suitability to the 'gendered condition' but also because of their dexterous skills and capability to adjust fast to the new situations and learn from them. Apart from this, the maids are expected to possess 'submissiveness, passivity and resignation' on account of their caste and class position which also are feminine in character (Tellis-Nayak et al., 1983).

The division of labour has thus been highly segregated based on gender, caste, class, economic level of prosperity in the world. At the national level, domestic work in India comes across as one of the way by which inequalities in the caste, gender, and class are manifested, reinforced and sustained. The trend of employing women maids especially younger and unmarried from poverty stricken rural areas or from poor families has been explained from both demand and supply side. With more younger, less educated girls seeking for greater financial autonomy, for earning in order to save money for their choice of lifestyle and marriage, breaking down the traditional social bondages, domestic work in the cities is seen as a lucrative and suitable option. They migrate to the cities anticipating an upward social mobility and as a rite of passage to the higher social status. Girl children from backward and poorer states such as Orissa, Chattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand etc are seen to be employed as domestic help in the affluent class homes in the neighbouring cities such as Delhi, Kolkata, and Bangalore etc. Though hiring services of children is illegal as per Indian law, but yet still many children especially girls are seen engaged in domestic work and are victims of trafficking and bondage. Parents of the child worker perceive domestic work in an urban household as a step towards attaining training and as a learning process. It is seen as a means to learn skills that would help the children manage their own household in future after marriage and also a way for economic diversification in their later life (Thorsen, 2012). Most of the girl children thus are sent to alien cities by the poor illiterate parents who are in need of monetary security. By doing so, the problem of provision of free lodging and food for the children who are viewed as social security by their parents is also solved. This is an easy method of reducing the consumption expenditure of the poor households in rural areas. The children

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are mostly dropped out of school or have never attended formal schooling. Studies by various scholars reveal that there is a preference for girl child domestics because of various hidden advantages as perceived by the employers. Children are easy to tackle, they are more obedient and vulnerable not to retaliate back to the work overloads or abuses hurled at them. They are cheaper with little additional expenses apart from extremely lower wages they are compensated with in return of their services. Moreover very often the hired child domestic helps to baby sit after the employer's children in their absence or even be an informal play-mate and companion to them. The usual pattern of employment of women in domestic work has been a late entry and then they continue in the job with occasional gaps only in between for childbirth. But in West Bengal the domestics enter the labour market in childhood as live in maids. They withdraw from work due to marriage and childbirth during adolescence and then again post the interval they re-enter the job market again as adults (Chakravarty & Chakravarty, 2008).

The participation of women in the paid domestic labour may give access to them to independent income and help them adjust to the labour market and working in the outside work, but the decision making freedom in their own household is poor or even non-existent at times. 'An increased sense of contribution to the household's economic position may enhance the better bargaining power and say in the family matters, but the ingrained patriarchal mind-set of Indian society, the rigid cultural set-up of the social processes do not give the working women an escalated stature in the community or even in their households. The work may give the women 'possibly a clear perception on their well-being' (Sen, 1990). But, participation in paid work is an involuntary decision dictated by household poverty (Chen et al., 2006; Kantor, 2009) and thus this crisis induced engagement in labour market by the maids may not serve a desired effective purpose for raising their social status and recognition within their family.

Greater participation of women in the labour market is perceived as a positive step in the achievement of greater magnitude of well-being and empowerment of women. This argument is also put forward by Sen, (1999), that woman's employment outside her home "often has 'educational' effect, in terms of exposure to the world outside the family, making her agency more effective". But the desired outcome would also depend on the quality and nature of work performed

by the women folk, the level of their educational attainment and the social structure and household support system at the micro-level.

Commuting to work by the train is a chief feature of maids in Kolkata. The suburban railway system brings in hundreds of women to the city in the early hours of morning, spread out to their respective work areas; often the neighbourhoods adjacent to the railway stations and again return back to their homes before the dawn. This daily routine occurs like clock-work precision and thus entails a dependency of the city on its peripheral and suburban portions. But this train commute to work and its effect on the worker's health and productivity is often debatable. It is argued that, on one hand the marginalised women folk experience a sense of empowerment by stepping out of their home in far-off places and commute to work. But simultaneously, they have to tackle issues of safety, security, harassment etc that adversely impact the quality of their work. Thus the implications of the commute to work by the women maids need to be analysed in a definitive framework of study. Moreover, the degree of spatial interaction and the inter-linkage of the city of Kolkata with its neighbouring suburbs lying in the Kolkata urban agglomeration region can be understood by studying the commuting women domestic workers. This pattern of urban way of life gives the city a unique characteristic.

2.4 Theories in Paid Domestic Work

2.4.1 Paternalism Theory

In the live-in mode of employment, there develops a greater dominance of the employer on the maid manifested through control on her 'time, life, conduct and movement' (Tellis-Nayak et al., 1983). More often the servant is regarded as a part of family and addressed through relationship names thereby making the work seem to be performed out of love and due to kinship bond. The maid servant in return protects the family name, 'upholds and defends' her employer's property and gestures back through gratitude, obligation, dutifulness and an unspoken affiliation cum devotion to her masters (Tellis-Nayak et al., 1983). With increasing duration of work, greater degree of intimacy and comfort develops between the maid and the employer and the former can also express her dissatisfaction, retaliation by subtle disobediences. But, there remains a stark disparity in power relations in the way where the employer (usually the women head) exerts control by the way she serves food to the maid, decides on her dress

code and place and time for consuming meals, orders for the maid's presence at beck and call, renders separate toilets, doors and spaces for her use, places restrictions in external interactions and also through rewards and punishments either in material or mostly in praises and criticisms in public. This can be addressed as paternalistic attitude on the part of the employer household head, as she monitors the maid's work alongside her conduct, dictates her life course and also provides for her food, accommodation and sometimes for her family. The patronage that exists from the maid's side has an institutional background rooted in caste segregation and division of labour based on religious ritual structure. Both party benefits from each other, the employer maintains her caste and class hierarchical domination by employing maid and also gets her housework accomplished while the maid views her employer as a provider for her and her family at large. The employer-maid servant interaction is intoned with visible mark of class and status difference manoeuvred through subtle ways of maintaining a distance in communication, with accepted body language within the workspace, in way the employer and the maid address each other etc. But paradoxically, there is a conflict in terms of degree of closeness and attachment that develops in due course of work tenure of the maid in an employer house that exists alongside of the class distinction and consequential physical and social distance that the employer maintains in interaction with maid (Dickey, 2000). Paid domestic work thus sustains in the interface of caste-class regime and under paternalism inherent in this asymmetrical relation between the master and the maid servant, cocooned within oral agreements, undefined range of tasks, subjectivity, personal relationships that outgrow client-patron service relation. The care work involves considerable personal and direct contact at the humane level especially for the ayah work and there develops emotional ties between the care-giver and the care-receiver which is often exploited by the employer. Thus work satisfaction can be derived by the ayah as she is the reason for someone's wellbeing but working conditions and compensation might be dissatisfactory and indecent. Paternalistic system of conduct from the employer adjudicates the female employer as the provider and sponsor of the maid, an authority who guides and decides over matters of the maid and housework, even though she might be involved in paid work outside home just like the men of the employer household.

2.4.2 World System's Theory and Social Network Theory of Migration in the Global Care Economy

In the neo-liberal modern world, the emergence and growth of global care network wherein the inequality of development levels, penetration of global capitalistic economy in the developing regions, through the operation of trans-national division of labour between the core and periphery have given rise to international migration networks of low-skilled, low-paid labour from the developing global south to the developed global north (Wallerstein, 1974). Saskia Sassen also in her books, "The Mobility of Labour and Capital" (1988) and "The Global City" (1991) theorized about the how globalization brought about redistribution in the resources and modes of production in social and spatial scales, which has initiated a massive migratory behaviour of the labour from the stagnating rural areas to the thriving cities within the developing south. This was a direct result of foreign capital transfers through multi-national investments into agriculture, manufacturing and service activities in the developing countries owing to cheap labour and low production costs. With a mass scale transformation global economic structuring and establishment of the 'cultural-ideological linkages' (Robinson, 2009) that international migration got an acceleration. With the emergence of large urban centres of the developed core as growth poles of global economy, the demand for cheap immigrant labour for personalised informal services industry inflates and therein begins the voluminous streams of migration from periphery to core. Likewise there originates a hierarchical world order of newer forms of employment (outsourced, contractual, casual and informal jobs) and restructuring of labour (both domestic and international migrants) within the tertiary sector and manufacturing sector in the developed core and developing periphery respectively. Consequentially there is evolution of modified social strata, branching of class relations, societal power structures and redistribution of wealth whereby low-waged, low-skilled mobile labour force caters to the wealthy professionals and white collar workers. It is in this 'post-Fordist' free market economy, labour has also attained higher mobility along with capital. The proportion of immigrant female domestic workers from Mexico, East European and Central American countries, South Asia, Philippines and South Africa employed in USA, Canada, and Western European countries is a common sight.

Primarily the migration flows of female labour from Third World nations to the First world countries is seen as a response to widening economic disparity between the two regions but a greater dependence through resource flows and enhanced digital connectivity. Surprisingly, within Asia itself the women from economically less developed countries of India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka flock to rapidly flourishing economies of Singapore, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. (Brenda, Yeoh & Huang, 1998). Live-in work is preferred among the new immigrants as they get added advantage of accommodation and food, but with increased duration in the foreign country these maids prefer to live outside the employer homes as it compromises their privacy and leaves no room for personal time. But with illegal undocumented migratory trends and absence of legal papers, these maids are forced to stay with the employers and suffer long working hours, abuses and perform degrading work such as cleaning toilets and caring for pets etc (Anderson, 2003).

In the globalizing economy, outsourcing of organised care work has seen rapid rise with institutionalizing of social reproduction. Technology has allowed new forms of global economic organizations, enhanced spatial inter-linkages and evolution of newer patterns of work profiles catering to the growing demand backed by financial affluence in the developed seats of capital world. (Castells, 2000) The neo-capitalism and socio-cultural transformation together with the power of networking based on strengthening of information and communication technology (ICT) has modified the social structure and patterns of modes of production. The 'network society' (Castells, 2000) has given impetus to social reproduction and intricacies in social networks and emergence of new types of social processes. As Mattingly (2001) points out, the caring labour economy has its roots in organised social network that is spatially diffused and it 'influences class and racial-ethnic hierarchies', as women who immigrate out to earn money through paid domestic service, take help of her female family members to care for their house, children and dependents or at times may hire low-waged maids as well. It is interestingly termed as 'globalization of mothering' by Hochschild (2000). With rising life expectancies and declining fertility rates, an unprecedented demand for care givers have arisen that has given thrust to operation and expansion of unregulated paid domestic work markets. Care work in

the global economic framework has also been plagued by heterogeneities, inequalities and associated hierarchical hegemony based on class, caste, race, ethnicity, gender differentials.

Caring labour and paid or unpaid work is highly 'relational' in its genesis in that it has a cause and effect character in the development of relations between the employer and the maid and also the need of a social network relation in the process of recruitment. Thus care chains back in the native countries or regions within the country (in case of out-migration from one state to other within the country) comes at cost to the domestic maids, who have to pay for the child care and it also creates obligations and dependence on their extended family and friends. But migration has definitely resulted in change in consumption patterns and lifestyle back at the source countries and regions based on the remittance money that the maid sends. It has also generated empowering outcomes in lives of these women by providing them with an edge in inter-personal, familial and societal relations. Contrarily most live-in migrant maids also feel alienated and detached after they return to their native countries or regions after many years (Anderson, 2003). Sometimes they have to face judgmental issues from their extended family and kin which can become unpleasant and make them feel unwanted. The maids also experience detachment from their children and try to fill this gap with giving material gifts to their children which is termed as 'commodification of mothering' (Parrenas, 2001).

Within the national boundaries, for instance in India, economic distress among the small farmers, agricultural labours and tenant and share-croppers as a result of capitalism and mechanisation in agriculture sector, has pushed the poorer families to migrate to cities for informal service work. Structural changes in farming wherein bigger landholders benefited through commercialised production along with climatic disasters like drought created troughs of inequality in the rural farming households. Thus it overflowed as distress internal and rural to urban migration. Most migrant women maids employed in the cities belong to agricultural household. The similar picture and trend is replicated amongst the tribal households whose forest lands and traditional indigenous livelihoods have been shrinking by forces of global capitalism and are thus migrating to the cities for sustenance needs. The deceleration of manufacturing sector in smaller tier

towns has also impacted in the bloating of tertiary sector apparent in the bulging of lower order, petty informal services and paid domestic workers shares a major part of this growing protuberance via the female workforce overcrowding. In metropolitan cities in India the increasing economic prosperity among the professional classes permit them to hire domestic worker services with wages much higher than what the maids can earn in small scale and mini-manufacturing industrial units. Thus even after acquiring secondary and senior secondary schooling, girls take up paid domestic work for easy and better paid work (Gothoskar, 2013).

2.4.3 Feminist Theory

Paid domestic work has been also been analysed through the lens of why it is considered primarily a women's work. It fosters deepening of women's invisibility and widening of occupational segregation in a greater way as it is undervalued on account of it being labour-intensive and unskilled. Debates have been raised on degree of productivity, gross estimate of value of output that can be attached to paid domestic services, what can be constituted as the appropriate wage according to tasks and whether concentration of women in this occupation has resulted in any empowerment to them or not (Gothoskar, 2013). Domestic work is not considered work per say in economic sense and thus women participation in paid work does not translate into enhanced bargaining strength or accrued socio-economic privileges within labour market. The work profile isn't thought to add much to women's autonomy in different space-relation matrix and moreover it is also thought to be responsible in making women more polarized within stereotyped gendered division of labour. Literature suggests that compared to women, men have less probability to participate in women-oriented work types such as nursing and social work (Williams, 1992). But in the new millennium, employment pattern has seen to attain higher level of commercialization and professionalism, and thus men are even preferred to be hired in predominantly women suited jobs especially in spaces and hierarchies that demand exclusivity and expertise, because men are thought to possess greater aptitude for work skill training, higher levels of professionalism and impeccable work ethics and are thought to be more committed and do more justice to the longer working hours and other situational adjustments that women may not extend readily owing to

family responsibilities. Women therefore are more likely to face work discrimination and restricted job growth not only in female work domain at higher professional levels (for instance, chefs, house-keeping and care-giving in restaurants, hospitality industry and specialized hospitals), but also in male dominated work scenario (for instance in construction, high level pink and white collar jobs which involves planning and decision-making and leadership). Discrimination in the form of sexual slurs, lack of financial and work-status promotion, hostile working conditions and non-cooperation from colleagues thus pose as obstacles which result in what is called 'glass ceiling effect'. Gender roles and sometimes biological structure of bodies tend to govern discriminatory behaviour and 'preferential treatment' (Williams, 1992) at workplace recruitment, promotion and upward occupational mobility. Thus even though paid domestic work requires feminine quality in its execution, but when performed in an institutional and mercantile setting, men are readily absorbed in such organisational arrangements than women and are also permitted faster pace of advancement in the course of time. Paid domestic work in the rungs of capitalistic, contractual and professional sphere also witnesses what is called the 'glass escalator effect'. Though it is not uncommon for men entering into women's work sphere to witness ridicule, discouragement and criticism from people but men are eventually able to reap greater benefits because of their gender differences and scanty presence in women dominated careers.

On the other hand, feministic theories also draw attention to immense workload that women have to perform not just outside their homes in paid jobs but also the unpaid house work and child rearing activities they shoulder within the confines of their own households. As Hochschild (1989) rightly coined the term 'second shift', women including the paid domestic workers are overburdened with work and are expected to fulfil their social roles and accomplish housework without assistance from family members in most instances. Time use data base has also supported the gross imbalance in the amount of time that the male and female earning members of households spend in attending unpaid labour at own homes. It affected their relationships and physical and mental health, productivity in the long run.

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Gothoskar (2013) points out that domestic work has always received less attention and disrespect in its value adding capacity as it is thought to be 'natural' to be performed by women owing to their innate disposition and because no training and skill imparting is needed for such work. To start with, the term 'care work' itself demeans and isolates women and the activities they undertake to a segregated periphery as the term connotes labour that is done out of 'care and love' and emotional attachment without expected remuneration. Convenient justifications are provided by patriarchal and sexual division of labour where women are thought to appreciate taking up care-giving work because they like the work and are thought to have stronger preferences to provide care relative to men. Society also reprimands women who choose not to spend time in care-work even though they are contributing to household income pool through paid work participation. In patriarchal country like India, women exercise their autonomy in a narrow sphere of life, usually within the household boundaries through either performing domestic chores by themselves through limited self discretion or by instructing and supervising the paid domestic maid for the same work. The male domination can be manifested through controlling women's access to work outside home space and placing responsibility of attending to the household chores, thereby regulating their 'sexuality, mobility and fertility'. Thus the poor households send their women to work in a domain that is familiar in terms of the work performed within own houses, for which no social and economic costs are required to be invested.

2.4.4 Agency Theory

Paid domestic work is associated with 'dirty work', one that conjoins stigma, physical filth and humiliating social identity across the social stratification. It colours the social interaction and women maids though feel disgrace but they feel empowerment for earning their income. Ritual impurity and lower class disrupts orderliness of society and thus it is unwanted and denounced. Sadl (2014) mentions that dirty work was introduced by E.C. Hughes in 1958 in his book "Men and Their Work", whereby certain impure work activities are assigned to certain sections of population; usually to the socially lowest ranking and then these population groups are socially isolated and stigmatised, not because of their personal attributes but owing to their work profile. Occupations are assigned

shame through 'physical, social and moral taints' (Kreiner, Ashforth and Sluss, 2006). In India, 'shudras' and scheduled castes are responsible for sweeping, manual scavenging, cleaning and other polluting tasks that involve handling of wastes and garbage, body wastes, excreta and tidying the dependents. The work is stigmatised which means 'discredited and devalued' and thus the person performing it is 'socially not acceptable'. Thus even in employer homes where the females are not employed in paid work, resist doing household chores as it symbolizes dirty and menial work and therefore employ hired maids who are fit to perform such tasks owing to their marginalised and inferior existence. In this way a social distance can be maintained from the work and with the population groups who perform it and perpetuate one's social superiority. Verbal phrases, body language, habits and gestures help to maintain this distance and in-group/out-group differences along with verbal abuse and criticisms in extreme cases. The notion of 'dirt' (Froystad, 2000) not only has physical connotation, but the term is symbolic as it refers to segregation on the basis of customary practices whereby the employers of the domestic workers aim to maintain sanctity of their household spaces by restricting the entry and actions of lower caste workers. Whereas Dickey (2000) argued that the class prejudice creeps into the idea of cleaning the household living space and maintaining hygiene standards and this has nothing to do with caste practices.

But contrarily maids are seen to be happy because they are able to improve their living standards and afford a lifestyle that was not possible before. Women have reported to excel with self pride and contentment to have achieved improvement in their lifestyle through their hard earned labour and that they consider it as any other work. They also revel in the fact that they are crucial part of their employer's lives and their absence would create hiccup in everyday lives. Within their community the maids are seen to bond over criticisms and animated discussions about each others' employers, where they project stigma and ridicule over shortcomings of their employers which acts as a defence mechanism in tackling the social discrimination they suffer. There is a strong identification of in-group and out-group affiliation and group ideologies and their agency. But nevertheless, there is active presence of mutual dependency between the employer and the domestic worker (Hansen, 1989).

Following the patriarchal system and capitalistic mode of production, the agency of the domestic worker in generation of surplus value is proposed to be negligible and likewise is not given the due share of the value. Moreover, the resource poor domestic worker can be compelled to accept poor working conditions and job insecurity. Agency and activation of agency of any being, in this case that of the domestic worker, is dependent on the presence and control of resources at disposal as it provides a bargaining power and thereby help in exercising power and capability to do certain things that was not possible otherwise. Amartya Sen (1993) describes agency in terms of 'freedom to choose way of living', which he terms 'capability set'. Thus the choices that the domestic worker makes and opportunities that she encounters in course of her life are guided by external structural forces. But it is influenced by her own agency with the motive of attaining wellbeing and improved quality of life for herself and her family, to which she attaches value. Agency is what people can do and it is experienced through actions. Thus although women maids who migrate within the country or internationally face 'structural constraints' of low wage, slave like work conditions etc that poses a challenge and obstruction in the way to attain desired life course (Briones, 2009). But she chooses through her agency and through family intervention to migrate and relocate physically and socio-economically as it opens up channels for her to be able to support her family which was otherwise not possible. There is active participation of the domestic worker in the structural setup of employment and social order. Agency theory largely draws upon the work of Anthony Giddens (1979) and Pierre Bourdieu (1977) who focus on the differences among the agents (in this case the maid and the employer) in terms of their needs and preferences which brings forth different social actions from them guided by different objective, but operating within the provided structure. The domestic worker is weaker in the power relations, but her active participation through 'conscious decision and deliberate action', about tasks, wage determination, changing the employer exemplifies her agency and also her knowledge about her agency (Nader, 2015). Thus there is a two way relation between the structure and agency whereby both influence each other.

2.4.5 Maternalism Theory

This theory explores the employer and employee relationship which is layered with complexities and is carried out within the structural framework but where the personal agency of the participant also comes into action. Because the work pattern and working condition cum space of interaction is informal, it inculcates a close bond between the female employer and her maid and sometimes with maid's family especially her children. This arrangement allows the employer to exploit the maid through additional work burden without pay and it also helps the employer to express his domination and supremacy. It is also argued that the domestic worker too may benefit from the benevolence and charitable characteristics of the employer by appealing to the maternal instincts of the women household head who shower the maid and her family with material gifts, incentive money, praises and public recognition for the services she renders at workplace and false proclamations about the maid to be an extension of her own family (Moras, 2013). Maternalism is a psycho-emotional concept and is dissimilar to paternalism only in that it manifests through the women of the employer household and has its roots in the feminine womanly attributes resembling a mother. The concept is used to explain the mechanism of asymmetrical power relations that has its genesis in unequal resource ownership, class and caste distinctions. Scholars have unravelled how usage of kinship names as against personal names of the maids or renaming the maid suiting own interest and provisioning of material inexpensive yet valuable objects like clothes, food and other cast off things, advice during problems to the maid allows the employers to portray the 'protective and nurturing' attributes that resembles conventional image of a mother (Rollins, 1985). In return the employers expect the maids to perform extra work and become a loyal prop to their sentimental needs as well. Thus maternal bond that ensues from daily routine of interactions between both sides affects negotiations of each others' self interests within the work domain. Maternalistic tendencies from employer women act as tools for 'manipulating' the maids to act according to the desire of the employers, who want the maids to perform additional work without extra pay and complain and as an externality it also fetches them titles of being kind, affectionate and considerate employers from the maids thereby sustaining their power over the maids (Sotelo, 2010).

There is presence of both 'business relation' and also 'friendly casual relations' (Moras, 2013). The employer relates with the maid in terms of family, children and thought processes common between women, but simultaneously also judges the maid on 'personality than performance' (Romero, 2002). Some of the employers usually ones from the older generations, who seldom visit spaces outside their homes, perceive the house as their sovereignty and thus enjoy the pleasure of constant supervision and directing the maids so that the desired outcome is attained through her agency. The maternalism that is reflected through such behaviour is that of distrust which requires strict personal vigil of the housework. Thus even though the employer might be not satisfied with the work performance of the maid, she might not terminate the services as it would compromise the trust that has developed and the amount of time invested in teaching the maid the housework and getting comfortable with each other's presence. To this one may add that 'emotional labour' work that the maid additionally performs also becomes a restraining factor in termination of services by the employer (Hochschild, 1983). 'Emotional labour' is cultivated through greater familiarity with increased duration of time spent at workspace and most likely to develop between the live-in maid and her employer, where the maid becomes a friend, confidant, a proxy kin to the women employer. The inherent character of paid domestic work is such that emotional labour becomes an 'intrinsic part' of interaction (Arnado, 2003). Live-in maids are also subjected to control in their movements and space negotiations and time distribution for even personal grooming and leisure. The mutual non-work interaction between the maid and her employer is flavoured via bonding over food, gossiping about other neighbours, over watching television together and sharing anecdotes from each others' family lives and lived experiences. But here too the employer holds the control on the topics she chooses to discuss and time and space of interaction she desires. The maid also gets a patient hearing about her problems pertaining to often reported husband's alcohol addiction, domestic violence or children's education in addition to receiving favours etc.

2.5 Decent Work and Dignified Living

Conceptually decent work is which brings in dignity, equality, fair income and safe working conditions. The term 'decent work' was introduced at the 87th ILC in 1999 by Mr. Juan Somavia; the then Director General of ILO. Sustainable development

goal (SDG) in goal 8 specifies the provision of decent employment to all citizens. In 1999 ILC reached a consensus on aspects that constitute decent work, which were broadly sub-grouped into **rights at work, employment opportunity, social protection and social dialogue** (Ghai, 2002). Decent work can be statistically measured using specific indicators as suggested by Anker et al., 2002. The underlined areas include equal employment opportunity and just treatment at work, adequate earnings and productive work, decent hours so as to balance the work, family and personal life. It also facilitates stability and security in work, safe work environment, prohibit child and forced labour. It provides window for social security, social dialogue, collective bargaining through active and equal worker-employer representation in associations. All of these aspects related to work can be measured by selective indicators and were discussed by member nations of ILO and ratified through explicit conventions. Work must be such that it supports sustainable livelihoods adequately and at the same time must not be forced up on, rather it should be devoid of discrimination. The work must be leading to a dignified existence as such the person is treated respectfully irrespective of gender and location in the world. Provisions of training, wage increments, good hourly pay, choice to change work, adequate and suitable work hours, weekly rest, sick leave and overtime payments, non-intermittent work tenure, adequate facilities for wide range of social protection, paid maternity leaves, child-care, health and safety facilities are some of the vital components of a decent employment.

Decent work has been discussed under three models; namely classical, transitional and developing; which pertains to the level of economic development the countries are into (Ghai, 2002). The 100th ILC at Geneva in June 2011 was a landmark in the history of paid domestic work as the decent work schema was extended and remodelled to include the domestic workers within it and held exclusive dialogues on it through Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No.201. The convention lays down effective tools notified under many articles towards protecting the workers against mistreatment at workplace, ensuring formal written contracts especially for the migrant workers, receipt of minimum wages preferably in cash and other entitlements inclusive of social and job security, fixed work timings, health issues, regulation of placement agencies, legal settlements of arguments among many others that promote justice, respect and dignified living among the workers. ILO conventions on Migrant Workers Rights and Safety and Elimination

of Discrimination against Women at Workplace also strengthened the decent work clause. Article 15 of the convention is inspired from the ILO Convention 181 on Private Employment Agencies, 1997 which regulates the activities of agencies and protects workers who get recruited via them (Blackett, 2012). The notion of decent work is interconnected with harnessing of productive human capital. The convention 189 is credited to use the term 'domestic worker' instead of maid or servant which is a crucial step in recognizing the people to be engaged in 'work' and at par with other workers. Similarly scholars have also used 'caretaking' instead of 'care-giving' to raise the importance of work requiring some skill (ILO, Report IV [1], 2010). The efficacy of the decent work scheme would be possible by raising the public awareness about the same.

Chapter III

Characteristics of Paid Domestic Workers in India and West Bengal

3.1 Work Participation of Women in India and West Bengal

The WPR of females in India is lower than their male counterpart. It is nearly half of that of male WPR. In 2001 Census of India male WPR was 51.7%, while females were 25.6%. In 2011 census, though male WPR increased to 53.3 %, the female WPR declined to 25.5%. Female WPR is an important area of concern for socio-economic studies. This is because it is an important both as a causative factor and an outcome for female wellbeing in general. It is a fact that urban women participate less in employment than their rural counterpart. This is so because of poverty, inadequate income in rural areas and lower educational attainment of the rural women, that they enter the job market early. But mostly the middle and upper economic class urban women take up jobs later and usually when faced with financial distress. They form the reserve labour force. Moreover when compared to the general population group, women from the SC and ST population participate more in the labour market. The phenomena may be hailed as a good sign towards women's wellbeing, but the nature of work performed by them has to be scrutinized before reaching any positive conclusion. It is the informal sector that the women workers are more likely to be employed in. It is seen that informal employment shelters around 92% of the workforce in the country. Out of this women constitute an overwhelming 95.9% (NCEUS, 2007). It is found that nine out of ten women in India who work in non-agricultural sector are engaged in informal domain. It calls for greater recognition and appreciation of these kinds of jobs which gives opportunities to earn livelihood. Census data 2001 shows that WPR of SC urban women in India is 16%, while that of ST women is 22% and the non-SC/ST women report only about 11%. Over the decade there has been an increase in the proportion of work participation for the non-SC-ST population, but it has slightly dipped for the SC and the ST population, and particularly so in the rural India. In 2011 census, thus WPR has increased for all the social groups, but still the ST women, both rural (46%) and

urban (24%) counterparts participate more in the labour market than the rest of the groups. They are followed by the SC women with both rural (31%) and urban (19%). But owing to financial compulsions and low skill constraints, that these women get employment in low-paid, manual, traditional, part-time kind of work, which is often of piece-meal nature in unorganised sector. (**Table 1.1.1 and Map 3.2 to 3.7**)

Table 1.1.1 Trend in the WPR across Social Groups, India, (2001-2011)

Work Participation Rate, India, (2001 & 2011)							
Years	Social Groups	Total (%)		Rural (%)		Urban (%)	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2001	SC	50.71	29.39	51.55	32.86	47.43	15.56
	ST	53.20	44.83	53.78	46.88	46.82	21.58
	Non-SC/ST	51.71	22.67	51.99	27.88	51.13	11.08
2011	SC	52.75	**28.30**	52.87	**31.31**	52.39	18.54
	ST	53.88	**43.49**	54.33	**45.62**	49.84	24.26
	Non-SC/ST	53.30	22.76	52.87	27.12	54.09	14.68

Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.2

Source: Census of India, (2001-2011)

53

Map No. 3.3

ST Work Participation Rate
Among Urban Male & Female, India, (2001-2011)

Legend
(Percentage Workers to
Total Population)

28

MALE 2001
MALE 2011
FEMALE 2001
FEMALE 2011

MAP NOT TO SCALE
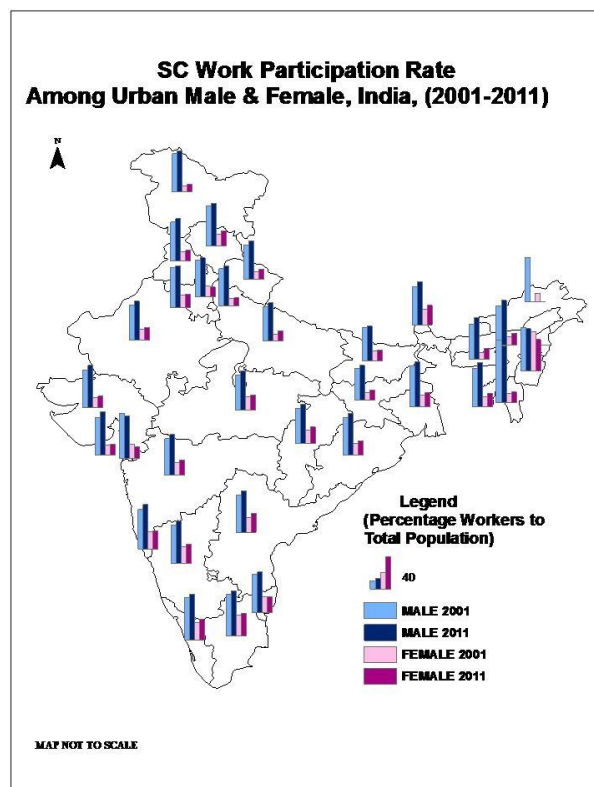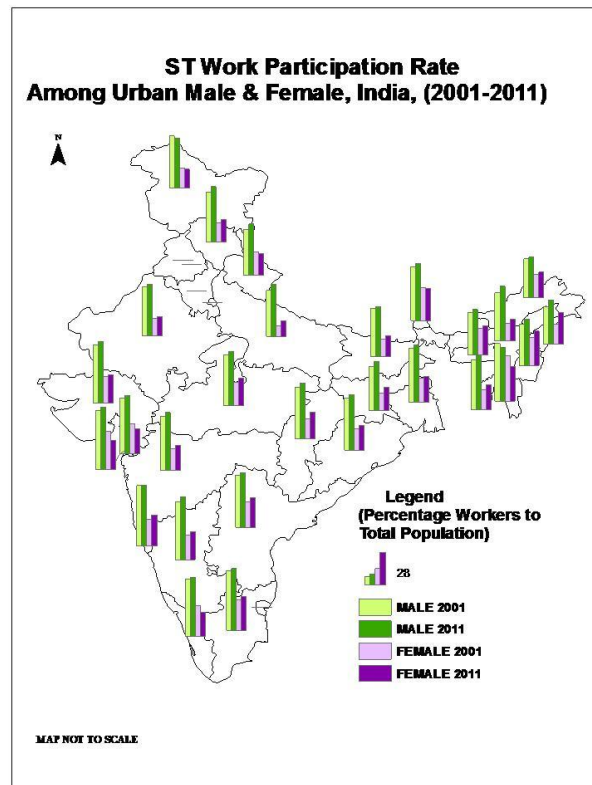
Source: Census of India, (2001-2011)

WPR of women also varies across the states, with northern states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar scoring lower WPR than the southern and north-eastern states in the country. Even, the women who are employed in economically gainful work are mostly concentrated in household industries, handicrafts, care work, personalised services and other related fields.

Another interesting feature to be noticed is that, among the total workers, proportion of females as main workers is lower than that as marginal workers invariably all throughout the country. But the gap between the two categories increase in the smaller metro-cities like Surat, Kanpur, Dhanbad, Asansol, Patna, Meerut etc. These cities are mainly located in the economically backward states. The proportion of female main workers in these cities are mostly less than 10%, while the marginal workers are more than twice that of main workers. On the other hand, relatively in the mega-cities of Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore women are employed more as main workers.
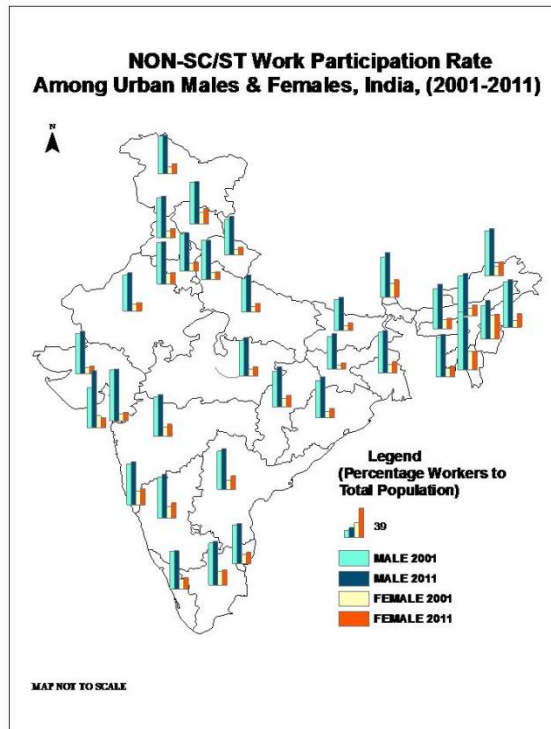
54

Map No. 3.4

NON-SC/ST Work Participation Rate
Among Urban Males & Females, India, (2001-2011)

Legend
(Percentage Workers to
Total Population)

39

MALE 2001
MALE 2011
FEMALE 2001
FEMALE 2011

MAP NOT TO SCALE

Source: Census of India, (2001-2011)

Map No. 3.5

Urban Work Participation Rate
India, (2001-2011)

Legend
(Percentage Workers to
Total Population)

29

2001
2011

MAP NOT TO SCALE

Source: Census of India, (2001-2011)

55
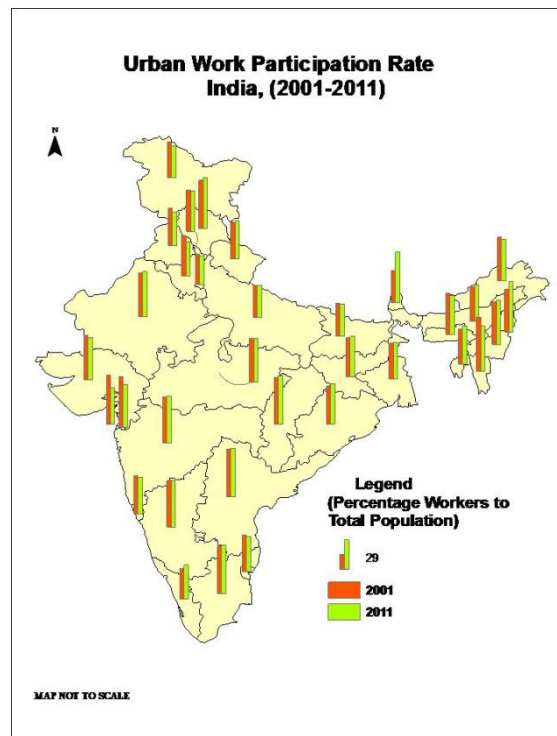
This is because of larger availability of suitable regular salaried work there. Thus it can be said that, level of economic development of a spatial unit has a direct bearing on the WPR and nature of employment of women. In the backward states and cities, the condition of women is all the more compromised due to the backward nature of the economy as a whole. (**Table 1.1.2**)

The distribution of female workers employed as main and marginal workers also varies across the country. Women in India are employed as marginal workers in a greater proportion than as main workers invariably all throughout. This is because of the lower skill constraint of women, part-time job seeking tendency utilizing the spare time from household chores, frequent breaks in the employment tenure in order to fulfil marriage, reproductive and child-raising responsibilities, and also due to their role as a distress and reserve labour entrusted to earn a living during household financial crisis situations. In this regard, one may notice that the difference between the main and marginal female worker in both rural and urban sectors is relatively larger in the empowered action group (EAG) states. In Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan female marginal workers are three to four times larger in proportion to that of their main worker counterparts. (**Figure 2.2 and 2.3**) This is an important labour situation which needs to be further delved into.

3.2 Paid Domestic Workers in India and West Bengal

Domestic work becomes an important source of employment among the disadvantaged social groups. Data computed from Census of India, reveals that SC and ST workers especially in the urban centres are more likely to work as domestics compared to the non-SC-ST population. In both the category of main and marginal workers, SC and ST groups are heavily concentrated in domestic work prominently in urban areas. Since domestic work in India is not yet accounted in gainful or productive activity, part-time or contractual nature of the work involve, that proportion of marginal domestic helps is much higher than the main workers. (**Table 1.1.3**) The dominance of women in domestic labour and related activities is evident from the database. The recruitment and overcrowding of low-caste and tribal girls and women as maidservants in urban India is seen to be the order of the day. (**Table 1.1.4**)

Map No. 3.6
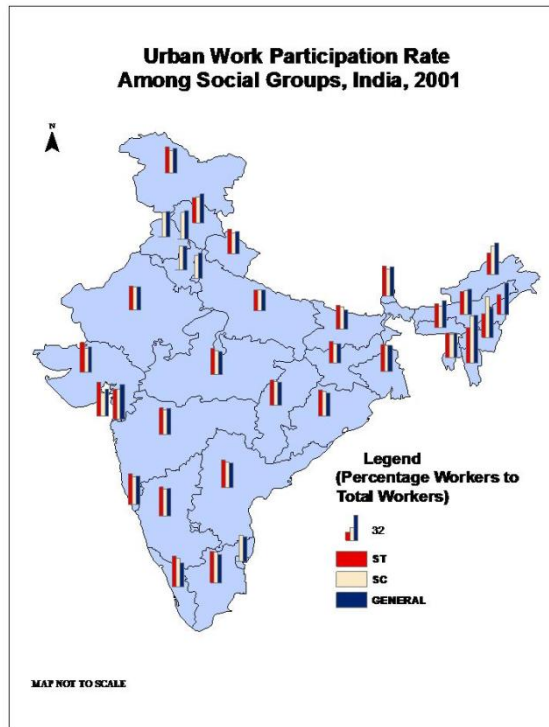
Source: Census of India, (2001-2011)

Map No. 3.7
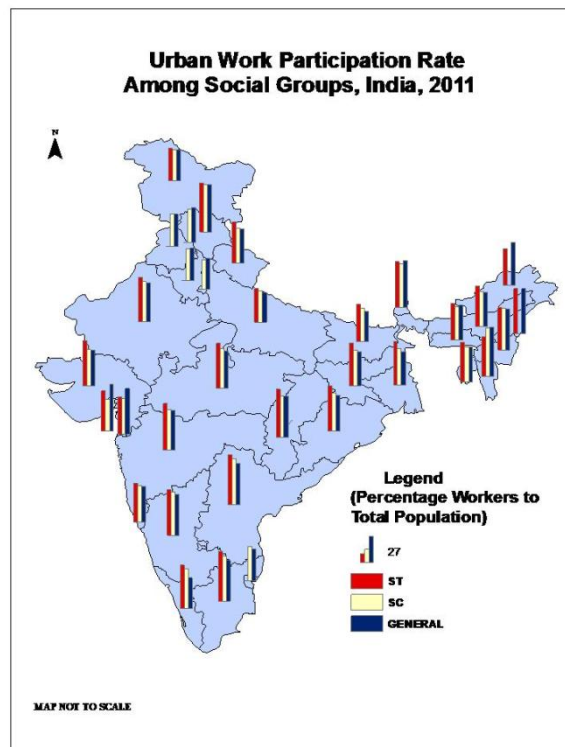
Source: Census of India, (2001-2011)

Table 1.1.2 Distribution of Female Main and Marginal Total Workers in Metropolitan Cities, India, 2001

Percentage Female Total Workers to Total Workers					
Metropolitan Cities	% Main Workers	% Marginal Workers	Metropolitan Cities	% Main Workers	% Marginal Workers
Amritsar (M.Corp)	11.35	31.32	Jabalpur (M.Corp)	14.67	26.09
Ludhiana (M.Corp)	8.70	33.56	Ahmedabad (M.Corp)	10.24	29.59
Faridabad (M.Corp)	10.26	23.20	Rajkot (M.Corp)	8.07	49.14
Delhi (M.Corp)	14.44	22.85	Vadodara (M.Corp)	13.54	38.95
Jaipur (M.Corp)	11.18	29.02	Surat (M.Corp)	7.76	46.51
Meerut (M.Corp)	6.97	13.38	Greater Mumbai (M.Corp)	14.45	25.33
Agra (M.Corp)	7.31	19.24	Nagpur (M.Corp)	15.3	27.81
Lucknow (M.Corp)	10.72	19.25	Nashik (M.Corp)	14.52	33.68
Kanpur (M.Corp)	8.22	17.34	Pune (M.Corp)	19.24	32.20
Allahabad (M.Corp)	10.23	18.59	Hyderabad (M.Corp)	16.28	31.44
Varanasi (m.Corp)	9.51	30.84	Vishakhapatnam (M.Corp)	12.59	23.91
Patna (M.Corp)	8.79	18.68	Vijayawada (M.Corp)	12.20	31.72
Asansol (M.Corp)	9.75	21.76	Bangalore (M.Corp)	19.39	33.36
Kolkata (M.Corp)	14.42	31.07	Kochi (M.Corp)	20.17	24.86
Dhanbad (M.Corp)	8.73	17.76	Chennai (M.Corp)	17.77	28.89
Jamshedpur (NA)	11.94	20.34	Coimbatore (M.Corp)	18.92	36.54
Indore (M.Corp)	14.20	30.42	Madurai (M.Corp)	16.37	33.24
Bhopal (M.Corp)	14.68	26.17			

Source: Census of India, 2001   M.Corp – Municipal Corporation

Figure 2.2.1
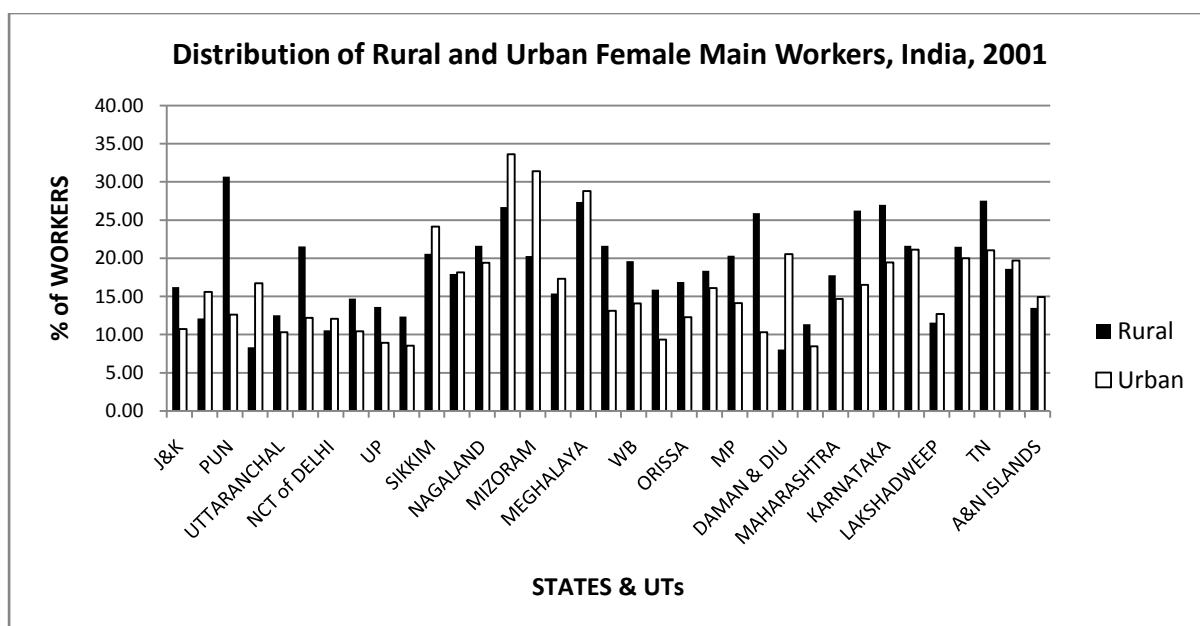
58

Figure 2.2.2

Distribution of Rural and Urban Female Marginal Workers, India, 2001
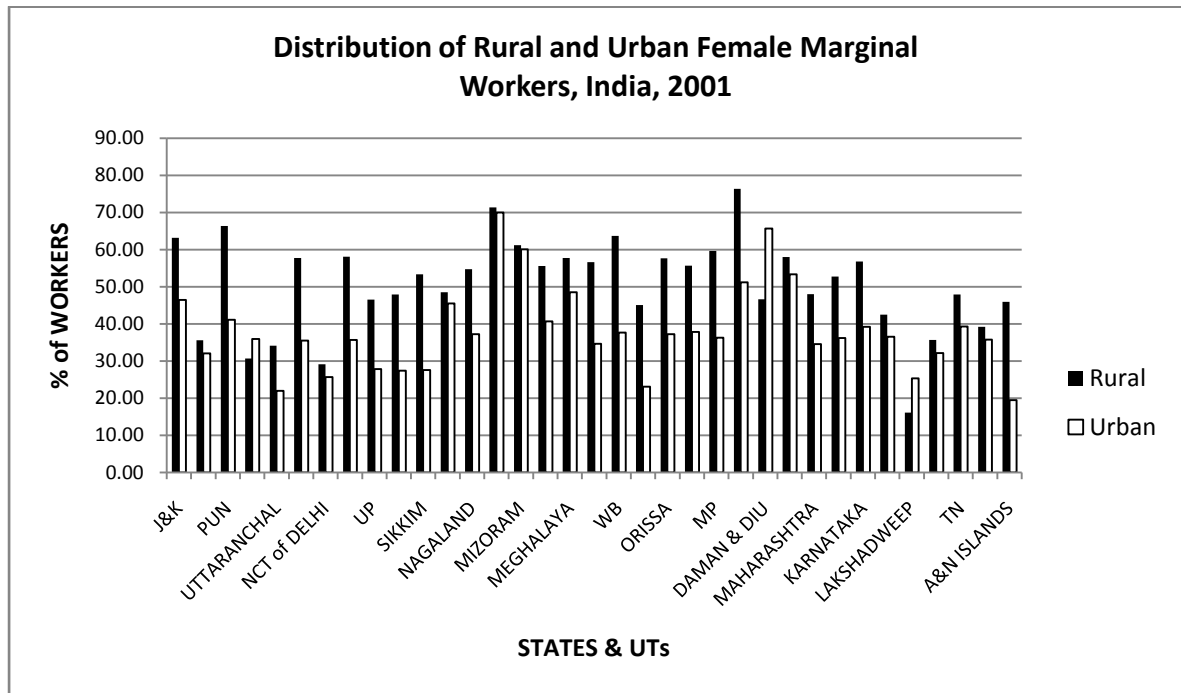
Map No. 3.8

Domestic Workers (MAIN) India, 2001
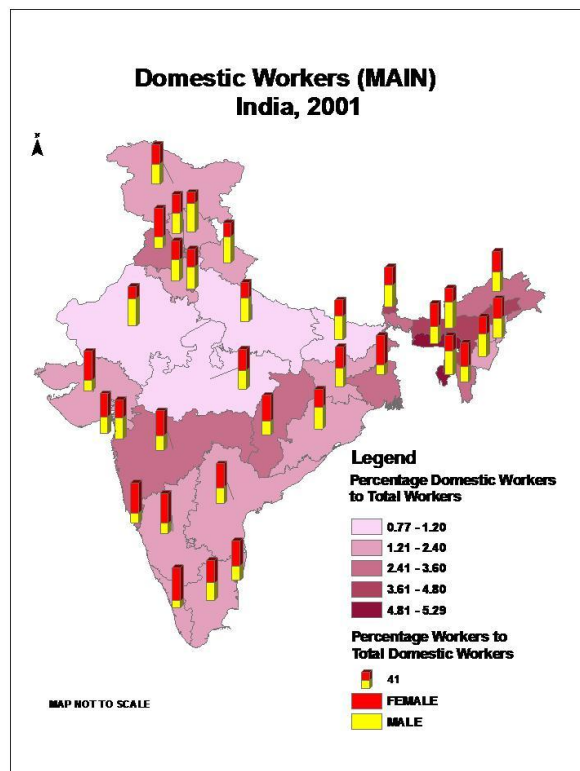
Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.9
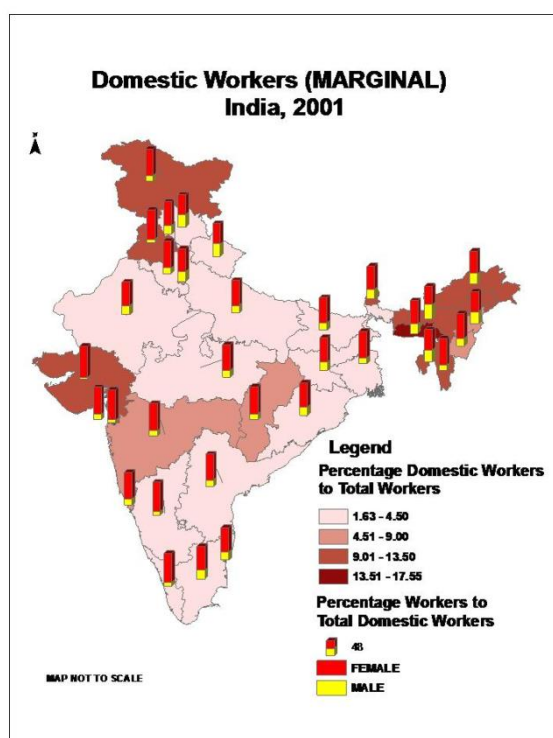
Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.3 Distribution of Domestic Workers (Main and Marginal) to Total Workers across Social Groups, India, 2001

Percentage of Domestic Workers to Total Workers, INDIA, 2001						
	MAIN WORKER (%)			MARGINAL WORKER (%)		
Groups	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Total	1.88	1.51	2.21	4.07	3.73	4.85
SC	2.75	2.00	3.73	4.52	3.76	6.42
ST	3.43	2.82	4.91	5.50	4.99	8.44
Non-SC/ST	1.67	1.30	1.96	3.80	3.55	4.33

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.4 Distribution of Female Domestic Workers (Main and Marginal) to Total Female Workers, Across Social Groups, India, 2001

Percentage of Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers, INDIA, 2001						
	MAIN WORKER (%)			MARGINAL WORKER (%)		
Groups	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Total	6.53	4.00	9.59	6.75	5.56	10.94
SC	9.55	5.78	15.31	8.12	6.09	15.52

ST	8.06	5.30	15.87	7.51	6.43	16.05
Non-SC/ST	5.81	3.44	8.38	6.32	5.29	9.61

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.5 Distributions of Main Domestic Workers (Rural and Urban) to Total Workers, Across Social Groups, in States and Union Territories, India, 2001

Percentage of Main Domestic Workers to Total Workers							
	RURAL (%)				URBAN (%)		
States	**Total**	**SC**	**ST**	**Non-SC/ST**	**Total**	**SC**	**ST**	**Non-SC/ST**
JAMMU & KASHMIR	2.29	1.94	3.35	2.16	1.58	1.41	2.26	1.57
HIMACHAL PRADESH	1.33	1.46	2.26	1.23	1.45	1.65	3.71	1.39
PUNJAB	3.52	4.43	0.00	3.08	2.04	4.56	0.00	1.48
CHANDIGARH	3.08	8.29	0.00	2.26	4.51	10.02	0.00	3.42
UTTARANCHAL	1.15	1.18	1.93	1.12	1.43	2.69	2.26	1.28
HARYANA	0.99	1.77	0.00	0.77	1.44	3.52	0.00	1.14
NCT of DELHI	2.84	4.17	0.00	2.58	3.19	4.44	0.00	2.97
RAJASTHAN	0.70	0.60	1.14	0.67	0.85	1.08	1.66	0.78
UTTAR PRADESH	0.93	1.08	3.31	0.88	0.98	1.52	1.76	0.91
BIHAR	1.05	1.21	0.92	1.03	1.49	1.72	4.34	1.46
SIKKIM	4.03	3.11	7.21	3.36	6.81	6.45	10.64	6.08
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2.47	1.78	4.15	1.41	3.85	2.09	6.10	2.82
NAGALAND	1.88	0.00	2.20	0.79	2.30	0.00	3.07	1.36
MANIPUR	1.18	1.07	0.82	1.30	1.47	4.13	0.82	1.32
MIZORAM	1.28	0.00	1.57	0.40	2.85	1.79	3.09	1.51
TRIPURA	4.86	6.71	3.82	4.57	5.01	8.91	4.83	4.17
MEGHALAYA	4.44	0.95	5.16	2.30	6.39	4.49	7.37	4.81
ASSAM	4.74	5.04	9.49	4.36	4.18	5.35	5.07	4.05
WEST BENGAL	2.02	3.98	1.59	1.40	4.17	7.77	4.85	3.66
JHARKHAND	1.55	1.74	3.10	1.07	2.22	3.58	5.13	1.75
ORISSA	1.36	0.97	2.45	1.21	2.22	2.98	3.82	1.96
CHATTISGARH	1.70	1.25	2.75	1.43	3.32	5.83	4.17	2.88
MADHYA PRADESH	0.89	0.68	1.54	0.81	1.37	2.12	2.51	1.19
GUJARAT	2.36	2.28	5.90	1.87	2.09	2.30	11.05	1.75
DAMAN & DIU	1.19	0.72	4.80	0.87	3.02	2.33	19.72	2.01
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	1.72	1.06	2.90	1.00	1.54	1.93	4.75	1.15
MAHARASHTRA	1.27	1.11	1.81	1.23	3.18	5.21	5.51	2.94
ANDHRA PRADESH	1.01	1.44	2.08	0.89	1.79	3.12	5.06	1.59
KARNATAKA	0.88	0.83	0.92	0.89	1.79	3.00	2.77	1.61
GOA	2.69	3.47	4.76	2.67	3.48	7.26	6.77	3.41
LAKSHADWEEP	0.22	0.00	0.12	0.86	0.21	0.00	0.22	0.17
KERALA	1.29	1.88	2.43	1.20	1.87	4.00	4.59	1.71
TAMIL NADU	1.07	1.23	1.23	1.03	1.87	3.00	2.46	1.74
PONDICHERRY	1.51	1.96	0.00	1.43	3.95	8.00	0.00	3.54

A&N ISLANDS	1.36	0.00	0.51	1.49	1.47	0.00	0.60	1.48

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.5 highlights that domestic work employs a significant amount of working population as main workers in affluent and more urbanized states like Goa, Delhi, Chandigarh, Maharashtra, Pondicherry. In the hilly and tribal dominated north-eastern states of Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, Chattisgarh, and even in West Bengal the share of domestic and related workers among the total working population is quite high, both in the rural and urban sectors. This can be taken as an indicator of economic backwardness of the regions and the lack of alternative sources of livelihood especially non-farm rural jobs, of the population immigrated into the prosperous states.

Table 1.1.6 Distribution of Urban Female Domestic Workers (Main and Marginal) to Total Urban Female Workers, Across Social Groups in States and UT, India, 2001

Percentage of Urban Female Domestic Workers to Total Urban Female Workers						
	MAIN WORKERS (%)			MARGINAL WORKERS (%)		
States	SC	ST	Non-SC/ST	SC	ST	Non-SC/ST
JAMMU & KASHMIR	7.67	3.13	4.13	10.63	6.44	9.33
HIMACHAL PRADESH	5.44	5.91	2.73	21.51	9.43	18.45
PUNJAB	23.92	0.00	6.74	26.27	0.00	12.87
CHANDIGARH	**39.09**	0.00	7.00	36.21	0.00	8.48
UTTARANCHAL	12.83	2.66	4.47	26.35	2.00	8.86
HARYANA	18.24	0.00	4.15	20.92	0.00	9.13
NCT of DELHI	21.95	0.00	10.10	22.54	0.00	12.55
RAJASTHAN	4.37	7.21	2.68	4.90	12.80	4.06
UTTAR PRADESH	7.37	9.21	3.49	7.06	9.52	4.17
BIHAR	6.70	17.78	6.75	8.00	6.57	6.91
SIKKIM	14.29	15.95	16.40	38.10	34.04	18.40
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	13.22	12.27	11.21	**47.62**	20.22	21.58
NAGALAND	0.00	5.42	7.29	0.00	13.93	13.24
MANIPUR	8.19	0.62	1.75	1.53	3.35	5.54
MIZORAM	33.33	5.60	5.16	33.33	12.92	13.75
TRIPURA	28.12	11.63	15.13	27.67	37.50	22.17
MEGHALAYA	15.07	13.99	13.63	18.42	28.59	**22.91**
ASSAM	23.76	14.00	15.83	29.62	19.36	21.80
WEST BENGAL	36.84	14.22	**19.95**	27.63	8.99	14.16
JHARKHAND	19.69	15.55	12.50	24.82	19.40	14.71
ORISSA	12.18	12.47	9.35	8.88	9.81	11.23
CHATTISGARH	22.86	15.39	14.83	24.93	20.28	19.44
MADHYA PRADESH	7.82	8.20	5.46	8.19	7.76	7.62
GUJARAT	9.70	**39.94**	11.33	13.44	**41.10**	13.99
DAMAN & DIU	9.09	50.00	7.07	27.27	60.71	4.58

DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	4.60	15.01	3.23	9.09	12.28	9.09
MAHARASHTRA	20.12	21.33	12.70	21.27	19.49	15.64
ANDHRA PRADESH	9.90	16.58	5.96	12.70	13.68	7.61
KARNATAKA	10.20	10.17	6.40	14.19	14.02	10.52
GOA	24.23	18.42	12.76	20.45	40.00	19.94
LAKSHADWEEP	0.00	0.45	0.00	0.00	13.54	0.00
KERALA	13.10	12.88	7.34	16.37	8.80	11.43
TAMIL NADU	7.93	5.77	4.88	11.38	6.46	7.00
PONDICHERRY	22.88	0.00	11.92	27.54	0.00	19.28
A&N ISLANDS	0.00	2.27	4.77	0.00	0.00	13.30

Source: Census of India, 2001

The above **table 1.1.6** depicts the gender and caste-tribe occupational segregation which is deeply entrenched into the Indian labour industry. Caste brings about a modification and intricacy in the neo-capitalist institution of production activities and labour structure (Basile, 2013). Not only that the female labour-force participation is concentrated in menial, manual and low paying casual types of work but the educational and quality of living inequalities among the social groups are sustained in the labour market participation. Thus table 1.1.6 shows that the category of domestic workers occupies a major proportion of these female workers. The percentage share of domestic workers across the social groups shows that irrespective of place of residence and region, SC and ST women participate in a greater proportion as domestic maids. The share is even higher in the urban centres. Big metropolitan cities shelter a huge population of female domestic workers who are either employed part-time or full-time. Chandigarh and Gujarat ranks first in employing SC and ST main urban female domestics respectively. The female domination can be justified from the informal nature of the work itself. The restriction on mobility, ease of entry and apparent illiteracy, easy availability of job near to their residential location, ability to balance work and home and other factors all cater to suit the women employment in domestic work.

The fact that domestic work is termed as dirty, dingy, degraded and unworthy of being performed by the upper caste working population has resulted in heavy concentration of SC, ST and OBC women and men. **Table 1.1.8** portrays that across India, there exists a clear-cut division among the caste segregation in domestic work as occupation among the women. Non-SC and ST women termed General in the study are found to be relatively less concentrated in domestic work,

unlike that of their SC-ST counterpart. Social inequality has thus been sustained in occupational segregation brought about by consequent economic and educational disadvantage. **Table 1.1.9** shows the top five ranking states according to the proportion of female domestics to total domestic workers. Kerala and Gujarat ranks first in main and marginal workforce.

Map No. 3.10
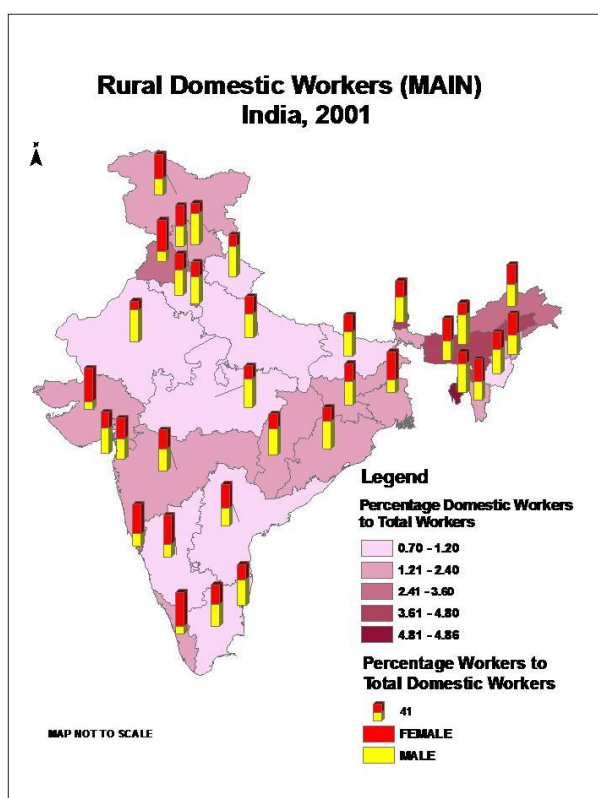
Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.7 Distribution of Male and Female Domestic Workers (Marginal) to total Marginal Workers, across Social Groups, India, 2001

Percentage of Marginal Domestic Workers to Total Marginal Workers						
	MALE (%)			FEMALE (%)		
Population	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Total	0.80	0.72	0.98	3.27	3.01	3.86
SC	0.74	0.65	0.97	3.77	3.11	5.45
ST	1.06	1.02	1.29	4.44	3.97	7.16
General	0.79	0.70	0.97	3.01	2.85	3.36

Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.11
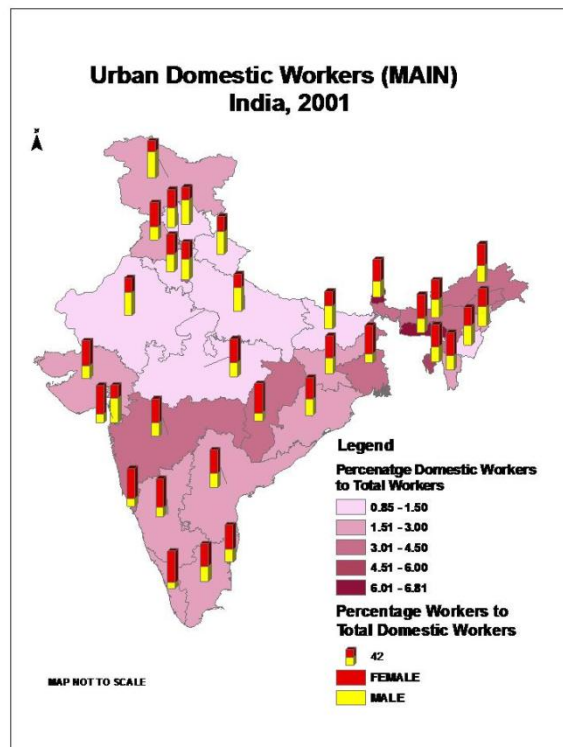
Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.12
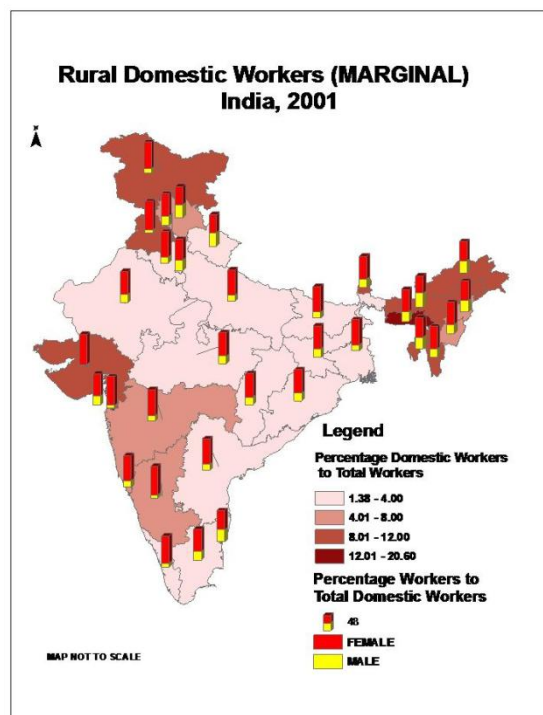
Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.13
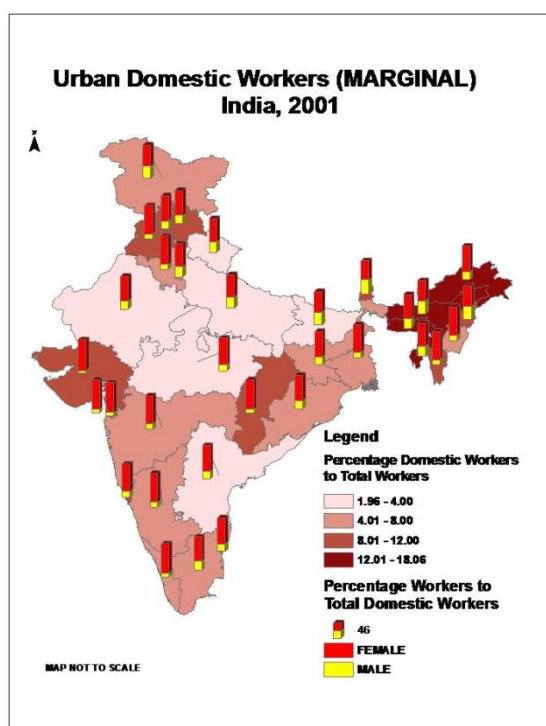
Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.8 Distribution of Female Domestic Workers (Main and Marginal) to Total Domestic Workers across Social Groups, in States and UT, India, 2001

Percentage of Female Domestic Workers to Total Domestic Workers						
	MAIN WORKERS (%)			MARGINAL WORKERS (%)		
STATES/UT	SC	ST	GENERAL	SC	ST	GENERAL
JAMMU & KASHMIR	42.48	60.85	47.48	72.65	86.33	81.48
HIMACHAL PRADESH	39.45	15.07	23.96	61.50	41.67	62.92
PUNJAB	79.64	0.00	67.20	91.51	0.00	89.08
CHANDIGARH	75.63	0.00	33.32	88.43	0.00	60.93
UTTARANCHAL	55.29	37.47	28.94	77.33	60.00	52.84
HARYANA	66.87	0.00	37.12	86.57	0.00	80.35
NCT of DELHI	67.94	0.00	39.46	78.96	0.00	64.25
RAJASTHAN	54.76	29.25	25.22	81.33	75.99	68.99
UTTAR PRADESH	51.21	64.49	35.94	78.80	80.36	76.02
BIHAR	44.82	50.18	39.61	77.87	63.84	77.04
SIKKIM	50.79	41.19	46.47	66.04	75.54	68.29
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	47.22	61.14	40.52	60.00	69.37	67.61
NAGALAND	0.00	52.95	37.23	0.00	63.51	58.66
MANIPUR	73.35	33.91	43.08	65.96	62.72	79.78
MIZORAM	50.00	64.42	21.59	100.00	82.03	75.93

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TRIPURA	39.82	30.81	41.88	53.93	74.47	62.59
MEGHALAYA	45.71	63.47	41.57	82.86	72.64	58.40
ASSAM	39.77	41.08	32.37	55.89	64.16	55.09
WEST BENGAL	81.80	49.22	70.64	86.02	63.93	80.62
JHARKHAND	66.30	55.08	48.13	77.88	80.71	68.48
ORISSA	52.90	43.83	42.72	78.11	69.07	75.02
CHATTISGARH	80.53	47.44	66.32	87.37	74.21	85.35
MADHYA PRADESH	65.12	43.91	52.44	81.93	76.34	77.39
GUJARAT	73.60	90.45	67.05	93.79	96.41	95.74
DAMAN & DIU	68.42	81.54	45.47	75.00	91.67	73.97
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	47.06	60.44	28.07	75.00	89.86	95.24
MAHARASHTRA	76.99	69.55	58.59	87.94	85.92	81.84
ANDHRA PRADESH	60.54	71.92	59.03	80.90	87.14	78.68
KARNATAKA	79.48	80.36	73.34	90.24	91.86	88.13
GOA	85.57	69.23	75.54	85.45	100.00	81.00
LAKSHADWEEP	0.00	18.75	0.00	0.00	91.38	0.00
KERALA	85.50	90.92	81.59	88.91	89.33	87.34
TAMIL NADU	61.90	63.43	55.26	76.84	67.67	71.97
PONDICHERRY	73.49	0.00	60.93	79.52	0.00	74.47
A&N ISLANDS	0.00	29.27	38.53	0.00	0.00	47.27

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.9 Ranking of States in Percentage of Urban Female Domestic Workers to Total Urban Domestic Workers, India, 2001

State	% Main Workers	State	% Marginal Workers
Kerala	84.43	Gujarat	92.11
Goa	79.10	Kerala	88.19
Chattisgarh	78.42	Chattisgarh	87.71
Karnataka	76.45	Punjab	87.63
West Bengal	76.09	Karnataka	85.64

Source: Census of India, 2001

The proportion of female domestic maids though varies at the inter-state level as denoted by the Census database, but nearly 40 to 50% of the female workers are engaged in this work. The proportion of domestics and particularly female maids out of total workers are on a higher side in the developed states such as Maharashtra, West Bengal, Goa, Gujarat, Chandigarh and Delhi. But the eastern region of India has a larger share of the domestics, and it is more prominent in the urban centres. West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Orissa, account for greater participation of female workers as domestic help. This brings out the poor

economic condition of the aforesaid states and the backwardness of the marginalised female groups there. 2001 census data reveals that in the million plus metropolitan cities, around 80 to 95% of the domestic workers were women (**Table 1.1.11**).

This is more so among the marginal workers. In case of main female workers the proportion as domestics was although relatively low, but still it was around 40% to 70% on an average. The part-time live out domestic helps usually reside in the slums lying close to the middle and upper class residential colonies. These maids provide the most essential services to the skilled and highly educated professional class of people. Yet they and their work remain unnoticed and unacknowledged, especially when it comes to the distribution of economic benefits. Even though it may be argued that the nature of work performed by these maids are rudimentary and mostly unskilled routine manual work, but the significance of their contribution to the working of the economy in general and productivity at the individual level cant be denied.(**Map 3.8 to 3.25**).

Map No. 3.14
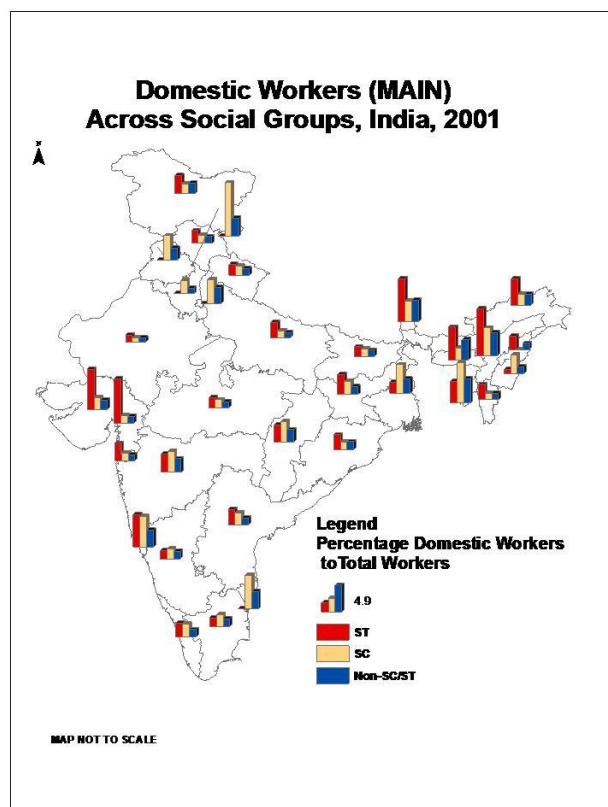
Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.15
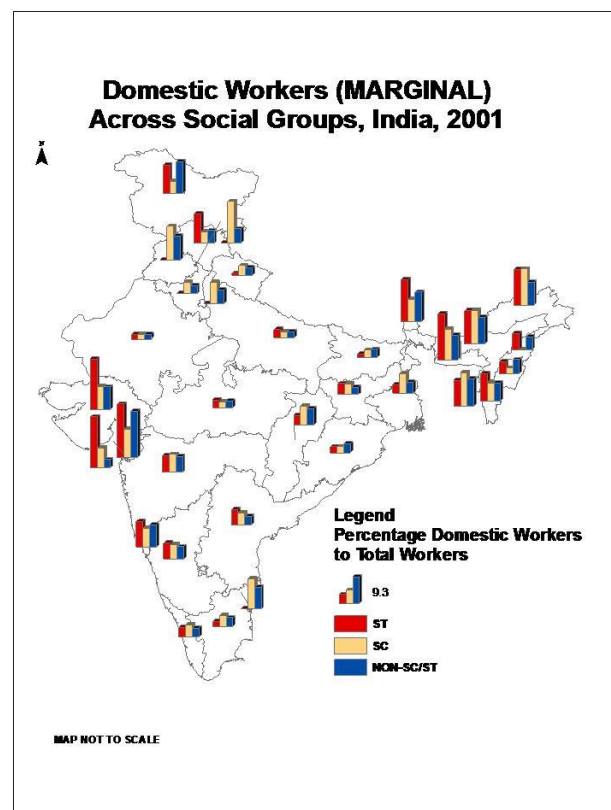
Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.10 Ranking of Districts in Percentage of Total Domestic Workers and Female Domestic Workers to Total Workers and Total Female Workers, India, 2001

Ranking of Districts		Ranking of Districts	
DISTRICTS	% of Domestic Workers to Total Workers	DISTRICTS	% of Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers
Rupnagar	30.96	Kargil	31.49
New Delhi	8.19	Kolkata	27.24
Kargil	7.35	Rupnagar	26.20
Kokrajhar	6.85	Navsari	22.26
Goalpara	6.79	Bharuch	21.87
Darrang	6.61	Bongaigaon	20.84
Bongaigaon	6.49	Narmada	20.60
East Khasi Hills	6.47	Vadodara	20.42
Nalbari	6.45	New Delhi	20.36
Karimganj	6.04	Amritsar	20.25

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.11 Ranking of Districts in Percentage of Main and Marginal Female Domestic Workers to Total Domestic Workers, India, 2001

Ranking of Districts		Ranking of Districts		Ranking of Districts – URBAN POPULATION	
DISTRICTS	% of Female Domestic Workers to Total Domestic Workers (MAIN)	DISTRICTS	% of Female Domestic Workers to Total Domestic Workers (MARGINAL)	DISTRICTS	% of Female Domestic Workers to Total Domestic Workers (MAIN)
Sabar Kantha	90.72	The Dangs	98.70	Diu	93.27
Diu	88.98	Surendranagar	97.89	Kanker	89.81
The Dangs	88.62	Panch Mahals	97.65	Navsari	88.68
Moga	88.41	Amreli	97.55	Pathanamthitta	88.39
Navsari	87.53	Mahe	97.50	Birbhum	88.18
Thiruvananthapuram	87.17	Narmada	97.36	Dakshin Dinajpur	88.13
Dohad	87.03	Kheda	97.23	Palakkad	87.84
Pathanamthitta	86.20	Sabar Kantha	97.22	Thiruvananthapuram	87.55
Hugli	85.85	Banas Kantha	97.22	Murshidabad	87.21
Kozhikode	85.17	Anand	97.16	Kozhikode	86.57

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 1.1.12 below shows distribution of main and marginal domestic workers to total workers in the metropolitan cities. It is important to note that economic diversity and employment dynamism being lower in the smaller metropolitan cities like Dhanbad, Amritsar and Surat, that the proportion of marginal domestic workers are nearly three times that of the main workers. The bigger metropolitan cities like Kolkata, Greater Mumbai rank higher in proportion of main domestic workers to total workers.

Table 1.1.12 Ranking of Metropolitan Cities according to Distribution of Main and Marginal Domestic Workers to Total Workers, India, 2001

Percentage of Domestic Workers to Total Workers, INDIA, 2001				
RANK	Metropolitan Cities	% Main Worker	Metropolitan Cities	% Marginal Worker
1	Kolkata (M Corp.)	5.99	Vadodara (M Corp.)	14.33
2	Pune (M Corp.)	5.09	Dhanbad (M)	13.27
3	Greater Mumbai (M.Corp.)	4.91	Pune (M Corp.)	12.64
4	Vadodara (M Corp.)	3.92	Surat (M Corp.)	10.99
5	Chennai (M Corp.)	3.79	Amritsar (M Corp.)	9.70
6	Nagpur (M Corp.)	3.52	Kolkata (M Corp.)	9.48
7	Dhanbad (M)	3.52	Nashik (M Corp.)	9.02
8	Delhi (M. Corp)	3.50	Greater Mumbai	8.89

9	Hyderabad (M Corp.)	3.16	Ludhiana (M Corp.)	8.85
10	Jamshedpur (NA)	2.98	Bangalore (M Corp.)	8.77
11	Kochi (M Corp.)	2.78	Nagpur (M Corp.)	8.71
12	Nashik (M Corp.)	2.75	Ahmadabad (M Corp.)	8.57
13	Asansol (M Corp.)	2.74	Rajkot (M Corp.)	8.44
14	Bangalore (M Corp.)	2.68	Asansol (M Corp.)	8.10
15	Patna (M Corp.)	2.60	Chennai (M Corp.)	7.82
16	Amritsar (M Corp.)	2.49	Hyderabad (M Corp.)	7.16
17	Bhopal (M Corp.)	2.36	Jamshedpur (NA)	6.81
18	Coimbatore (M Corp.)	2.35	Bhopal (M Corp.)	6.77
19	Surat (M Corp.)	2.25	Patna (M Corp.)	6.54
20	Ahmadabad (M Corp.)	2.17	Delhi (M. Corp)	6.52
21	Visakhapatnam (M Corp.)	2.16	Coimbatore (M Corp.)	6.01
22	Indore (M Corp.)	2.10	Kochi (M Corp.)	5.96
23	Vijayawada (M Corp.)	1.91	Madurai (M Corp.)	5.48
24	Ludhiana (M Corp.)	1.87	Vijayawada (M Corp.)	5.34
25	Faridabad (M Corp.)	1.87	Faridabad (M Corp.)	4.99
26	Lucknow (M Corp.)	1.80	Indore (M Corp.)	4.82
27	Madurai (M Corp.)	1.78	Visakhapatnam (M Corp.)	4.54
28	Jabalpur (M Corp.)	1.55	Jabalpur (M Corp.)	3.92
29	Kanpur (M Corp.)	1.51	Varanasi (M Corp.)	3.55
30	Rajkot (M Corp.)	1.45	Lucknow (M Corp.)	3.52
31	Jaipur (M Corp.)	1.41	Kanpur (M Corp.)	3.14
32	Allahabad (M Corp.)	1.18	Jaipur (M Corp.)	3.02
33	Varanasi (M Corp.)	1.18	Allahabad (M Corp.)	2.80
34	Meerut (M Corp.)	0.91	Meerut (M Corp.)	2.48
35	Agra (M Corp.)	0.77	Agra (M Corp.)	1.07

Source: Census of India, 2001   M.Corp – Municipal Corporation

Table 1.1.13 shows that among the class I towns, the ones located in economically backward states such as Jharkhand, Tripura, Meghalaya, and West Bengal the paid domestic labour forms the chief source of employment and livelihood for the women. Towns located in the immediate commuting vicinity of mega-cities of Kolkata, like Rajarhat-Gopalpur, rank higher in the same.

Table 1.1.13 Ranking of Class I towns according to Distribution of Main and Marginal Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers, India, 2001

Percentage of Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers, INDIA,2001				
RANK	Towns/Cities	% Main Worker	Towns/Cities	% Marginal Worker
1	Baharampur (M)	39.62	Dhanbad (M)	48.33
2	Raiganj (M)	38.97	Puruliya (M)	47.59
3	Navsari (M)	37.58	Balurghat (M)	45.99
4	Baidyabati (M)	35.55	Baharampur (M)	45.85
5	Rajarhat Gopalpur (M)	35.31	Gandhidham (M)	45.19
6	Hugli-Chinsurah (M)	35.21	Medinipur (M)	44.15
7	South Dum Dum (M)	33.73	Raigarh (M)	43.20

8	Chandannagar (M Corp.)	33.70	Nagaon (MB)	42.86
9	Bidhan Nagar (M)	33.65	Raniganj (M)	42.63
10	Durgapur (M Corp.)	33.24	Moga (M Cl)	41.63

Source: Census of India, 2001   M.Corp –Municipal Corporation, M–Municipality   M. Cl–Municipal Council

Table 1.1.14 Ranking of Class I towns according to Distribution of SC and ST Main Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers, India, 2001

Percentage of Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers (MAIN), 2001					
Towns	% SC	Towns	% ST	Towns	% NON-SC/ST
Durgapur (M Corp.)	70.86	Gondiya (M Cl)	88.35	Baharampur (M)	36.54
Balurghat (M)	61.15	Uluberia (M)	75.00	Raiganj (M)	35.56
Baidyabati (M)	59.96	Virar (M Cl)	67.83	South Dum Dum (M)	32.61
Rajarhat Gopalpur (M)	57.99	Navsari (M)	66.79	Delhi Cantt (C.B) (Part)	31.95
Hugli-Chinsurah (M)	57.92	Botad (M)	66.67	Bidhan Nagar (M)	30.87
Bidhan Nagar (M)	57.89	Bettiah (M)	63.16	Baidyabati (M)	29.33
Puruliya (M)	56.93	Navghar-Manikpur (M Cl)	63.04	Hugli-Chinsurah (M)	29.12
Baharampur (M)	56.61	Baidyabati (M)	59.09	Chandannagar (M Corp.)	29.05
Panchkula Urban Estate (EO)	55.35	Pallavaram (M)	58.70	Medinipur (M)	28.75
Raiganj (M)	54.59	Bharuch (M)	58.47	Kanchrapara (M)	28.47

Source: Census of India, 2001   M.Corp –Municipal Corporation, M–Municipality   M. Cl–Municipal Council

Table 1.1.15 Ranking of Metropolitan Cities according to Distribution of Main and Marginal Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers, India, 2001

Percentage of Female Domestic Workers to Total Female Workers, INDIA,2001				
RANK	Metropolitan Cities	% Main Worker	Metropolitan Cities	% Marginal Worker
1	Kolkata (M Corp.)	28.15	Dhanbad (M)	48.33
2	Vadodara (M Corp.)	21.74	Pune (M Corp.)	33.43
3	Asansol (M Corp.)	20.76	Vadodara (M Corp.)	33.39
4	Surat (M Corp.)	19.99	Asansol (M Corp.)	28.56
5	Greater Mumbai (M Corp.)	19.43	Amritsar (M Corp.)	27.45
6	Pune (M Corp.)	18.78	Greater Mumbai (M Corp.)	27.35
7	Dhanbad (M)	18.24	Nagpur (M Corp.)	25.33
8	Nagpur (M Corp.)	16.36	Jamshedpur (NA)	23.76
9	Jamshedpur (NA)	15.73	Nashik (M Corp.)	22.92
10	Amritsar (M Corp.)	15.18	Bangalore (M Corp.)	22.88
11	Chennai (M Corp.)	14.26	Kolkata (M Corp.)	22.76
12	Delhi (M. Corp.)	12.90	Bhopal (M Corp.)	22.31
13	Nashik (M Corp.)	12.76	Surat (M Corp.)	22.14
14	Kochi (M Corp.)	11.83	Ludhiana (M Corp.)	22.13
15	Ludhiana (M Corp.)	11.71	Chennai (M Corp.)	21.82

16	Rajkot (M Corp.)	11.64	Kochi (M Corp.)	21.39
17	Bhopal (M Corp.)	10.98	Ahmadabad (M Corp.)	19.09
18	Ahmadabad (M Corp.)	10.88	Delhi (M. Corp.)	18.99
19	Vijayawada (M Corp.)	10.82	Hyderabad (M Corp.)	16.76
20	Bangalore (M Corp.)	10.61	Patna (M Corp.)	16.17
21	Hyderabad (M Corp.)	10.41	Faridabad (M Corp.)	16.12
22	Patna (M Corp.)	9.91	Rajkot (M Corp.)	16.05
23	Visakhapatnam (M Corp.)	9.83	Meerut (M Corp.)	15.45
24	Faridabad (M Corp.)	9.56	Visakhapatnam (M Corp.)	14.72
25	Indore (M Corp.)	9.19	Vijayawada (M Corp.)	14.52
26	Coimbatore (M Corp.)	7.68	Coimbatore (M Corp.)	13.22
27	Kanpur (M Corp.)	7.29	Madurai (M Corp.)	13.21
28	Jabalpur (M Corp.)	7.03	Indore (M Corp.)	12.76
29	Madurai (M Corp.)	6.80	Lucknow (M Corp.)	12.03
30	Lucknow (M Corp.)	6.76	Kanpur (M Corp.)	12.02
31	Allahabad (M Corp.)	5.22	Jabalpur (M Corp.)	11.81
32	Meerut (M Corp.)	5.18	Allahabad (M Corp.)	9.83
33	Varanasi (M Corp.)	4.72	Varanasi (M Corp.)	7.53
34	Jaipur (M Corp.)	4.67	Jaipur (M Corp.)	7.39
35	Agra (M Corp.)	3.93	Agra (M Corp.)	3.14

Source: Census of India, 2001   M.Corp –Municipal Corporation,   NA- Notified Area

It is interesting to note that, even though these domestic helps provide the services which forms the base of a healthy and decent living but the quality of living of the maids and their households are very poor. Most of the maids employed especially in large urban centres are immigrants from surrounding economically backward states or even far-off places. They struggle to find shelter and earn a living in the city.

Map No. 3.16

Domestic Workers (MAIN)
SC Males & Females, India, 2001

Map No. 3.17

Domestic Workers (MAIN)
ST Males & Females, India, 2001

Legend
Percentage Workers to
Total Domestic Workers

FEMALE
MALE

MAP NOT TO SCALE
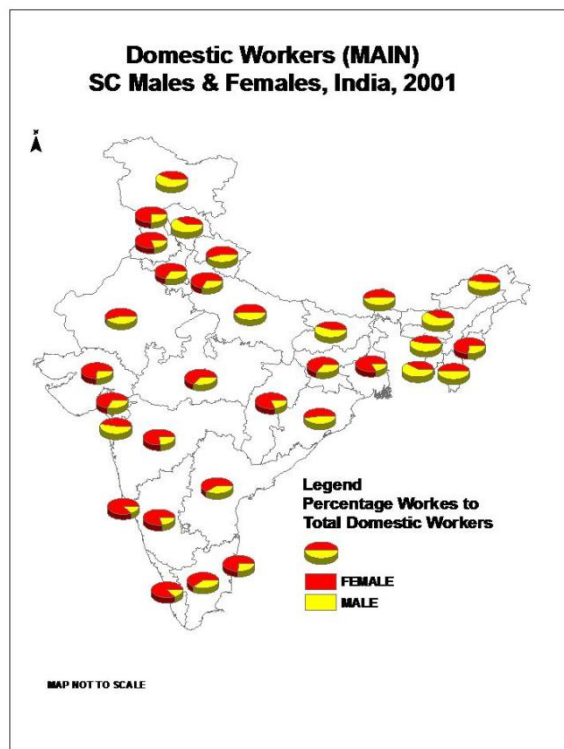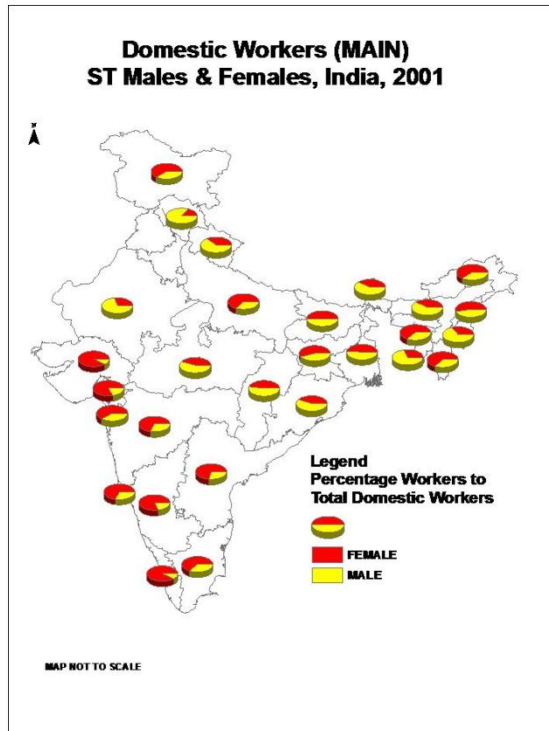
Thus slums and other squatter settlements are the places where these maids reside often under insanitary and unhygienic conditions. It is a fact that level and quality of housing amenities directly affects the standard of living and the degree of human capital formation. Amenities are the basic requirements needed towards maintaining a decent living. Given that majority of the live-out maids reside in the slums, and have access to inferior quality housing amenities, it becomes all the more a serious concern to study the work and living patterns of the most downtrodden and disadvantageous labour group. Women living in slums have to face constant threat of forced eviction by the government and private construction companies. The lack of access to safe, secure housing and inadequate and poor quality civic amenities is too often a major problem faced by these women. It is an important aspect of the lives of the migrant women, and in this aspect the domestic workers, which needs to be addressed.

More over unlike that of the developed countries of the world, domestic maids in India are kept out of the ambit of social security measures and there is lack of adequately strong legal provision for these socio-economically weaker groups. In India, the laws and amendments that exist for the informal sector workers are already meagre and weak, in terms of their approach, proposals and their implementation.

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Moreover, the fact that domestic labour is not accounted as one of the principal informal work and is not part of the unorganised sector social security measure act,

Map No. 3.18
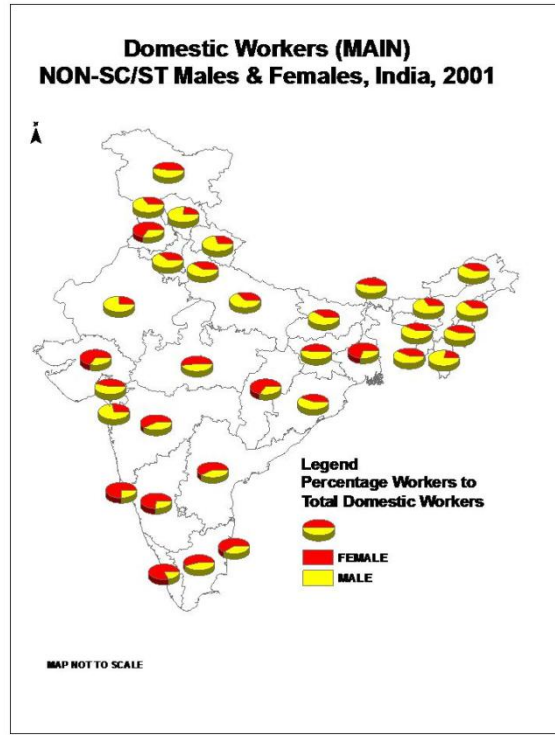
Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.19

Source: Census of India, 2001

75
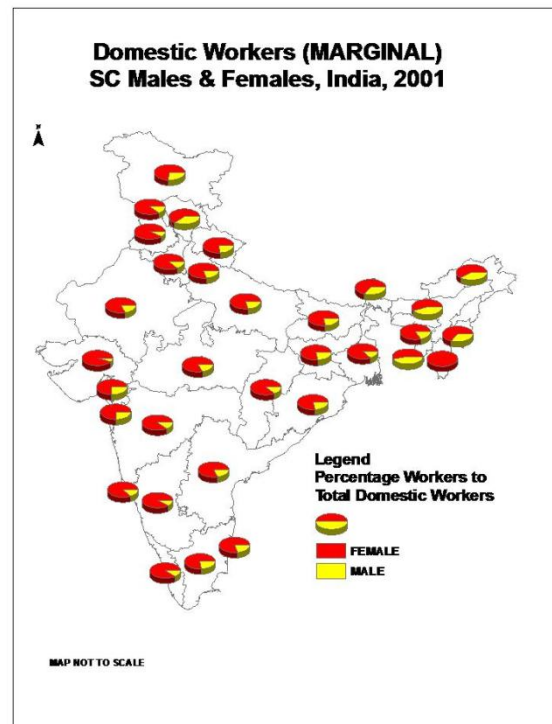
makes the workers engaged in domestic work all the more vulnerable and disadvantaged. Migration is again an important factor in the lives of these maids. They hope for gathering money quickly in the cities and making improvements back in their villages and ultimately returning back to their native places. But it is not easy for these female workers to get accommodated in the urban way of life. Very often these migrant women have to confront economic and social constraints and adverse situations such as violence, low and uncertain wages, poor working conditions, physical and emotional abuse, trafficking by the middle-men. The ignorant migrant women are easily duped of their belongings, and they find it hard to avail better paying jobs.

Table 1.1.16 Distribution of Female Domestic Workers (Main and Marginal) in Metropolitan Cities in India, 2001

Percentage of Females Domestic Workers to Total Domestic Workers					
RANK	METROPOLITAN CITIES	% MAIN	RANK	METROPOLITAN CITIES	%MARGINAL
1	Kochi (M Corp.)	85.94	1	Surat (M Corp.)	93.67
2	Bangalore (M Corp.)	76.81	2	Rajkot (M Corp.)	93.44
3	Vadodara (M Corp.)	75.09	3	Vadodara (M Corp.)	90.77
4	Asansol (M Corp.)	73.76	4	Kochi (M Corp.)	89.26
5	Nagpur (M Corp.)	71.04	5	Amritsar (M Corp.)	88.63
6	Pune (M Corp.)	71.02	6	Ahmadabad (M Corp.)	88.24
7	Amritsar (M Corp.)	69.13	7	Bangalore (M Corp.)	86.98
8	Surat (M Corp.)	69.08	8	Bhopal (M Corp.)	86.21
9	Vijayawada (M Corp.)	69.04	9	Vijayawada (M Corp.)	86.18
10	Bhopal (M Corp.)	68.33	10	Nashik (M Corp.)	85.57
11	Kolkata (M Corp.)	67.79	11	Pune (M Corp.)	85.19
12	Nashik (M Corp.)	67.30	12	Ludhiana (M Corp.)	83.96
13	Chennai (M Corp.)	66.79	13	Meerut (M Corp.)	83.28
14	Jabalpur (M Corp.)	66.43	14	Nagpur (M Corp.)	80.89
15	Rajkot (M Corp.)	64.98	15	Indore (M Corp.)	80.60
16	Jamshedpur (NA)	62.92	16	Chennai (M Corp.)	80.59
17	Madurai (M Corp.)	62.56	17	Coimbatore (M Corp.)	80.29
18	Indore (M Corp.)	62.14	18	Madurai (M Corp.)	80.07
19	Coimbatore (M Corp.)	61.71	19	Jabalpur (M Corp.)	78.68
20	Greater Mumbai (M Corp.)	57.64	20	Greater Mumbai (M Corp.)	78.02
21	Visakhapatnam (M Corp.)	57.19	21	Visakhapatnam (M Corp.)	77.53
22	Ludhiana (M Corp.)	54.49	22	Asansol (M Corp.)	76.74
23	Hyderabad (M Corp.)	53.77	23	Faridabad (M Corp.)	74.96
24	Faridabad (M Corp.)	52.47	24	Kolkata (M Corp.)	74.59
25	Ahmadabad (M Corp.)	51.22	25	Hyderabad (M Corp.)	74.47
26	Delhi	46.57	26	Jaipur (M Corp.)	71.07
27	Dhanbad (M)	45.28	27	Jamshedpur (NA)	70.93
28	Allahabad (M Corp.)	45.08	28	Delhi	69.11
29	Lucknow (M Corp.)	40.19	29	Kanpur (M Corp.)	66.38
30	Kanpur (M Corp.)	39.69	30	Lucknow (M Corp.)	65.77
31	Meerut (M Corp.)	39.49	31	Varanasi (M Corp.)	65.52
32	Varanasi (M Corp.)	38.07	32	Allahabad (M Corp.)	65.27

33	Agra (M Corp.)	37.18	33	Dhanbad (M)	64.68
34	Jaipur (M Corp.)	36.93	34	Agra (M Corp.)	56.29
35	Patna (M Corp.)	33.50	35	Patna (M Corp.)	46.17

Source: Census of India, 2001   M.Corp –Municipal Corporation NA-Notified Area
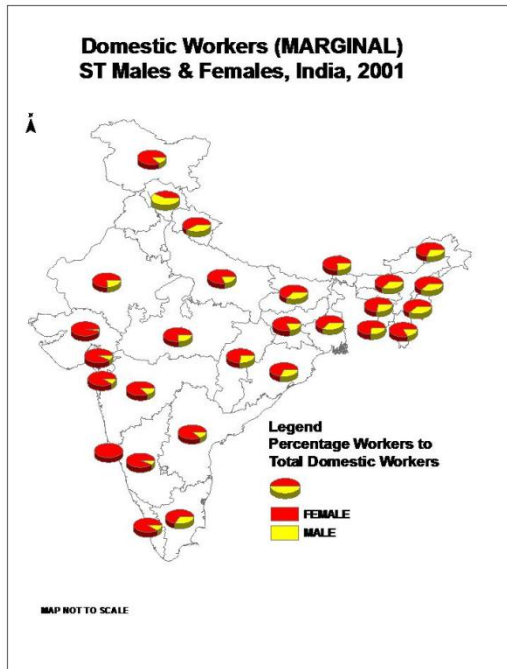
Map No. 3.20   **Map No. 3.21**
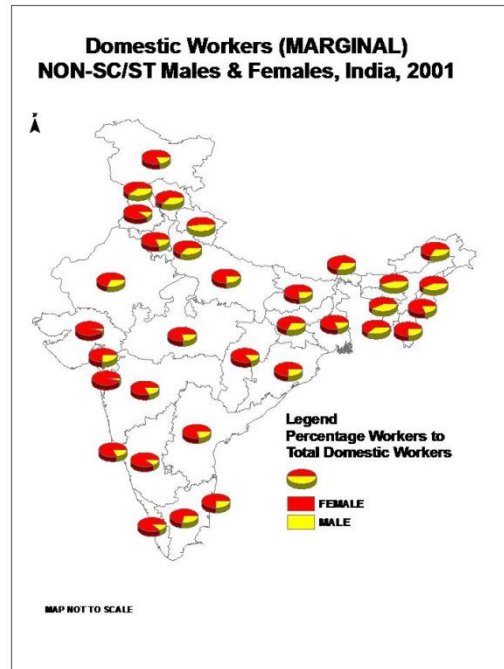
Source: Census of India, 2001   Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.22
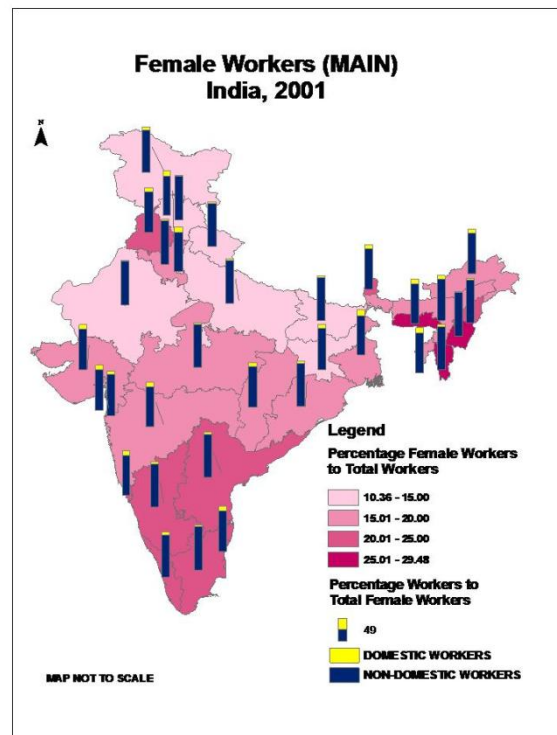
Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.23

Female Workers (MARGINAL)
India, 2001

Legend

Percentage Female Workers
to Total Workers

25.96 – 35.00
35.01 – 45.00
45.01 – 55.00
55.01 – 65.00
65.01 – 70.93

Percentage Workers to
Total Female Workers

49

DOMESTIC WORKERS
NON-DOMESTIC WORKERS

MAP NOT TO SCALE

Source: Census of India, 2001

Map No. 3.24

Female Domestic Workers by
Place of Residence
India, 2001

Legend

Percentage Workers to
To Total Female Workers

16

RURAL MAIN
RURAL MARGINAL
URBAN MAIN
URBAN MARGINAL

MAP NOT TO SCALE

Map No. 3.25

**Female Domestic Workers (MAIN)
Across Social Groups
India, 2001**

Legend
Percentage Workers to
Total Female Workers

ST
SC
NON-SC/ST

MAP NOT TO SCALE

As per the Census of India 2011, West Bengal shelters 9.8% of total slum population of India in its 10% of all slum households. Whereas 22% of West Bengal's slum population resides in Kolkata city alone, which amount to 31.4% of the total population of Kolkata and 29.3% households in Kolkata. Literacy rate is 79.8% and 77.6% among the total population and female population of Kolkata, while the same among the slum population of Kolkata stands at 75% and 71.4% respectively. The literacy among the slum population of West Bengal is 73.1% which is above the national figure of 69.1%. The proportion of scheduled population living in Kolkata is 5.6%, whereas among the slum it is 5.8% and a little less among the non-slum population (5.5%). The Kolkata slums have 9.1% children (0-6 years) while the non-slum households have much low at 6.9% children population. Proportion of workers in the city is 40%, while among the slum women it is 16.7%.

3.3 Socio-Economic Characteristics of Domestic Workers in India and West Bengal

NSSO EUS, 68th round database tables primarily depicts the situation of female domestic workers over India for the year 2011-12. In the absence of 2011 Census data, it helps in detailed analysis of work structure of the maids in India for recent years. A five digit classification of NIC 2008 has been followed instead of NCO classification in distinguishing paid domestic work as an occupation. Since NSS only provides a three digit data code for NCO 2004 and it includes other personal service occupations such as gate-keeper, driver etc, that NIC structure is used.

The distribution of domestic workers across India is skewed towards West Bengal and Maharashtra, with both the states having the largest share of samples. Southern states also share around 4.5 to 10% of the total domestic workers. (**Map 3.26**) The northern states do account for male domestic helps but it is the women who dominate this occupation throughout. Thus women domestic workers are only studied in this section. Similarly over all urban women workers are greater in number and their land ownership status is quite poor. (**Map 3.27**) NSS 68th round provides division 97 of NIC in a disaggregated level with its sub-divisions of domestic work into ayah/babysitters, cook and maid or servants. These sub-groups have been found to have decreasing degree of specialization of work pattern with and decreasing levels of remuneration respectively. Around 81% of domestic workers in West Bengal work as domestic helps followed by cooks (17.85%) and about 1.62% worked as ayah. (**Table 1.1.17**) Paid domestic work being more in demand in urban areas, thus towns and cities has 80% of all domestics in India. (**Table 1.1.18**) Southern plain region of West Bengal accounts for more number of domestic workers due to higher degree of urbanisation and population concentration relative to the northern districts. The caste and religion based distribution of domestic workers follow the population distribution across states, with socio-economically disadvantaged groups of SCs and OBCs in India having a higher share of domestic workers than general population. While in West Bengal, the employment situation for women is so precarious that the general caste women also have a higher participation (58.78%) in domestic work. (**Table 1.1.18**)

Table 1.1.17 Distribution of Categories of Domestic Workers, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

	Total Domestics	Women Domestics	Total	Women	% WB to INDIA

Worker Category					Domestics (%)		Domestics (%)		Total Domestic	Women Domestic
	INDIA	WB	INDIA	WB	INDIA	WB	INDIA	WB		
Maid/servant	2098482	333181	1782311	310685	90.4	80.5	89.9	79.6	15.9	17.4
Cook	209423	73847	188687	72908	9.0	17.8	9.5	18.7	35.3	38.6
Ayah/babysitter/governess	12447	6718	12447	6718	0.5	1.6	0.6	1.7	54.0	54.0
Total Domestics	2320353	413746	1983445	390311	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	17.8	19.7

Source: NSS, 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB – West Bengal

As per the existing literature, notion of pollution and purity which is attached to caste status determines the distribution of women across work categories. Thus around 50.1% of cooks belong to general status unlike the domestic helpers (27.4%), based on restrictions imposed by the employer to employ lower caste maids in their kitchen. But in big metropolitan cities, where most slum dwelling women are migrants, the caste dictates are relatively relaxed and both the employers recruit lower caste domestics for cooking and the maids belonging to higher castes work as housecleaners in employer homes, which they would have avoided in their native places (Palriwala & Neetha, 2009). (**Table 1.1.19**) Muslim women in the state are found to have higher work participation in domestic work (16.2%) which is more than double that of national average (8.7%). Age wise distribution of the maids shows a disturbing situation in the form of child labour. Children as young as 7 years are send to work as domestic help in India. In rural West Bengal the adolescent children drop-out of school once they reach the puberty around 13 years of age and are sent off by their guardians to work as live-in maids to unknown far-off places especially beyond the state via an informal nexus of middlemen and agencies and other social network. This is seen in NSS 68th round as well. Around 6% of girls within 13 to 17 years work as domestic servants in the state. (**Table 1.1.20**) This occurrence can be also gauged from the relationship to the head of household. Around 9% of the babysitters and 3.2% of helps in India fall in this age group. In West Bengal, 12.03% of domestic workers are mother and mother in law of the head of household, while 8.2% women are sisters and relatives of the head in joint family structure. About 8% unmarried

women domestics in India are found to live with their parents, while 47% are wives of the household heads.

Table 1.1.18 Distribution of Women Domestic Workers across Social Groups and Place of Residence, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Caste	% INDIA	% WB	Religion	% INDIA	% WB	Marital Status	% INDIA	% WB	Place of Residence	% INDIA	% WB
ST	3.84	1.71	Hinduism	83.31	83.32	Never Married	15.67	21.07	Rural	19.68	36.36
SC	30.56	35.29	Islam	8.69	16.15	Currently Married	54.41	42.19	Urban	80.32	63.64
OBC	35.79	4.22	Christianity	5.76	0.53	Widowed	25.84	34.38	Total	100	100
General	29.81	58.78	Sikhism	0.58	0.0	Divorced /Separated	4.08	2.36			
Total	100	100	Others	1.66	0.0	Total	100	100	* WB- West Bengal		
			Total	100	100						

Source: NSS, 68th Round, (2011-12)

About 15% of maids in West Bengal work as live-in paid employees and servants unlike the Indian average of 6.4%. Another notable occurrence is about the aged women who earn their livelihood as domestic help. About 11.14% of women in the age-group of 60 to 80 in West Bengal are reported to work as maids, which is higher than national figure of 7.3%. Likewise, the proportion of widowed women workers in the state is much higher at 34.4% compared to India at 26%. (**Table 1.1.18**)

Table 1.1.19 Distribution of Women Domestic Workers Sub-Categories by Caste and Land Ownership, India, NSS, (2011-12)

Distribution of Women Domestic Workers Across Social Group (%)						Women Domestic Workers By Land Ownership (%)			
Work Category	ST	SC	OBC	Other	Total	Work Category	Owning Land	Not Owning Land	Total Workers
Maid/servant	3.9	31.2	37.5	27.4	100	Maid/servant	57.27	42.73	100
Cook	3.7	26.2	20.1	50.1	100	Cook	67.31	32.69	100
Ayah/ babysitter/governess	2.4	0.0	34.0	63.6	100	Ayah/ baby sitter/governess	80.08	19.92	100
Total	3.8	30.6	31.8	29.8	100	Total	58.37	41.63	100

Source: NSS, 68th Round, (2011-12)

Map No. 4.26
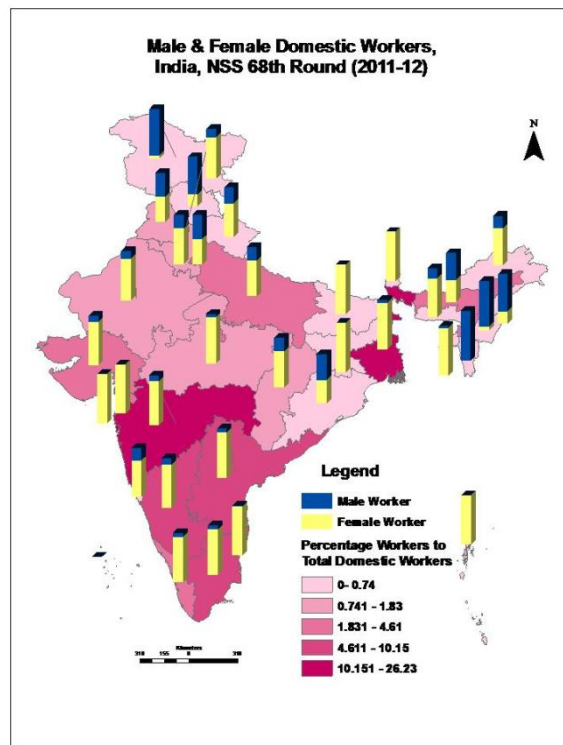
Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Map No. 4.27
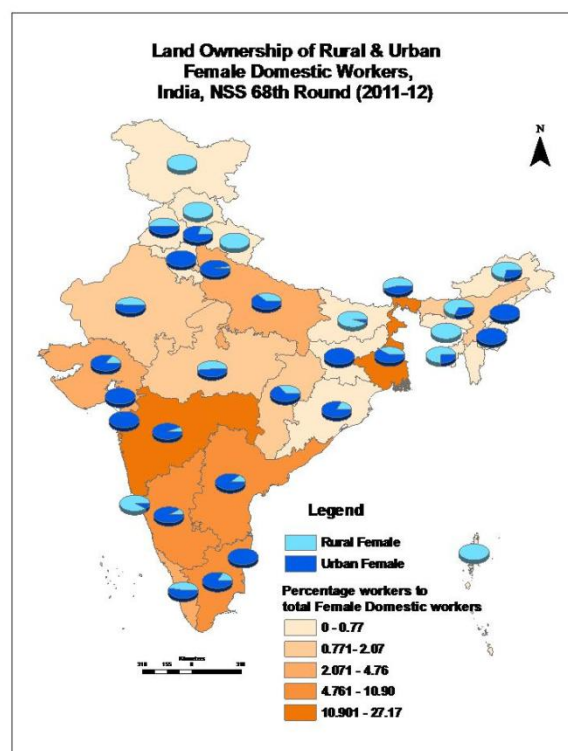
Single women of the lower socio-economic strata choose paid domestic work as an easier option for livelihood. Another indicator of the disadvantageous position of these women workers stems from the fact that more than 25% of the women are head of their households in India. Rural women maids usually belong to agricultural casual labour households (3.2%) and self employed farming households (6.5%) in India. In West Bengal the share is escalated to 7.4% and 19.3% respectively. This means that rural women in the state often shift their occupation from being agricultural labour and unpaid farm hands on own cultivated lands to paid domestic work. In urban areas it is the self-employed households engaging in petty business and small scale trade that stand out in the state. (**Figure 2.3**)

Figure 2.3 Distribution of Women Domestic Workers by Household Type, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)
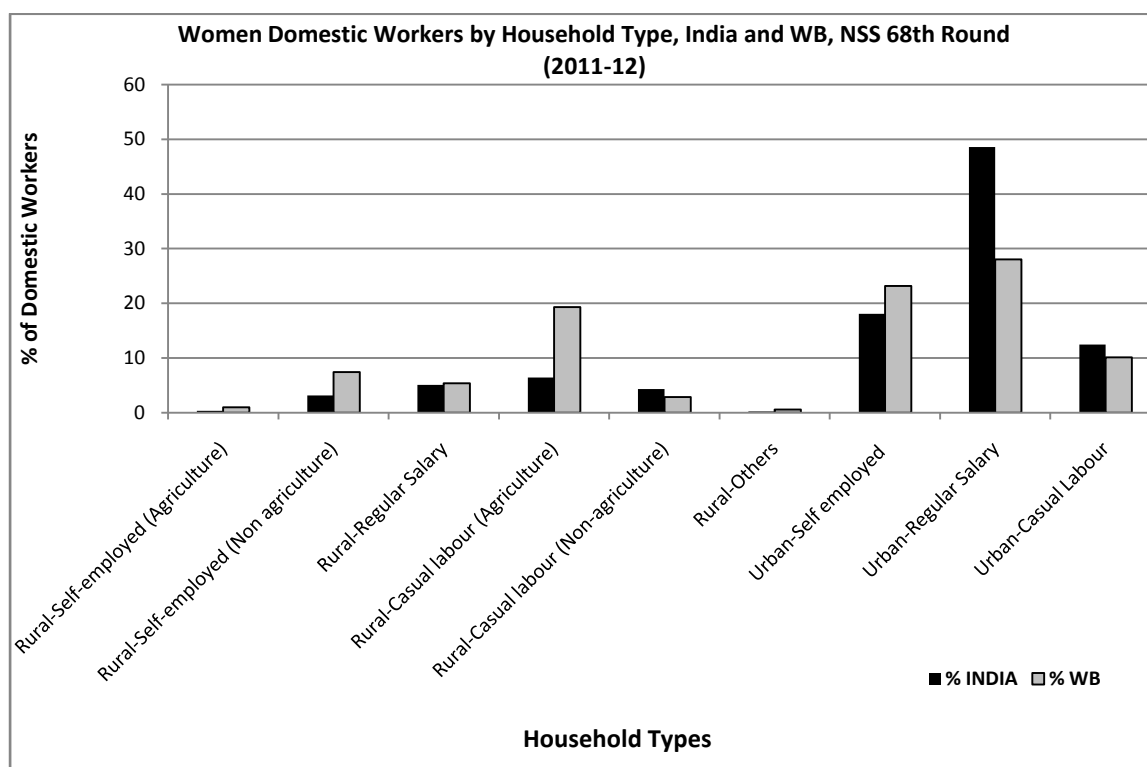
Source: NSS, 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

As regards to educational attribute of these women is concerned, there is conspicuous dominance of the illiterates in this occupation more so in West Bengal, where 70% of domestic maids have never attended school. (**Table 1.1.21**) The literate women hardly

have studied above primary level and they are reported to drop-out of schools to work and earn the supplementary household income (30%) and to attend domestic chores and looking after younger siblings (22.1%). Among the categories, baby-sitters fair better in education, with 45% reporting to have completed middle school.

Table 1.1.20 Distribution of Women Domestic Workers according to Age Cohorts, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Age Structure of the Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)					
Age Group (Years)	In %		INDIA (%)		
	INDIA	WB	Maid/servant	Cook	Ayah/ baby sitter
7-12	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
13-17	2.95	5.90	3.20	0.00	8.80
18-21	7.26	8.65	7.60	5.00	0.00
22-30	23.55	16.50	24.40	17.30	0.00
31-40	25.26	14.20	25.40	25.40	7.50
41-50	24.89	32.13	24.40	26.10	80.40
51-59	8.79	11.48	8.20	14.80	0.90
60-80	7.27	11.14	6.90	11.40	2.40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: NSS, 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB – West Bengal

About 62% of the rural women in India are found to have registered in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), while in West Bengal only 39.4% of women have a job-card. Out of the women who have job-card 87.6% women had worked in the public works programme, while the figure for India is 55.8%. (**Table 1.1.23**) On the other hand, land ownership declines with increasing holding size and is skewed towards the general population. Overall SC are found to be the most deprived group, with 93% of SC women own land in the range less than 0.05 hectares, and none owning more than 1 hectare of land. Thus, they are economically the worst off social group. While, general category women own 5.3% and 1% land within 1-2 hectares and above respectively. Facets of socio-economic discrimination and backwardness can be gauged better from distribution of a particular size of land holding across the castes. For the land holding sizes of more than 1 hectare, general castes have the major share such as 98% (1-2 hectares), 80% (5-10 hectares), 100% in the greater than 10 hectares. (**Table 1.1.22**) Analysis across the work categories of domestic workers depicts a decreasing gradation of land ownership which coincides with the wage disparity and economic inequality among the ayah, cook and domestic servants. Around 80% of the baby-sitters reported to own land while 67.3% and 57.3% of cooks and domestic servants own land respectively. (**Table 1.1.19**)

Table 1.1.21 Distribution of Women Domestic Workers according to Educational Attainment and Reasons for not Attending School, India and West Bengal, NSS, 68th Round, (2011-12)

Education Level of Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)						Reasons for not Attending School by Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round			
Education Level	% INDIA	% WB	Maid/servant (India)	Cook (India)	Ayah (India)	Attendance Status	Reasons	% INDIA	% WB
Illiterate	45.68	69.8	47.3	32.3	13.9	Never Attended	Supplement Household income	5.80	5.75
Literate without formal schooling	1.65	1.97	1.4	4.6	0.0		Education not considered necessary	6.90	16.27
Others	0.08	0.38	0.0	0.6	0.0		Attend Domestic Chores	10.55	22.13
Literate-below Primary	11.06	11.73	10.7	14.9	0.0		Others	3.57	5.05
Primary	21.81	11.6	21.7	21.3	41.1	Ever Attended but Currently Not Attending	School too far	0.55	2.96
Middle	13.62	4.41	12.8	18.9	45.0		Supplement Household income	49.07	29.03
Secondary	3.13	0.11	2.7	7.4	0.0		Education not considered necessary	3.97	11.86
Higher Secondary	2.41	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.0		Attend Domestic Chores	14.64	6.95
Graduate & above	0.56	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0		Others	4.96	0.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100		Total	100	100

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB – West Bengal

Table 1.1.22 Distribution of Women Domestic Workers across Caste according to Land Ownership, India, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Land Owned by Women Domestic Workers Across Social Groups, India, NSS 68th Round					
Land Owned (in Hectares)	Social group (in %)				
	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
0.00001-0.0500	2.0	35.0	32.0	31.0	100.0
0.50100-0.10000	4.6	13.6	81.8	0.0	100.0
0.10001-0.50000	19.0	8.6	30.2	42.2	100.0
0.50001-1.00000	42.6	43.2	1.7	12.4	100.0
1.00001-2.00000	0.3	0.0	1.6	98.2	100.0
2.00001-5.00000	33.2	0.0	6.7	60.2	100.0
5.00001-10.00000	19.5	0.0	0.0	80.5	100.0
20.00001-30.00000	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Total	4.6	32.6	30.9	31.9	100.0

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Table 1.1.23 Rural Women Domestic Workers with MGNREGA Job Card and Work Status, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Rural Women Domestic Workers Registered in any MGNREGA Job Card & Working Status, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)					
Registered	% INDIA	% WB	Work Status	% INDIA	% WB
Yes	61.59	39.41	Worked	55.83	87.63
No	38.41	60.59	Sought but did not get work	11.69	0.00
Total	100	100	Did not seek work	32.48	12.37
			Total	100	100

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

3.4 Employment Conditions and Work Profile of Women Domestic Workers in India and West Bengal

When looking into the work scenario of the women domestic workers a wide variation exists across the work categories and worker types. Around 80% and 20% of women domestics work in urban areas and villages respectively in India. But the work structure in respect of terms and conditions at the time of hiring and leave arrangements are bleak and highly informal in nature. Almost all (98.75%) domestic workers in India don't have any written job contract and 85.5% and 78% women workers in India and West Bengal respectively are not entitled for paid leave. (**Table 1.1.24**) Informality in both the work type and worker status makes this occupation further vulnerable to high exploitation in terms of payment, additional workload without overtime payment, no social security benefits and non-existent security of job tenure. Only about 1.5% of workers get provident fund, pension, health-care and maternity benefits. Payment is usually received per month (89.5%) with cases of irregularity of work existing as well where the workers are hired and paid on weekly (4.4%) and daily basis (3.3%). (**Table 1.1.26**) It concurs with the nature of work performed by these maids. Around 11.5% and 6.3% of maids in India and West Bengal do not get a full-time work and around approximately 2.1% of workers perform intermittent work especially being hired seasonally. Again ayahs, baby-sitters and governesses are usually employed on a full-time work basis (97.64%). (**Table 1.1.25**) This is because of difference in work pattern of an ayah compared to a maid servant or a cook. The degree of professional intimacy with the employer and rendering of specialized form of care-work requires a full-time work span (usually 8 to 12 hours a day), and it thus brings in a higher value of remuneration to the worker than for a cook or a maid-servant. Another possible reason could be explained from

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the fact that, most of the baby-sitters get clientele and work outsourced to them via informal chains and word of mouth from hospitals, nursing homes and health-care institutes. Thus 89% of ayahs also report to be employed in a permanent tenure of job setup unlike the helpers (54%) and cooks (49%). (**Table 1.1.26**) Interestingly, women maids in West Bengal (81%) are under-employed either in terms of amount of paid domestic work or due to low pay-scale and unavailability of work options other than domestic work, that they are reported to have been actively searching work on months when they do not have regular employment as maids. This is a contrasting picture relative to national scenario, where 31.2% of women maids do not seek work during the phases of being without work. It brings forth the dire economic situations of domestic helpers in West Bengal. Upon further disaggregation, it is revealed that women maids in the state inform that there is not enough alternative work (8.06%) as against India (4.4%) and on account of joint reasons of lack of work and utter need to earn and to supplement family income (25%) that they are compelled to actively enquire for work.(**Table 1.1.27**)

Table 1.1.24 Job Contract and Paid Leave Status of Women Domestic Workers, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Type of Job contract and Paid Leave Status of Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)						Eligible for Paid Leave of Women Domestic Workers, India, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)				
Contract	% INDIA	% WB	Paid Leave	% INDIA	% WB	Work Category	Regular Salaried/Wage-employee (%)		Casual Wage Labour (%)	
							Yes	No	Yes	No
No written job contract	98.75	100	Yes	14.58	22.0					
Written job contract for 1 year or less	1.18	0.0	No	85.42	78.0	Maid/Servant	17.1	82.9	7.3	92.7
More than 3 years	0.05	0.0	Total	100	100	Cook	7.4	92.6	0.0	100
Total	100	100				Ayah/ baby sitter/governess	8.5	91.5	100	0

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

Table 1.1.25 Work Status among Women Paid Domestic Workers, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Work Status among Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)					
Work Status	% INDIA	% WB	Work Status	% INDIA	% WB
Full time work	88.53	93.71	Regular	97.91	97.84

Part time work	11.47	6.29	Not Regular	2.09	2.16
Total	100	100	Total	100	100

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

The necessity for earning livelihood from a secondary economic activity is evident from the low rate of income that women earn from paid domestic work. In West Bengal the pay structure is all the more poor than India. Around 13% of the women maids in West Bengal reported to earn additional income from subsidiary activities as against 6% at the national level. The employment avenues is primarily the casual wage labour in private enterprise (41.03% for India) and (68% for West Bengal) such as construction work, piece-rate work etc. MGNREGA and other public works are another source of employment for these maids, followed by self-employment activities (17.1% in India) such as selling of food and non-food items, tailoring and other petty small business ventures. (**Table 1.1.27 and 1.1.28**) Domestic workers in urban areas especially in West Bengal (6.7%) are found to be registered with private placement agencies and employment exchanges. But generally, maids are found to get hired directly by their employers. (**Table 1.1.28**) Another disheartening occurrence is the lack of awareness and knowledge among the women domestic workers about the presence of union and associations for their occupation. The national figure for the women maids reporting to have no knowledge about unions is 94.6% while it is still worse for West Bengal (97.2%). From among the handful of maids who have knowledge, 79% in the state report to being a member to a union, while it is 45% for India. (**Table 1.1.29**)

Table 1.1.26 Nature of Employment and Payment received by Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Nature of Employment of Women Domestic Workers, India, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)				Interval of Payment received, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)		
Work Category	**Regular Salaried/Wage-employee (%)**		**Casual Wage Labour (%)**		**Method of Payment**	**% INDIA**	**% WB**
	Permanent	**Temporary**	**Permanent**	**Temporary**	Regular monthly salary	89.56	96.58
Maid/Servant	58.4	41.6	31.6	68.4	Regular weekly payment	4.35	1.26
Cook	51.7	48.3	1.0	99.0	Daily payment	3.32	0.14

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Ayah/ Baby sitter	88.5	11.5	100	0.0	Piece rate payment & Others	2.77	2.03
					Total	100	100

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

A comparison between the regular waged and casual domestic workers depict that there is hardly any marked difference between the two groups in terms of security of tenure. Moreover, the conditions of work and terms of employment are worse for the casual maids. In India as per 2011-12 NSS round there was about 84.3% of regular and 15.7% casual maids. The casual workers mainly the cook and ayah are not registered with the placement agencies. Around 93% of casual workers get no paid leave as against 83% for the regular wage earners. (**Table 1.1.24**) Terms like permanent, regular and fulltime-time worker is used interchangeably. But generally permanent domestic workers are referred to those who are employed in the job after completion of a trial period. Temporary workers are the ones who are on probation, *'badli'* or ad-hoc in employment and that their requirement in the job is for a specified time-period.

Table 1.1.27 Additional Work Seeking Status and Subsidiary Activity of Women Domestic Workers, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Work Seeking Status and Reasons for Seeking Additional Work of Women Domestic Workers During Months Without Work, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)								
Sought/ available for work	% INDIA	% WB	Reasons	% INDIA	% WB	Subsidiary Activity	% INDIA	% WB
Yes on most days	39.1	81.09	To Supplement income	81.58	67.44	Yes	5.56	12.72
On Some days	29.7	12.41	Not Enough work	4.46	8.06	No	94.44	87.28
No	31.2	6.50	Both	11.5	24.51	Total	100	100
Total	100	100	Others	2.47	0.00			
			Total	100	100			

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

While regularity in work refers to non-seasonal nature of job and full-time worker is the one who pursues the work for a major time span and earns substantially their livelihood from that work, it usually corresponds to 8 hour minimum work schedule per day. But in the unorganized and informal work domain like paid domestic work, these terms barely have pronounced differences. Moreover the workplace being

located within the private household precinct, the worker is invisible and the work is deprived of its due recognition in the market.

Table 1.1.28 Paid Domestic Workers by Usual Subsidiary Activity Status and Registration with Placement Agency, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Usual Subsidiary Activity Status and Registration with Placement Agency of Women Domestic Workers, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)					
USSS	% INDIA	% WB	Registration Status	% INDIA	% WB
Self Employed/Own Account Worker	17.11	8.38	Registered: only in Government Employment Exchanges	1.3	0.00
Unpaid Family Enterprise Worker	13.37	4.66	Only in Private Placement Agencies	2.5	6.70
Casual Wage Labour in Public works*	28.49	19.38	Both Government Employment exchanges and private placement agencies	0.4	0.00
Casual Wage Labour in other works	41.03	67.58	Not Registered	95.9	93.30
Total	100	100	Total	100	100
* MGNREGA works		WB - West Bengal			

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Table 1.1.29 Distribution of Paid Domestic Workers by Knowledge and Membership into Union/Association, India and West Bengal, NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)

Knowledge & Membership of Women Domestic Workers About Existence of Union/Association for their Occupation ,NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)					
Response	% INDIA	% WB	Membership	% INDIA	% WB
Yes	2.29	1.46	Yes	44.93	79.02
No	94.64	97.27	No	55.07	20.98
Not known	2.87	1.27	Total	100	100
Total	100	100			

Source: NSS 68th Round, (2011-12)   WB - West Bengal

3.5 Summary

Women's work participation has experienced decline over the years, but the proportion of women engaged in informal employment and informal sector has seen massive intensification. Feminization and increase in casual labour force is prominent in paid domestic work domain in India and West Bengal. The urban centres especially the metropolises have witnessed rise in percentages of domestic workers who cater to the growing demands from middle and upper class households. Kolkata city ranks

first in case of proportion of female workers in this occupation. The general occurrence that emerges from secondary data analysis is the poor state of living and working conditions among these maids across pan India. The concentrations of scheduled groups of population who are largely illiterate, poor and disadvantaged socio-economically are evident. The women are all the more marginalised and pushed into inequality. The following chapter thus attempts to explain and unravel the forces and factors operating behind the dynamics of paid domestic work and how it affects the lives and livelihood of the women engaged in it taking Kolkata city as the study area.

Chapter IV

Demographic, Social and Family Characteristics of Slum and Commuter Women Paid Domestic Workers in Kolkata

4.1 Characteristics of Domestic Worker

A comparative analysis has been attempted in between two broad groups of live-out paid domestic workers. A total of 360 slum dwelling and 240 commuting women workers were interviewed, across the four geographical zones of the KMC limits constituting 141 municipal wards. The are sub-divided as north, west, south and central Kolkata zones within which 93, 96, 101 and 70 samples were collected from each zone respectively, thus constituting 25.85%, 26.67%, 28.06% and 19.44% of the total sample size of slum dwelling domestics. Among the remaining commuter workers, 105, 30 and 105 women were canvassed from north, west and south Kolkata zones constituting 43.75%, 12.5% and 43.75% of total commuter women sample size. Though work-categories was not used as a principle basis of selection of the samples, but upon investigation it is apparent that the sub-group of house-cleaners who perform primarily floor sweeping and mopping, utensil cleaning and clothes washing comprises a much larger proportion among the domestic workers. There are 5 sub-categories of workers identified namely house-cleaners (55.5%), cook (18%), ayah or babysitters (8.7%), cook and house-cleaners (14.8%) and a overlapping group of cook cum ayah and housecleaners (3%). Paid domestic work in the lowest level of understanding principally focuses on house-cleaning and minor allied activities but the care activities for elderly, disabled, sick and baby-sitting also comes under its broader ambit.

 The caste-wise distribution shows that it is mainly the scheduled caste (SC) population that is engaged in paid domestic work, amounting to more than 50.8% of the samples, while general caste women follows next at 31.8%, then by other backward classes (OBC) at 15.3% and 2% of scheduled tribes (ST). Likewise 91% of the women were Hindus, and 8.7% were Muslims including two Christian women. (**Table 1.2.1.1**) About 16% of the commuter women were Muslims, employed in and around the Park Circus station locale. An important point that floated through the survey indicated a strong preference of religious similarity among both the employing

households and the maids. Thus few residential pockets in the city like Park Circus, New Alipore, Lake Market demonstrate religion and language based concentrations of domestic helpers and employer communities.

Map 3.28.1
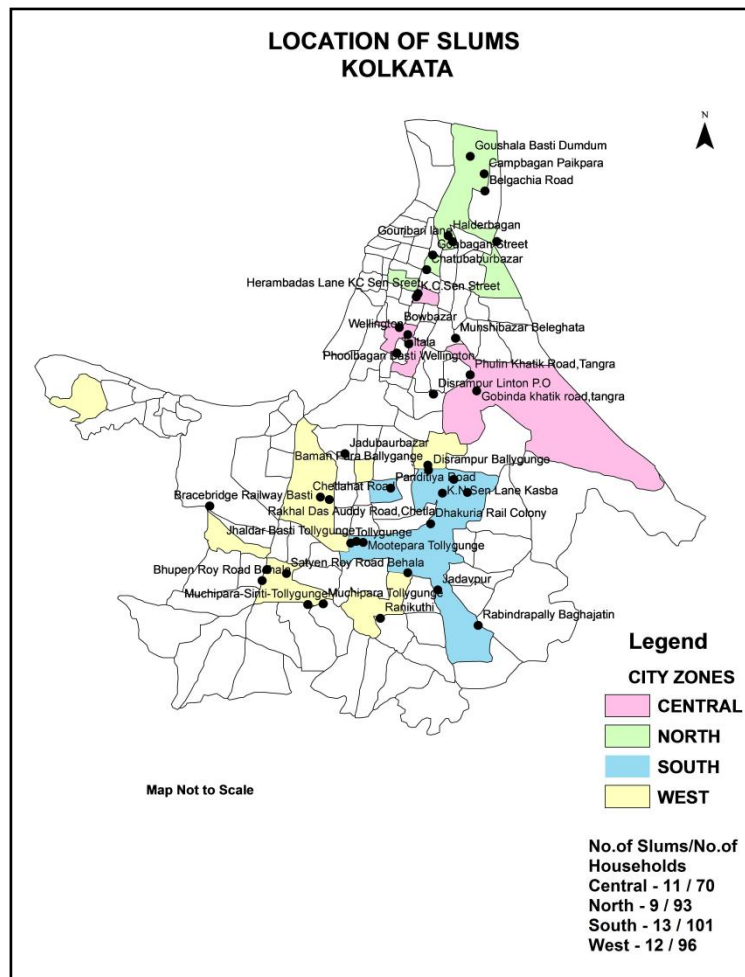
Source: Census of India, 2011 & Field Survey, (2014-15)

Muslim women (8.3%) especially from OBC groups are seen to work in larger numbers in the Muslim dominated residential neighbourhood of Park Circus, while Bihari (14.3%) and Christian maids mostly work in and around KC Sen Street, Tangra, Panditiya Road slums and Sealdah region. Majority of the respondents have Bengali (84.5%) as their mother tongue with few among them are bilingual, being able to speak and understand Hindi. Around 14.3% of the respondents reported Hindi or Bihari (specifically Maithili, Bhojpuri) as their mother tongue. These women were found to be either migrants or have inter-generational roots in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. The age structure has been sub-grouped into 4 categories (**Table**

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1.2.1.2). It is mainly the middle aged women within age groups of 36 to 59 years that are employed in paid work. Around 58.1% of slum and 63.7% of commuter women belong to middle age, while 30% and 28.7% women in both groups are from youthful age cohorts (21-35 years) and 2.2% and 2.9% of slum and commuter groups are young adults (18-20 years).

Map 3.28.2
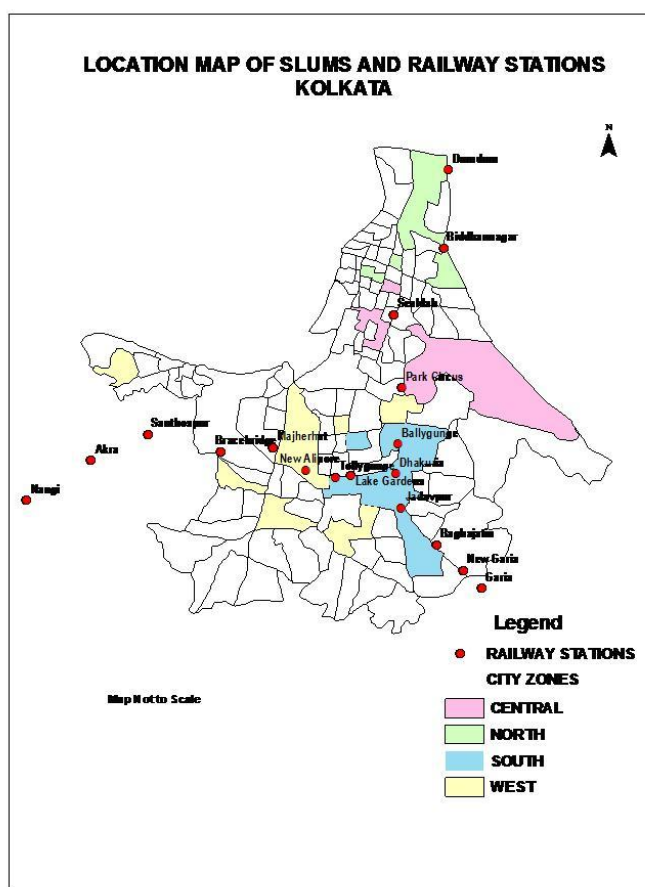
Source: Census of India, 2011 & Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.2.1.1 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Social Background

Religion	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Caste	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Mother Tongue	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Education Level	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)

Hindu	95.8	83.8	SC	53.1	47.5	Bengali	81.9	88.3	Illiterate	56.7	72.1
Muslim	3.9	15.8	ST	2.2	1.7	Hindi/Bihari	16.7	10.8	1-5	26.1	21.7
Christian	0.3	0.4	OBC	9.2	24.6	Urdu	0.8	0.8	6-8	11.4	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	General	35.6	26.3	Nepali	0.6	0.0	9-10	5.8	1.3
			Total	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0	11-12	0.0	0.4
									Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Another disturbing occurrence is the presence of 10% of slum dwelling maids and 5% of commuting maids in the 60 to 80 years age cohort in this profession, though ageing does reduce the propensity to commuter long distances to work, and mostly the middle age women and youth have greater tendency to commute. (**Table 1.2.1.2**) Most elderly women cited issues of children not caring for them, widowhood and unemployment of head of the household as reasons for still working in old age. Among the caste groups SC women join the labour market at a young age, thus 2.6% SC women as young as 18-20 years are found to be working. Up to age group of 20-25 years, SC women outnumber other caste groups. But age cohorts above 26 years, shows an increased proportion of general caste women to engage in the work market.

Figure 2.4
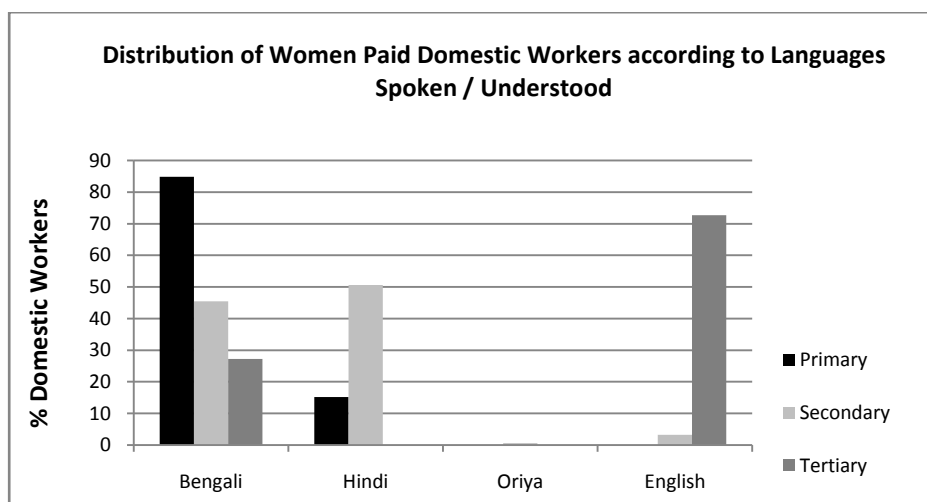
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.2.1.2 Distribution of Domestic Workers across Age Groups

Age Distribution of Commuter Domestic Workers

Age Group in years	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Population Groups by Age-Slum (N / %)	Population Groups by Age-Commuter (N / %)
<= 20	2.2	2.9	Young Adults (18-20 years) = 8 **(2.2%)**	Young Adults (18-20 years) = 7 **(2.9%)**
21-25	6.4	4.2	Youth (21-35 years) =108 **(30%)**	Youth (21-35 years) = 69 **(28.75%)**
26-30	12.5	9.2		
31-35	11.1	15.4		
36-40	17.8	22.9	Middle aged (36-59 years) = 209 **(58.05%)**	Middle aged (36-59 years) = 153 **(63.75%)**
41-45	15.0	17.5		
46-50	11.4	15.8		
51-55	7.2	4.6		
56-59	6.4	2.9		
60-65	6.9	4.2	Aged (60-80 years) = 35 **(9.72%)**	Aged (60-80 years) = 11 **(4.58%)**
66-80	3.1	.4		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Ayah work is usually preferred by women who are widows or married in the higher middle aged women households and their mean age is slightly higher than other work categories. The average age of ayah workers is 47 years while for the cooks it is 43 and it is still relatively younger among the women who are domestic helpers at 40 years. (**Table 1.2.2**) This can be explained from health viewpoint and nature of tasks performed. Untrained and generally inexperienced younger women are not recruited as ayah or baby-sitters as the work entails forming closer and deeper human bonds between the employer and the maid and also the work profile requires some basic skill and minimum expertise which is crucial to handle and care for the aged or a newborn infant, and this develops with training or with age. With most domestic workers entering labour market sans training, age factor indirectly determines the work categorization.

Table 1.2.2 Distribution of Domestic Worker Categories by Social Characteristics

Characteristics of Work Categories of Women Paid Domestic Workers						
		Work Categories (%)				
Variables	Characteristics	Ayah	Cook	Domestic Helper	Cook & Helper	Ayah & Cook & Helper
EDUCATION (%)	Literates	59.6	48.1	28.5	34.8	50.0
	Literates Completed Elementary Schooling	19.4	30.8	14.4	11.8	33.3
AGE	Mean Age (Years)	47	43	40	42	45
MARITAL STATUS (%)	Unmarried	9.6	6.5	4.8	5.6	5.2
	Currently Married	42.3	64.8	70.0	55.6	66.2
	Divorced\Separated	9.6	4.6	6.0	11.1	6.0
	Widowed	38.5	24.1	19.2	27.8	22.3
	Total	100	100	100	100	100
CASTE (%)	SC	51.9	38.0	54.4	52.8	50.0
	ST	0.0	0.9	1.5	6.7	0.0
	OBC	1.9	9.3	19.5	12.4	27.8

	General	46.2	51.9	24.6	28.1	22.2
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Literacy rates are low at 36.3%, but it is slightly higher for the slum dwellers at 43.3% as against 28% for the commuters. Among the literates education level is principally up to primary level (24.3%) and elementary level (8.7%), mostly the women dropped out before completing standard five, and only a handful women completed class 10 level. General caste women fare better in literacy (50.8% for slum women and 37.9% for commuters) relative to other groups. The proportion of illiterates is highest among OBC women (76.1%) and SC (67%) and lowest among general caste (53%). Among the literate domestic workers general caste women (25%) have completed elementary schooling while only 4.5% of OBC women come under the same. There is a significant relation between work category and literacy among the women workers at 1% level of significance but the strength of association is moderate (Phi and Cramer value of 0.22). Literacy and place of residence of the workers have significant relation but strength of association is weak (Cramer's value is 0.187). Literacy and type of maid (slum or commuter) has significant relation just like with caste (general and non-general caste), but the strength is weak. Around 53% general caste women are illiterate as against a larger 68.7% women belonging to non-general castes. Education level of the head of household has highly significant relation with location of the sample household (slum and commuter) with 75% of commuter and 56.4% slum households have illiterate heads.

Table 1.2.2.1 Literacy across the Domestic Workers by Caste

Literacy	Castes (N / %)		Total
	Non-General	General	
Literate	128	90	218
	31.3%	47.1%	36.3%
illiterate	281	101	382
	68.7%	52.9%	63.7%
Total	409	191	600
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Chi Square = 14.095 (df =1) p < 0.001			

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Across the religious distribution, around 37.18% of Hindu and 25% of the Muslim women are literates within their community, with only 13% of the commuting

Muslim women are literates as against 57.14% of the slum dwelling Muslim women, thereby highlighting that poverty dimensions are severe for Muslims in villages and small towns in West Bengal than Kolkata and thus educational attainments vary. Among the literate Muslims, none have completed elementary schooling, whereas 20.2% of literate Hindu women workers have finished elementary schooling and 11.2% Hindus also completed secondary schooling and one woman also studied up to standard 12th as well. Drop out rates are usually high and the reasons cited can be grouped into economic, social and personal. (**Table 1.2.3**) Poverty is the biggest reason for dropping out of school mid-way followed by early marriage as reported by 78% and 8.17% of women. Death of parents, large number of siblings to look after, attending household chores and disinterest in studies are some of the other grounds for dropping out apart from issues like nearest school being very far from home and gender discrimination. About 20.6% slum maids and 15% commuters have siblings while 20.3% women have up to 2 siblings and more than 40% have 3 to 5 siblings which justify the rationale behind illiteracy and school drop occurrences.

Table 1.2.3 Reasons cited by Domestic Workers for Dropping out and Never Attending School

Reasons for Dropping out/non attendance in School of Domestic Workers					
Causes	Reasons	Primary (N)	Secondary (N)	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)
Economic	Poverty	468	9	78.00	16.98
	Family Problem/large number of Siblings	25	14	4.17	26.42
	Started working early to help family Financially	10	8	1.67	15.09
	Death of Parents	26	6	4.33	11.32
Social	Early Marriage	49	9	8.17	16.98
	Parents did not send School as I am Woman	2	2	0.33	3.77
	School was far from Home	2	0	0.33	0.00
Personal	Non-interest in Studies	14	3	2.33	5.66
	Migrated from Bangladesh	2	1	0.33	1.89
	Health Issues	2	1	0.33	1.89
	Total	600	53	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Most of them are first generational learners and thus shortfall of self and parental motivation and absence of effective study environment at home often also results in drop-out. The rural-urban differential in literacy rate and completion of elementary

schooling is distinct with rural women literates being half of that of urban women at 21.4% and only 6% village women finishing standard VIII against 22% urban women workers. Around 14% of the illiterate women claimed to sign their names. Literacy rate of women maids in general is poor but women in male headed households are marginally in better position with 38.3% literacy rate as against 33% in women headed households. Strikingly, the literacy rates are skewed across the work categories of domestic workers, with ayahs reporting highest proportion of women literates (60%) unlike cooks (48.1%) and the lowest among domestic helpers (28.5%). Women who overlap as cook cum helper have 35% literacy while the proportion increases to 50% among women who work as ayah alongside cooking and helping tasks. The completion rate of elementary education among the literates is highest among cooks (30.7%), followed by ayah (19.3%) and lowest among domestic helpers (14.4%). Thus literacy rate and differential attainment of education does affect the work category of a domestic worker which in turn results in inter-category wage differentiation.

 Paid domestic work primarily thrives on the information network within close linkage of maids and the personal contacts with employers. Thus presence of a social network is the foremost determinant in the introduction and sustenance of the women folk in the job. Usually it is the sisters, aunts and other women relatives of the maid who have prior work experience in maid's work and who help their family members in the recruitment process. 45.3% and 38% of slum and commuter women inform that around 2 of their family members both natal and marital, are domestic workers, while 10% of all the workers report to have 3 to 13 family members in paid domestic work. Around 20 domestic workers all of whom worked as domestic helpers were found to be disabled, of which 85% suffered partial vision loss. Disability registers a kind of obstacle in wage negotiation, as was found in few sample cases. A deaf and mute commuter women maid working around Jadavpur railway station neighbourhood in south Kolkata, reported to be working in 10 employer households earning Rs 200 per house and was visibly exploited economically. She also reported to have suffered job loss without any compensation on account of loosing her speech ability few years back.

Child marriage has been a known incidence in West Bengal, and is evident from the primary data. It is a sad picture to hear that 21% of the sample women (16.7% among

slum and 27% among commuter women) reported to be married in the young and docile age of less than 14 years, sometimes as young as 7 years. Majority of women around 54.3% got married before the legal age of 18 years. Paid domestic work is an easy work option among the widowed (22.7%) and separated (6.33%) women folk. Quite a few women in the young age group of 26 to 30 years are separated from their husbands and thus have taken to paid work for financial support and bringing up her children. 66% of the sample women are married, while 6.33% are separated or divorced and 5.2% are unmarried or never-married. Strikingly, 23% women are widows and have participated in paid domestic work after the death of husbands.

4.2 Migration Details of Domestic Workers

 Slums are usually seen as the place where people from low socio-economic and poorer strata live. This is also supported by the notion that slums shelter substantial proportion of migrant population, who usually come to bigger cities and metropolises in search of employment, better paying jobs to support their family back in their places of origin. On the similar foundation, it is been seen that around 46% of the slum women are migrants, of which 69% and 31.1% migrated from rural areas and urban centres respectively. Among the commuters 62.2% of the migrant women have migrated from villages other than their present place of stay and 38% from urban areas. Women are regarded as associational migrants and the decision to migrate is primarily a family decision (92%) among the economically disadvantaged women like the maids. Women maids migrated with their husbands (68.3% in slums and 73% among commuters) after marriage or to join their husbands and marital family to look after them in to the slums, but around 9.4% women reported to have migrated with their parental families, mostly during their childhood. Determinants of migration are classified in to economic, socio-political, socio-cultural and natural. Apart from marriage (60%), reasons cited focus on poverty (7%), search for better employment (11%), high paying jobs, economic reasons to work as domestic workers, lack of suitable work options at their native places were also cited as the primary reasons (**Table 1.2.4**). When the location of natal family and marital family is tabulated, South 24 Parganas district stands out as the one from where the major share of maids; both commuter and slum dwellers work in Kolkata. About 36% of all the sample women are born and brought up in Kolkata and 46.3% maids have their marital family

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located in Kolkata, few women have been married into families located in Bihar, Orissa.

Table 1.2.4 Reasons cited by Domestic Workers for Migration from their Native Places and Persons Migrated with

Reasons for Migration by Domestic Worker				People Accompanying During Migration		
Causes	Reasons	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Migration With	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
Socio-Cultural	Marriage	59.64	0.0	Single	2.4	4.5
	To join Husband in city/ to look after husband or other relatives	5.82	10.0	Parental family/sisters/kin	13.4	3.6
	Death of father/parent	1.82	0.0	Husband	68.3	73.0
Economic	Family poverty	6.91	20.0	Peer group/friends	0.6	0.0
	Widow/Separated/for Self sustenance/ work to bring-up children	5.09	0.0	Other Distant Relatives	1.8	0.0
	Search Better job & Good paying job	10.55	40.0	Known people of native place/co-villagers	0.6	0.0
	Work to repay Loan/Debt Burden	1.09	0.0	Child/children only	3.7	6.3
	Lack of work/low income in source region	3.27	25.0	Marital Family/Husband and Children	9.1	12.6
Socio-Political	Feud with Family/ to occupy a Property	2.91	0.0	Total	100.0	100.0
	Political reason/Partition	2.55	5.0			
Natural	Natural Calamity	0.36	0.0			
	Total	100	100			

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Migration is seen to be mainly of short-distance and inter-district in nature, as it is from the surrounding Kolkata Urban Agglomeration area (86% of total migrants) constituted by 6 neighbouring districts that women mainly have migrated to Kolkata city limits. South 24 Parganas (52.1%), North 24 Parganas (9.1%) and Purba Medinipur (3.6%) stand out from within West Bengal as the most contributing districts to in-migration to Kolkata and native place of the commuters. Few cases of long distance migration from neighbouring Bangladesh (3.2%) have also been reported. Few districts of Bihar (7.2%) such as Nawada, Saran, Gaya, Vaishali, Munger and Patna are found to have migration links with Kolkata. Migrants also from Orissa (1.4%) and Jharkhand such as from Bhadrak, Ganjam, Dumka were found working as maids.

Migration has been seen as a backbone of the steady supply of cheap labour into the cities, who usually take up work in the informal employment situations and provide

valuable services in the heavy demand labour-intensive sectors and personalised jobs like paid domestic work, laundry service, watchmen, sweeper among many. It also signifies the strong network of social relations that help to cope with opportunity cost of time and money invested in migration. The already existing social network in the form of known villagers, extended families and relatives in the city provide the benefits of initial stay upon arrival, often finding jobs via word of mouth and teaching these women the conventional trade tactics of their occupation. About 7.6% women maids were recent migrants (less than 5 years) and 25% are permanent migrants residing in Kolkata for more than 30 to 40 years. Most of the migrant women maid landed in the city or in the suburbs with their husbands and families and eventually took up paid domestic work to supplement household income. Around 21.3% women are living for 5 to 15 years in Kolkata and another 46% for 15 to 30 years. The existence of the thriving network of friends, peer group and native acquaintance can be estimated from the remittance linkage that exists between the source and the destination regions. Around 25.3% of the sample women were aware about the incidences of their family members migrated to the city for working as maids. This provided an added motivation and psychological security to these women to follow suit. Upon arrival to the city, they stayed the initial period with their village associates who also cushioned them economically and socially and helped them getting recruited to their first job as maid. About 17.4% of the women migrants into the slums acknowledged the help that they received from their social network in accommodation, job search, and eventually settling up their own homes in the city. The maids inform that they usually visit their native places mostly once (23.7%) or twice (11.5%) a year especially during festivals and duration of stay is brief of one week or less. About 42.1% women do not visit at all and 7% go after many years interval. Lack of paid leave and over-supply of labour in market meant the women could not risk losing job to other women in the wake of staying back for a longer period at native places. Many commuter women revealed that they have migrated into the suburbs of Sonarpur, Garia, Baruipur and Barasat in the district of S.24 Parganas from remote villages of the district, in order to cut down on travel costs and time. Migration decision was jointly taken along with their husbands in order to find work in the city and at times to repay back the previous loans borrowed. This living arrangement helped them earn a higher income relative to the native places and would enable them to pay back their indebtedness. High rent amount and exorbitant cost of

living in Kolkata compels them to live in its suburbs incurring much lesser house rent and travel cost. They occasionally visit their extended family and children (5% maids visit twice or once per month) who choose to stay back in the villages. Around 32 women reported to be employed as paid domestic worker in their native places, but chose to commute to work in the city on account of wider wage differential (44.12%), marriage (32.4%) and geographical mobility of husband's place of work (23.5%). Only about 11 women admitted to have faced objection from their extended family for opting to migrate.

4.3 Family and Household Characteristics of Domestic Worker

The proportion of nuclear family has substantially increased over the years and thus 73% domestic workers mainly come from a family setup living with their husbands and children or their parents and siblings (7.8%). Higher cost of living, lack of household space in the slums and attitudinal shift towards individualism and small family norms have thus resulted in reduction of joint and extended household family structures. Thus living arrangements show that around 6.5% maids live with spouse and 35.3% women live with their husband and children only. Many widowed women live with her son and his family (12.3%) and even with their married daughters (1.5%). There are incidences of domestic violence as reported by these women, who silently suffer at the hands of son and daughter in law. Quite a few women live alone in single member households, both in slum (7%) and among the commuter ones (8.8%). About 53% and 60.4% of the slum and commuter households have husbands of the women workers as head of the households. Primarily the separated and widowed women are the head of the household (27%) and live with their children only (6.3%), especially the commuter women who have been deserted by their husbands and live with their children (3%). Around 18% of the women have grandchildren in their house and 20.3% of the women live with her marital family. Household size generally lies in between 2 to 4 persons (44% households) indicative of nuclear structure. Presence of joint family branches with more than one brother and his family makes household size go up to 6 to 8 people (7.5%). Around 12% and 7.7% of households of the domestic worker comprise of 2 member and single household respectively. Share of household sizes of more than 8 members is high in the central (5.7%) and western slums (5.2%) and commuter south zone (4.8%). Among the slum households, 30% are regular salaried or income earner households

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except the ones where the head of the household is a domestic worker. Self employed and casual labour household types make up 20% and 14.4% respectively. Most of the urban commuter women maids belong to casual labour households (9.2%). While self employed households except where the head is the domestic worker is 6.7% and only 5% households are self employed. Non-agricultural households both for the casual labour (11.7%) and self employed (10%) form the highest share of household types among the rural commuter group, while 6% of the households are of self employed in agriculture type.

4.3.1 Women Headed Households among Domestic Workers

The proportion of women headed households is 38%, with 40% among slum and 35% among commuter workers while it is higher among the Muslim workers (44.2%) relative to Hindus (37.2%). 72% of the women headed households have these domestic workers as heads. Distribution shows that there is not much difference across the OBC and general households (42% each) and migrant (37.3%) or non-migrant (38.3%) households with women headship. About 43% and 37% of women headed households are Hindi and Bengali speaking respectively. Ayah and baby-sitters mostly are seen to belong to a higher age group and are widowed or separated, thus around 58% of the ayahs come from households with women headship, while it is 32% and 36.3% among the cook and housecleaners respectively.

The financial stress of the women headed households can be assessed from the asset ownership differential between the former and the male headed households. Television is owned by 54.6% women headed households, mobile (55.1%), land (6.2%), LPG (22.5%) and house (60%) as against 65%, 73.7%, 11%, 31.6% and 65% among the male headed households respectively. About 55.1% below poverty line (BPL) households are under women headship, though the access to PDS among both kinds of households is not much different. The single headed households, where the domestic worker is living alone is 41.3% among general castes, 30.4% among SC and 17.4% among Muslims. 50% of the women who are living alone are widows, with unmarried and separated amounting to 21.7% each and the age distribution reveals that 21.7% of these women are aged. About 74% of the widowed women workers are illiterate and 14.2% belong to Hindi speaking non-Bengali community. About 65.7% of the interviewed widows live in Kolkata slums, 8.2% are Muslims and 52.2% are

SC. About 29.1% of the widowed women are aged while 3% have lost their husbands in their youth (21-35 years). Although 88.1% of these widows are head of their own households, but instances where father (1.5%), son (3%) and mother-in-law (3%) are heads are also found. Family structure is mostly nucleated (56%), whereby widowed women maids are usually living with their children (21%) and others (61.9%).

4.3.2 Demographic Profile of the Domestic Worker Households

As per the Census of India 2011, the proportion of SC population in the north, west, south and central parts of the city slum wards that were canvassed in field survey and grouped into spatial zones is 3%, 4.9%, 5.2 % and 10% respectively. The literacy rate being highest in the northern wards (83%) followed by southern slum wards (78.6%), west (75.2%) and lowest at central wards (71.1%). Among the female slum population, the literacy rates for north, west, south and central wards are 80%, 73.3%, 70.2% and 66.7% respectively. The same is witnessed in the primary survey. Distribution of household members of the domestic workers show the presence of more females than males but more than 50% males are never married relative to females (32%). Sex ratio is 1078 women per 1000 men and child sex ratio (CSR) is 813 girls per 1000 boys. CSR is less than half for the commuter households at 511 than at1102 for the slum counterparts. Out of the total slum dwelling domestic workers, 190 women report to have children below 14 years of age in their household, while 170 women do not, while it is 121 and 119 respectively among the commuter women. The proportion of households having no non adult member in the households stands at 38.1% in the slums and 42% among the commuters. (**Table 1.2.5**) The distribution of the dependant population of the children (0-14 years) and the aged (60 years and above) is 22% and 7.16% respectively. Dependency ratio is highest in the northern zone (47.7%) and lowest in southern zone (37.1%) among the slum households, while it is again highest for the northern commuter households at 43.8% and lowest among the western households at 27.3%.

Youth dependency ratio is highest among the commuter north and lowest among the commuter west, while old dependency ratio is highest among the slum north zone. The proportion of aged population is highest at 9.07% in northern slums and children population is highest among the northern commuter households at 24.5%. About 25% households have only a child, while 27% households report sheltering more than 2

children. 25.3% slum households and 18.3% of commuter households have at least 1 aged person. Out of that around 17.2% and 6.7% aged persons respectively work to earn their living. In their life-time the total number of children born to the domestic worker women is an important indicator of their reproductive behaviour.

Table 1.2.5 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Households by Age group and Dependency Ratio

Categories	Regions	Age-group (Years)				% of Population across Age Groups (Years)			Total dependency ratio	Youth dependency ratio	Old dependency ratio	Child Sex Ratio
		0-14	15-59	60 & above	Total pop	0-14	15-59	60 & above				
Slum	North	90	262	35	387	23.26	67.70	9.04	47.71	34.35	13.36	1000
	West	85	299	33	417	20.38	71.70	7.91	39.46	28.43	11.04	1200
	South	77	288	30	395	19.49	72.91	7.59	37.15	26.74	10.42	917
	Central	74	227	23	324	22.84	70.06	7.10	42.73	32.60	10.13	1214
Commuter	North	102	290	25	417	24.46	69.54	6.00	43.79	35.17	8.62	350
	West	20	88	4	112	17.86	78.57	3.57	27.27	22.73	4.55	286
	South	98	308	28	434	22.58	70.97	6.45	40.91	31.82	9.09	750
	Total	546	1762	178	2486	21.96	70.88	7.16				813

Demographic Profile of the Households of Domestic Workers

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

These include the children who died in their lifetime and also the married daughters and the sons who do not live with the women in the same household. Around 42% of women both slum and commuter report bearing two children, while less than 5% women have born four or more children. Women bearing three or more children are slightly higher for the commuter women than the slum dwellers. The age-wise distribution of household members shows that proportion of female members is 52.5% and 50.9% in slum and commuter households respectively, with never married male population being 53.2% and 50.2%. Following the age-sex pyramidal structure found in India, among the respondent households too females are greater than males from the age-group 36-40 years and above, while proportion of males is higher in lower age-groups.

Educational attainments of both the head of the households and of its members are much lower and it is manifested in the occupational distribution, which is mainly informal, casual or self employment in nature. Unemployment level is 8.4% and 11.6% among the slum and commuter households, while the out of labour force group

comprises 34.3% and 36.6% respectively. About 64% and 18% of the members are illiterate and educated up to primary level respectively, illiteracy being higher among the commuter (51.2%) than slum households (37.8%). Among the slum households about 47% women are illiterate compared to 28% of men, while it is 58% and 44% in the commuter households. Educational qualification is substantially poor among the women and more so for the commuting women at all levels of education. For instance slum men completing secondary level of education is more than twice at 18.7% than slum women at 9.5%, but the attainments are much lower at 9.1% and 6.1% for the same. Overall gender differential in literacy rate is 12.1% and is biased towards men, but the inter-zonal disparity of this differential remains as high as 18% and 17% for the western slums and southern commuter zones respectively, while the literacy levels of both gender is similar for the central slum households with differential being less than 1%. About 30% of the literate members except the domestic workers have studied above elementary education.

4.3.3 Children in the Households and their School Enrolment

The households reportedly having children less than 18 years of age were canvassed in terms of school going behaviour of the children. Out of the 27% of the children up to 18 years of age in the households, 31.4% children do not attend school and the figure is almost double for the commuter households at 43.2% compared to the slum children (23.6%). (**Table 1.2.6**)

Drop-out among household children is an important factor which can become a social problem, given the fact that many children are first generational learners in their family. About 13% of the total household children and 80 children of the domestic worker herself reported to have dropped out of the school due to varied reasons. The lack of adequate encouraging environment at home with parents being mostly illiterates and lack of motivation at school with sub-standard performance of many municipal and village schools often act as indirect deterrents resulting in drop-outs. Girl children have a greater likelihood to be pulled out of school after attaining the adolescence on account of poor toilet facilities at school and on pretext of learning housework to be married off at an early age. Work participation for supplementing household income and disinterestedness in studies along with poverty stand out as the major reasons for the children to leave school without completion.

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Figure 2.5

Age-Sex Pyramid of the Household Members of Domestic Workers

Figure 2.6

Literacy of Male and Female Members across Households of Paid Domestic Workers, Kolkata
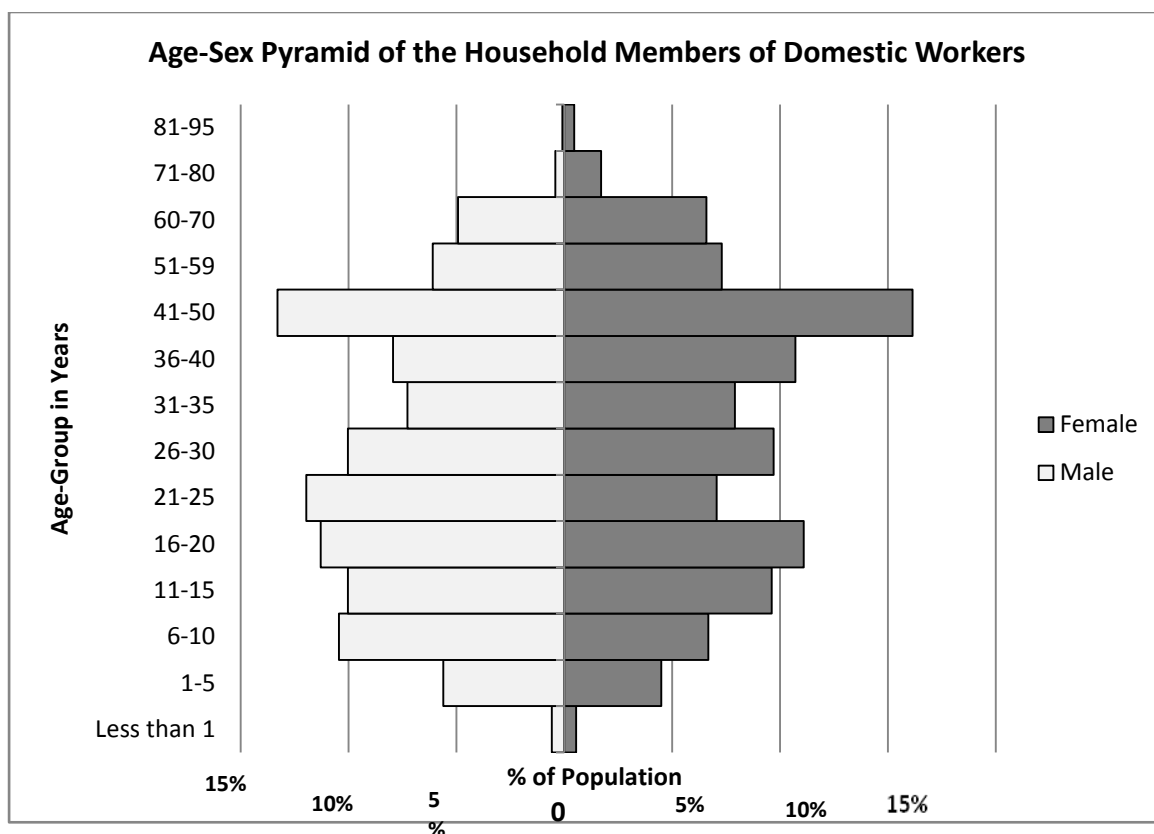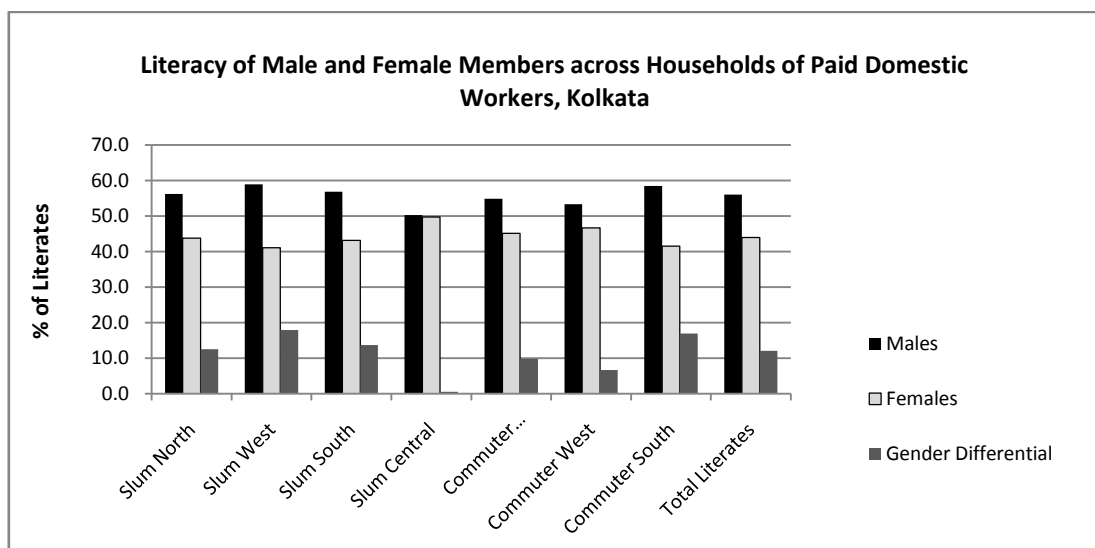
Drop out children generally were doing nothing or loitering whole day (59%), and 20.4% are engaged in economically gainful activity and another 18.4% mostly girl

children who help in performing household chores and looking after younger siblings. Similarly many respondents (70.3%) have said that their grandchildren attend school. About 14.2% women have grandchildren attending school. Out of the 1519 members of the 360 slum households, and out of 965 members of 240 commuter households, 22% or 332 children and young adults more than 18 years and 17.2% or 166 children age attend educational institution respectively. Majority of them attend government schools (more than 92%) and colleges, while it is mainly the nursery going and kindergarten level children who attend private facilities. Few village children also were attending local community crèches and schools (3.2%). The chief medium of transport mode of the children to attend school is on feet. Few students travel by bus, and pool-car and cycles and train (5.2%). Children up to elementary school level that is up to standard eighth receive grant of mid-day meals (13.7% slum and 11.3% commuter household children) from the public schools and a yearly grant of free school uniform and books. Children in the kindergarten levels in government facilities, primarily *Anganwadi* set-up that is up to 6 years of age are provided with free education and meals.

Table 1.2.6 Distribution of Children of the Domestic Worker Households by School Attendance

Class Level Attended Currently by the School going Age population (less than 18 years) Household Members of Domestic Workers			
Class	Slum	Commuter	Total
Nursery-Kindergarten	26	7	33
	6.5%	2.6%	5.0%
1-5	151	69	220
	37.8%	25.9%	33.1%
6-8	70	47	117
	17.5%	17.7%	17.6%
9-10	42	23	65
	10.5%	8.6%	9.8%
11-12	12	4	16
	3.0%	1.5%	2.4%
Graduation	4	1	5
	1.0%	.4%	.8%
Does not Attend School	94	115	209
	23.6%	43.2%	31.4%
Total	399	266	665
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.2.7 Supervision of Children of Domestic Worker by Different Care-Givers

Persons Supervising/Caring the Children of Domestic Workers in her Absence (in %)			
Persons	Primary Supervisor	Secondary Supervisor	Tertiary Supervisor
Older Sibling	34.44	0.68	2.70
Marital Family	12.40	3.38	2.70
Take along to workplace	1.94	0.68	2.70
Natal Family and Mother	8.14	1.35	2.70
Remain Alone	31.40	27.70	2.70
Crèche	0.00	0.68	0.00
Local area Community Centre / NGO	0.39	1.35	2.70
Neighbour / Friend	2.33	1.35	2.70
School	3.88	58.11	78.38
Daughter in law	0.39	0.68	2.70
Husband	4.65	4.05	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The social cost of participation in the paid labour market of these women is varied at personal and familial levels. After a tiring schedule at paid work, the women have to bear the burden of household work which on most instances they are not assisted by their family members. Cooking, fetching water from sources usually situated outside house precincts, housework and care giving activities to the sick, disabled, children and aged members is mostly performed by the women of the house. The opportunity cost of paid work is highest in terms the time the married women domestics spend at paid work and their non-adult children spend alone or in care of the supervisor. The primary surveillance of the smaller children and infants is entrusted with the older sibling or the eldest child of the maid (34.1%) or the children remain alone (31.4%) during their mother's absence from home. The supportive natal family (8.1%) and in-laws (12.4%) and neighbourhood friend circle (4%) of the women worker also form crucial part of the care-chain. (**Table 1.2.7**) Children enrolled in schools also spend considerable time there. Handful of women have to pay a nominal amount to the community or local club crèche services for child care and few women report to face non-monetary consequences of supervision from others. Sometimes they have to listen to the complaints (71.4% respondents) from the supervisor.

4.4 Distribution of Household Members of Domestic Workers by Occupation

Paid domestic work sector has been seeing rapid increase in proportion of labour supply since few years. It is an easier employment avenue for illiterate women who

lack financial means for self employment. Women often look for jobs closer to their residence to facilitate looking after their own household. Many women thus engage in part-time household based familiar jobs and paid domestic work is one of the best available options also because it is easy to join the domestic labour market. It is seen as an extension of household work that women are accustomed to perform at own homes, thus requiring less skills and no training and it is regarded as much less strenuous than other labour-intensive work like manual labour at construction sites, freight-loading etc. Given the increased standards of living and increased participation of educated women of middle and high income households, the demand to paid domestic workers have seen fillip in recent times. NIC 2008 and NCO 2004 classification has been followed to categorize the occupational information about the interviewees themselves and their family members.

4.4.1 Previous Occupation of the Domestic Worker

Many women both among the commuters and the slum residing, have changed their occupation into paid domestic work on account of economic distress and dislike for earlier job. Around 24.2% of the women interviewed changed their occupation into domestic work. The remaining 68% were house-wives and 2.3% were students and others were unemployed before entering this profession. Among the women who were engaged in prior economically gainful work, 56.6% were working as ayah in hospitals, live-in maids, and other care activities. Around 10% of women especially the commuters worked as farm help in family landholdings or as hired agricultural labourers and share-croppers in others land. Quite a few women (13.7%) were involved as casual or piece-rate workers in manufacturing of consumer products such as textile, leather, rubber, paper, plastics etc which entailed home-based work against meagre amount of payment. Slum women are usually involved in preparing incense sticks, envelope boxes, toys, garland, buttons, bags and purses, nylon nets, '*zari-moti*' embroidery work and '*bidi*' making among others. Few women also worked as salon assistants, sweepers, brick kiln workers (2.8%). A handful of women were also found to be running petty business (7.6%) of selling tea, snacks and food items, but irregular and insufficient income from self-employment made them engage in work as domestic maids. Better scale and regularity in income and thereby increased scope of saving money was reported by 47% of the maids as the main reason for opting into paid domestic work. Flexible work-time and greater ability to look after own

household and children (11.4%) was another important determinant of the occupational change, followed by health deterioration (10.2%) which did not permit the women to continue their previous occupation. Commuter women who reported to have worked in the fields as casual labour or engaged in MGNREGA activities in their villages, vehemently proclaimed to dislike earning via such arduous manual labour under sun (8.9%). Other factors included workplace being far, presence of men co-workers at the manufacturing units and travel issues. Marriage, child-birth and relocation of family head, retirement from previous occupation (10.1%) were also some of the secondary reasons for occupational change. Around 29 (5%) women maids reported to have made a shift within the domain of paid domestic work. The hierarchical nature of skill requirement in categories of paid domestic work and its corresponding gradation of payment scale meant many women who are performing tasks of a domestic helper aspire to find work as a cook or ayah. Not only it would help them earn an increased income but also this intra-occupational mobility would earn them improved respect among their community. Domestic helpers are looked down upon socially and their work as derogatory. Sometimes it is linked with caste based notions of pollution and purity. Though the urban living fosters anonymity and loosens the caste and racial discriminations, but data gathered points to the subtle existence of caste structured occupational preference among the domestic workers.

Table 1.2.8 Distribution of Domestic Worker Categories by Caste

Work Category by Caste Reflecting Ideas of Caste based Occupation Choice (%)					
Work Category	SC	ST	OBC	General	Total
Ayah/Baby-Sitters	51.9	0.0	1.9	46.2	100
Cook	38.0	0.9	9.3	51.9	100
House-Cleaners	54.4	1.5	19.5	24.6	100
Cook and House-Cleaners	52.8	6.7	12.4	28.1	100
Ayah and Cook and House-Cleaners	50.0	0.0	27.8	22.2	100
Total Workers	50.8	2.0	15.3	31.8	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

When one studies the caste distribution of women according to their work categories it surfaces that percentage of general caste employed as cook is much higher than women working as domestic helps. (**Table 1.2.8**) Around 52% general caste women are cooks while only 25% work as domestic servant. Simultaneously 54.4% SC women are domestic help as against 38% of the cooks being SC category. This can be exemplified from the traditional caste based occupational structure that was prominent

in the 19th and 20th century, and vestiges of which are still strictly followed in villages and in the traditional joint family set up. Sweeping, toilet cleaning and washing of used utensils and laundry are supposed to be unclean activities and more suitable to be performed by lower castes, while cooking or feeding is a clean task and has to be performed by higher castes especially the Brahmins. This kept alive the caste based inclination on demand of domestic workers by the employers and choice of tasks to be performed among the maids themselves.

4.4.2 Secondary Occupation of the Domestic Worker

Many women responded to also carry out some form of secondary activities to supplement their household income or to utilize their free time left apart from work as part time live out maids. Though paid domestic work and own household chores subject these women to enough physical exhaustion, but many enterprising and laborious women maids take out time and effort for more work in order to earn more (46% slum and 36.4% commuter women) and provide an increased monetary support her family. Many choose to sweat it out within their homes in home-based self employment at piece-rate or contractual basis of payment in cutting shoe laces, making envelopes, sewing garments, book binding and making flower garlands among various others often juggling more than one secondary activity. About 44.4% women engage in this kind of work daily, while 24.4% and 31.1% work up to 10 days and 11 to 25 days per month in secondary job.

Table 1.2.9 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Secondary Economic Activities Performed

Types of Secondary Occupation Among Paid Domestic Workers		
Occupation Types (NCO 2004)	Frequency	Percent
Self-employed/Business	5	11.1
Teaching Professionals	2	4.4
Life Science and Health Associate Professionals	2	4.4
Customer Services Clerks	1	2.2
Personal and Protective Service Workers	3	6.7
Market Oriented Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Workers	3	6.7
Extraction and Building Trades Workers	1	2.2
Precision, Handicraft, Printing and Related Trades Workers	2	4.4
Other Craft and Related Trades Workers	11	24.4
Machine Operators and Assemblers	5	11.1
Sales and Services Elementary Occupations	9	20.0
Agricultural, Fishery and Related Labourers	1	2.2
Total	45	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Around 45 (8%) of the sampled women earned money from self employment (46.7%), daily casual wage (31.1%) and piece-rate work (22.2%). Among the self employed, 9% and 2.2% women are involved in a partnership business and sole proprietorship hiring workers under her respectively. Commuting women do not have enough spare time to invest in secondary activity relative to the slum counterparts. Thus 9.6% of slum women earn through secondary employment against only 4.6% commuter women. The location of their secondary workplace is their own dwelling unit (59%) or on the street (26%) like the many women who reported to use their culinary skills to run road-side food stalls and tea shops (15.4%) or at market places selling breakfast and meals often near their homes (23.5%) in order to help raise household income especially for upbringing of their children in a better way. Many offer tailoring services to their neighbourhood houses. Women performing massage work, salon work or sewing and tailoring have reported to have received a minimum training for about 180 days or so (72.4% out women receiving training). Some women reported to have taken micro-financial loans like Bandhan, Arohon, Ujjivan in order to start their ready- made garment business. An interesting instance was when a women reported to lease out her auto-rickshaw to a hired driver to run on city roads. Women also earn as kitchen help in restaurants and road-side snacks counter earning hourly wage. In the villages few commuter women reported to sell cow milk and rear animals for meat, fishing as well. Around 18% women have stated that lack of enough work opportunity in paid domestic work and 24% implied to economically utilize the free time compelled them to earn by means of secondary channels, 13.1% women helped in the family enterprise as a unpaid family labour. Monthly income earned from secondary work is mostly under Rs 1000 (57%), while 25% earn in between Rs 1000 to Rs 3000 and 18.2% women get more than Rs 3000.

4.4.3 Occupation of the Household Members of Domestic Workers

Occupational familiarity stemming from the knowledge of work pattern and operations of trade engaged by closest family members often influence the choice of occupation of a person. More so, because of the social connections, especially among the socio-economically and educationally backward communities who help to get started into an occupational set-up. It is not surprising that substantial numbers of women family members of the domestic workers are employed as maids and ayahs either in private households or at the hospitals, or as cooks in *Anganwadis*. Among the

2485 household members including the domestic workers, around 1107 members (39%) are out of labour force or unemployed. Among the remaining 1378 family members 51.7% worked as paid domestic workers (except the interviewed 600 women, another 112 women household members were working as maids). Among the male members vehicle driving was the commonest choice of profession, with 12% of the members were employed as private car, taxi, auto, truck drivers. A larger of the members, especially the husbands of the domestic workers were self employed as rickshaw-puller (40 women) and van drivers (29 women). Almost 99% of the members work in the private sector, and only 1.4% are in the public sector. Among the out of labour force, 20.4% of the family members are currently enrolled in educational institutions, 9.3% are housewives or are drop-out males who are reluctant to work and another 8.3% are dependent population including disabled, old, sick and infants. Around 6.3% of all members are unemployed; with 11% out of males and 2% among females available and seeking work. Among the employed, 12.2% are employed as regular salaried in private sector and only 1.7% in government jobs. 16% have their own business enterprise and 20% are casual labour earning as mason and mason helper (67 respondents), grocery and garment shop attendants. In the villages farming and pisciculture whether on own land or as tenant farmers has the largest share of employment in the household followed by basket weaving and cane product manufacturing and *bidi* making. Retail and wholesale trade (7%) of garments, crockery, toys, tobacco products, food items and books are some of the common occurrence. Manufacturing of textile hosiery, hardware, metallurgical products, leather, plastic, glassware and wood also employ few male working members (6%). Many families reported almost all of their male workers to be employed as carpenters, and factory workers and a considerable number are earning casual wage as mason helpers and manual workers in cargo handling, kiosk and marquee decoration. Men are also employed as car-repairers, car-washers in garage, electricians and mechanics, in construction sites as plasterer and mosaic polishers and painters (7.5%), machine handlers in printing press and book binding units. Fishmongers, butchers, hawkers selling fast food and dry snacks, fruit and vegetable vendors, ice-cream and juice vendors and cooks and helpers in sweat meat shops and catering service and home delivery of food-meal are among the ones employed in food and beverage sector. The proportion of members providing personal and elementary informal services is quite high with employment as launderers, salon workers, shoe making, sweepers and

security guard, office peon and support staff etc. All occupations thus are informal in nature with low and irregular payment and almost no job security. Only few men and women are employed in railways, municipal corporations as clerks, electrician, garbage collector, traffic policing are entitled to perks of working in public sector organisations.

4.4.4 Occupation of the Parents of the Domestic Workers

The occupation background of the parents is an important determinant in deciding the occupation of the domestic workers, especially the mother's occupation. NIC method is followed to categorise the occupations. About 25.3% of the mothers of the maids were domestic worker themselves and many women reported to have started working as maid accompanying their mothers to the employer's house as early as 5 to 6 years of age. Some women maids reported to be working for 3 to 4 decades at a stretch since the childhood without any breaks in work participation. Though almost half of the women respondents (48.5%) had their mothers as homemakers, but around 9% mothers were employed in agriculture and fishing. Less than 2% of mothers were also earning their livelihood in waste collection, petty trading and food service each. Fathers occupation was primarily tied to agriculture sector with 30.2% fathers of the maids were working as sharecroppers, farmers in own landholdings and in forestry and fishing activities. About 5.5% were unemployed and 8.7% maids could did not report any occupation of their fathers on account of being orphaned at young age. Construction sector (6.6%), manufacturing (6.2%), retail trade (8.2%), land transportation (5%), other personal services including housekeeping, caretaking and domestic help services (7.7%) and other unclassified casual employment (3.8%) are some of the other avenues of work participation of the father of the maids. The prevalent current daily wage rate in the city for construction labourers and masons is Rs 500 to Rs 550 while the assistants get Rs 300 to 350. Carpenters and ironsmiths get Rs 600 and the electrician Rs 700 daily, while their assistants get Rs 400 and Rs 500 daily. In the rural areas and in surrounding districts, the wage rates are lower by Rs 100 to 150 in all professions. Thus the low income earned by the heads and men of the house is the major reason behind women participating in paid domestic work.

Table 1.2.10 Distribution of Domestic Workers by Occupation of the Parents

Father's Occupation (NIC 2008)	% of Domestic Workers	Mother's Occupation (NIC 2008)	% of Domestic Workers
Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities/forestry/fishing	30.2	Housewife/Homemaker	48.5
No occupation reported/unemployed/out of labour force	14.2	Activities of households as employers of domestic personnel	25.3
Services to buildings and landscape activities/security/office support/social work/personal service//domestic labour/creative	10.0	Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities/ fish & Aquaculture	9.0
Wholesale & retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	9.7	No Occupation reported/unemployed/out of labour force	7.6
Construction of buildings/others	6.6	Wholesale & retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	3.1
Land transport and transport via pipelines/warehousing/repair of motor vehicle/computer repair	6.4	Food and beverage service activities/education	1.8
Manufacture of textiles/wood/tobacco/leather/paper	5.0	Other personal service activities	1.3
Food and beverage service activities/Manufacture of pasteurized milk/meat slaughter/sweet & bakery/self employed	4.5	Manufacture of textiles/wood/tobacco products	1.2
Manufacture of chemicals/non-metallic mineral/metal/electrical equipment/furniture & other products	4.2	Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery	1.2
Financial service activities/legal/science & technology/rental/travel agency/education	3.7	Manufacture of chemical products/rubber/plastic/non-metallic mineral product	1.0
Casual Labour	2.5	Total	100.0
Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery	2.0		
Printing and reproduction of recorded media/motion picture/TV	0.9		
Total	100.0		

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Occupation of the household head is an important influencer in economic position of the household, general standard of living and at times occupation pattern of the family members and work participation by women along with many other factors. About 7% and 9% of the slum and commuter household heads are dependants, old and sick. It is interesting to note that about 16.3% of the commuter household heads are unemployed as against only 5.6% of the slum household heads and these are mostly the husbands of the domestic workers. This is corroborated with 22.7% and 12.6% of the married commuter maids stating their husband's unemployment and sickness was the reason behind their work participation in paid domestic work. Regular salaried in both private (14.2%) and government (1.4%) sectors is higher among the slum household heads than for the commuter households at 9.2% and 0.4%. Self employment (18.7%) and casual labour (16.3%) are the two most common occupation categories of the household heads.

4.5 Summary

The chapter thus provides a background characteristic of the women domestic workers and their family regarding their caste, religion and age distribution. Women belonging to SC and OBC households have higher work participation as maids, especially concentrated in work domain of a domestic helper or cleaner. Hindu women of higher castes are engaged more in cooking activities than SC and other social groups, tied to the notion of caste based occupational segregation. Educational attainments are poor with high level of illiteracy and drop-out especially among the commuter women maids living in villages of KUA. Child marriage and child labour is extremely common among the women, as most domestic workers are working continuously since their childhood, being introduced by their poor parents into this work to support their family financially. Parents and family members of these women are primarily earning their livelihood from informal sources of employment, whereby many domestic workers had their mothers working as maids. Widowhood and separation from husband is fairly common occurrence and most women are thus compelled to enter paid domestic market to sustain economically. Few women also earn their living from secondary occupations pertaining to self-employment or casual piece rate work. The migrant women maids living in slums of Kolkata, have joined their husbands after marriage and most have entered into this occupation to contribute into family income pool. KUA districts along with Bihar are the chief areas from where women have migrated into Kolkata and its suburbs. Family structure is primarily nucleated, whereby single households are headed by widows and separated women, who are mostly working as ayah. Spatial difference in the literacy and household characteristics are observed across the slums and commuter women workers, with the latter faring poorly in level of social development than the former group. This discrepancy is seen to be heightened in terms of economic standing and housing structure of the domestic worker households, which is discussed elaborately in the next chapter.

Chapter V

Housing and Economic Conditions of Slum and Commuter Households of Women Paid Domestic Workers in Kolkata

5.1 Housing and Housing Amenities

The housing and housing amenities clearly portray the economic position from which the domestic workers belong. It provides a background for understanding the situations under which the women participate in paid work, and has their participation helped their households improve their overall economic position. Infrastructure facilities like drinking water, toilet and sanitation systems within slum locality is a governance issue, nevertheless it influences quality of living of the residents. Urban local governance of KMC has improved immensely over the years, and thus amenities like provision of timely availability of tap water, digging of bore-wells for tube-well has been taken care of properly over the domain. But the situation among the commuter households is not so good especially the ones living in the villages in KUA districts.

5.1.1 Drinking Water

Though inter-ward disparity remains but in a broader scale, slum households are provided with tap source of drinking water. About 90.6% slum households and 67.33% of the total households draw water solely from tap source point, the rest relying on tube-well. The primary source of water for 24.33% of all households canvassed is tube-well followed by hand-pump. Washing of clothes, utensils and bathing in the villages is performed using pond source of water (69% use pond as the principal and secondary source). Quality of living is affected by location of water and toilet facilities and by sharing arrangements of the service as well. In the slums, 86% of the taps or tube-wells that are located within the household premises are shared, while 40% of the commuter households do not share the water facility. For 63.4% and 86% of the slum and commuter households that do not have water facility within their premises have to share water with other households. It is especially difficult for the women of the households, the maids who work hard at employer's home to earn money and again endure long hours at household chores with added chore-time waiting for collecting water. 32.3% of the total households have no tap water source.

Water quality is affected by not only presence of superior source of drinking water, but also its duration of availability and ease of access and quantity share. Out of the households that get access to tap water, majority do not get supply throughout the day. Barring 10.8% households who get 24 hour water supply, mostly households rely on supply which lasts 4 to 8 hours (40%) or even less than 4 hours (30%) a day. Tap density that is number of households sharing one source of tap water is found to be high overall. Around 35% of the slum households share water with 6 to 10 houses, while 34% share with 11 to 30 houses. The proportion of households sharing water with 30 to 50 households is higher among northern (16.1%) and western (7.3%) slums. Only 5.8% households have individual water source and do not share with other households. Among the commuter households, the urban households have to share tap water or water drawn from tube-well, otherwise the village households mostly depend on other open and inferior sources and the sharing does not put a strain on the household chore time as it does in the slums. Slums in the north zone (21.5%), like Shyambazar, Paikpara and Ballygunge, Panditiya and Chetla in south zone have good water quality, with availability for almost 24 hours. In Dhakuria, the slum households depend on a two hour window for collecting sweet drinking water that is procured from the distributing tankers for portable water. It puts the women under severe stress to schedule their household chores and paid work accordingly and make ample time for awaiting their turn in collection and storage of water standing in the queue.

Table 1.3.1.1 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Households of Domestic Workers by Duration of Drinking Water Supply

Water Quality Across Slum and Commuter Domestic Worker Households (%)							
Time(hours)	North	West	South	Central	Total Slum (%)	Time(hours)	Commuter (%)
Up to 4	1.1	40.6	46.5	11.4	26.4	Up to 4	10.0
4.01-8.00	44.1	39.6	37.6	72.9	46.7	4.01-8.00	5.8
8.01-12.00	3.2	0.0	10.9	14.3	6.7	Throughout Day(24)	5.8
12.01-16.00	0.0	9.4	0.0	0.0	2.5	No Tap water	78.3
16.01-20.00	30.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.8	Total	100.0
Throughout Day(24)	21.5	6.3	4.0	0.0	8.3		
No Tap water	0.0	4.2	1.0	1.4	1.7		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		

5.1.2 Sanitation and Toilet

Likewise the toilet facility which is primarily pour latrine is also shared among the slum dwellers (90%) and among the shared facility 61% toilets are outside the premises. Toilets are cleaned either by the households themselves or they collectively pay the corporation sweepers to clean the latrines. There is also 5% incidence of households defecating in the open. Quality of toilets in the slums can be seen poorer in some northern and western Kolkata slums where toilet density is more than 40 households (5.6%) and 38% households share one toilet and one bathing facility with 11 to 40 houses. About 15% households share a toilet with more than 21 other households. Though the recent Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and KMC efforts have improved the sanitation facilities across the slums and municipal governance and the approachability of local councillors is appreciable in Kolkata city relative to others, but there is much scope for improvement in the maintenance and upgrade of the existing toilets especially in the western and eastern fringes of the city. Households without toilet within premises use corporation toilets (72.3%), Sulabh pay and use facility (13.5%). It is an interesting and perplexing occurrence that even though penetration of mobile telephony and cable television has seen rapid escalation and wider coverage in recent years, but still the practice of open defecation is highly prevalent and common both in slums and commuter households. This can be attributed to the habitual preferences and lack of health concerns among the population along with problems pertaining to inappropriate design and location of public toilets, water scarcity and toilet dysfunction, lack of physical space and finance to build personal toilets and total disregard of safety and dignity of women. Open defecation is a cultural and behavioural occurrence in many instances and notions of shaming, financial incentives and toilet behaviour training cum rewards alongside awareness campaigns that highlight health issues are needed to tackle this menace. But the commuter households have much higher incidence of open defecation (30%), especially among the ones living in North.24.Parganas district. Notwithstanding, many commuting domestic workers have also acknowledged the fact that their participation in paid work have enabled them to construct and install pour-type of toilets and thereby have improved their standard of living (28.3%). Many times the

women especially the rural folks reported about the government initiatives that has built pour-latrines within their premises free of cost.

Table 1.3.1.2 Distribution of Domestic Worker Households by Toilet, Tap and Room Density

Toilet Density		Tap Density			Room Density	
No. of Households/Seat	% of Households	No. of Households / Tap Source	Slum Households (%)	Commuter Households (%)	No. of Persons/Room	% of Households
No Toilets Used	15.0	2-5	17.5	14.6	Individual Room	10.2
Individual Household	14.8	6-10	35.0	18.3	2 people	16.0
2-5	28.7	11-15	15.6	8.8	3-6	66.2
6-8	16.0	16-20	8.6	18.3	7-10	7
9-10	10.7	21-30	9.4	17.5	11 and above	0.7
11-20	11.2	31-50	8.1	12.1	Total	100
21 and above	3.7	51-100	0.0	2.5		
Total	100	101-250	0.0	0.4		
		Individual Household	5.8	7.5		
		Total	100.0	100.0		

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

5.1.3 Cooking Fuel and Kitchen Space

Housing amenities directly influence the standards of living, living environments and health conditions of the dwellers. Type of cooking fuel used and location of kitchen has a substantial role in affecting the health status of the inhabitants apart from the source of drinking water, toilet arrangements. Kerosene is the primary source of cooking fuel (43%), followed by liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) at 27% and wood (22.5%). Proportion of slum households using LPG is much higher at 40.3% than of the relatively poorer commuter ones (10%). The commuter households use the cheaper and polluting fuels like wood, coal, organic waste like hay and cow dung cakes for cooking and heating purposes. Women report to buy these fuel varieties in bulk at Rs 120 per 40 kg for wood, or Rs 100 for hay. They also gather such combustible wastes from the city or from their neighbourhoods and open areas in their villages. Location of kitchen can determine levels of air quality within the house along with household size and number of occupied rooms. In the slums, where the hutments are built very close to each other and narrow alleys and congested living of

people within limited space, the kitchens are mostly located within the living room (42.8%). Practice of cooking activities is also done in the narrow veranda (43.6%) and open space (8.3%) which can cut down the indoor but might seriously affect the food hygiene. Commuter households in the villages usually practice cooking in the veranda and in open space. House structure and materials of construction not only indicates the economic level of the owner but also affects the quality of life at large. Temporary houses are usually termed 'kacçha' and are made of mud, with thatched roofs or use of tiles and polythene shacks for roofing. A large proportion of commuter houses are 'kaccha' (40.4%) or are termed mixed (33.8%). In the Kolkata slums the proportion of 'pacca' house is high at 57.2%, where bricks, tiles, and cement mortar are the building materials. House ownership is 80% among the commuters while in the slums it is 52%. Literacy of the maid and type of cooking fuel has significant relationship, so does the location of kitchen but the strength of association is weak for both variables with Phi values less than 0.23. About 34% literates and 23% illiterate women workers use LPG as cooking fuel.

Table 1.3.2 Distribution of Domestic Worker Households by Type of Cooking Fuel and Location of Kitchen according to Literacy Status

Literacy	Types of Cooking Fuel (%)							
	LPG	Kerosene	Coal	Wood	Organic Waste	Cow Dung	No Fuel as no cooking at home	Total
Literate	33.9	47.2	0.9	11.9	2.3	3.2	0.5	100.0
Illiterate	23.0	40.6	1.0	28.5	3.7	2.6	0.5	100.0
Total	27.0	43.0	1.0	22.5	3.2	2.8	0.5	100.0
Chi Square = 25.599, df(6), p < 0.01								

Literacy	Location of Kitchen Space (%)					
	Separate Room	Veranda	Open Place	Living Room	No Kitchen in House	Total
Literate	6.0	52.3	10.1	31.7	0.0	100.0
Illiterate	5.0	40.6	16.8	37.2	0.5	100.0
Total	5.3	44.8	14.3	35.2	0.3	100.0
Chi Square = 11.148, df(4), p < 0.05						

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.3.3 Distribution of Housing Amenities across Domestic Worker Households by Social Groups

Basic Amenities by Social Groups		
	Within Premises (%)	Cooking Fuel Usage (%)

Castes/Religion	Drinking Water	Toilet	LPG	Kitchen within Living Room
SC	33.0	36.1	36.1	49.7
ST	50.0	75.0	37.5	37.5
OBC	30.3	36.4	39.4	39.4
General	53.1	49.2	41.4	33.6
Total	40.3	41.7	38.3	42.8
Hindu	41.2	42.0	38.3	43.2
Muslim	21.4	35.7	35.7	36.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

5.1.4 Electricity Connection, Room Density and House Ownership

Monthly rental amount paid by the slum households ranges from Rs 100 to Rs 500. About 11.1% and 10.6% of slum households pay in between Rs 51-100 and Rs 101-200 per month respectively. In the older city parts of north and central Kolkata, slums like Paikpara, Taltala, monthly rent amount is even less than Rs 50.This is the '*thika*' system of '*bustee*' living exclusive to Kolkata, where the slum settlements have grown in authorized land (58% of the sample slum households) and the houses are leased out for a time interval. Payment in small denomination is paid as annual house tax by the owners to the KMC. On the other hand, about 15.8% of the 49 commuter households that do not own their house pay Rs 200 to Rs 1000 per month for accommodation. Room density or the number of people living per room is invariably high. About 66.2% of the households report having 3 to 6 members per room, while 7% households have bigger families consisting of 7 to 10 persons living under the same roof. Central city slums have the highest room density with 18.5% households sharing room with more than 7 people. Room density affects the indoor pollution and physical environment of the living space but also determines the psycho-social living conditions of the inhabitants. Electricity connection in both slums and commuter households is high at 94.4% and 86.7% respectively. About 74% of slum households have authorized connection directly paying monthly charges to the service provider, while 15% pay their owners. But incidences of illegal connections at home through hooking practices are common too as reported by 4.4% and 9.6% of slum and commuter households. Other lighting requirements are mainly fulfilled by lighting kerosene lamps.

5.2 Economic Characteristics of the Households of Domestic Worker

The economic standing of the domestic worker households can be assessed from various indicators, especially gauged from presence of relevant documents, ownership of durable assets, monthly expenditure on various heads. The ownership of ration card and its status in terms of being categorised as below or above poverty line, access to PDS of food grains, kerosene, and other items by the households entitled to such sanctions is an important aspect to understand their economic position. Enrolment in electorate list, possessing a voter card (89.3%) and Aadhar card (73.8%) is seen having almost a universal coverage both in the slum and commuter households. The distribution of households according their possession of important legal documents that would ensure their economic and social empowerment shows a mixed picture. In 94.2% and 78% of cases the households own voter card and Aadhar card along with other documents while bank account came up as the next important document possession registering 20.4% of all responses. The good performance of the government in enrolment of Indian population in the Aadhar system of unique identification and *Jan-Dhan Yojana* for opening savings account in public financial institutions has improved their situation recently; much after the survey was conducted. Possession of savings bank account was seen almost double for the slum workers (63.1%) than that of the commuters (32.1%). Documents like permanent account number (PAN) card, disability card, health insurance card etc is possessed by only 8.3% of the slum women, lesser among the commuters. Only about 11.4% of slum dwelling women have life insurance corporations (LIC) papers, while it is much lower at 2.1% for the commuter women. Relative to the Hindus, a smaller share of Muslim maids were seen to possess specified documents. The same is seen for the OBC and illiterate workers, who possess lesser proportion of documents like LIC, Aadhar card etc.

Most of the respondents reported having ration cards and accessing the PDS in slums, though the materials received and their quantities varied across the slum localities. Rice, wheat, kerosene and sugar are the major items dispensed from the fair priced shops. The prices though were found to be varying across the slum zones. As reported by the respondents, rice and wheat prices hovered over Rs 2 to Rs 3 per kg, in Paikpara and Shyambazar areas they were sold at Rs 7 per kg. Similarly sugar was sold in between Rs 30 to 38 per kg. Around 19.1% and 19.6% of the slum and commuter households reported to have red cards issued by the government indicating

their BPL status. Recently in 2016 the current government in the state has initiated the process of digitizing the ration cards and linking it with the Aadhar enrolment list in order to plug the leakage in the PDS system and remove the fake card holders and create a strong enlistment of the actual targeted households. It is a sorry state of financial condition among the widow women maids. Out of the 137 widows interviewed, only 10.21% has widow pension card, which entitles them to a meagre amount of monthly pension assistance of Rs 200 to 400 , and unfortunately most of the times they fail to receive from the authorities on due time. An important fact that came out of the survey is that, many of these households have reported to have lost substantial sums of their hard earned money in private financial and chit fund investments such as in '*Rose Valley', 'Sarada Investments'*, which turned out be fraudulent schemes and are now facing legal trials for duping these small savers.

There is significant relation between poor living condition and religion. Muslim and OBC households have strong positive and highly significant relation at 1% with no access to electricity (0.89), no specified assets (0.945 for OBC and 0.875 for Muslims). There is also a strong positive correlation between households with high room density and no individual toilet access, indicating the over-crowded slum households usually have low quality of living. Similarly households having more than one room (r = 0.855) and which are owned (r = 0.756) by the occupants have significant positive correlation with presence of personal toilets within premises. Households using LPG as primary cooking fuel are more likely not to live in non-pacca house (r = -0.972 and significant at 1% level). Again there is significant correlation at 1% between households using non-tap drinking water source with inferior fuel usage (r = 0.967) and also between practising open defecation and using polluting fuels (r = 0.941). Literate maids are more likely to use LPG (r = 0.765) and have better standard of living as gauged from assets owned such as mobile (r = 0.848) and television (r = 0.768) and presence of better quality housing amenities like drinking water within premises, and the relation is highly significant at 5% level. Muslim households have negative correlation at 5% level of significance with literate maids (r = 0.832). Non-Bengali households are more likely to live in crowded slums and rented accommodation (r = -0.789 with house ownership) and have bigger household size as tabulation against room density of more than 4 persons shows (r = 0.904 with 1% significance level). Households using inferior fuel and non tap water

are highly positively correlated with temporary and kaccha households. Domestic workers earning decent monthly income have significant correlation with possessing bank account with $r = 0.953$ at 1% level of significance and with ownership of durable expensive assets like television, mobile etc. Women headed households are correlated at 5% level of significance with non-ownership of land ($r = -0.756$).

5.2.1 Asset Ownership

Ownership status of durable assets is higher among the slum households. Smart phones and mobile telephony has seen vast coverage in India in recent years, and households also show better coverage in Kolkata, with 76% of slum households reporting to own a mobile handset either by own-self or as by any household member, thereby improving their connectivity with the employers as well. The basic electric gadgets like light and fan are fairly common in all households thus 18% and 17% of all responses for specific assets was accounted by them followed by 13.1% and 12% for mobile and television respectively, indicating that these four assets are more likely to be found in almost all homes than rest of the objects. In about 90% and 96% of cases the households have assets such as fan and light along with other assets. Bicycles (20%) are seen to be one of the chief possessions of the households as is the satellite television connections (31%). Television is owned by more than 60% of the total households, higher among the slum households with 73.6% as against 42.1% of commuters. Land is owned either at their native place from which some households receive annual income from agricultural produce or as monetary share of the agricultural sale or land in the form of ownership of the house built by the households themselves on the small piece of land they bought in the slum or villages. Average size of the landholdings is less than 0.5 acres owned by 80.7% of the 57 households that own land. Around 10.5% own land in the 0.5 to 1 acre range and 8.7% own 1 to 2 hectares of land. Animals like cow, hen, goats and ducks are owned by handful of village women for self consumption. Few households in slum keep pets like dogs, birds, hen and pig for recreation and occasional commercial purposes. Households in Tangra, Razabazar, Belgachia own chicken and pigs and earn income from selling them for meat in the market. Expensive assets such as refrigerator are primarily found among the slum households (15.8%).

Table 1.3.4.1 Domestic Worker Households according to Assets and Documents Owned

Assets	% Household Ownership	Assets	% Household Ownership	Documents	% Workers Possessing
Fan	84.7	Set top box/ Satellite TV	31.0	Voter card	89.3
Radio	10.7	Mobile	66.7	LIC policy	7.7
TV	61.0	Cycle	19.8	*Aadhar* Card	73.8
Light	90.3	Bike	0.5	Train Pass	16.8
Cot	29.2	Auto	0.3	Bank Account	50.7
Bed	33.3	Rickshaw	1.7	PAN Card & Others	5.7
Almirah	39.2	LPG Gas Cylinder	28.2	Widow Pension Card	2.3
Sewing Machine	2.5	Refrigerator	10.0	Private Money Investment	1.8

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The economic standing of these women can be estimated from the asset ownership index and standard of living index computed using selected indicators. Based on the composite score the households of these women maids are categorized into low, medium and high asset ownership index classes which amount to 34%, 49.2% and 11.2% respectively. As is hypothesized the economic condition of commuter households are worse off compared to the slum households. The index scores show that 9.2% commuter households have no specified assets and the proportion of commuter maids classified in low asset group is more than double at 54% than among the slum households at 20.8%. Only 17% of the slum households have high asset ownership as against a mere 2.5% of commuter counterparts.

Spatial variation can be ascertained from the ward wise map computed based on asset index scores. Among the slum category, wards 57, 58 and 59 comprising slums of Tangra, 50, 54 and 38 comprising Boubazar, KC Sen Street in the central zone and 131,141 in Brace Bridge in the west have lowest asset index. Wards 38, 57, 72 and 89 have around 12.5%, 14.3%, 16.7% and 16.7% households categorised as having no assets. While the slums of Chetla, Panditiya in the south, Tollygunge and Ranikuthi in west and Wellington, Shyambazar in the central and north zones have high index. Overall the western slum zone (25%) and commuters coming into northern part (61%) of Kolkata through Sealdah station fare poorest in asset ownership. About 5.2% and 13.3% of households in two sub-zones do not have any assets respectively. Similarly the commuters who disembark at New Alipore station and work in its neighbourhood

have the highest index, followed by commuters coming at Dhakuria, Ballygunje stations. Commuters arriving from North 24.Parganas at Sealdah and Park Circus and those getting down at Jadavpur station in the south are the poorest as indicated from their low index scores.

Map 3.29.1

LEVEL OF ASSET OWNERSHIP AMONG DOMESTIC WORKERS IN SLUMS, KOLKATA

Legend

KMC Wards

ASSET INDEX

0 – 0.369 (LOW)

0.3692 – 0.519 (MODERATE)

0.5192 – 0.667 (HIGH)
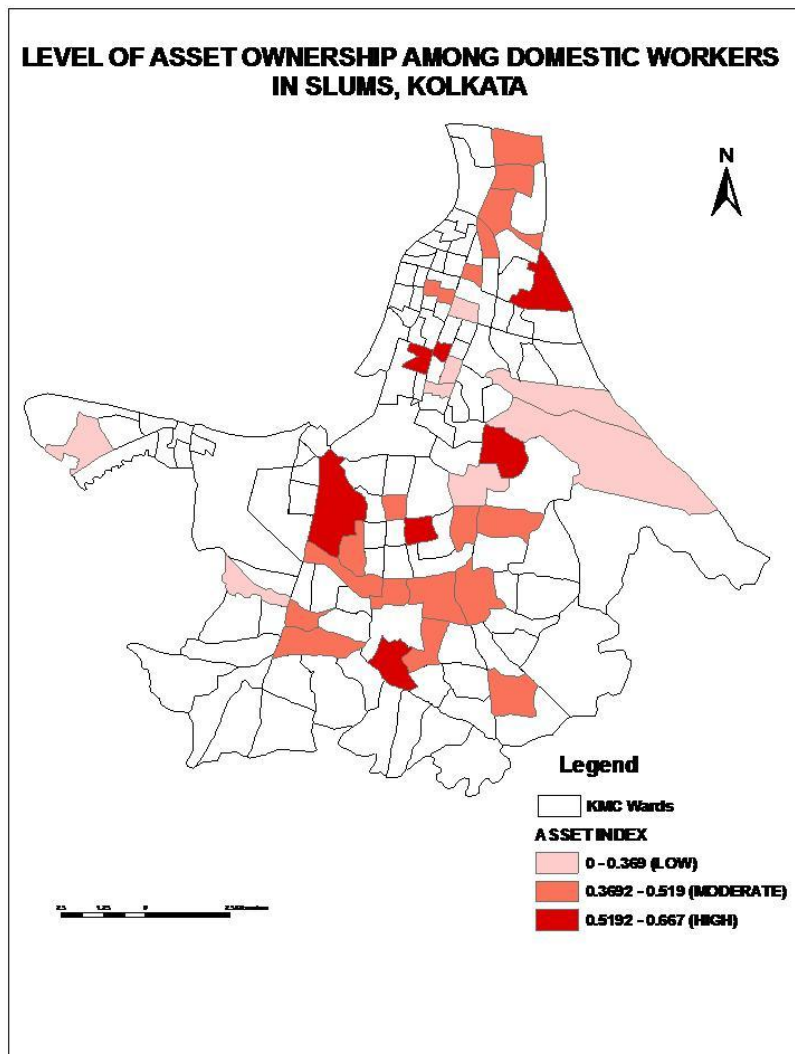
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Among the commuter women out of the no-assets group, the OBC (45.5%) and SC (36.4%) were the most down-trodden relative to 13.6% of general castes. 91% of the women maids in the low and no assets possessing households were illiterates. It is the women domestic workers employed in the northern Kolkata zone in the vicinity of Sealdah station and those residing in the North 24 Parganas district have no assets

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(63.6%) and low asset index (49.6%). While, the south zone commuters have better index score whereby, 84% of women maids score high asset ownership index.

Map 3.29.2
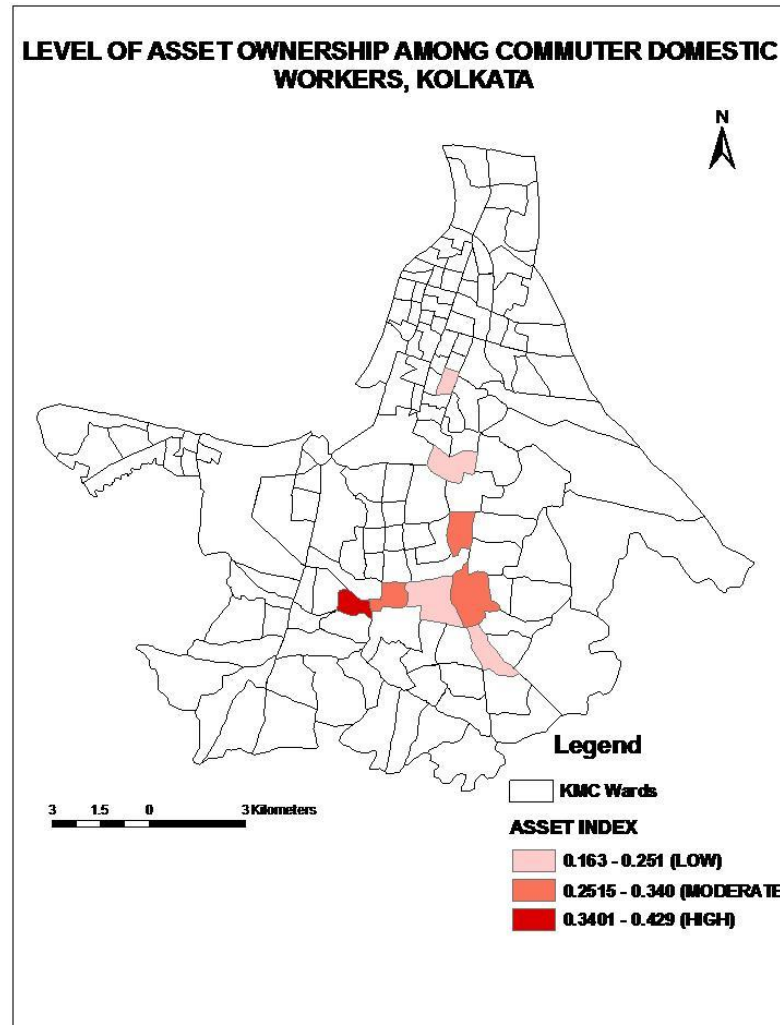
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The proportion of high asset ownership is greater for literates (15.6%) than illiterates (8.6%) and it is more for domestic workers who have completed primary level of education. As the education level of the maid increases, the asset ownership index also rises, as seen from 30.8% of households classified as high index where the women maids are educated class 9 and above, while only 12% of households are high index with women educated up to primary schooling. Similarly, the households with illiterate head of households have a higher share under no assets category (8.1%) as against 1.9% households where the head is educated in between secondary schooling

to graduation. None of the households with heads working as regular salaried and self employed comes under no asset category. Muslim women report (23.1%) to have a very high proportion of no-assets relative to Hindus (4%), which is almost 6 times of the latter. On the other hand, 13% of OBC and 8.3% of ST families possess no assets, where the same figure stands at 5.6% for the SCs. Domestic workers commuting from villages fare worse in asset ownership than their urban counterparts. Households with woman as a head and especially if they are widow and live in a single member household are worse off; about 8.6% households with the domestic worker herself as the head has no specified assets, unlike 4.6% households where she is not the head. It is evident that more earning members especially males reflect from the figures of 14.2% and 6.2% of male-headed and female-headed households respectively. Among the work categories domestic workers who perform tasks of a house-cleaner have lower asset index (40%) and about 10% have no assets while 24.1% of the cooks fall in the high index category followed by ayahs at 15.4%. This can be explained in conformance of the differential wage structure across the work categories.

Table 1.3.4.2 Distribution of Domestic Worker Households according to Asset Ownership Index

Households of Domestic Workers (in %)											
Asset Ownership Index	SC	OBC	General	Literate	Illiterate	Women Headed	Male Headed	Hindu	Muslim	Rural	Urban
Low	32.5	47.8	30.4	23.9	39.8	39.6	30.6	32.4	50.0	57.9	25.4
Moderate	51.1	33.7	53.4	58.7	43.7	46.3	50.9	51.8	23.1	30.8	55.8
High	10.8	5.4	14.1	15.6	8.6	6.2	14.2	11.7	3.8	1.3	14.7
No Assets Owned	5.6	13.0	2.1	1.8	7.9	7.9	4.3	4.0	23.1	10.1	4.1

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

5.2.2 Standard of Living Index

Considering that standard of living in slums and among commuter households is usually poor, the index thus computed tries to understand the degree of poor living standards and classifies the index into fair, bad and worse categories. Higher index scores reflect poorer standard of living. Tabulation of the composite score reveals that 40.8% of commuter women have worse standard of living and only 4.2% have a fair index. The slum dwellers are better of relatively as seen from a much lower

proportion of 11% having worse index scores and fair index scores are accounted by 14% of households, which is more than three times that of commuters. Index value is used to categorise the women groups according to spatial distribution and by employment categories.

Table 1.3.5 Distribution of Domestic Worker Households according to Standard of Living Index

Standard of Living Index (%)				
Households	**Fair**	**Bad**	**Worse**	**Total**
SC	7.5	71.8	20.7	100
ST	8.3	66.7	25.0	100
OBC	5.4	54.3	40.2	100
General	15.7	66.0	18.3	100
Literate	23.4	72.9	3.7	100
Illiterate	2.1	63.9	34.0	100
Ayah / Baby-sitters	17.3	71.2	11.5	100
Cook	14.8	77.8	7.4	100
House-cleaners	6.6	61.9	31.5	100
Hindu	10.3	69.6	20.1	100
Muslim	3.8	44.2	51.9	100
Slum North	17.2	77.4	5.4	100
Slum West	10.4	74.0	15.6	100
Slum South	15.8	78.2	5.9	100
Slum Central	10.0	70.0	20.0	100
Commuter North	0.0	52.4	47.6	100
Commuter West	6.7	56.7	36.7	100
Commuter South	7.6	57.1	35.2	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

There exists conspicuous inequality in general among the households classified based on geographical zones in which they are located within the city and beyond. The slum households of the north and south Kolkata have fair standard of living. The worst quality of living is experienced by the commuter households of women maids travelling to Kolkata from northern KUA districts of N.24.Parganas. Among the work categories, the domestic helpers rank poorest having the worst standard of living relative to the cook and ayahs. Households of the cooks and the ones who perform multiple tasks of the cook cum ayah cum helper have fair living standards while the ayahs are classified as having bad standard of living. Literacy and standard of living and asset ownership has strong significant relation and association is strong (Phi value as 0.45 and 0.23 respectively). About 34% illiterates have worse standard of living unlike 3.7% of the literates. About 40% and 7.8% illiterates have low asset index and no assets owned as against 23.8% and 1.8% of literate domestic workers.

Table 1.3.6 Standard of Living Index of Domestic Worker Households across Work Categories and Spatial Zones

Quality/Standard of Living Index		
Composite index	Values	Work Categories
Fair	0-1.15	Cook, Cook and Helper and Ayah
Bad	1.16-1.86	Ayah, Cook and Helper
Worse	> 1.87	Domestic Helper
Quality/Standard of Living Index		
Composite index	Values	Slums/Commuter Zones
Fair	0-1	Slum North, Slum South
Bad	1.01-2	Slum Central, Commuter West, Slum West, Commuter South
Worse	>2.01	Commuter North

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

For understanding the intra-group inequality tabulation is made for within the individual zones and worker categories. The domestic workers employed as baby-sitters and ayahs perform better in standard of living index, with 17.3% of their households enjoy fair index followed by the cooks at 14.8%. Only a 6.6% of house-cleaning maid household fall in fair category and 32% of their households live in worse living conditions. The women employed in multiple tasks of cooking, baby-sitting along with cleaning and washing has better living standards. This can be exemplified from the task based unequal wage structure which permeates down the economic position of the households and keeps them intact in their level of standard of living. Similarly, the economically backward communities such as Muslims (52%), OBC (40.2%), ST (25%) and women headed households (34.8%) have higher share of households who live under worse standards, unlike that of Hindus (20.3%), general castes (18.3%) and male headed households (15.8%). (**Table 1.3.5**) It is most likely that widows and separated women maids are single-earning members of their households and they exist under dire situations. The index figures point out that about 37% and 39% of the widows and separated women have worse living standards. Literacy status and standard of living is found to have a positive relation which can be seen from the fact that about 34.1% of illiterate maids live in worse living conditions as against on meagre 3.7% of the literate maids. Place of residence also affects the standard of living. Commuter women coming to the city from villages to work are found to live under worse living conditions in a greater proportion at 46.5% than the urban dwelling counterparts.

Table 1.3.7 Standard of Living Indicators across Slum and Commuter and across Spatial Zones of Domestic Worker Households

Standard of Living Indicators of Domestic Worker Households	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	North Region (%)	South Region (%)
Non Open Defecation	95.0	70.0	81.3	85.9
Toilet within Premises	41.7	55.0	62.1	44.7
LPG and Kerosene as Cooking fuel	90.0	0.4	62.2	75.5
Pacca House and Mixed House	97.8	59.6	73.7	83.0
Tap Water as primary source of Drinking Water	98.3	21.7	58.1	59.2
Kitchen room not inside Living Room	57.2	76.3	76.3	66.0
Electricity	94.4	86.7	88.4	94.7
More than 1 room	11.7	23.3	12.1	21.8
Ownership of house	51.9	79.6	65.7	65.5
PDS received	74.4	85.0	79.8	82.0
Own TV	73.6	42.1	54.0	62.1
Own Mobile	75.6	53.3	58.1	72.8
Ration card	83.1	85.0	83.8	82.5
Bicycle	21.2	19.9	12.1	23.8
Satellite Television	45.0	10.4	24.7	30.1
Own refrigerator	15.8	1.3	6.1	12.6
Own land	7.8	11.3	4.5	14.1
Education up to Primary Level	26.1	21.7	26.3	18.9
Bank Account	63.1	32.1	52	48.5
Head of Household other than Maid herself	72.5	73.2	71.7	75.7
Loans taken through Microfinance/SHG	8.6	6.3	5.6	10.7
Work > 6 hours per day in paid-work & want to work in more houses/Under-employed	7.2	22.5	15.7	14.1
Literate	42.2	27.5	37.4	32.5

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The ward-wise map generated across the slum and commuter domestic workers assist in getting a better comprehension of the spatial concentrations of households with ordered levels of standard of living. The slums such as Tangra in east, Baghajatin in south, Brace Bridge railway *basti* in the west and K.C.Sen street in the north come under worse category.

The slums of Paikpara in north, central Kolkata slums and southern zone slums like Ballygunje, Tollygunge, Behala are better performing in terms of living standards. Among the commuter workers the women who arrive at Sealdah, Park Circus and Lake Gardens stations have the worst standard of living. Households of the southern region including both slum and commuter show a relative economic prosperity than that of the northern region. Specific asset ownership like television (62.1%), mobile

handsets (72.8%), refrigerator (12.6%), land (14.1%) is almost double or more in proportion than northern region.

Map 3.30.1
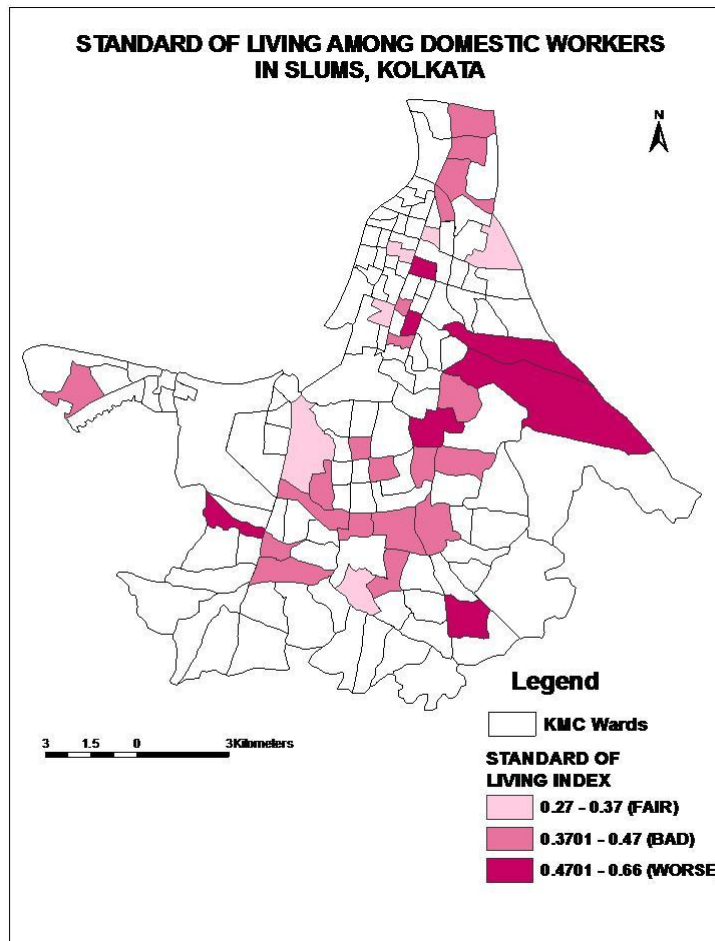
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Similarly housing amenities such as LPG and kerosene as cooking fuel (75.5%), power connection (94.7%) pacca and mixed house (83%) and living in more than 1 room (21.8%) is seen to be in better shape in south than northern region households. But in other indicators of standard of living like in literacy of the maids (37%), toilet within premises (62.1%), kitchen not inside living room (76.3%), the northern households perform better.

Binomial logistic regression is performed taking poor standard of living index as the dependent variable and socio-economic factors, employment and household factors as the independent continuous and nominal variables. (**Table 1.3.9**) Households with

standard of living index above mean value of 0.4598 are categorized as poor. The model explains 51.3% (Nagelkerke's R^2) of the variance in standard of living among the domestic worker households and correctly classifies 78.3% of cases.

Map 3.30.2
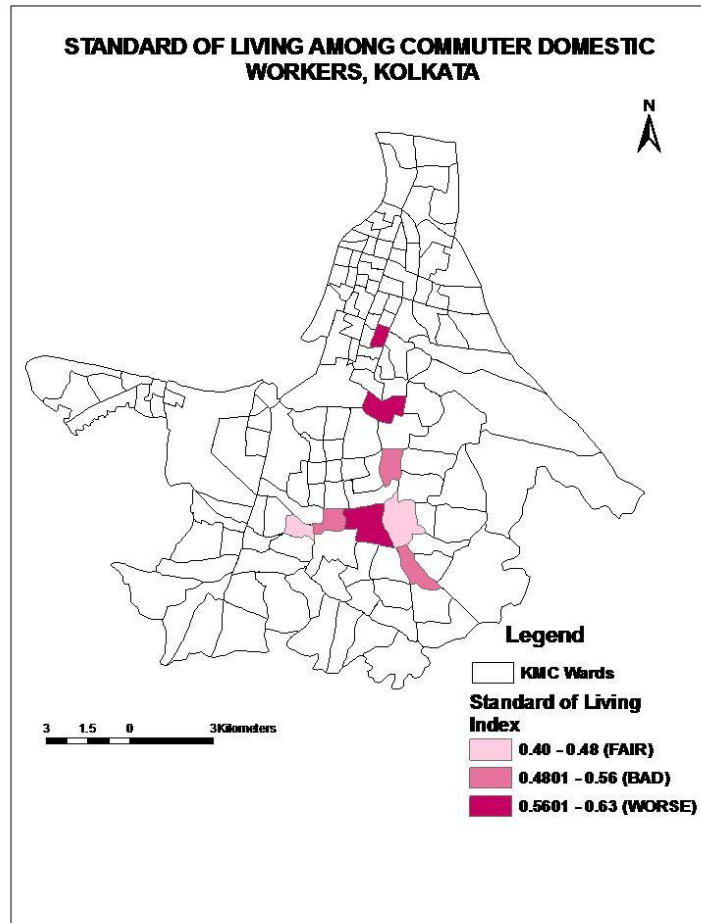
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The commuter households ($p = 0.004$), households with women headship, households having children below 7 years of age and households having worse health and wellbeing index ($p = 0.003$ for each) for the domestic worker have increased likelihood to come under worse standard of living and the regression coefficients are highly significant at 1 % level of significance. It is to be noted that health and wellbeing index measures the degree of poor or worse health conditions of the maids. Women headed households and households of domestic workers with worse health conditions are 5.6 and 28.7 times more likely to live under worse living standards than male headed and fair health index households. The odds ratio of living under worse

standard of living condition is 1.98 times greater for commuter households than among slum dwellers. With increasing level of education of both the domestic worker and the head of her household, the chances of standard of living of the households increases as evident from the coefficient values which are statistically highly significant at 5% and 1% level respectively. But with increasing decent work index among the domestic workers the incidences of poor standard of living declines. The regression coefficient is found to be highly significant ($p = 0.005$).

Table 1.3.8 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Worker Households according to Ownership of Specified Assets

Asset Ownership By Domestic Worker Households (in %)								
	Fan		Mobile		Television		Light	
Possession	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter
Yes	89.2	77.9	75.6	53.3	73.6	42.1	92.8	86.3
No	10.8	22.1	24.4	46.7	26.4	57.9	7.2	13.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Cot		Bed		Almirah		Cycle	
Possession	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter
Yes	24.4	36.3	47.5	12.1	54.4	16.3	21.1	17.9
No	75.6	63.8	52.5	87.9	45.6	83.8	78.9	82.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Set Top Box		LPG Cylinder		Refrigerator		Bike	
Possession	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter
Yes	44.7	10.4	40.3	10.0	15.8	1.3	0.6	0.4
No	55.3	89.6	59.7	90.0	84.2	98.8	99.4	99.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Households with living arrangement of the domestic worker is only with spouse are 3.4 times more likely to be under worse living standards at 5% significance level. Occupation type of the head of the household and nature of task performed by the domestic worker has significant influence on standard of living at 5% and 1% significance level. Casual labour households and households where the head is unemployed is are 3.7 and 3.5 times more likely to be under worse standard of living compared to other households. The p values of 0.002 and 0.007 indicate a high significant relationship respectively. Caste and religion doesn't have any significant relation with standard of living, whereas marital status shows negative relation with living standards at $p < 0.05$. Relative to the married, the widowed domestic workers

are more likely to live in worse living standards. While the cooks have negative relation with poor standard of living at $p = 0.016$, and they are 0.4 times less likely to be living in poor economic condition than other workers.

Table 1.3.9 Binomial Logistic Regression explaining Determinants of Poor Standard of Living among Domestic Workers

Binomial Logistic Regression explaining factors Influencing Poor Standard of Living					
Determinants	**N**	**B**	**S.E**	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**
Commuter (Ref- Slum)	240	0.684	0.24	0.004***	1.982
Religion- Non-Hindu (Ref- Hindu)	54	-0.286	0.42	0.495	0.751
Worker Category (Ref- Ayah, Cook & House-Cleaner)	107			0.006***	
Cook	108	-0.923	0.384	0.016**	0.397
Housecleaner	333	0.257	0.291	0.378	1.292
Ayah/Baby-Sitter	52	-0.082	0.465	0.86	0.922
Education Level of Household Head	600	-0.092	0.039	0.017**	0.912
Education Level of Maid	600	-0.358	0.054	0***	0.699
Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	31			0.143	
Married	397	-1.471	0.644	0.022**	0.23
Separated/Divorced	38	-1.177	0.743	0.113	0.308
Widowed	134	-1.341	0.66	0.042**	0.262
Decent Work Index	600	-3.801	1.353	0.005***	0.022
Head of the Household- Woman (Ref-Male)	227	1.719	0.577	0.003***	5.58
Household Size	600	-0.161	0.093	0.083*	0.852
Children (0-6 years)	600	0.624	0.212	0.003***	1.866
Health & Wellbeing Index	600	3.356	1.13	0.003***	28.68
Living Arrangement (Ref- Others)	265			0.23	
Spouse	39	1.211	0.577	0.036**	3.358
Spouse & Children	212	0.241	0.343	0.482	1.272
Children Only	38	-0.005	0.551	0.993	0.995
Alone	46	0.695	0.644	0.28	2.004
Occupation of Household Head (Ref-Regular Salaried)	79			0.023**	
Self Employed	112	0.61	0.426	0.152	1.84
Casual Labour	98	1.309	0.424	0.002***	3.703
Unemployed/Doing Domestic Chores	74	1.24	0.461	0.007***	3.457
Dependents	46	0.502	0.571	0.379	1.652
Domestic Worker	191	0.657	0.714	0.358	1.928
Caste Non-General (Ref- General)	409	0.343	0.253	0.175	1.409
Constant		2.04	1.3	0.116	7.694
*** Significant at 1% ** Significant at 5% * Significant at 10%					
Dependent Variable: Poor Standard of Living (Index values > Mean Value of 0.4598)					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Model Summary				
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	N
1	540.496a	0.385	0.513	600

5.2.3 Household Expenditure and Savings

Total monthly household expenditure and its disaggregation into various sub-heads give important information about the financial position of the household. Provision of expense details for fuel, transportation, electricity, education, housing, food and miscellaneous payments, help in ascertaining the economic standing of the domestic workers. Overall the monthly expenditure is mostly in between Rs 1000 to Rs 2000 as is reported by 34.3% households, with average expenditure being Rs 2340. About 17% households are very poor with monthly expenditure below Rs 500. Between the slum and commuter households a stark difference is visible in monthly expenditure and so in the economic condition. Much of the slum households (72%) are better off, as they spend in between Rs 1000 and Rs 5000 per month, out of which 31% spend in between Rs 2000-5000. While it is only 9.2% of commuter households that can afford to spend in between Rs 2000-5000.Contrastingly, 31.3% of commuter households are very poor spending less than Rs 500 per month, as against a small proportion of 7.5% in the same range among the slum households. When compared according to proportion of income spend on essential items like fuel and electricity, about 7.1% and 24.2% commuters are seen to pay nothing respectively. This is because of firewood, dung-cakes, hay which is available freely in the villages or is towed by the commuters on way back home. Such environment polluting and inferior quality fuels are much cheaper than kerosene and LPG. More than 65% of slum households spend Rs 200-600 per month on cooking fuel, out of which 40% spend within Rs 400 to 600, while 25% of the commuter households buy fuel for Rs 200-400 per month. The survey yielded exact costs of LPG which is more than Rs 400 per cylinder, while kerosene procured through PDS outlets usually costs around Rs 15 to 17 per litre. But almost all households both in village and the urban centres have to depend on external informal sources which sell at very high market prices of Rs 40 to 50 per litre. Electricity bills are paid to the service provider Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation (CESC) or to the neighbours from whom the connection is taken in the slums. In Dhakuria rail colony slum, most houses have sub-metres and they pay to the landlord

at month end. Hooking and unauthorized connections are common in the Tangra and Belgachia slums. In the villages, the households usually pay for electricity every three months to the *Gram Sabha*.

Children's education expenditure has various subheads, such as school fees and private tuition fees. The data collected brings out a vital fact that is also collated by the recent NSS 71st report on education about expenditure on private tuition, which is often seen a substantial amount and more than school fees in West Bengal. Even the slum dwelling children regularly study in private coaching institutes and teachers as early as kindergarten class or Class 1. Around 17% of the slum households reported having spent on paying tuition fees for their children and that too high amount going up to more than Rs 500 per month. In the slums, around 1519 household members, 255 (17%) are children and adolescents and adult students who are attending educational institutions. Among them, 55.3% students attend private tutorials and spend about Rs 200 to 500 per head per month, and 23.17% spend within Rs 500 to 1500. It is interesting to know that school or college fees are substantially low and 91% students pay less than Rs 100 per month for formal educational fees. Thus it is apparent that parents rely on private coaching centres and spend at least five times or more for availing tuition services, than what they pay for school enrolment. Among the commuter households, 14.1% members are currently enrolled in schools and 92% of the 136 members spend up to Rs 50 on school fees. Only 75% of the students afford private tuitions and monthly expenditure on tuitions is much less than for the Kolkata city dwellers, with 53% spending up to Rs 200 per month. Annual expenditure on children's education lies within Rs 200 to Rs 1000. Transport expenditure is borne by 25.5% of the total samples. About 93.3% of the slum maids walk to work within a radius of 1 to 2 kilometres from their homes, and thus do not have to bear cost of transportation. While the commuter maids have to bear the monthly costs to buy monthly train pass and daily auto or bus tickets for two-directional journey from home to workplace in the city. Among the 240 commuters interviewed, 41% own a train pass incurring monthly expenditure of Rs 100 (32.3% of maids), and within Rs 100-200 (46.5% of maids), and 21.2% incurred between Rs 200- 400. Household savings are small, mostly kept in bank or invested in chit funds or kept at home.

Table 1.3.10 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Households of Domestic Workers according to Monthly Household Expenditure

Monthly Household Expenditure under Various Sub-Heads (in %)								
Expenditure (Rs)	Education		Expenditure (Rs)	Fuel		Expenditure (Rs)	Housing/Rent	
	Slum	Commuter		Slum	Commuter		Slum	Commuter
1-200	8.9	15.4	1-100	4.4	14.6	1-100	19.4	0.8
201-400	9.4	8.3	101-200	11.1	39.6	101-200	11.4	0.8
401-600	11.1	5.4	201-400	26.4	25.0	201-500	9.7	6.7
601-800	8.3	2.5	401-600	39.4	7.5	501-1000	1.9	9.6
801-1000	4.4	1.7	601-800	11.9	4.6	1001-2000	4.7	3.8
1001-1500	6.1	0.4	801-1000	3.1	1.3	2001and above	1.4	0.4
1501 and above	4.4	0.4	1001 and above	2.8	0.4	No Expenditure	51.4	77.9
No Expenditure	47.2	65.8	No Expenditure	.8	7.1	Total	100.0	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0			
Expenditure (Rs)	Transport		Expenditure (Rs)	Electricity		Expenditure (Rs)	Cable Television	
	Slum	Commuter		Slum	Commuter		Slum	Commuter
1-100	1.1	11.3	1-100	8.1	22.9	1-200	20.8	19.2
101-200	0.6	18.8	101-200	15.3	37.1	201-400	52.2	6.7
201-300	0.6	9.2	201-500	38.6	12.1	401 and above	0.8	0.0
301-400	0.6	5.8	501-1000	19.7	2.9	No Expenditure	26.1	74.2
401-500	1.4	3.3	1000 and above	5.3	0.8	Total	100.0	100.0
501-600	1.1	2.1	No Bill Paid	13.1	24.2			
601-700	0.8	1.3	Total	100.0	100.0			
701-800	0.0	1.3						
801 and above	0.6	0.8						
No Expenditure	93.3	46.3						
Total	100.0	100.0						

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Across the caste groups OBC (92.4%) and SC (87%) households have the largest share in the lowest monthly household expenditure decile class (less than Rs 3000). 14.3% general caste households spend in between Rs 3000 and 12000 monthly, while 3% spend Rs 15000 and above while only 1% SC households come under the same. 97.8% households of aged domestic workers are categorised under lowest decile class which explains their distressful economic condition. Among the geographical regions northern city (94%) households followed by western (90%) households have the largest share under the lowest decile class (less than Rs 3000 per month) while only 78% southern city households come under the same. Southern region households (6.3%) have relative affluence and can afford to spend more than Rs 12000 monthly

on household expenditures. The commuter households of north is worse off than the slum household of north with 95.2% households of the former categorised in lowest decile than 92.5% of the latter. Similarly only 71.3% slum households of south Kolkata come under the lowest expenditure decile class unlike the 84.8% commuters coming from southern peripheries into the city. There is observable variation among the rural self-employed in agriculture households than the non-agricultural ones. About 83.3% households of the former come under the lowest decile class unlike 95.8% of the latter, whereas 5.6% and 11% of the agricultural households are categorised under Rs 3000-6000 and under the highest decile class of Rs 27000 and above respectively. There is not much difference in monthly household expenditure between the urban casual labour and urban self-employed households except that 8.1% of the former group spends more than Rs 6000 per month compared to a bit lower 7.2% of the latter. Although nucleated families have smaller number of earning members, they have the largest share under higher decile classes of monthly expenditure (Rs 6000 and above). 7.3% households coming under this range than the joint (2.2%) and extended (1.4%) families. This can be exemplified from the fact that a smaller household size enables diversity in spending sub-heads and spending on non-essential expenditures.

5.2.4 Monthly Household Expenditure across Social and Economic Groups

The social gap in terms of household expenditure which can be taken as proxy indicator for standard of living or poverty is sharp between the urban and rural households, where the former is almost 5 times richer than the latter. Around 8.8% of urban households spend Rs 5000 and above monthly as against 1.9% of rural households. Households of the widow women are evidenced to be poor with only 3.7% households capable of spending more than Rs 5000 per month unlike 8.6% of households of married women irrespective of whether the husbands are working or are unemployed. The slum and general caste households are better off than the commuter and non-general caste households. Around 9.4% general caste households spend Rs 5000 and more per month compared to 5% SC and 7.6% OBC households. Ironically though ayahs and baby-sitters earn the highest among all worker categories but since mostly the widows and separated women take up ayah work relative to married women, who are sole livelihood earners of their household and thus only 1.9% of ayahs undertake monthly household expenditure of Rs 5000 and above. The

work schedule of a baby-sitter or elderly care giver involves 8 to 12 hours continuous work and sometimes night shifts which interferes with family life and unpaid housework responsibilities of the married women workers and this poses as a disincentive for the young married women especially with children to take up ayah work. Thus households with cooks (8.3%) and housecleaners (6.6%) can spend more than Rs 5000 per month by virtue of presence of other male earning members.

The monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) and its CV values computed for all the zones indicate that variation is least in northern and southern slums and highest among the southern commuter and central slum households. The median values for MPCE is Rs 384, Rs 407, Rs 585 and Rs 342 in the northern, western, southern and central slums while it is Rs 178, Rs 155 and Rs 250 in the commuter households of northern, western and southern regions respectively. The MPCE decile classes indicate low standard of living among the commuter households compared to slum ones as 80% households of the former come under lowest MPCE decile class (up to Rs 500), while only 61.7% of slum households fall within the same. Similarly 9% slum households come under Rs 1000 to 2500 MPCE class, while only 5% of commuter comes under the same. At higher MPCE classes the difference between the two broad households reduce and proportion share also decline. 90% of rural households have MPCE less than Rs 500 while for urban areas it is 61.5%. About 3.6% and 4.8% urban households come under Rs 2000-5000 and Rs 3000 and above MPCE classes but none of the rural households come under that. Between the Hindu and Muslim households there is not much difference at the lowest MPCE deciles, but the proportion of Hindu households is 1.5% more than Muslims at MPCE classes of Rs 2000 and above. Across the caste groups, OBC households are the poorest as evidenced from 76.1% whereas only 62.3% general caste households come in the lowest MPCE decile class. The per head expenditure in general caste households is better than rest on account of higher living standards and higher income earned (6.8% households come under Rs 2000 and above MPCE classes as against 4.3% OBC and SC households). Literacy has positive effect on income earnings and thus share of illiterates in the lowest MPCE decile class is highest (78.1%) while households with head of the household having education level of standard nine and above has the lowest share in the same (48.1%). None of the households with illiterate heads earn enough to spend more than Rs 2000 per head, but more than 12% households with

heads studied up to standard eighth and completed secondary schooling and above come under MPCE class of Rs 2000 and above. Gender of the household head doesn't affect the MPCE much but work category of the paid domestic worker affects the income pool of the household so that share of households of cooks in the Rs 2000 and above MPCE class is 6.5% while for domestic helpers it is 4.8%. As most ayahs belong to women headed and single earner households thus income pool is small and share per head gets reduced and only 2% of ayah households fall in Rs 2000 and above MPCE class. The Gini values computed for monthly household expenditure is higher among commuter workers (G = 0.67) relative to slum (G = 0.50), and is lowest among northern (G = 0.30) slums and western (G = 0.42) commuter households. Households of cooks earn in higher brackets and in have the least inequality in standard of living as indicated by lowest Gini values at 0.49. Households in urban (G = 0.56) areas and of illiterate (G = 0.61) women workers have higher inequality in expenditure than literate (G = 0.50) and rural households (G = 0.48). The Bihari (G = 0.42) and general caste (G = 0.58) households have the lowest inequality and have low and high expenditure capabilities. The households with more than 6 members have low standard of living thus have similar economic condition at 0.39 Gini value. Single member households and in households of aged women workers the monthly expenditure levels vary widely, depending on the nature of task performed and presence of adult male earning household member.

Table 1.3.11 Distribution of Domestic Worker Households by MPCE Classes

Domestic Worker Groups (in %)						
MPCE Class	Slum	Commuter	Hindu	Muslim	Literate	Illiterate
Up to 500	61.7	80.0	68.9	71.2	61.9	73.0
501-1000	25.3	10.8	19.6	17.3	25.2	16.2
1001-1500	6.1	2.5	4.8	3.8	6.4	3.7
1501-2000	1.9	1.3	1.5	3.8	2.3	1.3
2001-2500	0.8	1.3	1.1	0.0	1.4	0.8
2501-3000	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.5
3001-5000	1.7	1.7	1.8	0.0	0.5	2.4
5001-7000	1.7	0.4	1.1	1.9	1.4	1.0
7001-15000	0.0	0.8	0.4	0.0	0.5	0.3
15001 and above	0.6	0.8	0.5	1.9	0.5	0.8
Total Households (N)	360	240	546	52	218	382
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

5.2.5 Remittance Linkage

Remittance money is an important linkage between the migrants and their families at their native place. Even some of the non-migrant women send money to their in-laws and extended families located in the neighbouring districts of the state. More often; around 71.1% domestic worker households take the remittance money along with them during their yearly short visits especially during festival occasions or their husbands go in person to hand over the money. 14.2% and 10.2% of the slum and commuter households send remittances to their marital and natal families, usually in small amounts of Rs 500 to 1000 per transfer. Even some women informed to send money to their children for their upbringing, who are staying with their grandparents in the smaller towns and surrounding villages. Some women have even reported to financially support their married daughters and thus the background social network system becomes clearly evident from this.

5.3 Life in selected Slums in KMC

Slums in older parts of Kolkata; the north and central city areas have the typical character owing its colonial past which is in contrast to the slums that have been growing in recent history in the southern and western city portions. Slums in south like Chetla, Panditiya Road have been there since 1980s as informed by one of the dwellers. Slums like Rangkal Basti in Jadavpur area have grown adjacent to the multi-storeyed high class residential apartments and shopping malls and resided by construction workers and labourers who work as security, sweepers and help-boys in the nearby complexes. Dhakuria rail colony is an unique example of how economic variation of intra-slum households is manifested in the gradation of land pieces occupied by them. The slum dwellers here are living on and adjacent to the suburban railway lines and are accustomed to schedule their activities and manage their makeshift use of railway land space according to the train timings and train approach. Economically most poor among them live at the edge of the railway tracks, while progressively the land away and inside from the tracks is taken up by relatively better off households. Similar conditions are seen in Brace Bridge and Budge Budge localities where mostly Bihari migrants and rickshaw-puller men stay just along the edge of the railway stations. Women domestic workers in these slums often travel a bit longer towards city core via train or auto in search of better paying employer houses. Being at the edge of the municipal limits, the land value and wage rate, work demand and vacancy is also seen insufficient. Likewise the standard of living is

extremely poor here as most houses are mixed or kaccha variety, using open water source and inferior cooking fuel. Most slums in Kolkata is named after the dominant caste by occupation and suffixes such as *'bustee', 'pally', 'potti' 'bagan' 'para', 'bazaar'* etc are used in the names, like the Gaushala basti, Mathor patti in north Kolkata which are inhabited by milkmen and sweeper castes. New emergent slums like Nabapally in Kasba, Saradapally and Rabindrapally in southern extreme part of the city are similar in nature. Alcoholism and domestic violence is rampant here with most men being unemployed and status of women extremely depressed. Municipal schools and Integrated Child Developmental Services (ICDS) run well in most slums except at some places. The Tangra and Tiljala slums lying very close to Chinatown in the central and eastern city fringes are known for their leather workshops and tanneries and slaughter-houses and have relatively very dirty dingy atmosphere. Most slums in north have good system of garbage disposal and regular visits by municipal sweepers and long duration of drinking tap water supply. In Tollygunge area of south Kolkata, many slums have extended along either sides of the arterial roads and caste and occupation specific households have concentrated like in 'Muthepara', 'Muchipara' 'Jhaldar Basti', where population of freight-loaders, cobblers and dairy owners use to live respectively. Slums have grown up along canal banks in Beleghata and Jadavpur as well.

5.4 Summary

A sharp distinction is visible in availability, access and use of housing amenities among the domestic worker households residing in slums of Kolkata city and the ones located in the adjacent districts within KUA. The intra-city slum variation in asset ownership and standard of living is prominent especially between the northern and southern slum pockets. Women commuters reaching Kolkata to work from northern region of KUA namely North 24.Parganas are the most deprived economically. Use of inferior quality fuel such as coal, wood, non-tap drinking water, temporary house structure, open defecation incidences are greater among commuters than slums and more so among the western and northern region households. The ownership of durable assets of television, mobile phones, vehicles, LPG cylinders etc sees an unequal distribution with higher possession rates among slum households especially in the southern city zones, which also report higher proportion of households categorized under higher MPCE classes. Significant differences are noticed in living

condition across religious and castes groups. Muslims, SC, OBC along with Hindi-speaking domestic worker households live under worse living standards relative to the Hindu, general caste households. Widowed and separated women workers are financially the poorest having absence of male earning members in the households. There is positive correlation between degree of educational attainment of the head of the household and of the women domestic worker with the standard of living. The differential wage structure among women working as cooks, ayah and domestic helpers coupled with their background economical position is conspicuously reflected in their asset ownership and quality of living index. Domestic helpers and domestic worker households in general of northern commuter zone are ranked worst performing among all. The work profile and wage structure varies not only across the categories of domestic workers based on task, but also spatially across the Kolkata city. This brings about economic inequality within domestic worker group and thus the employment related conditions need to be studied thoroughly in the next chapter to understand the dynamics behind it.

Chapter VI

Paid Domestic Work: Comparison between Slum and Commuter Women Workers

6.1 Paid Domestic Work in Kolkata

This section is devoted to discussions on the work life of the maids; background of the being introduced to this profession to their wage structure, employer characteristics, working conditions among many others. Distribution of workers according to the tasks performed in all employers houses i.e. 899 households by slum workers and 741 households by commuter workers shows that the latter are engaged more in the tasks of a domestic helper including mopping floor (78%), cleaning utensils (76%), washing clothes and laundry (56%) and dusting (24.2%), while the same for the slum women stands at 65.3%, 66%, 30% and 18% respectively. Mopping and utensil cleaning is the most common of all activities as the proportion of domestic workers more likely to report these two activities is greater than 70% percent of cases than other tasks, while washing clothes and dusting are seen to be next likely common activities with 42 and 21 percent of cases. Cooking is performed by 26.1% and 17.3% of slum and commuter women, 3% and 3.7% perform activities of an assistant in kitchen such as make chapatti, cut vegetables, ground spices etc. Baby-sitting and elderly care-giving is provided by 2% and 2.01% of women interviewed and disabled sick care- giving by 1.2% of workers. Women are seen to perform multiple tasks in their daily work course as it provides better earning chances than if they stick to one task. But likewise cooking being the higher order domestic work retains its exclusivity and many women cooks choose not to do other tasks and remain specialized. Many women workers have reported to have changed their occupations from previous jobs like vegetable vending, home-based piece-rate work or casual labour at nearby makeshift production units into paid domestic work. Reasons stated include health deterioration (10.1%), low and irregular payment received earlier (47%), or post retirement or post laid off time (6.3%) from previous job they had to depend on maid work for self-sustenance. Another factor favouring women to take up maid work is that comparatively work done within a domestic setup of an employer is part time, less strenuous one relative to earlier occupations (9%) and its flexible features (11.4%) which allows the workers to be able to manage own household and

children. About 39% of slum women report to be working in 1 employer house, followed by 23% in 2 houses and 28% up to 4 employers. Only 11% of the women work in 5 or more employers homes, the maximum being 12 in number. Commuters usually work with more than 2 employers to make economic use of time and distance travel, thus 43% commuters work for 3 to 4 employers and 20% in 5 to 10 houses, and only 22% work for one employer. Hours of work is usually more for the commuters, 62% of whom spend 4 to 8 hours per day in paid work, while just about 38.1% of slum women work the same duration. Workers, usually ayahs are employed for more than 8 hours (normal man-day) and up to 12 hours is 20.6% and 25% among the slum and commuter workers respectively. In exceptional cases, only 9 slum women work more than 12 hours a day at employer's premises.

Table 1.4.1.1 Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Work Duration and Income Earned

Duration in this Occupation			Time Spent on Paid Domestic Work/Day			Monthly Income from Paid Domestic Work		
Time (Years)	Slum (%)	Comm uter (%)	(Time) Hours	Slum (%)	Comm uter (%)	Income (Rs)	Slum (%)	Comm uter (%)
Less than Equal to 1 year	6.1	5.8	Less than Equal to 1	3.3	0.0	Less than Equal to 1000	15.6	9.2
1-5	15.3	23.3	1.01-2.0	7.2	1.7	1001-2000	24.2	22.9
5-10	17.5	21.3	2.01-4.0	28.3	10.8	2001-3000	30.3	31.3
10-20	33.3	29.6	4.01-6.0	21.1	31.7	3001-4000	15.0	20.8
20-30	13.3	15.0	6.01-8.0	16.9	30.8	4001 and above	15.0	15.8
30-40	12.2	4.2	8.01-10.0	8.1	17.1	Total	100.0	100.0
40-50	1.4	0.8	10.01-12.0	12.5	7.9			
50-60	0.8	0.0	12.01 and more	2.5	0.0			
Total	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0			

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.4.1.2 Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Daily and Hourly Wages, Paid Holidays and Salary Increment Frequency

Wage Earned per Day			Wage Earned per Hour			Paid Holidays per Month			Wage Increment Frequency		
Wage (Rs)	Slu m (%)	Co mm uter (%)	Wage (Rs)	Slum (%)	Co mm uter (%)	No. of Days/M onth	Slu m (%)	Com mute r (%)	Salary Increment Frequency	Slum (%)	Com mute r (%)
1-100	70.0	63.3	1-10	23.6	28.3	None	65.3	24.6	Yearly	27.8	17.5
100.01-200	25.6	35.0	10.1-20	51.4	56.3	1	5.6	3.3	Once in 2 years	4.4	6.7
200.01-300	3.1	1.3	20.1-30	14.7	14.2	2 to 4	15.6	14.6	Once in 2 to 5 years	4.7	0.4

300.01-400	1.1	.4	30.1-40	5.8	1.3	5 to 8	3.1	12.9	Do Not Increase/ No Increment	61.4	72.5
400.01 and above	0.3	0.0	40.1-50	3.1	0.0	Total	100	100	More than 5 years	1.7	2.9
Total	100	100	50.1 and above	1.4	0.0				Total	100	100
			Total	100	100						

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The hours of paid-work by the domestic worker per day is influenced by variables such as age, marital status and presence of own children, distance of workplace from home, wage rate, total number of earning members in the household, availability of jobs, duration of employment in this occupation, household size, alternative and secondary occupation of the worker, health condition and monthly household expenditure demands of the worker.

6.2 Duration of Employment of Paid Domestic Workers

Persons and relations of the maid those who introduced the domestic worker to this work, highlights the social connection upon which the choice of work, place of work is based on. Most of the workers (30%) stated that they themselves thought to have joined this occupation and got work via word of mouth and neighbours initially. Neighbourhood (24%) friends (10.3%), relatives, in-laws and acquaintances (18.6%) who themselves were familiar with the nature of domestic work also helped introduce these women in to the paid domestic job market. Another feature of this informal work is that at very young age that these women were introduced into this occupation by their parents (14.3%), especially their mothers who themselves earned their living as domestic workers. About 14.4% of women are said to have been working more than 30 years in this profession. Many of these respondents (5%) admitted to have worked as maids in their childhood days accompanying their mothers to employer's workplaces or even have worked as full time live-in maids in urban homes. Thus around 19% and 32% of women reported to have been earning from paid domestic work since 5 to 10 years and 10 to 20 years respectively (**Table 1.4.1.1**). The inter-generational nature of work is displayed from the fact that many slum dwelling workers (26%) and 19.2% of commuter workers in the age cohort of 50 years and above are earning their living since last 20 to 40 years. The proportion of recently joined workers is quite visible among the commuter women, amounting to 6% in the

less than 1 year category and 15.3% among the slum and 23.3% among commuter women for duration of 1 to 5 years. It can be seen that more women from surrounding rural-urban suburbs are flocking to Kolkata to work as maids; pointing to the non-availability of sufficient and well paying non-farm and manufacturing and service work in the native places. It was mentioned earlier there were many women in the interview group who said that they started to work as paid domestics at much younger age of below 10 years and to have entered the labour market accompanying their mothers and relatives since their childhood. Thus around 17% of the respondents stated to have worked as a child, out of which 17.6% worked in single employer homes as full-time maid, while 82.4% worked as part-time maid with multiple employers. In a Muslim dominated slum in north Kolkata, Parseebagan prevalence of employing child labour in paid domestic work was reported by neighbouring households, but police interventions have helped tackle the social problem there, bringing down such incidences. The women who started work at young age took break in between for marriage (35.3%) and childbirth (13%), poor health (10.3%), but a large share; 40.5% did not take any break and are continuously working since they started work. Women maids have however informed (11 precisely) to have faced phases of unemployment on account of shifting of the employer, being laid off from work or lack of work availability after a brief interval of self induced break from paid work.

Paid domestic work has an inherent intergenerational character especially among the aged and middle aged slum women and is more pronounced in the traditional older neighbourhoods of Kolkata preferably in the north and central city zones. In the localities of Shyambazar, Moulali, Taltala, Beleghata, where the employer households have more of a joint family, shop house and typical double or triple storeyed mid 19th century bungalow structure, these maids especially from the adjacent slums have been working with the same employer for more than 30 to 40 years or even more. At many instances these maids were introduced to these employers at their childhood working as helpers to their domestic worker mothers, and thus taking up the jobs upon the retirement or death of their mothers. Parents of these maids also found easy way to clear their debt bondages through sending their children in live-in paid domestic work. Thus long duration of work tenures with a single employer which blends into strong informal bonds beyond work relationship can be estimated from the fact that,

about 6.1% and 4% of slum and commuter women have been working since 20 to 40 to more years, 41% and 30% working for up to 5 and 5 to 10 years respectively. Apart from private employer homes, 3.2% women also work as domestic workers performing mopping, washing and sweeping activities in offices, 1.2% as ad-hoc part-time task based and hour based jobs and 2.7% women in restaurants, clinics and shops. To earn supplementary income about 16% of maids admitted to wring in time for working ad-hoc for few hours or days and have some women have also eventually got permanent jobs.

6.3 Social Network in Paid Domestic Work

The involvement of social network in introduction to this occupation and acquiring new employer houses and also assistance in wage fixation is fairly strong and observable extensively, more so among the commuter women workers. Often the mother, peers and relatives (2.2%) accompany the maid to the workplace for arbitration with the employer on salary fixation on behalf the maid; usually the new entrants into this occupation. The social network of the women maids is generally constituted by other women only and a large share of which is familial in character. They often provide financial support through interest free loans in times of emergency economic crisis. Around 19% and 2.4% of the slum women who borrowed from sources other than employers received monetary loans from their neighbours and acquaintance and relatives and peers respectively, apart from self help groups (SHG) (9.5%) and bank (2.8%). The dependence on informal sources other than the employers were more in case of the commuters as seen from the loans taken from neighbours and village natives (21.7%) and relatives cum friends (4.3%), while banks and SHG stood at 0.4% and 13% respectively. Interestingly, participation in local area committee meetings and pooling of community loans is common with 4.8% and 8.7% of slum and commuter women depending on this informal source of loans. The role of Bandhan bank and other sources of microfinance borrowings such as Ujjivan, Arohon is profound among these small saver women workers, particularly for building *pacca* (permanent) house and buying assets (22.2%) and as capital for self employment (11.1%). Among the other major institutional source of loans microfinance assists around 64.3% of slum and 52.2% of the commuter women maid borrowers. Repayment of loans to the employer sources were mostly arranged as deductions from salary, while other arrangements were subjective and based on convenience and prior

decisions. The microfinance sector has proven extremely instrumental and beneficial to the small saver section especially the women folk in eliminating financial stress, providing capital for self-employment and assisting in improving standard of living. Repayments are made on easier terms with weekly and monthly small instalments. Most women also claimed to have helped new maids find job and teach them trade tactics or answered their queries. Around 35% of slum maids and 28% commuter women have helped recently joined workers with job information and 10.5% also helped with imparting cues for better work opportunities. But lack of job vacancy (15%) under mutual competing environment and lack of trust (37%), fear of harming self reputation in the wake of unfortunate incidences have made most women to be sceptical in assisting fellow maids. About 50% workers think that domestic work is forte of all women and special teaching skills are not needed for the new participants in labour market, while 8.7% women are themselves new in this job to impart skills to others.

The decisions regarding work participation is often seen to have a patriarchal authoritarian shadow especially among the village women, the male heads of their households exercising power to decide whether the women of their house should work or leave working for an employer etc. 47% and 40% slum and commuter maids had left employer jobs multiple times during their job tenure and 7% consulted with their family before discontinuing their services. About 13.1% and 22.1% of slum and commuter women workers who left work for employer consulted with their respective families. The principal advisors were husbands (46.5%), parents and family (8.6%) and son (2.3%). Similarly several women reported to have discussed and taken permission from their male guardians for participating in paid work, often facing objections and disapproval from them (4.4% towards slum and 2.5% towards commuter women). The mothers and daughters of these women maids also substitute at workplaces during instances of absenteeism and leave. 9.2% of slum and 3.3% of commuter female family members primarily daughters (50%), mothers (25%) and daughter in laws (16.7%) had substituted them at workplace. The support also transcendences in to sharing and teaching these women trade tactics and on the job training to the maids from co-workers (13.1%) and mothers (10.1%). Paid domestic work comes under the highly informal domain which needs personalized niche of contacts of the potential maid with the employer through a number of her social

network chains of people. The process of recruitment and finding work entails acquaintances for both the employer and the domestic worker, who act as mediator and representative between the parties as the nature of work is personalized and is performed within employer's house and the issues of trust, cleanliness, obedience, efficiency and other personal characteristics become important for both the maids and their employers. Thus very often personal care attendants like barber, security guards, neighbours, drivers and many more service occupation persons who frequent employers homes act as immediate social network who help find potential domestic workers. Sometimes village natives who work in the city introduce newly entered women in to paid domestic work and help them in being employed within their known network of employers. Thus about 35.3% and 28% of slum and commuter women stated to have been introduced into this profession by their social network, primarily comprising of mothers (13.3%), neighbours (24%), friends and co-workers (11.7%), male members of family (11%). The network operation is also seen when maids are working via placement agencies. Most agencies informed to have enrolled women who came to their centres after being informed from their peers, friends and distant family who used to work via the agencies. On same note, the information about newer employer prospects is also received via dense and complex frame of social network through chance meetings and word of mouth (38.8%) among 61.1% of slum and 50% of commuters. Although most women (34.2%) claim to get more employers by self searching efforts, but neighbours (23%), friends (13.3) and sisters, mothers and women (8.3) in families and also co-workers (3.8%) and current employer (6.5%) help in channelling information about new job prospects. Acquisition of current job was being made with the help of placement agency (6%) and peer group (30.2%) also. The social connectivity and fellow feelings of a belonging with the fellow co-workers and other domestic workers was a surprising occurrence even amidst the stiff competition among the slum (35.3%) and commuter (28%) maids, who claim to have helped co-professional women to find jobs. The others did not due to trust factor and lack of knowledge or lack of work vacancies.

To ascertain the magnitude of presence of the various channels of social capital and to understand the importance of networking prospects a comparative inference has been drawn across the work categories and between the domestic workers located in northern and southern city region parts. The ayahs are more or less dependent on the

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affiliated placement centre or on own discretion in matters regarding wage decision, leaving work and getting work information. But on the other hand they are seen to have more dependence on social network (relatives, friends, peer and co-workers) to learn trade tactics and helping other maids in getting jobs and spending leisure hours with friends and neighbours and getting help in household chores from family members compared to the cooks and domestic cleaners. Relative to cooks, the domestic helpers have greater dependence on their social connections for introduction to this occupation and work information along with decision on work participation. This can be reasoned based on the nature of tasks which are simplistic and which doesn't require inherent proficiency that cooking activity does, added to that the proportion of women domestic helpers is higher than women who exclusively work as ayah or cook (**Table 1.4.2**). Similarly the southern region maids are seen to take work related decisions more by themselves but the social networking is strong in cases of work information, work distribution and additional help from family members. Besides, remittance is sent through social network by 12.5% slum and 8.8% commuters and migration into the city was primarily accompanied by 12% slum and 7.5% commuter women through channels of social circle. Thus networking is a medium of sustaining association with the origin, with kin, undertaking migration and securing livelihood and fulfilling psycho-social needs.

Table 1.4.2 Distribution of Domestic Worker Groups according to Presence and Role of Social Network

Social Network of the Domestic Workers	Slum Worker (%)	Commuter Worker (%)	North Region Worker (%)	South Region Worker (%)	Ayah (%)	Cook (%)	Domestic Helper (%)
Wage decided by Family/Peer/Relative	1.11	3.75	5.0	0.50	0.0	2.80	2.40
Consult Family/Peer/Relative before leaving work	1.39	1.67	1.50	7.70	3.80	5.50	5.10
Substitute for my workplace from Social Network	9.17	3.33	3.50	9.30	5.70	7.40	6.30
Sources of loan among Social Network	4.17	4.58	2.50	3.50	3.80	3.70	2.70
Introduction to paid domestic work by Family/Friend/Relative	48.89	61.67	72.80	73.80	63.50	65.70	70.90
Work got through Social network	37.50	24.17	33.30	29.20	21.10	35.20	35.10
Work information through Social Network	61.11	49.58	52.60	65.60	44.20	55.60	63.60
Helped introduce any new	35.30	27.90	26.80	33.50	44.20	38.90	27.0

entrant into this job							
On the Job training from social network	3.06	1.25	4.0	2.50	19.30	4.70	2.10
Leisure time spent with Family/Friends	5.0	8.33	8.10	7.30	9.60	5.50	8.10
Decision to start working decided by Social Network	1.38	0.42	16.20	14.60	9.60	7.40	19.20
Family/Relatives disapproving paid domestic work	4.44	2.50	1.50	4.40	3.80	5.50	2.70
Family/Relatives helping in household chores	11.94	5.83	47.0	44.20	67.30	40.70	49.50

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

6.4 Paid Domestic Work among the Commuter Women

Commuter women were canvassed for additional questions to understand the economics behind commute from interiors of KUA. The suburban railway network along the south-eastern route has Sealdah station as the terminal and trains ply up and down towards the north and South 24 Parganas. Kolkata suburban railway network is distinguished to be the largest in India with 348 stations and the trains are refereed to as 'local' in common city parlance. For the analysis, women domestic workers travelling along the Sealdah- Canning, Sealdah- Baruipur, Diamond Harbour, Namkhana lines under Sealdah South section and Shantipur- Krishnanagar line, Naihati line under Sealdah-Bongaon section were chosen. The trains are electric multiple units (EMU), chugging at frequent intervals either with halts at every station or with alternative galloping stops. The trains have compartments which are exclusively reserved for women but an added initiative of the West Bengal ministry was the '*Matribhoomi* Local' introduced since 2009; a women exclusive train service running along Sealdah- Canning, Sealdah- Baruipur and Sealdah- Barasat lines. The trains have vastly improved spatial mobility in KUA and enabled not only bringing women domestic workers into the city but also brought together vendors, daily-wage earners, regular salaried and petty traders within the same physical and social space of journey. The hordes of people commute every day to and fro the city in the morning and evening rush hours returning back to their homes in the neighbouring districts at the end of the work-day. They come to the city from far-off villages like Mograhat, Namkhana, Mathurapur, Lakshikantapur and others along the Diamond Harbour trail located in Sundarbans region and Halishahar, Kanchrapara trail or from lower tier towns such as Ranaghat, Agarpara, Kalyani, Naihati, Barasat and Canning. About

80.4% commuters come from S.24.Parganas, while the rest comes from N.24.Prganas (12.1%), and Kolkata (6.7%) and Nadia.

Table 1.4.3 Distribution of Commuter Domestic Workers by Distance Travelled and District of Residence

One-way Distance Travelled by Commuter Domestic Workers to Kolkata by District of Origin in West Bengal						
Distance Travelled (Kilometres)	**Districts of origin for commuters**					
	Nadia	**N.24.Parganas**	**Kolkata**	**S.24.Parganas**	**Purba Medinipur**	**Total**
Up to 20	0	2	15	20	0	37
	.0%	6.9%	93.8%	10.4%	.0%	15.4%
20.01-40	0	12	0	34	0	46
	.0%	41.4%	.0%	17.6%	.0%	19.2%
40.01-60	0	12	1	113	0	126
	.0%	41.4%	6.3%	58.5%	.0%	52.5%
60.01-80	1	3	0	24	1	29
	100.0%	10.3%	.0%	12.4%	100.0%	12.1%
80.01-100.5	0	0	0	2	0	2
	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.0%	.0%	.8%
Total	1	29	16	193	1	240
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

6.4.1 Role of Suburban Railway Network and Train Commute in Paid Domestic Work

These trains act as a space for social networking as gauged from the questions pertaining to work related information. About 38% of the women admitted to receive information of job prospects and new employer houses from their commuter friends and acquaintances. Apart from improving work and income earning potential, train commute is looked upon as beneficial by these women. They confer the positive facets in the form of realization of financial independence and greater spatial mobility, development of a sense of belongingness, evolution of friendship bonds amongst fellow women co-travellers. Train commute all by themselves and that too in the big metropolis for earning their bread and butter crystallizes a form of empowerment among the weak, docile and socio-economically poor women workers. Thus 75.4% of the maids noted that the companionship of the fellow women commuters, friends and peer is the best part of journey that they look forward to.

Figure 2.7 and 2.8

Distance Travelled by Commuter Domestic Workers (North and West) by Train (One - directional Journey)

Stations Alighting
- Sealdah
- Park Circus
- Lake Gardens
- Tollygunge
- New Alipore

Distance Travelled by Commuter Domestic Workers (North and South) by Train (One- directional Journey)

Stations Alighting
- Sealdah
- Park Circus
- Ballygunge
- Dhakuria
- Jadavpur
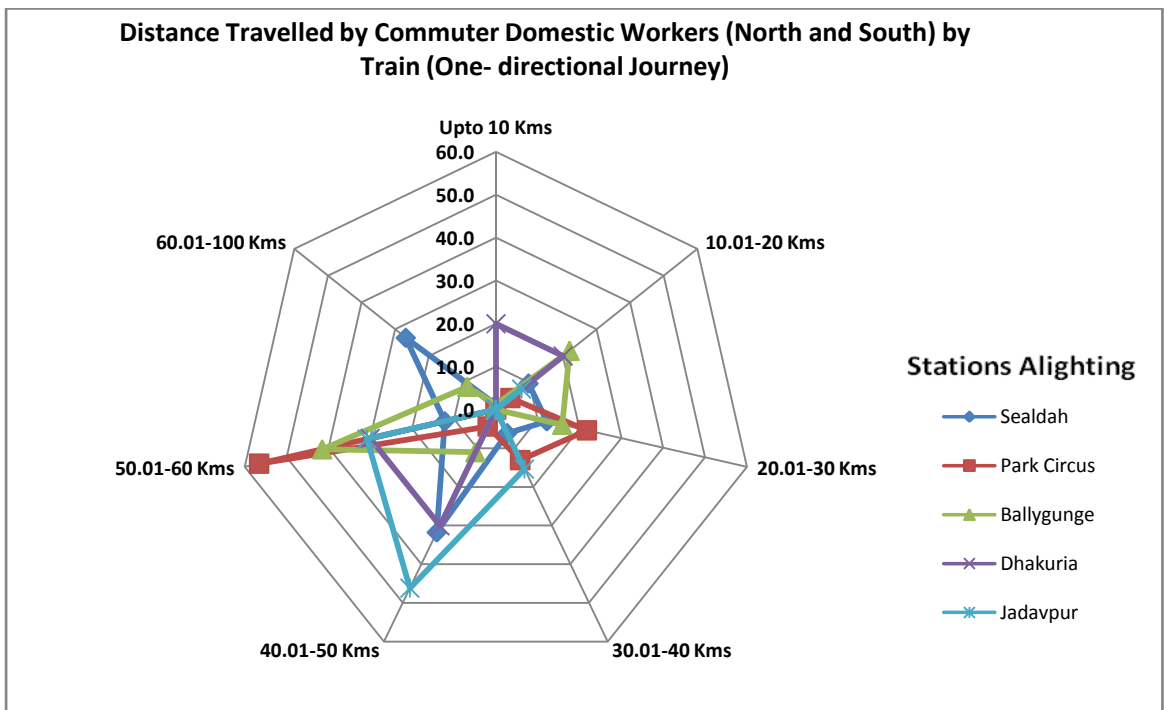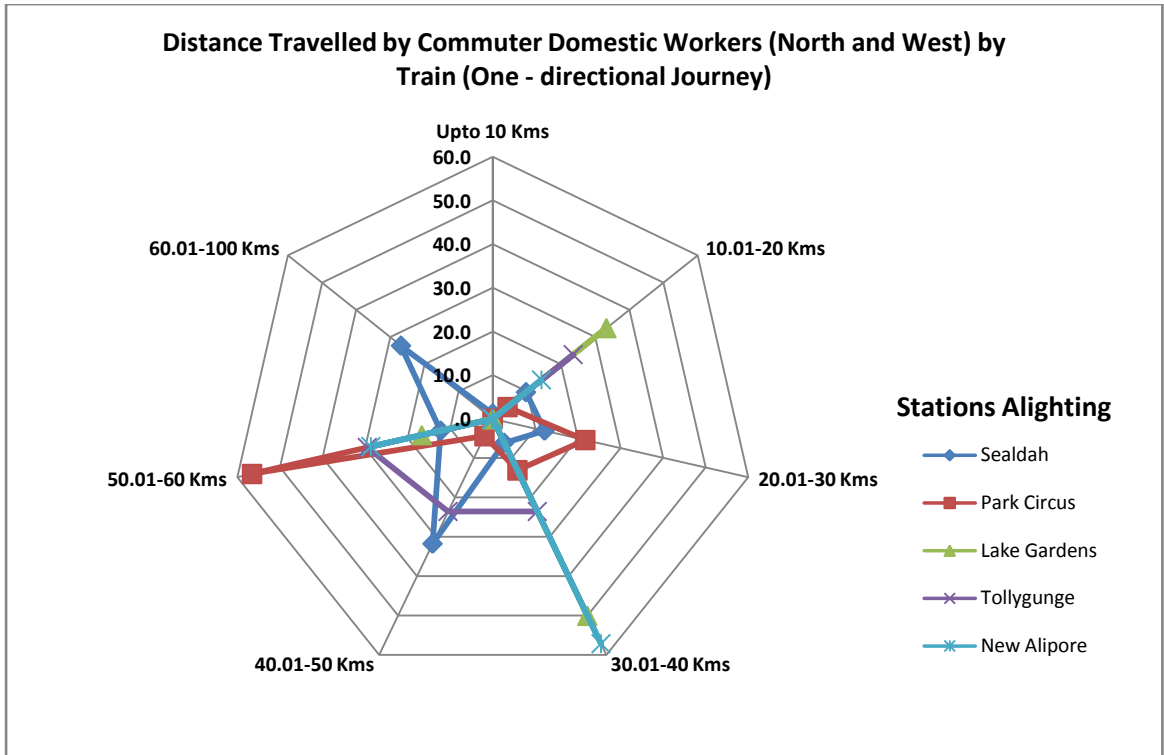
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

It is easy to spot the feelings of solidarity and support for own community and a sense of comfort zone that these women have developed over the time of routine sharing of their life tales and happenings with one another throughout the daily commute. The women who have been commuting into Kolkata since many years

develop a strong unspoken psycho-social connection among themselves which is also reflected in uniform wage demands and wage proposal solicitation advises that they give one another notwithstanding the competition for employment. The compartments also transform into mini makeshift markets where hawkers sell cosmetics, food snacks, fruits, toys, garments, confectionery and decorative items apart from everyday usable household objects. Likewise, 8.2% respondents noted that they access such petty transactions and are fond of it, while 7% talk about making contact with the city life all by themselves as life changing. Travel is not hassle free and the respondents complain of over-crowding (59.3%), lack of sitting room, physical exhaustion (22%), and trivial fights and pick-pocketing (18%) as some of the major obstacles in the journey that they face every day. Some women reported to have faced threats to be retrenched from work on account of absenteeism due to disruptions and delay in train services (34.2%). There are some primary negative aspects of commuting ranked in descending order such as physical exhaustion (45.7%), longer working hours (23.4%), difficult journey experience on account of overcrowding (10%), starting the journey to work very early from home (7.4%) and harassment by railway authorities and men (7.4%). The single most important shortcoming expressed by the women was their longer hours of paid work (35%) and consequent inability to look after their households (40%). (**Figure 2.9**)

81.3% of commuting women preferred to journey in women only coaches or '*ladies kaamra*' while 13% use the general compartments for safety mindset especially in the evenings (5.8%) and to avoid the abuse and fights that are common in women-only coaches. Women are very poor to buy train tickets and travel ticket-less daily risking being caught by the railway officials. Only 40.8% women had monthly train pass, the price of which varied according to the distance travelled. Time use survey reveals that journey to work for these women takes up much of their time and in turn extends their total System of National Account (SNA) time. Short distance commuters who usually live immediately near to KMC limits or live within the city like in neighbourhoods of Garia, Dhakuria, Brace Bridge, commuting up to 20 kilometres in one directional journey to workplace makes up about 17.1% and completing the train journey within 30 minutes (11.5%). About 43.3% women travel 1 to 2 hours in train thereafter walking another few minutes or taking auto, rickshaw to reach the employers houses. Multiple modes of transportation aggravate the journey time and makes travel more

wearisome and a mentally fatiguing experience. Women report to start their travel on feet, cycles or van-rickshaws from their homes in the early hours of dawn around 2 to 3 am in the morning along with fellow travel companions like vegetable vendors and others to board trains to their nearest station. Women who travel from distant villages are found to bear greater socio-economic costs on account of using more than two modes of transport; train, feet and van (11.7%), auto (8.3%), rickshaw, bicycle etc. Thus about 11.3% women travel for 2.5 to 4.5 hours in a one directional commute and 4.6% women journey for 1 to 2 hours on feet to and from workplace. Thus it is imaginable the kind of gruelling travel that these women are subjected to which makes them more vulnerable to inferior health and well-being situations. It also affects their productivity and performance at work on account of greater likelihood of reporting stress and lesser duration of sleep. Time use shows 82% and 71.3% of commuter women spending less than 6 hours on night-time sleep and having no time for recreational and leisure activities respectively. Commuters from S.24 Parganas were usually coming from greater distances of 40-60 kilometres (58.5%) in one way journey than N.24 Parganas (41.4%). Interestingly women from smaller urban centres in North 24 Parganas outnumbered those from S.24.Parganas. 80% of women in latter were from villages while the figure stood at 14% in N.24.Parganas.

Figure 2.9
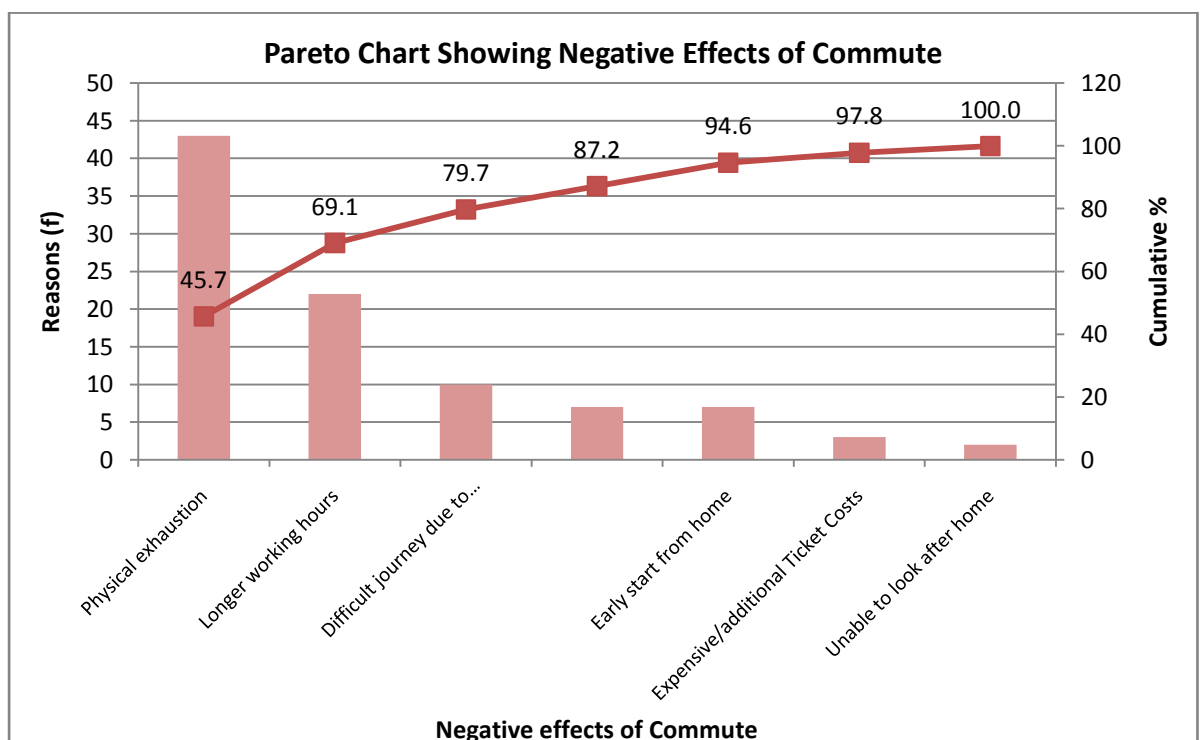
Map 3.31
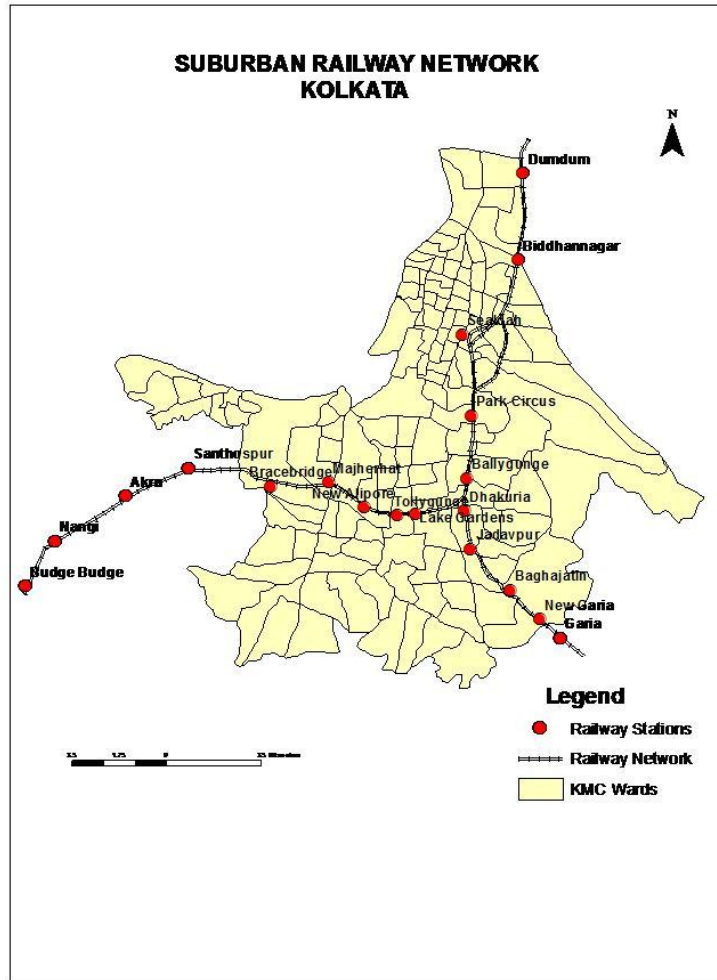
6.4.2 Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting

In order to understand that whether commuting long distance into Kolkata is empowering or incurs a socio-economic cost burden on the women domestic workers, a socio-economic commuter cost index is computed comprising of 7 indicators. Commuters who travel more than 20 kilometres and for more than 1.5 hours in a one-directional journey (55.4%) to work and usually with greater than Rs 200 monthly travel expense (53.8%) thresholds are considered to have high commuting cost index. Higher the value for the index, greater will be the degree of socio-economic cost.

About 85% of the commuter women travel more than 40 kilometres daily. It is especially the commuters from village (13.8%) that have to bear higher cost to earn livelihood in city than the ones commuting from small towns (3.7%). Literacy, religion and caste affiliations do not have any affect on the commuting cost. This can be attributed to using more than two modes of transportation, which the village women use daily to reach Kolkata. A comparative picture can be drawn on the basis of composite score for women arriving at 8 different stations across Kolkata. The cost is lower for commuters who reach Sealdah and Park Circus stations in northern Kolkata, while the ones arriving at Tollygunge and New Alipore stations from western fringes of the city and beyond endure a higher cost. Jadavpur, Ballygunge, Dhakuria on the Sealdah-Canning line and Lake Gardens in the Budge Budge line, come under moderate index category. Thus only 30% of western zone commuters have low cost index, while 56.2% of the women in the northern zone fall in low cost index category. But it is understood that the opportunity costs in the form of physical-psychosocial health, inability to look after household and children and time loss and travel expense related to commuting lengthier distances from the interiors of the districts, are much lower than the dividends earned through paid domestic work in Kolkata city. Overall the distances travelled by women maids reaching western and northern Kolkata stations are much larger than southern counterparts. About 91.4% (northern) and 83.3% (western station) workers travel more than 20 kilometres uni-directional relative to only 78.1% of southern maids. But compared to northern (17.1%) commuters, a higher proportion of southern (38.1%) ones have to use more than two transport medium thereby incurring more probabilities of hassles of daily commute and higher travel expenditures greater than Rs 200 per month (31.4%).

Table 1.4.4.1 Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting Indicators across Commuter Domestic Workers

Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting Indicators	Total Commuter (%)	North Commuter (%)	South Commuter (%)	West Commuter (%)
Time taken to commute to workplace from home (one directional) > 1.5 hours	55.4	51.4	55.2	70.0
Distance travelled between workplace and home (one directional)- > 20 kilometres	84.6	91.4	78.1	83.3
Travel expense > Rs 200 per month	53.8	17.1	31.4	20
Hassles of Daily Commute	37.9	21.0	41.9	83.3
Hardships caused due to travel/train service Disruption	34.2	39.0	27.6	40.0

Negative aspects of commuting suffered	39.2	37.1	38.1	50.0
More than 2 modes of Transport used	25.4	17.1	31.4	33.3

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Map 3.32.1
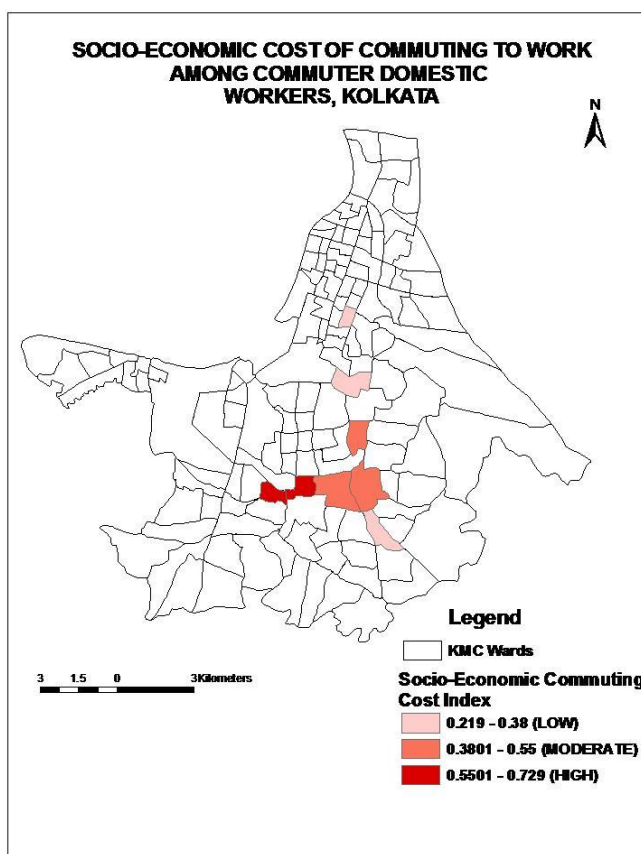
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.4.4.2 Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting across the Commuter Domestic Workers

Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting Index		
Index	Index Values	Stations
Low	0.20-0.37	Parkcircus, Sealdah
Medium	0.38-0.55	Jadavpur, Ballygunje, Dhakuria, Lake Gardens
High	0.56-0.73	New Alipore, Tollygunje

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Many reasons were cited by the women to come from far-flung distances to work in Kolkata. Women usually choose to find work near their residences and as the distance to workplace increases, the propensity of women preferring to work decreases. This is owing to their traditional gender role of managing both house-work, unpaid care

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activities alongside paid work. Child rearing and staying at home motherhood is a major responsibility that is almost entirely shouldered by women folk, even among the ones participating in higher order professional economic activities with greater income margins. Thus domestic workers are mostly illiterate or with lower education and earn scanty incomes and belong to low income households, they generally find work within proximity of their homes, not only to minimise travel time and be able to look after domestic chores but also to minimise travel cost. It is seen that 90.2% of the maids work in the neighbourhoods lying within a radius of 2 kilometres from nearest railway station in Kolkata.

Table 1.4.5 Reasons for Commuting for Paid Domestic Workers and Hassles Faced during Commute

Reasons for Commuting to Kolkata for Paid Domestic Work (%)			Hassles faced While Commuting in Train (%)		
Reasons	Primary	Secondary	Hassles	Primary	Secondary
Earn more Money	30.30	0.00	Overcrowding	59.34	7.69
Do not want to work in field	9.09	11.11	Petty Fights	16.48	61.54
No Work in Village/Native place	38.38	44.44	Lack of sitting room/physical exhaustion/standing	21.98	30.77
NREGA work not sufficient/ less Job opportunity	6.06	11.11	Pick-pocket	1.10	0.00
High House Rent in Kolkata	11.11	0.00	Train Not on Time	1.10	0.00
Workplace here	2.02	22.22	Total	100.00	100.00
Low Paid manual jobs in villages	3.03	11.11			
Total	100.00	100.00			

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

But in case of commuter women, appalling economic state of their native places with inadequate job prospects and stagnant agricultural sector, coerce them to travel in to Kolkata from far and distant places. About 14% of the rural women commuters have their names enrolled in MGNREGA job-card and have also worked under the job scheme, but they complain of not getting enough work and disliking such kind of manual labour under scorching sun (15% of commuters). Unavailability of decent and adequate employment opportunities (38.3%) and to earn higher and better paying regular incomes (30.3%) is cited as primary reasons behind commuting to Kolkata (**Table 1.4.5**). About 12 women said their previous occupation was paid domestic

work at their native places, but low rate of payment at the villages was insufficient for running their house. High rental expenditure in Kolkata slums and higher cost of living in the city is cited by 13.1% of the respondents. According to these women, the work diversity in their native places is narrow and is primarily limited to casual labour work in agriculture (10%), less paying maid work (10%), construction and brick kiln worker (1.4%). Self employment (1.3%) and piece rate work such as garland making, embroidery '*zari-moti*' work (2.50%), *bidi* making etc are the only options. About 10% and 59% painted a grim picture of non existence of any suitable job and their own lack of knowledge of alternative economically viable employment opportunities at their native places.

6.4.3 Distance Analysis

Women participation in economic activities can be identified with some archaically salient features which are related to informal nature of work, with part-time low paying activities, typically requiring low skills and training that allow them to manage unpaid domestic chores and participate in family life to a greater extent. Distance of workplace from residence has a major significance in determining the work participation and availability of women to particular type of occupations. Women tend to find work near to their house in order to cut down the travel time and expenditure incurred. This conception is more appropriate for the poor and economically weaker section of population who live in slums and find work close by to reduce expenditure on travel.

Table 1.4.6 Distribution of Slum Domestic Workers by Zones according to Distance Travelled on Feet to Workplace

Distance Travelled by Slum Domestic workers on Feet according to City Zones in One-Directional Journey to Workplace (in %)				
Distance in (Kilometres)	North	West	South	Central
Up to 0.5	78.5	38.5	43.6	52.9
0.51-1.0	10.8	35.4	31.7	25.7
1.01-1.5	4.3	4.2	9.9	7.1
1.51-2.0	1.1	1.0	4.0	5.7
2.01-3.0	2.2	13.5	5.0	5.7
3.01-4.0	1.1	5.2	5.0	0.0
4.01-6.0	1.1	2.1	1.0	1.4
6.01-8.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The domestic workers set out for workplaces that are covered on feet, thus making a buffer of maximum 2 kilometres from their residence. The slum dwelling women usually find work within same ward and locality with 53.1% walking up to 0.5 kilometres on one directional travel to workplace, 26.1% within 0.5 to 1 kilometre and 9.2% within 1 to 2 kilometres. Women who work under employment agency and especially the ayahs at times use bus and auto to workplace with a distance more than 3 to 6 kilometres or more (5%) to cover. In the more compact and densely aligned slum and middle class houses in north (78.5%) and central (53%) Kolkata most women work within 500 metres of their home and 18.8% maids in the western slums like Tollygunge, Alipore walk for 2 to 4 kilometres in one sided journey to workplace. Even the commuter women who travel by train in to Kolkata city, find work within a limited radius of areal extent from the terminating railway station, usually 56% of commuter women work within 1 to 2 kilometre radius, while another 35% within 1 kilometre.

Commuter women getting down at 8 different stations within KMC, are tracked according to their direction and distance travelled from the railway terminus to workplace, for conducting a spatial analysis. Majority of the women in northern Kolkata stations of Sealdah (51.2%) and Park Circus (30.4%) travel for 1.51 to 2 kilometres, while the women arriving at the western and southern stations of Tollygunge (47.1%), Ballygunge (72%) walk even shorter distances of 0.5 to 1 kilometre and 1 to 1.5 kilometres respectively. Commuters reaching at Dhakuria, Jadavpur and Lake Gardens stations have workplaces within easy proximity of the crowded residential areas within 0.5 kilometre. The women alighting in New Alipore station travel the longest among all the women with more than 85% covering more than 2 to 4 kilometres on feet to workplace from station.

The distances travelled by commuter women are categorised in 10 kilometres classes and the distribution of domestic workers station-wise shows that women de-boarding at Park Circus (56.5%), Tollygunge (20%) and Ballygunge (41.5%) travel longer distances of 50 to 60 kilometres by train in one directional journey. Walking to work is the primary mode of commute for the slum dwelling women followed by bus (6.4%) and auto-rickshaw (2%). For the commuter women the feeder routes up to employers house in Kolkata is usually traversed on foot and bus (14.8%), whereas the connectivity to their residences from the railway stations in the villages and small tier

towns is reached by van-rickshaws (46%), auto-rickshaws (32.8%) and by bicycles (7%).

Figure 2.10
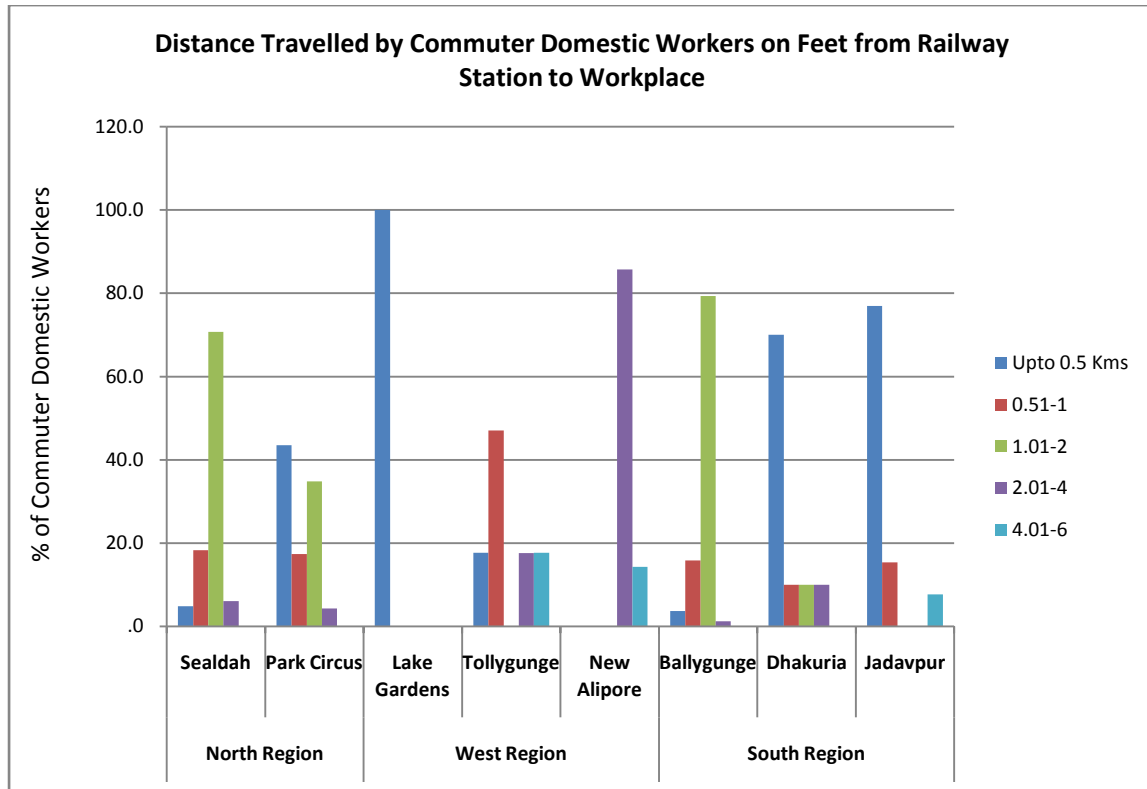
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Distance has a negative relation with work participation, level of empowerment, standard of living, level of decent work and health and wellbeing condition of the women domestic workers. As the distance to workplace increases the proportion of women willing to work declines, but among the commuter workers, poor standard of living and poverty force them to travel greater distances from interiors of villages.

Health and wellbeing declines as the distance to work rises, on account of accelerated degrees of physical and mental exhaustion endured due to greater time spend on the road, so does the social and economic costs of commute. Degree of empowerment attained from working is nullified due to long distances and time incurred in reaching and returning from workplace. The opportunity costs for work participation is inability to take care of own children and performing own household chores, or struggling to balance both paid and unpaid work, travel related hassles etc.

Map 3.32.2
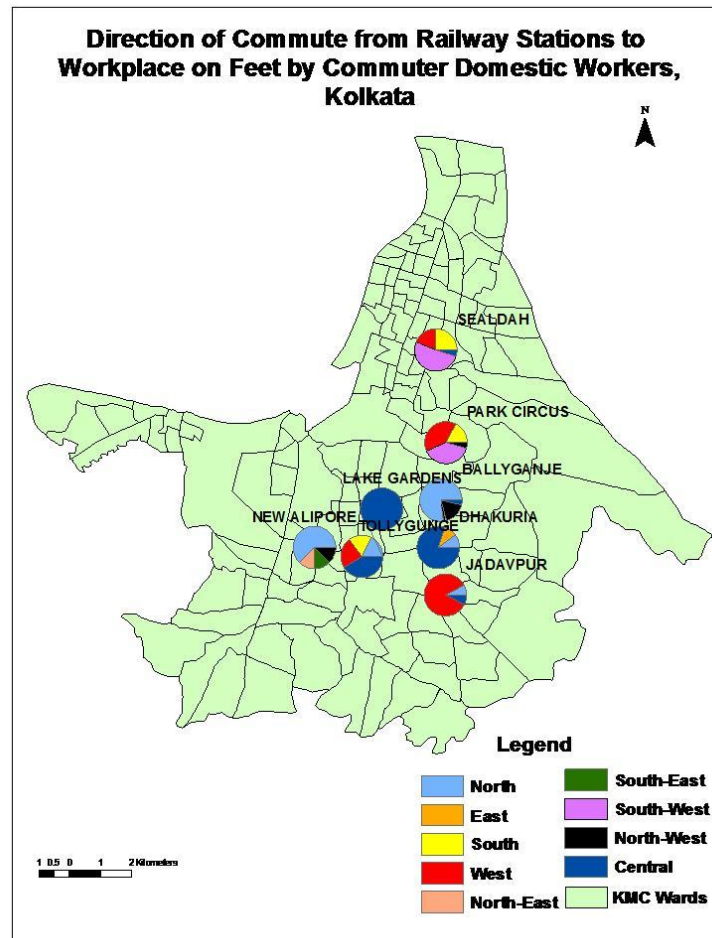
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The cross tabulated data shows that up to 20 kilometres of travel to work the proportion of women under high decent work index (DWI) is 26.2% and low is 6.5%, but with incremental rise of distance by 20 kilometres results in progressive decline in proportion of high DWI women, with only 3.2% women classified having high DWI with 60 to 100 kilometres of journey to work. The same is seen for the degree of empowerment which also has an inverse relation with distance travelled to workplace, with women experiencing high empowerment decreases from 41.1% to 12.9% when distance traversed increases from up to 20 kilometres to more than 60 kilometres correspondingly. This has a similar replication with health and wellbeing index that also witnesses worsening situation with rising distances of journey, especially for the commuter women coming to the city from far off villages in the KUA districts. About 6.5% and 7.9% women maids who travel daily 20 to 40 kilometres and 40 to 60

kilometres respectively come under worse health and wellbeing category and it jumps up to 26% when distances covered is more than 60 kilometres in an unidirectional journey to workplace.

Table 1.4.7 Distance to Workplace and Its Impact on the Work and Life of Commuter Domestic Workers

Distance (in Kilometres)	Decent Work Index (%)				Standard of Living Index (%)			
	Low	Moderate	High	Total	Fair	Bad	Worse	Total
Up to 20	6.5	67.3	26.2	100.0	12.8	75.1	12.1	100.0
20.01-40	15.2	73.9	10.9	100.0	8.7	58.7	32.6	100.0
40.01-60	28.6	66.7	4.8	100.0	2.4	49.2	48.4	100.0
60.01-100	25.8	71.0	3.2	100.0	3.2	51.6	45.2	100.0
Distance (in Kilometres)	Health and Wellbeing Index (%)				Empowerment Index (%)			
	Fair	Bad	Worse	Total	Low	Moderate	High	Total
Up to 20	28.2	68.8	3.0	100.0	8.8	50.1	41.1	100.0
20.01-40	23.9	69.6	6.5	100.0	8.7	69.6	21.7	100.0
40.01-60	18.3	73.8	7.9	100.0	17.5	52.4	30.2	100.0
60.01-100	3.2	71.0	25.8	100.0	29.0	58.1	12.9	100.0
Chi Square = 70.519 (df =6) p < 0.001, Chi Square = 87.951 (df =6), p < 0.001, Chi Square = 39.444 (df = 6), p < 0.001, Chi Square = 29.167 (df = 6) p < 0.001								

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Finding appropriate and fruitful wage earning work within their villages and small towns is difficult and wage rates being extremely paltry, compels these women to make a hard choice of commuting daily to Kolkata and traversing distances to even more than 60 kilometres one way. The standard of living is fair (12.8%) for households within a threshold of 10 to 20 kilometres of workplace and it becomes bad to worse once distance interval increases, but the relation is not that definite. The chi square performed on the same shows that the relation of increasing distance and declining decent work, level of empowerment attained, worsening health and standard of living are all significant at 1% level of significance. The Phi and Cramer's values are 0.343, 0.220, 0.256 and 0.383 respectively indicating a moderate to low strength of association of these variables with distance of commute.

Thus the distance analysis of the paid domestic workers allows us to understand the economics and social impact brought about by workplace commute. The change of economic space from village to urban and from unpaid family labour or from out of labour force to paid labour market undertaken by the commuter domestic workers creates waves of big to minor simultaneous changes in their quality of life and living.

The commute network between Kolkata city and its immediate hinterland and the rural-urban or lower order urban to mega-city linkages brings about consequential substantial changes among the domestic worker population. Social interactions between the commuter village domestic worker women with city life, extension of social capital through direct or indirect ways, participation of rural women in urban informal labour market, etc can lead to critical dynamics among the women workers, their household and the source village or lower tier towns. The city of Kolkata acts as a working space for these women who travel daily to and from, it acts as a stimulant towards fulfilment of aspirations related to better living standards for themselves and their children. The commuters and the slum dwellers thus negotiate their labour and time, their physical and psychological being through multitude spaces; the commute space, work space and their familial space, neighbourhood and social space and the intermingling of all of these creates a complex transformation in both categories of women, more so among the commuter workers. The daily commute and ensuing interactions with employers, peers, placement agency people, acquaintances and strangers at railway stations exposes these women to a new form of urban social atmosphere instilled with plethora of opportunities, expected and surprise challenges, sense of belongingness and also feelings of alienation and unfamiliarity. The railways have helped reduce the geographical distance between the work seekers and job providers, and to some extent narrowed down the social distance among population sections from different walks of life. But paid domestic work like other casual and informal service job activities has reinforced the existing class and caste difference and it is manifested in inter-group behaviour, discrimination, in language used to address, activities undertaken by both the employer and the paid domestic worker and in myriad forms.

6.5.1 Work Profile and Pattern among Women Domestic Workers

In most cases, there is no verbal discussion in between the maid and the employer regarding work tenure, working conditions and other work related agreements such as paid leaves, sick leaves, bonus, etc. Thus this adds to the already existing precariousness and insecurity in the job of these women. Many a times employers make these workers perform additional work without compensation, and can also terminate their employment at their will, without prior notice or adequate compensation. 51.5% of the workers are made to do additional errands apart from the

agreed ones, without additional payment, the incidence being higher among the commuter maids (56%), while 51% of slum women do not perform additional errands. All this is because of lack of any legislative support to these non unionized workers, who invariably fall in the vicious trap of hand to mouth existence totally at mercy of the exploitative nature of their work pattern. Fear of retrenchment and pay-cuts, stiff competition due to over supply of substitute workers who can snatch away their jobs anytime that most workers restrain from rebellion and do not refuse to perform additional tasks. The situation is more exploitative for the commuters because of their poorer economic position and smaller market base of familiar work area and employers.

Table 1.4.8 Additional Errands Performed, Tasks Performed and Discussions at the Time of Hiring by the Domestic Workers at Workplace

Additional Errands Performed, Discussion during Hiring and Tasks Performed by Domestic Workers					
Additional Errands	**% of Domestic Workers**	**Discussion at Hiring**	**% of Domestic Workers**	**Tasks**	**% of Domestic Workers**
No Errands Performed	48.3	Task	23.7	Cooking	22.1
Additional Routine Work	19.2	Wage	26.8	Utensil Cleaning	70.2
Grocery Shopping	18.5	Time Schedule	2.7	Washing	41.8
Kitchen Assistance	12.7	Food & Rest	0.3	Dusting	20.8
Cleaning & Dusting Bed	9.5	Termination	0.2	Mopping & Sweeping	70.9
Fetch Water	4.8	Holidays	6.2	Toilet	0.5
Hair & Body Massage	4.7	Bonus	4.2	Elderly Care	2.0
Ironing, Sewing Clothes & Polishing Shoe	2.3	Pay-cut	0.3	Babysitting	1.8
Sell Article & Newspaper	2	Wage Increment	0.5	Disable Care	0.4
Baby-Sitting Employer's Children/Aged Members	1.2	No Discussion	72.0	Sick Care	0.7
Gardening	1.2			Cook Help	3.4
Toilet Cleaning	1				
Pet-care	0.7				

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Though 5% slum and 3.8% commuter women had refused to perform some tasks and in consequence had to face verbal abuse and threats of retrenchment (40% of women faced abuse as retaliation in return for refusal) from work. Verbal abuse and

misbehaviour from the employers are also fairly common in times when the domestic worker accidentally breaks or damages some expensive material objects at workplace, such as glassware or crockery etc. Around 32.2% domestic workers mentioned to have confronted verbal admonishment and scolding and 55.3% were threatened and 15% were asked to be careful or face layoff from work. Another 19.41 responses indicated that maids feared wage deductions as well at some extreme incidences, while 69% women also reported to have good employers who do not complain.

Additional overtime payments are received by 54% of the slum women and 52.5% of the commuter women who perform additional tasks regularly, while only 30.2% and 27.2% of the same receive overtime payment always. Geographically speaking, the employers in the central city zone rank first in paying additional payment always (17.1%) followed by northern city at 11.6%. Errands such as shopping groceries and vegetables (18.5%), additional routine work (19.3%), kitchen assistance (12.7%), dusting bed and ironing, polishing shoes (11.8%), baby-sitting and toilet cleaning are commonly performed. Most employers make these domestic workers perform outdoor work like fetching and buying things from market and also most commonly increase their work load within the usual task pattern. About 14.7% and 15.2% of all responses on additional errands are accounted by these two tasks, while cleaning and dusting the bed comes third at 7.5% of responses. Efficiency incentives in the form of monetary rewards or '*bakshish*' or charitable gifts when guests arrive at the employer's house is rare, with 84% women reporting never to receive such occasional payments. The remaining 10% and 6% women claim to get tips from their employers always and occasionally respectively. Refusals to perform some assigned tasks are met with verbal abuse and threatening to retrench at times. All except 5% of the maids refused to perform piled up tasks, as non-conformity with employer's instructions can result in wage deductions or dismissal from work. Supply of women maids being high at relatively cheaper wages means that the employers have a commanding upper hand and the maids are apprehensive about their job security; which is non-existent.

6.5.2 Paid Leave and Wage Deductions

Decent work accord entails a minimum number of paid holidays per week and month to ensure the employees can achieve work-life balance and most importantly restore bodily health. Rest period is a significant part of decent work criteria, but that must

not compromise on income earnings of the worker, for which paid holiday arrangements along with paid sick leave and leaves for visiting native places should be made mandatory. But unfortunately, in the informal sector, the dearth of stringent labour laws in India, and the general scattered nature of domestic workers and private home boundaries as workplaces, decent and dignified work statutes are difficult to implement and monitor. Data points out that around 55% and 21% of slum and commuter women report having no paid weekly holidays excluding 7.5% of ayahs who receive wage on daily basis with 'no work no pay' clause and if they do take leave from work, then they are subjected to pay-cuts. 45% of the maids are entitled to take 2 to 4 paid holidays on a monthly basis while 4.7% get only 1 day off. 49% of the respondents do not get any paid leave, while the proportion is 87% for the ayahs and 50% for the cooks. About 20% cooks and 25.5% housecleaners get minimum 4 holidays per month, whereas it is only 7.7% among the ayahs, especially the ones who are working directly and not through the placement agency (**Table 1.4.9**). Western (51.6%) and central (50%) city employers give no paid holidays, while the figure is lowest at 36.4% among southern city employers.

Pay-cuts on absenteeism from work is a regular occurrence with higher percentage of commuter workers (36%) relative to 12.2% of slum women being harassed by their employers through wage-cuts. The slum maids are in a better position than commuter maids as 72% of the former do not suffer pay-cuts unlike only 49.3% of the latter, while 36% commuter maids are found to suffer from pay-cut always when absent and 11% sometimes. Emergency leaves or leaves without prior notice invites pay-cuts for 40% of commuter relative to 23.1% of slum women. Though slightly higher proportion of women domestics (more than 50%) have reported to get sick leave, but about 62% and 72% of slum and commuter workers stated getting no extended paid leave to visit their relatives in their native place. Domestic workers thus are obligated to take leaves without pay for personal work commitments. The share is highest among the maids employed in the central city zone (36%) and west (30.2%). Around 51.2% of the workers do not get paid leave and thus come under indecent work culture, the proportion of slum maids are more at 80% while it is 20.1% for commuters. Thus the women maids are forced to take holidays from work without prior permission and notice of their employers. Women who reported to take such non-notified leaves; 40% took 1 leave per month, while 17.7% took on an average 2

to 5 leaves monthly. On similar ground, 48.3% workers did not have any paid holidays in a year, 6% had 2 to 14 days and 44.3% had 24 to 48 days off a year. Though few employers were found to be benevolent and exempt from pursuing pay-cut on such non-informed leaves partly due to the small salary amount that the maids are paid, yet 47.2% of commuter maids suffer from pay-cuts as against relatively better positioned slum workers (39.5%).

Table 1.4.9 Work related Mean Values across Domestic Worker Categories and Groups

Mean Values Across Work Categories And Worker Groups (in %)								
Variables	Ayah	Cook	Domestic helper	Cook & Housecleaner	Ayah, Cook, Housecleaner	Slum	Commuter	Total
Total Duration working as Domestic Worker (Years)	15	15	15	17	16	17	13	15
Monthly income from Paid Domestic Work (Rs)	4544	2752	2415	3308	3550	2808	2855	2827
Time spent on paid Domestic Work per day (Hours)	11	5	6	7	9	6	7	7
Number of Employer houses worked	1	2	3	3	1	3	3	3
Average Monthly income per employer (Rs)	4377	1525	906	1312	2843	1584	1216	1437
Average Time spent per day per Employer (Hours)	10	3	2	3	7	4	3	3
Wage per Day (Rs)	151	92	81	110	118	94	95	94
Wage per Hour (Rs)	15	22	14	16	16	17	14	16
Number of Paid Leave per Month (Days)	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	2
Increment Amount per Year (Rs)	3	53	25	46	63	38	23	32

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The provision of substitute by the maids (only 8% maids provided replaceable worker during their leave days) is again a part of the casual arrangement whereby the relatives and family members (1%), commuter friends (2.5%) and acquaintance maids in the locality of workplace (3.5%) are coordinated by the maids to substitute them at the workplace. In most cases employers manage housework on their own (29.3%) or the employer arranges substitute (3.2%). Payment arrangements to the substitute is mostly wage deductions from the concerned maid by the employer and payment to the substitute (73.7%) or payment made by the maid herself to the substitute she arranged (14.8%) and handful of maids also received payments alongside their substitutes (12%). Though the occurrences were relatively very low, but around 16 maids

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reported to have been dismissed unethically from their jobs by their substitutes who accept lower wages upon their return from the notified leave. The apparent job loss was justified by the employers on account of better performance by the substitute coupled with regularity in attendance.

6.5.3 Discontinuation of Work and Job-Loss

When asked on issues of leaving work for any employer, 44% reported to have left work due to many reasons ranging from lack of increment in wages, dissatisfaction with the employer, low and irregular wages, misbehaviour and abuse by the employers etc. Only handful of women had notified their employers in a form of threatening to leave work if their demand of incremental salary and paid leave is not met, but almost all chose to work without rebel. The commuting workers are in a disadvantageous position than slum women on account of stringent financial position and inability to wait in between job changes, thus a lesser proportion of commuter maids (39.2%) have left job on their own than their slum (47%) counterparts. Only a mere 6.1% of slum and 8.3% of commuter workers have consulted with their husbands (3.3%) or agencies (2.3%) before leaving a job, mostly without any prior notice or inkling to their employer. Diverse reason related to low and irregular compensation (29%), verbal abuse and misbehaviour from employer (14.5%), non-increment in wage (10.4%) for leaving the service at the workplace surfaced from the respondents. The maids experienced work dissatisfaction from some workplaces due to task overburden sans additional pay alongside frequent wage deductions and no bonus received (7%). The other personal rationale was associated with sickness (14.2%), marriage or childbirth (9.2%) and to foresee own children and family work (5%).

Occupational change and exit from paid domestic work vocation seemed a hard choice for these women and about 78% respondents could not decide to provide a suitable answer. Out of the ones who were definite only 1.7% commuter women were sure about the option of their exodus from this occupation rests on their own personal discretion, while the same among the slum women stood at a better 9.4%. But more than 75% of the women who left work did not give any prior notification to their employers. Most decisions of resigning were made in haste as a reaction to mistreatment by the employer and incorrigible failure of conciliation dialogue

between the two parties on matters of wage, paid leave and other work issues even after mutual warnings of leaving work, thereby often the maid missing out on salary compensation. Among the women who gave notice, 17.4% gave a day's notice to their employers. While 8.1% gave one week, 23.2% and 51.2% gave notice of 8 to 20 days and one month respectively. Job loss was also reported by 16.2% workers with a recall reference time of past 1 year, due to illness or incidence of sickness and consequent absenteeism of the women workers. Around 13.8% commuter domestics and 12% of slum women reported to have lost 1 to 3 jobs due to sustaining fracture, operation, fever and other bouts of sickness. About 3.1 % workers have lost more than 4 jobs due to illness. These job terminations were either made by the employer chiefly without compensation or also by the worker herself without formal notice. Although 43.3% of the women losing their jobs could not report their illness, but health issues such as fever and exhaustion (19%), operation (5.2%), fracture and orthopaedic illness (11.3%) and gastro-enteric diseases including jaundice, diarrhoea (6.2%) and heart issues. Around 8 women also reported to have lost their jobs due to their pregnancy related leaves. It brings us to the issue of maternity benefit and allied social securities like paid leave, crèche facilities and stipends that almost all women employed in unorganised sector (almost 95.9% of working women work in informal sector as per NCEUS, 2007) in India are deprived of notwithstanding the Maternity Benefit Amendment Bill 2016 being passed on 8th March 2017 by Union legislative.

On the other hand instances where the employer terminated the services of the domestic workers on account of reasons ranging from absenteeism and frequent leaves without prior notice by the maids (36.3%), late reporting to work (3%), answering back and refusing to perform additional errands without payment and on account of false theft charges (3%) were also reported. Seven interviewees stated that they have faced theft accusations and consequential lay off from work on no fault of their own. Around 17% of the total maids interviewed; 21.3% of commuter and 14.2% of slum workers had faced retrenchment from employer houses. About 40% maids reported that their employers shifted out to new residential location discontinued their services along with being dissatisfied by the performance of the maid (8.8%) and refusing to increase salary (5%) and upon expiration of the care-dependent elderly (4%) in case of the ayahs. The dismissal from work mostly had a notice period (52%), but around 30.4% and 17.7% maids reported to have been

discontinued from next day and immediately that moment respectively whereby 28% maids got their monetary dues later and 10% complaining to have not received their salary dues till date.

These workers though wish to work in more number of houses so as to earn more, but many women have reported to have refused prospective employers, mainly due to primary factors such as lack of spare time (42%), or for being offered low wage (20%) or health factors related to ageing (12%). About 25% women reported to have refused to work more citing various combinations of reasons. About 35% women want to work more (30% slum and 40% commuter). This can be indicative of under-employment and lack of enough jobs in the paid domestic work market. Reasons put forward by them for refusing to work more are, on account of health and ageing (22%), lack of spare time (24%) to spend more time with family, housework and child-care (8%). The contradictions that arise here points to the fact that around 71% slum and 85% commuter maids no longer desire to continue pursuing paid domestic work for earning their bread. Instead they aspire for profitable avenues of other jobs which may not come with the stamp of social stigma of being unclean and lowly ignominious task that cleaning activities in other's homes are recognised with. Many women think of changing their occupation into office clerical work, with better payments, salon or sewing work which they intend to learn professionally as well. But this is also true for many women, who note that they can not leave their current occupation at their will so easily as desired due to being shackled by various socio-economic constraints. Constraints like illiteracy, lack of alternative occupations and shortage of business capital and absence of other earning members in the household make the choice of leaving paid domestic work and transitioning to other occupation a difficult proposition.

6.5.4 Wage Increment and Bonus

When analysing the payment structure especially in terms of bonuses paid yearly and increment in wages, the situation is seen to be grim. Bonuses are quite low in amount and not regularly paid with 14% of commuter and 12% of slum women not getting any bonus. Sometimes old clothes or other new ready made garments and other items are given by the employers in kind as bonus, which is not appreciated by these poorer women domestics. Overall bonus is not received by 12.5% of maids and is paid in

cash to around 62% of maids. Payment in kind and both cash and kind is received by 10% and 14.6% of the workers respectively, but 20.3% maids perceive the bonus received to be moderately satisfactory while 16.3% are not happy with the small denominations of bonus that they get. Employers in the central Kolkata are found to prefer giving bonus in kind; at 13% while only 5.3% southern region domestic helps get bonus in kind only. Besides this, 23% central region workers report to receive no bonus at all, while it is 14.1% in northern and 11.2% in southern regions.

It is a disappointing tale when one sees that around 62% of slum workers and a greater proportion of commuter women (72.5%) report having received no wage increment from their employers over the duration of being employed, while 28% and 17.5% women respectively informed to have been receiving yearly hike of Rs 50 to 100 in monthly wage rates. On the other hand, 5.2% women rarely get incremental wage over a span of 2 to 5 or more years, which does not serve the purpose in the wake of rising cost of living. Monetary increments and bonus are more welcomed than payment in kind. About 74.3% and 71.2% of women workers in central and northern zones receive no wage increments. The dismal pay-scale situation can be estimated from the starting wage and current wage that employers pay these women. Initial wage rates used to be less than Rs 100 (16.5%) or in between Rs 100 to Rs 500 (44.3%) which has risen slowly and marginally to Rs 500 to 1000 (50.5%) and Rs 1000 to 2000 (32%) within time interval of within 10 years (53.6%) and 11 to 20 years (33%). The women also have to confront bargaining coupled with threatening of being laid off from work and misbehaviour (9.17%), while 30% and 15.2% maids stated that increment is rejected or are asked to wait sometime before a hike is made respectively. Women who have not completed 1 or 2 years in paid employment (10%) and the ones working via placement centres (6.5%) are in no position to get wage hike.

However, domestic workers have reported to have been subjected to pay-cut as seen and most of these salary deductions are frequent and regular occurrence from employer's side. Around 17% slum and 47% commuter workers say that employers deduct wages from their salary upon absenteeism from work beyond a stipulated number of days. While babysitters and ayahs (11% slum and 5% commuter) get wages on the daily wage rate basis and thus they come under the ambit of no work no pay scale. While absenteeism from work is the trigger for the employer to expel maids

from their work, often the maids are not adequately compensated. Unlike the live-in maids who are completely depended on their employers for almost all big and small necessities, the live-out workers are seen to rely on their employers for more important needs. There is another economic relation in between the domestic worker and their employers that needs to be highlighted. It could be mentioned that there is an almost imperceptible way by which the employers have a control over the domestic workers they employ. The employer-worker relationship here in the setting on informality also becomes all the more vulnerable by way in which the workers depend for emergency monetary loans from their employers, time to time. About a sizeable portion of women workers (39% of respondents) have taken loans from their employer, while loans borrowed from financial institutions like banks is as low as 3% among slum maids and none among commuter. While an encouraging observation is that around 7.5% slum dwelling and 5% commuter women workers reported to have borrowed various short terms loans from micro-financial institutions like Arohon, Bandhan, Ujjivan for primarily financing education of their children, renovating or building up of *pacca* houses, or to fund emergency medical expenditures (**Table 1.4.10**). The reasons behind discontinuing maid work from both the domestic worker and the employer sides can be summarized on account of non-increment of wages and mistreatment at work places, account for major points that make maids to resign from work, often without any prior notice to their employers. The share of other informal sources of loan advance is mainly distributed among neighbours and acquaintance (20%), relatives and friends (3.1%), SHG (11%) and committee pools (6.2%).

6.5.5 Employer Characteristics

The relationship of the domestic worker with her employer is of an unequal one and is usually limited to instructions, supervision and handing of monthly wages and food given by latter, with occasional pleas from the latter for wage increments, loans and leaves. With prolonged years of serving the same employers, the relationship matures into that of a loyal dependence of both parties based on familiarity and mutual trust. The elderly and middle aged women employers bestow their maternal compassion on their maids with advise, additional money tips, gifts and bonuses in return of faithful overtime services and errands that the maids happily perform. Domestic work is regarded as the realm of women and so mostly women heads of the house (in 88.4% cases) have the responsibility to supervise the employed maids. Caste and religion

affiliations of the maids with the employers are seen having preference in certain pockets of the city, especially the Muslim dominated neighbourhoods of Park Circus, Razabazar, Topsia among others. Marwari (2%), Muslim (3.7%), Punjabi (0.7%), Christian and Gujarati households are also served by the maids, apart from Bengali employers (92.8%). Around 44% of slum workers and 32% of commuter women have borrowed money in liquid cash for varied reasons ranging from family needs and sustenance (55%), self and household medical expenditures (11.6%) and primarily for constructing permanent and *pacca* house (10.3%). The convenience of repayment without formalities of institutional paperwork and non requirement of paying interest amount makes employers as one of the chief source of borrowing for the women domestics. Other requirements met by loans are education of children (7.3%) and marriage of daughters (7.8%) and miscellaneous purposes (8.2%) like buying asset, travelling, religious rituals, paying house rent and other social responsibilities. An observant fact is the disparity in loan extensions and advances that the slum maids avail more from their employers than their commuter counterparts. This attitudinal misfit arises from the lack of employer's trust on the commuter women on account of their residences being far from reach and usually beyond immediate verification. The other ways in which employer-domestic worker relationship develops can be seen by medium of socialization during spare time in between tasks. Few maids talk about sharing their personal problems (33%) pertaining to marital life, work problems, family with the employers and in return also receive suggestions and advises (19.3%) from the latter. The propensity for the slum domestic workers to discuss their problems (36.4% slum maids unlike 27.5% commuters share private problems) and ask for employer's advises is found to be higher than the commuter counterparts. Out of the slum dwelling maids who discuss their problems with employers, in 58% cases the employers provides advise on their own, while its 100% for the commuter maids. About 12.8% women only share their problems but do not ask for advises or help from their employers.

Table 1.4.10 Reasons given by Domestic Workers for Borrowing Loans from Employers and Reasons by Employers for Retrenching Workers from Work

Loans Borrowed from Employers (%)			Termination Reasons by Employer (%)		
Reasons	Primary	Secondary	Reasons	Primary	Secondary
Children's Education	7.33	13.33	Absenteeism/leave without prior notice	36.27	89.47

Medical Expenditure of family	11.64	20.00	Answering back/ Protesting against employer's rude behaviour	1.96	0.00
Daughter's Marriage	7.76	26.67	Refusing to do Extra work	0.98	0.00
To Built or renovate *pacca* house	10.34	13.33	Dissatisfied with the work	8.82	0.00
Sustenance of own self/family needs/ to run household	54.31	13.33	Shifting by employer to new Location	39.22	0.00
Conducting *puja*/ceremonies/death rituals at home	1.29	0.00	Late Reporting to work	2.94	5.26
For Travelling	1.29	0.00	False Theft charges/ suspecting of theft	0.98	5.26
To Buy Asset	3.88	13.33	Patient died/patient becomes well/ child grew up	4.90	0.00
To give own house rent / to pay electricity bill	1.72	0.00	Could not afford maid/did not require maid	3.92	0.00
For Opening Bank Account	0.43	0.00	Total	100	100
Total	100	100			

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

On the other hand, 7.3% of maids report that their employers also discuss their private personal problems and happenings with their maids, the propensity with slum women is again higher at 8.6% maids as against only 5.4% of commuter women. Other transaction that exists among the employer-employee is through grant of gifts and other benefits that the former bestow on the maids. Though 52.2% maids receive no additional benefits but the rest receive diverse help and assistance in the form of old reusable garments and utensils (47.7%), free medical aid and consultation with doctors (20.3%), cash money and non-returnable loan advances and ration subscriptions (13.2%). (**Figure 2.11**) Other acts include offering of consultation in maid's family matter (3.7%), helping in finding new job for the maid and also supervising the maid's child (8.7%) when she is completing tasks, assisting in opening bank account (3.7%) and teaching soft skills and etiquette to the maid (1.7%).The maids are seen to complain about the miserly attitude of some of their employers, who do not grant any help beyond giving old clothes and utensils which they themselves discard.

Figure 2.11

Benefits Received from Employers by Domestic Workers

Y-axis: % of Domestic Workers (0.0 to 60.0)

Categories: No help; Old Cloth; Medicine/doctor consultation and other medical equipment; Utensil & Scrap items; Child Supervision; Gifts & cash money; Consultation matter (legal & other problems); Help in opening bank account; Loan Advance; Free usage of ration card & additional food for family; Help in getting new jobs & in secondary occupation; Teach soft skills & etiquette

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Then again relative to the general caste (16.1%) domestic workers, about 27.6% SC workers report to be getting no help from their employers.

6.6.1 Decent Work and Decent Wage Payments

Paid domestic work is found to be highly unreliable and meagre source of wholesome income to suffice in running a household. The women are exploited quite visibly in terms of the monthly wages earned against the time spend on paid work per day per employer house, more so for the commuters. About 32% of the slum and 23% of commuter workers earn monthly wage of Rs 200-500 per employer household, which can be seen to be much against the norms of decent work. The threshold wage is taken as Rs 1000, beyond which proportion of commuters in higher wage bracket per employer house declines steadily. About 55.7% of the commuter women earn in the wage bracket of Rs 500 to 1000 per house while the same among the slum women stands at 35%. The wage range of Rs 2000 to Rs 5000 and above sees 10% of slum maids while only 4% of commuter women. Total monthly income among the commuters is relatively lower than slums as observed from the mean monthly income per employer house earned by the former hovers around Rs 1216 which is lower than what is earned by the latter group at Rs 1584. A smaller fraction of commuter women maids are found to earn slightly higher than the slum counterparts especially the ones working in the relatively wealthy southern Kolkata localities in multi-storeyed workplaces, earn monthly income in the range of Rs 3000 and above (36.7%). But daily and hourly wages show that the monetary returns on investment of time on paid

work is much higher among the slum workers, attributed to additional hours of SNA work on account of long duration of travel to work. Around 10.3% slum domestics earn Rs 30 to 112 and 75% earn up to Rs 20 per hour while only 1.3% commuters earn more than Rs 30 per hour and 85% earning in the lower hourly wage deciles (up to Rs 20) with maximum hourly wage being Rs 38. The geographical variation in the monthly income earned ranks domestic workers in southern Kolkata to receive higher range of salaries; with 45.1% workers earning more than Rs 3000 per month followed by central zone (33%). Generally the tasks are varied and mostly the cooks and ayahs earn in this salary range, in return of more number of hours services, sometimes dual visits to the same employer house per day. Wage is usually paid at a monthly interval (more than 92%), while the ayahs and maids employed via placement agency receive their remuneration at a 10 days (4.6%) or 15 days (1.8%) interval and in cash.

Toiling for hours in employer's home without adequate payment and not even work security speaks the societal attitude to women's work especially within the realm of informal work performed in employers home. About 44.3% and 9.5% domestic workers work for 1.5 to 3 hours and 3 to 8 hours per individual employer house while 3.6% workers spend more than 8 to 12 hours. Mostly these women perform various activities clubbed as housework pertaining to cleaning, cooking taking care of the dependents like children and elderly people in the employer's home. Many women perform multiple activities. It is also observed that nature of work usually differentiates in the number of hours served and wage rates across the activity table, with ayahs receiving highest wages, followed by cooks and cleaning ladies in the descending order. Ayah workers usually work for 8 to 12 hour shifts in a single employer house, and this agglomerates into extreme hours of work and thus is indecent in nature. Thus domestic work is not a homogenous totality which it is often mistaken to be. Domestic helpers performing few lower order cleaning tasks are seen to spend up to 1 hour per employer house (26.6%) or 1 to 1.5 hours (16%), earning mostly in between Rs 1000 to 3000 per month (58.9%). Generally about 40% workers spent 30 minutes to 1.5 hours per employer house, while slightly longer time of about 2 to 4 hours is spent by 18% slum and 24% commuter maids per house correspondingly. The association with particular employers is usually long as 40% and 30% maids reported to be working with individual employers for 1 to 5 years and

5 to 10 years and 6.1% of slum maids also are continuing with the same employer for more than 20 years without break.

Among all the 5 identified work categories, the domestic helpers remain at the bottom rank in terms of remuneration irrespective of the locality and number of hours worked (**Table 1.4.11**). About 17.1% of helpers earn less than Rs 1000 monthly income as against 5.8% of ayahs and 2.2% of women employed as cook and housecleaners. Baby-sitting is the better paying work and thus is coveted as seen from 50% of the ayahs earning a monthly income of Rs 4000 to 10000 and 20% earning Rs 3000-4000. But cooking emerges as the most decent of all tasks because of its reputation of being associated with higher levels of honour, being less laborious and higher prospects of wage income in return of lesser work-time invested, as most women aspire to upgrade their work profile from cleaners and ayahs to cooking. About 29% of cooks earn more than Rs 3000 per month with work time varying between 1 to 2 hours (13%) and 2 to 4 hours (39%). Thus women who are categorised in multiple work-categories, usually the domestic helpers are seen to earn better when they also work as ayahs and cooks additionally. 60% of the ayah who also work as house cleaners earn within Rs 3000 to 4000 per month, while only 16% of house cleaners earn in that range. Similarly 43% of women working as cook cum ayah cum housecleaners earn Rs 4000 to 6000, while only 5.7% of house cleaners, and 10.2% of cooks earn in that range. The slum-commuter worker wage differential arises from the longer working hours inclusive of stretched out journey to workplace among the commuters and their relatively poor wage negotiation skills. Thus daily and hourly wages received by the latter is lesser than the former for the same tasks performed. Average daily wage for the baby-sitters is Rs 156 among slum women and Rs 141 among commuter women. Among cooks and housecleaners the hourly wage is Rs 23 and Rs 16 for slum women and Rs 17 and Rs 13 for the commuters respectively and for all worker sub-categories the minimum daily and hourly wages earned by commuter maids are much lower than the minimum wages received by the slum women.

Table 1.4.11 Mean Rates of Income and Wage (Monthly, Daily and Hourly) across the Work Categories of Domestic Workers

Work Categories	Mean Monthly Income (Rs)			Mean Daily Wage(Rs)			Mean Hourly Wage (Rs)		
	Total	Slum	Commuter	Total	Slum	Commuter	Total	Slum	Commuter

Ayah	4543.7	4650.5	4223.1	151.5	155.0	140.8	15.0	15.1	14.6
Cook	2751.9	2662.5	3064.6	91.7	88.8	102.2	21.5	22.7	17.2
Housecleaner	2415.2	2290.9	2552.8	80.5	76.4	85.1	14.4	15.7	13.1
Cook and Housecleaner	3308.4	3340.4	3263.5	110.3	111.3	108.8	16.4	17.2	15.4
Ayah, Cook and Housecleaner	3550.0	3130.0	4075.0	118.3	104.3	135.8	16.1	14.5	18.1

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The intra-city variation in monthly income earned by 5 worker categories of domestic worker women highlights the importance of spatial determinants which loosely govern the wage dynamics for the similar occupation outline. In all the sub-categories, women working in southern parts of the city are seen to earn the highest income. (**Table 1.4.12**) This is because the average income earned from each employer is highest in southern city with 31% maids in that area earning more than Rs 1500 per employer, whereas the same for north and west is 17.2% and 24% respectively. Only 6% maids in southern part receive less than Rs 500 mean wage per house, while it is more than 20% in all other regions. Among the ayahs, 67% in south Kolkata earn more than Rs 4000 per month, which is much higher than west (42%), north (50%) and central (46.2%) zones. On similar grounds of spatial analysis, it is observed that 44% cooks in south Kolkata come under the income range of Rs 3000 and above, while it is 23.8% in west and 18.3% in north Kolkata; which is less than half of that earned by women in southern Kolkata. The inter-zone difference in income is prominent among the housecleaner workers as women earning Rs 3000 and above is severely low in west (10.8%), north (19.4%) and central (23%) zones, all of which is way below the southern zone whereby 39% domestic helpers get the same income per month. Thus there lies a clear north-south fine divide in Kolkata city in terms of wage rate and income returns for similar set of job-tasks.

Table 1.4.12 Monthly Income earned by Domestic Worker Categories across Spatial Zones in Kolkata

Monthly Income Earned by Domestic Worker across Spatial Zones (in %)						
Worker Categories	Income (Rs)	North	West	South	Central	Total
Ayah	1-1000	6.3	16.7	0.0	0.0	5.8
	1001-2000	12.5	0.0	0.0	7.7	5.8
	2001-3000	6.3	16.7	36.4	23.1	19.2
	3001-4000	25.0	25.0	0.0	23.1	19.2
	4001 and above	50.0	41.7	63.6	46.2	50.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Cook	1-1000	21.1	4.8	11.1	15.4	13.9
	1001-2000	21.1	47.6	16.7	15.4	24.1
	2001-3000	39.5	23.8	27.8	46.2	33.3
	3001-4000	15.8	14.3	16.7	23.1	16.7
	4001 and above	2.6	9.5	27.8	0.0	12.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Housecleaner	1-1000	18.6	20.0	10.6	25.7	17.1
	1001-2000	34.9	32.3	20.2	28.6	29.1
	2001-3000	27.1	36.9	30.8	22.9	29.7
	3001-4000	13.2	6.2	27.9	11.4	16.2
	4001 and above	6.2	4.6	10.6	11.4	7.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Monthly Income Earned by Domestic Workers across City Zones (in %)				
Monthly Income (in Rs)	**North**	**West**	**South**	**Central**
1-1000	16.7	14.3	7.8	15.7
1001-2000	29.3	28.6	16.0	21.4
2001-3000	29.3	32.5	31.1	30.0
3001-4000	15.2	13.5	21.8	17.1
4001 and above	9.6	11.1	23.3	15.7

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.4.13 Mean Monthly Wage received per Employer House by Domestic Workers across Spatial Zones in Kolkata

Average Income Earned per Employer by Domestic Worker across Zones (in %)					
Income (Rs)	**North**	**West**	**South**	**Central**	**Total**
Up to 500	20.2	19.8	5.8	21.4	15.3
501-1000	51.5	42.1	38.8	38.6	43.7
1001-1500	11.1	14.3	24.8	10.0	16.3
1501-2000	4.5	5.6	10.7	7.1	7.2
2001-5000	10.6	13.5	18.9	17.1	14.8
5001 and above	2.0	4.8	1.0	5.7	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The one way ANOVA analysis of the worker categories spread across the geographical span of the city shows a distinct north-south divide in total monthly income and in daily wage rates. The mean differences in wage rates is not statistically significant among the ayahs and baby-sitters, while the spatial heterogeneity is evidently significant from the mean differences of the northern and southern localities of Kolkata for the exclusive activity of cooking ($p = 0.01$) and house-cleaning ($p = 0.004$). Cooks in southern Kolkata earn the highest with mean monthly income and daily wage being Rs 3478 and Rs 116 respectively. While the northern city cooks earn the lowest among the 4 zones of the same at Rs 2287 and Rs 76 correspondingly and the differences between the two regions is highly significant at $p = 0.008$. Among the domestic helpers the same pattern is observed whereby the southern region workers

receive Rs 2815 and Rs 94 as mean monthly income and mean daily wage rate, followed by central Kolkata localities, then by northern and lastly by western localities, with mean monthly income of Rs 2310, Rs 2242 and Rs 2177 respectively. There is significant statistical difference between north and south region ($p = 0.007$), and also between west and south Kolkata ($p = 0.015$)

Monthly income deciles of the paid domestic workers are cross tabulated across the caste and religious groups and the social disparity is clearly visible with greater share of OBC (26.1%) and Muslim (32.1%) households in the lowest income decile class (up to Rs 1200) as against 15% Hindus and 14.1% general caste. Slum workers and women commuting from urban areas (4.3%) in KUA districts have a higher share in the higher income decile households (more than Rs 6000) than the rural counterparts (0.6%) Larger household size and presence of male members especially within working age-groups, joint and extended family usually enables larger income in a household. The chances of earning higher income and being employed in a better paying job also rises with increase in educational attainments of head of the household. The computed Gini coefficient values for monthly income earned by the paid domestic workers is higher among slum (G = 0.33) than commuters (G = 0.27), while southern commuter (G = 0.22) and southern slum (G = 0.30) pockets have the lowest inequality in income earned. Differences in educational attainment among literates (0.33) results in higher inequality in work profile and wage rates than illiterate (G = 0.29). Gini values are higher among urban maids (G = 0.34) than rural origin women (G = 0.26) and higher among general caste (G = 0.32) than SC women (G = 0.29). There exists highly significant moderate relationship between total monthly income earned by the women domestic worker and net hours worked weekly at paid-work, with Pearson's correlation coefficient 0.585. Though the relation between monthly income earned and working terms, decent work index, education level of the head of household and asset ownership and land ownership is highly significant and positive but the magnitude of relation is low. Women workers belonging to households owning land have significant positive relation with total monthly income earned from paid domestic work but strength of r is low at 0.146. The relation of total income is negative and highly significant with worsening standard of living, poor socio-economic condition and increase in number of children below 7 years of age in the household. This is because amount of time spent at paid-

work and thus earning capacity is compromised with the presence of a child at home who needs to be taken care of. There is similar negative and significant relation between total income earned and amount of sleep, amount of leisure time and time spent at unpaid care-work at home, with a moderate Pearson's correlation coefficient value of (r = -0.394) for unpaid work. But unpaid care-work is negatively related with hours spent on daily commute but the magnitude is small with r value of (-0.319). The number of paid leaves taken by commuters is more if the distance travelled to workplace increases, and the relation is moderately significant and positive with r value of 0.425.

Table 1.4.14 Distribution of Slum and Commuter and Work Categories of Domestic Workers by Indicators of Decent Wage and Decent Work

Domestic Workers	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
Doing > 48 hours of paid work per week (Excessive Hours)	11.90	4.20
Earning < 2/3rd of mean monthly income	29.20	24.60
Earning < 2/3rd of mean hourly wage	18.30	22.10
Doing > 8 hours of work per day (Unusual Hours)	23.10	25.00
Ayah	**Less than (%)**	**More than (%)**
Earning < 2/3rd of mean monthly income	30.77	69.23
Earning < 2/3rd of mean hourly wage	17.31	82.69
Earning < 2/3rd of median daily wage	17.31	82.69
Cook	**Less than (%)**	**More than (%)**
Earning < 2/3rd of mean monthly income	25.93	74.07
Earning < 2/3rd of mean hourly wage	21.30	78.70
Earning < 2/3rd of mean daily wage	25.00	75.00
House-cleaners	**Less than (%)**	**More than (%)**
Earning < 2/3rd of mean monthly income	31.83	68.17
Earning < 2/3rd of mean hourly wage	22.52	77.48
Earning < 2/3rd of mean daily wage	30.63	69.37
Cook and Housecleaners	**Less than (%)**	**More than (%)**
Earning < 2/3rd of mean monthly income	25.84	74.16
Earning < 2/3rd of mean hourly wage	14.61	85.39
Earning < 2/3rd of mean daily wage	10.11	89.89
Ayah, Cook and housecleaners	**Less than (%)**	**More than (%)**
Earning < 2/3rd of mean monthly income	11.11	88.89
Earning < 2/3rd of mean hourly wage	16.67	83.33
Earning < 2/3rd of mean daily wage	11.11	88.89
Decent Working Hours per Week (in %)		
Domestic Worker Groups	**Not decent (> 48 hours)**	**Decent (< 48 hours)**	**Total**
Slum North	11.8	88.2	100.0
Slum West	13.5	86.5	100.0
Slum South	9.9	90.1	100.0
Slum Central	12.9	87.1	100.0
Commuter North	1.9	98.1	100.0
Commuter West	6.7	93.3	100.0
Commuter South	5.7	94.3	100.0

	65.4	34.6	100.0
Ayah	65.4	34.6	100.0
Cook	0.0	100.0	100.0
Housecleaner	2.4	97.6	100.0
Cook & Housecleaner	6.7	93.3	100.0
Ayah, Cook & Housecleaner	27.8	72.2	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Thus cooking is the most desired domestic work and ayah work is the best paying activity within the realm of paid domestic work. But not all women look ayah work with dignity as it involves handling sick and aged patients, assisting in toilet and human wastes, giving them bath and other such allied activities conjoined with 'pollution and purity' notions. Additionally the work also incorporates long hours of service at employer's home; usually 10 to 12 hours without breaks and also night time stay at the workplace. Thus about 30 women reported to have upgraded within domestic work profile, 38% of them changed their work from helper to cook and ayah, and another 39% shifted from ayah to cook and help. Moreover women always are looking out for performing diverse tasks so as to have a safety net of miscellaneous jobs and income sources given an impediment in any one.

Table 1.4.15 Binomial Logistic Regression explaining Determinants of Decent Monthly Income Earned among Domestic Workers

Binomial Logistic Regression explaining factors Influencing Decent Monthly Income					
Determinants	**N**	**B**	**S.E**	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**
Age of the domestic worker	600	-0.026	0.011	0.018**	0.974
Commuter (Ref- Slum)	240	0.855	0.31	0.006***	2.351
Caste Non-General (Ref- General)	409	-0.472	0.219	0.031**	0.624
North Region (Ref - Rest of Region)	198	-0.002	0.261	0.994	0.998
South Region (Ref - Rest of Region)	206	0.903	0.247	0***	2.466
Decent Work Index	600	3.724	1.16	0.001***	41.433
Education Level of Maid	600	-0.083	0.037	0.024**	0.921
Worker Category (Ref- Ayah, Cook & House-Cleaner)	107			0***	
Cook	108	-0.279	0.313	0.373	0.756
Housecleaner	333	-0.933	0.264	0***	0.393
Ayah/Baby-Sitter	52	2.229	0.493	0***	9.293
Health & Wellbeing Index (Ref- Fair)	147			0.018**	
Bad	420	0.401	0.232	0.085*	1.493
Worse	33	-0.767	0.541	0.156	0.464
Religion- Non-Hindu (Ref- Hindu)	54	-0.641	0.381	0.092*	0.527
Children (0-6 years)	600	-0.316	0.172	0.066*	0.729
Living Arrangement (Ref- Others)	265			0.182	
Spouse	39	-0.486	0.432	0.26	0.615

Spouse & Children	212	-0.48	0.258	0.063*	0.619
Children Only	38	0.545	0.455	0.231	1.725
Alone	46	0.394	0.421	0.349	1.483
Household Type (Ref- Rural Agricultural)	21			0.011**	
Rural Non-Agricultural (Self & Casual)	52	-0.681	0.611	0.266	0.506
Rural Regular salaried (including Maid)	91	-0.8	0.58	0.168	0.449
Urban-Self employed	83	-0.392	0.613	0.522	0.675
Urban Maid-Regular salaried	158	0.337	0.602	0.575	1.401
Urban-Casual Labour	74	-0.842	0.614	0.17	0.431
Urban-Regular wage/Salary earning	121	-0.526	0.602	0.382	0.591
Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	31			0***	
Married	397	1.164	0.501	0.02**	3.202
Separated/Divorced	38	-0.412	0.589	0.484	0.662
Widowed	134	-0.072	0.527	0.891	0.93
Constant		-1.793	1.165	0.124	0.167
*** Significant at 1% ** Significant at 5% * Significant at 10%					
Dependent Variable: Decent Monthly Income (Monthly Income Values > Mean Income of Rs 2827)					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Model Summary				
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	N
1	672.106a	0.227	0.303	600

The binary regression model (**Table 1.4.15**) to analyse the factors that determine the decent monthly income earned by the domestic maids is able to explain 30.3% (Nagelkerke's R^2) variance in average monthly income and classifies 70.2 % of cases correctly. The domestic workers earning above mean value of Rs 2827 per month are categorized under decent income and is the dependent variable in the model. The predictors include many categorical and continuous variables such as age and level of educational attainment of the maid and number of children (0-6 years of age) in the household. All the above three variables have significantly greater probability to earn indecent income and the regression coefficients are at 5% level of significance. Many aged women report to have left work for employers due to poor health, sickness and ageing issues, moreover the mean age of ayahs is higher than other work categories, implying that chance of earning higher income is reduced. Women having small children are more likely to spend greater time in unpaid child care activities, thereby reducing probability of earning a decent income, given that the wage rates are very

low in Kolkata in general for all tasks, more so for the domestic cleaning activities. Geographical localities are taken as dummy variables. With slum workers considered as reference category, the commuter women are 2.4 times more likely to earn above the mean monthly income, as they tend to work in multiple workplaces to economise their long distance commute. This can be also due to the fact that southern region of Kolkata has a relatively higher wage rate across all work categories than the northern and western Kolkata localities, which pushes up the mean income for commuters. The south Kolkata workers have 2.5 times greater likelihood of earning a decent income per month and the coefficient is highly significant at 1% level. The non-general castes (SC, ST, OBC) and non-Hindu (Muslims and Christian) maids have increased probability to earn indecent income with highly significant p values of 0.031 and 0.092 respectively. They are more likely to earn an income much below mean monthly income. The type of worker category strongly influences the probability of earning decent income at $p < 0.01$. Women working as ayah are 9.3 times more likely to earn decent income while the housecleaners are more likely to earn indecent income as seen from the coefficient values at 1 % level of significance. Likewise domestic workers who have higher decent work index ($p = 0.001$), are 41.4 times more likely to earn a decent income. Household type does influence decent income earned and the p values are found at 5% level of significance. Marital status of the maid is also significantly influences the possibility of earning decent income ($p = 0.0$), especially the married women are seen to have 3.2 times likelihood of earning decent income at 5% level of significance relative to widows and separated women who have greater likelihood of earning indecent income. But women living with husband and children have a greater housework burden which restricts longer hours at paid work and thereby reduces chances of earning a decent income, (regression coefficient is negatively significant at 10% level). Lastly as the health and wellbeing index worsens the likelihood of earning income above mean monthly threshold increases at 5% level of significance. Women who spend longer hours at paid work and suffer from chronic diseases and have psychosomatic issues and are classified under 'bad' index score are seen to earn decent income, but the coefficient is significant only at 10% level ($p = 0.085$). The increased income earned comes at a cost of worsening health which is characterized by lack of leisure time and greater disease burden.

6.6.2 Wage Determination

Dynamics of wage determination are hugely complex in the paid domestic labour market. The actors here are not only the involved parties of employer household and the domestic worker, but extraneous factors such as wage configuration of local area placement agency, neighbourhood affluence and micro-urban cost of living of the locality of the workplace, competitive service prices due to involvement of relatively cheaper commuter maids, seasonal variation of hiring the domestic worker and sometimes the occupation of the employer. Wage is fixed by the directly influencing factors like number and size of rooms in the employer's home, number (75.6%) and nature of tasks (10.5%), number of family members (6%), time spend at workplace per day (7.8%), wage rate of the former maid, number of visits to the workplace in a day. But in general these factors are over shadowed by the threshold cost of the maid's services that the employer's decides to incur and their stronger bargaining power ensuing from their financial strengths than the maids looking for work. But contrary to this belief, 35.3% of the respondents answered that they themselves decided upon the wages they must get from their respective employers. Around 27.3% and 7.2% of maids are receiving the wages fixed by the employers and the placement agencies they work for respectively. There is a strong locality and neighbourhood effect on the wage determination in spite of the activities being fairly same anywhere. It is observed from data gathered that in southern upscale localities in Kolkata city especially around multi-storeyed housing societies and gated residential complexes, wages are in the higher denominations than rest of the city neighbourhoods. North and central city areas have older architectural buildings, designed as per colonial style heritage structures with wide verandas, porticoes with narrow alleys, '*para*' (neighbourhood or locality) culture, and traditional shop-house structures, densely populated mixed land-use of residential intermingled with commercial, recreational and public spaces, thus culminating into lower cost of living than the westernized sophisticated buildings and higher land prices in the modern southern city expanse. As mentioned about 23.3% of women in southern region earn more than Rs 4000 per month, while the same in north and west Kolkata is 9.6% and 11.1% respectively, while 17% and 16% of maids in north and central city zones earn a meagre sum of less than Rs 1000 per month. But there exists a high degree of flexibility and non-uniformity in working hours, working conditions and wage fixation across the city

and is determined by socio-cultural factors such as caste and religion of the employer and the maid, geography and space factors of both the workplace and residence of the maid, position in the task hierarchy among all.

Table 1.4.16 Factors Determining the Wage Rate of the Paid Domestic Work

Social Network Determining Wage (%)			Factors Determining Wage (%)			
Persons	Primary	Secondary	Factors	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Own-self	35.33	5.00	Number of Tasks	75.67	0.00	0.00
Employer	27.33	15.00	Type of Tasks	10.50	85.17	0.00
Both Employer and Myself bargain	28.00	55.00	Number of Family Members in Employer's house	6.00	12.79	92.00
Placement Agency	7.17	10.00	Number of Rooms	0.00	0.26	2.67
Mother	0.17	5.00	Previous worker's wage in the house	0.00		1.33
Peer/Neighbour	0.83	5.00	Number of Hours worked in that house	7.83	0.00	4.00
Guardian/Relative	1.17	5.00	Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total	100	100				

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Labour market for domestic work is highly disorganised with workers being invisible and scattered and largely unaware of them being exploited in various aspects. Many of the babysitters and ayahs for elderly care are seen to be working via the numerous unregistered placement agencies that have proliferated in the cities. They are mostly seen to deduct their commission on a daily rate basis from the agency affiliated women for usually the 12 hour or 10 hours work-day they are contracted to work in the employer's house. Women who work in multiple employer homes are seen to spend up to 1 hour (30% women) and 1 to 2 hours (40% women) per employer home earning around 2000 to 3000 monthly income. There is virtual absence of any convincing and stable agreement on matters regarding compensation, tasks to perform, perks and bonuses, wage increments and other vital work related contract at the time of hiring. Thus it is needless to say that these maids are easily exploited in terms of additional overtimes and errands without additional pay, insecurity of tenure, inadequate wage payments and devoid of decent work conditions. Most of the domestics; 72% report having no verbal agreements at all at the time of hiring with their employers, thereby increasing their chances of being further marginalised and oppressed at the workplace, with no legal support (**Table 1.4.8**). Commuter women are worse off than the slum women with 85.4% of the former enter into no dialogues

with their employers than a lesser 63.1% of the latter, while only about 27.2% maids speak about wage and tasks to be performed at the time of their recruitment. Only a handful of 6.2%, 2.7% and 4.7% maids have some kind of indefinite discussion on paid leave, work duration, bonus and increment. Of all responses regarding points of discussions at the time of recruitment, wage amount and tasks to be performed came up as 20% and 17.3% of all responses. No domestic worker seemed to be aware about the necessity to discuss and mention about other agendas related to working condition and perks though only a meagre 4.5% of all responses hinted towards paid leave about which some women did negotiate with employers. Thus lack of even verbal agreement and communication gap between both sides in this employment relation lays open the platform for severe undue exploitation of the women domestic maids. Few employers also hire maids (3%) permanently after judging their performance within a few probationary days ranging from one week (77.8%) to 15 days to 1 month (22.2%). This trend of judging a domestic worker's performance within a probationary period is more prevalent in the placement agencies and among employers residing in upscale high rises in southern and western city areas. It is not surprising to find out that compared to the literate maids (68.3%) and general caste (21.7%) workers, about a higher share of illiterate maids (74.1%) and SC maids (37.2%) do not have any dialogue with the employers at the time of getting a job.

6.6.3 Wage Structure and Payment Arrangements

The decent work as proposed by ILO incorporates not only the working conditions but also the minimum wage standards that ensure decent employment. Thus workers earning less than $2/3^{rd}$ of the mean and median monthly income of the total sample women domestic workers interviewed are considered to be not in decent work because the income does not enable decent living, and around 20% of all workers earn below average hourly wages. Across the 5 work categories and their separate mean and median daily, hourly and monthly incomes, the women employed as housecleaners were seen to be not in decent work in proportions greater than other sub-categories. About 32% and 30.6% of housecleaners earn less than $2/3^{rd}$ of mean monthly income and daily wage as against 25% of the cooks and only 17.3% of ayahs who earn less than $2/3^{rd}$ of mean daily wage. Women who work as ayah and cook and helper have the least share of women below 2/3rd of mean monthly income (11.1%), because performing more than one activity ensures higher income.(**Table 1.4.14**)

The mean monthly income across the work categories cross-tabulation shows that it is Rs 4544 for the ayahs, Rs 2753 and Rs 2416 for the cooks and domestic helpers correspondingly. Ayah work earns the highest income and thus women who work as an ayah along with cooking and helping activities, have their average monthly income raised to Rs 3550 from Rs 3309 (cooking and helping). The mean wage per day between the three exclusive domains of ayah, cook and domestic helper is compared across the slum and commuter and surprisingly the mean daily wage earned among slum ayahs is higher at Rs 155 while it is Rs 141 among commuter ayahs. But the mean values of daily wage rates for commuter cook (Rs 103) and housecleaners (Rs 86) is higher than slum cook (Rs 89) and housecleaner (Rs 77). But hourly wage rates are higher for all worker categories among slum maids than the commuters due to the longer duration at paid work of the latter which reduces the hourly wages and maximum daily and hourly wage rates are also much higher among the slum maids than commuters (**Table 1.4.11**)

Wage variations registered with CV of 66% and 60% for the ayah and cooking work respectively on account of locality, number of family members of employer and duration of paid hours per day. It is shocking to see that the minimum monthly wage among the house-cleaners was as low as Rs 300 unlike Rs 800 for the ayahs. The mean daily income is highest again among the ayah at Rs 152, as against Rs 92 among cooks and Rs 81 among helpers. Because of reliability of median values it is used to differentiate among the work categories in terms of hourly wage rate, which is highest among the cooks at Rs 17.1 followed by Rs 13.6 and Rs 13.1 among ayahs and helpers respectively. An ayah usually works longer hours per day (around 10.7 mean hours) and the thus the hourly wage slides down compared to cooks (works around 4.8 mean hours), but the monthly wage of house-cleaners being so trifling, that the hourly wage is miniscule though the average daily hours of work at 6.1 hours is much less for them. The average daily hours for cook and helper is 7.2 hours with mean daily wage is Rs 110 and the same for ayah cum cook and helper is 8.7 hours with Rs 118 as mean daily wage. Many women who had started with domestic cleaning activities have diversified in recent times by working as cooks as well. Thus the maximum duration of employment in this profession of such women is longest at 46 years. The average number of houses worked by a cook is 2 and 3 for domestic helper, while helpers working in 10 to 12 houses have also been reported, while 4 to 5

is maximum limit among the cooks. The nature of tasks in house-cleaning is such that it can be wrapped up relatively faster (women have reported to spent 30 minutes to 1 hour in a employer house as well) than other tasks but it also depends on the ease of mobility and working capacity of the individual domestic worker. Secondly, wage rate being extremely meagre for housecleaning work that women tend to work in greater number of houses to compensate for lower wages and earn as much as possible. Overall, about 31.7% workers earn monthly from 1 employer house, 20% from 2 houses, 34% from 3 to 4 houses, 14.5% from 5 houses and above. Yearly wage increments are extremely low across all categories, but shockingly, the ayahs have no increment at all. Cooks fare better with Rs 53 average annual raise in salary, while domestic helpers get less than half at Rs 25. Women who overlap in all the 3 domains get Rs 63 annual hike in their monthly income.

6.6.4 Task Based Wage Structure

Wage rate is strictly depended on type of task performed at a primary level. Though varied other allied and important variables do influence wage rate substantially, but the activity pattern creates base wage differences among the workers. 66% of women who are engaged in elderly care earn Rs 3000 and above, while only 16.6% women in baby-sitting care earn the same. Similarly 29% and 25% of ayahs caring for the disabled or the sick patients respectively, earn more than Rs 5000 monthly. Dusting and help in cooking (such as grinding spices, making bread (*chappati*), fetching water, cutting vegetables etc) are ancillary and lowly paid tasks which are performed sometimes along with the domestic helping activities. Thus 66% and 56.1% maids who perform dusting and kitchen help earn within Rs 500 bracket monthly. Washing clothes is not a popular activity as it entails physical strength and payment is also low, with 74% women who do laundry are paid up to Rs 500 monthly. Activities like mopping, sweeping floors and cleaning utensils are likely to be performed together and it comes under the lowest ranked activity in terms of payment. Approximately 73% and 18.6% maids performing these tasks earn up to Rs 250 and Rs 251-500 per month and only 8 to 9% come under the pay bracket of Rs 1000 to 3000. Toilet cleaning is performed by 10 respondents but usually they are not paid separately for the task. Cooking is the highest paid activity as 26.2% cooks earn Rs 1000 to 2000 per month and 12% earn Rs 2000 to 12000. Cooks have the smallest share in the lowest income bracket of up to Rs 250 (40%) and the mean monthly income earned per

employer house by a worker by doing only cooking is the highest among the exclusive sub-domains of paid domestic work at Rs 1385. Activities of utensil cleaning and mopping/sweeping earn the lowest mean income of Rs 800, while the addition of washing clothes to it raises the pay marginally to Rs 870. Within the care-work category, baby-sitting fetches an average income of Rs 3157 per employer house, while elderly care gets a little higher at Rs 4201.

Table 1.4.17 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Tasks performed at Workplace

Task Combinations	Average Monthly Income per Employer (Rs)	Average Time Spent per Day per Employer (Hours)	N	% of Employer Households with Task Combinations
Only Elderly Care	4201	10	25	1.5
Only Disabled & Sick Care	3447	16	3	0.2
Cooking & Babysitting	3417	9	6	0.4
Cooking & Elderly care	3167	11	3	0.2
Only Baby-Sitting	3157	8	21	1.3
Cooking & Utensil Cleaning	2183	3	6	0.4
Cooking & Utensil & Mopping & Washing	1763	5	26	1.6
Cooking & Utensil &mopping	1657	4	52	3.2
Only Cooking	1385	3	277	16.9
Utensil & Mopping & Washing & Dusting & Cook help	1143	3	7	0.4
Washing & Utensil & Mopping & Cook help	996	3	25	1.5
Utensil & Mopping & Washing & Dusting	938	2	163	9.9
Utensil & Mopping & Cook help	914	2	37	2.3
Washing & Mopping	870	2	611	37.3
Washing & Utensil & Mopping	870	2	577	35.2
Utensil & Washing	868	2	617	37.6
Utensil & Mopping & Dusting	831	2	86	5.2
Utensil & Washing & Dusting	820	2	5	0.3
Mopping & Utensil Cleaning	800	2	1061	64.7
Only Mopping	662	1	29	1.8
Only Utensil Cleaning	439	1	31	1.9
Only Washing Clothes	438	1	29	1.8

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

But across the geographies of the Kolkata city similar tasks accrue variation of wage rate implying the discrepancies in neighbourhood cost of living, spatial disparity in affluence and living standards among the employer households manifested in stark contrasts in residential organisations and building structures and transport network.

Wage rate for cooking is lowest in north Kolkata with 73% women earning less than Rs 1000 per employer house whereas wage rates are high in west and central parts of city with 51% (Rs 1000-4000) and 48% (Rs 1000-3000) cooks respectively earning greater than Rs 1000 per employer. But southern Kolkata has the higher pay scale as 5.1% cooks earning in between Rs 3000 to 12000 per employer. Similar trend is observed in all other tasks except mopping and utensil cleaning. About 33.3% employers pay more than Rs 4000 to an elderly care-giver in south Kolkata, while the figure is 46.2% and 50% in north and central neighbourhoods. Ayah and baby-sitting pay scale registers the lowest variance across the city zones, while helping and cleaning tasks and cooking sees greater variation. Thus about 10% and 15% employers are paying more than Rs 1000 for cleaning utensils, only 4.1% pay the same in northern city.

Table 1.4.18 Monthly Income of Domestic Workers per Employer by Work Tasks Performed

Monthly Wages Received by Domestic Workers per Employer according to Work Tasks/ Activities Performed (in %)						
	Work Tasks					
Wage/Month/Employer House (in Rs)	Cooking	Utensil Cleaning	Washing Cloth	Dusting	Mopping & Sweeping	Toilet Cleaning
1-250	35.8	52.1	61.8	55.1	52.4	44.4
251-500	4.1	20.9	12.0	10.3	20.4	0.0
501-750	3.6	7.7	6.0	5.9	7.4	11.1
751-1000	19	10.3	10.2	15.0	11.2	22.2
1001-2000	26.2	7.1	8.5	9.7	6.9	11.1
2001-3000	8.3	1.4	1.0	3.2	1.2	0.0
3001-4000	1.7	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.0
4001-5000	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
5001 and above	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	11.1
	363	1151	685	341	1162	9
Total (N/%)	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Work Tasks					
Wage/Month/Employer House (in Rs)	Elderly Care	Babysitting	Disabled Care	Sick Care	Cooking Help	
1-250	12.1	40.0	14.3	16.7	41.8	
251-500	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	14.5	
501-750	0.0	3.3	14.3	8.3	7.3	
751-1000	6.1	3.3	14.3	0.0	18.2	
1001-2000	6.1	13.3	14.3	0.0	18.2	
2001-3000	9.1	23.3	14.3	25.0	0.0	
3001-4000	27.3	3.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	
4001-5000	15.2	10.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	
5001 and above	24.2	3.3	28.6	25	0.0	

		33	30	7	12	55
	Total (N/%)	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The mean monthly income for paid domestic work is Rs 2826.8, mean daily wage is Rs 94.3 and mean hourly wage is Rs 16.1. Central (43%) and southern (50.5%) slum zones earn above Rs 2827 per month indicative of higher wage structure slum north (36.6%). The domestic workers coming into western and northern regions in to Kolkata are the worst paid as 70% and 65% maids respectively while only half the value is accounted by southern commuter women (32.4%). The Muslims (27%), OBC (39.1%) and Hindi speaking (32.6%) women maids register smaller proportions of women earning above the mean monthly income compared to Hindus (47.3%) and Bengali (47.7%) speaking native women. The women (15%) who shifted into paid domestic work from previous occupations used to earn mostly less than Rs 500 (31.5%) per month, followed by 26% (Rs 1000-2000) and 10.1% above Rs 3000 per month. Occupational shift proved prospective for 71 of the 89 women who have improved their monthly earnings, out of which 33.8% and 28.17% are earning in between Rs 2000-6000 and Rs 1000-2000 respectively. Nonetheless income decline is reported by 18 women, of whom 89% complain to suffer a decrease of up to Rs 2000 per month. The incremental changes in the wage structure can be ascertained from the initial and the current wage earned and the time lapse in between. Most women earned up to Rs 500 (61%) when they entered the profession years back. The recent wage structure depicts 50.5% and 32% receiving wages in between Rs 500-1000 and Rs 1000 to 2000 per month and 54% maids reported to have earned the current wage amount within a decade, while 33% took 11 to 20 years to reach this present wage.

The income gap across the social groups is a sharp contrast between Hindu and Muslim women and among the general caste and OBC women. Around 59.6% Muslim maids earn less than Rs 2000 per month and only bout 17.3% fall under the income range of more than Rs 3000 per month. Contrastingly, more than double of Hindu women maids (34.2%) earn higher than Rs 3000 monthly income (**Table 1.4.19**). The income gap between general and OBC women in the same income range is 6%. Urban and literate women workers are found to earn more in the higher pay scale. Around 16.1% and 18% of urban origin and literate women earn Rs 4000 and above while the figure for the rural and illiterate women stands at 13.2% and 14% correspondingly. The difference in skill requirement, time engagement in work and

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nature of tasks performed creates a substantial wage gap between the ayahs, cooks and the bottom rung house-cleaners. 50% of the ayahs earn more than Rs 4000 per month, whereas only 12% and 7.8% of the cooks and housecleaners get wage in that range. The ayah work definitely fetches better income as the women who perform multiple tasks i.e, work as ayah alongside cook or housecleaners are seen to receive a higher income (33.3% women workers performing all tasks earn Rs 4000 and above). While women who are cook cum house cleaner (23.6%) earn in that income quartile. The widowed women earn usually in the lower pay range relative to the married counterparts; 26.1% of the former earn Rs 3000 and above while it is 35.8% among the latter.

Table 1.4.19 Monthly Income Earned by Domestic Workers across Social Groups

Monthly Income Earned by Domestic Workers Across Social Groups (in %)									
Monthly Income (Rs)	Hindu	Muslim	SC	OBC	General	Bengali	Hindi/Bihari	Rural	Urban
1-1000	12.5	19.2	12.5	16.3	13.1	11.4	20.9	8.2	14.7
1001-2000	22.2	40.4	23.0	30.4	21.5	21.7	33.7	27.7	22.2
2001-3000	31.1	23.1	29.2	27.2	35.1	32.3	23.3	28.9	31.3
3001-4000	17.9	11.5	19.7	13.0	15.2	18.3	11.6	22.0	15.6
4001 and above	16.3	5.8	15.7	13.0	15.2	16.2	10.5	13.2	16.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Monthly Income (Rs)	Unmarried/Never-married	Currently Married	Separated	Widowed	Ayah/Baby-sitters	Cook	House-cleaners	Cook and house-cleaners	Ayah and cook and house-cleaners
1-1000	22.6	11.1	8.3	17.9	5.8	13.9	17.1	2.2	5.6
1001-2000	16.1	21.2	33.3	30.6	5.8	24.1	29.1	16.9	5.6
2001-3000	32.3	32.0	33.3	25.4	19.2	33.3	29.7	36.0	38.9
3001-4000	22.6	18.9	11.1	13.4	19.2	16.7	16.2	21.3	16.7
4001 and above	6.5	16.9	13.9	12.7	50.0	12.0	7.8	23.6	33.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

6.7 Work Participation and Problems at Workplace

Paid domestic work falls in the category of highly personalised informal employment but one that has low veneration in society due to the nature of tasks involving cleaning and direct handling of wastes, working within unofficial casual house setups

and because the activities are rudimentary, labour-intensive and are not considered skilled and gainful work in economic literature. Thus work participation in paid domestic work is looked down upon by middle class and upper rich class groups as a stigmatised incidence. There is a clear caste and class based association of participation as backed by statistics with marginalised sections of SC, ST and EWS lower class women are likely to participate in greater proportions in this occupation. The reasons cited by the respondents for the participation in paid domestic work can be broadly grouped under four namely economic, familial, social and occupational characteristics. The principal judgment in working as domestic workers by the women lies on earning supplementary income to enable in contribution to the household income pool (44%), compulsions of poverty (9.5%) and lack of opportunity coupled with ignorance about alternative job opportunities (2.2%). Other reasons include monetary independence transitioning into personal freedom of choice (2.2%) and in order to accomplish certain aspirational future commitments like constructing permanent house, to return borrowed loans, to incur marriage and medical expenses of family members (1.3%). Few cases were encountered in the survey where the unmarried young women and some married women reported to participate in this work to earn enough to save money for bearing marriage expenses and dowry for themselves and for their daughters respectively. Among the social background factors death and desertion of spouse and sickness of family head (8%), illiteracy (11.8%), unemployment of husband, reluctance of work by husband due to alcoholism and separation from husband and no other working member in family (3.8%) are the listed reasons. Some women also put forward reasons pertaining to transformations in family and kinship relationships in modern society where children abandoning parents in the latter's middle and old age (4.8%) that left the women with no other choice than to work in order to sustain themselves. Similarly many women (approximately 5.3%) cited that they do not want to be treated as burden on their children especially daughters and their marital family and thus working to earn money. Familiarity with this profession due to mother's or family members involvement in this job and prior work experience with accompaniment and assistance of mother at the latter's workplace in childhood (8.8%) is one of the indisputable motivator in choosing paid domestic work to earn livelihood. Lastly the flexibility and part-time nature that paid domestic work provides is an attractive option for women who want to earn money without compromising on family responsibility of care work (1.5%), easy availability

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of work and no skill constraint and no prior training requirement meant women who have no work experience can hope to find work easily. Moreover women usually consider this work as their specialization since the tasks are similar to what they are used to perform at own homes and are less strenuous than other manual work options (23.5% women mentioned this as a factor), alongside safe working environment (28.5%) due to non requirement to share workplace with men workers. This is one of the leading causes of women changing their occupation into paid domestic work from factory unit based production jobs which was undertaken by many women. Around 3.5% women also changed occupation citing unsatisfactory payment structure and unhealthy situations emerging from previous employment and also to utilize the free time (5%) that made them opt for paid domestic work. Many women (15.7%) landed permanent jobs by working as 'badli' (change/substitute) worker or substitute in ad-hoc positions and many also continue to work aside as 'badli' whenever opportunity lies. But there was a visible aversion from maximum women respondents to work as ad-hoc and temporary maids as that would mean severe job insecurity, ineligibility for any chance benefits that a stable worker would receive. Likewise almost maids also showed solidarity and an unspoken ethical norm that they tend to abide by not snatching away job prospects from fellow domestic workers when they substitute them for short time periods. The proportion of married and widowed women in paid domestic work is disproportionately high and this can be exemplified from the reasoning that almost all widows and separated women entered labour market after their husband's death and desertion. Sickness and unemployment of husbands emerged as the major factor behind labour market participation of these women who were until then involved as unpaid family worker in family farms and business or in domestic chore-work. This is more apparent among the commuter women who cited husband's sickness (12.1% against half proportion of slum maids at 6.1%) and unemployment (21.7% against 10.3% among slum women) as the principal push for their engagement in daily commuting to unknown city from extensive distances for earning livelihood. The perception study regarding the worker's attitude and cognizance towards paid domestic work garners a sense contradiction in reality and the worker's views and expectations. Job security is perceived to be high (30%) and very high (27%) notwithstanding of lack of any legal protection. Maids who are working for a while in this profession and for few years with the same employers sense a self-notified authority in leaving a job or terminating services to be in their

own hands. Only 12.5% maids observe that they have low to extremely low security and could be coerced into being laid off from work by the will and authority of their employers.

In this backdrop one must recall that these women have no access and awareness about NGOs, voluntary organisations and women's associations who work for upliftment and negotiations of informal sector women workers and domestic workers with resident welfare associations (RWA) forums and governmental authorities and voice their cause regarding pay structure and working conditions. But the sole perception of self power among these maids evolves from the highly personal informal and close network work relationship with the women employers which often take the form of maternalistic, benevolent, patronizing and fluid relation between the employer client and subordinate domestic service provider maids. The employer women regard their authority to not only supervise and instruct the maid in the service tasks but also to control the life and livelihood reigns of the domestic workers through avenues of loans, gifts and other generosity such as through advises during personal problems of maids and discussions on own private life happenings. Thus it is difficult to engage a austere professional approach between the maid and her employer not only because of lack of legal laws in this sector, but attributed to the salient characteristic of the workplace and nature of task; which proliferates into an unequal work relation yet having a narrow channel for the domestic workers to prevail upon the employers by appealing to the charitable and compassionate side of the employers. This occurrence is true for the slum dwelling women particularly in the traditional parts of the city such as the north and central Kolkata, which have vestiges of the colonial, pre-modern cultures found in joint or extended family structure, in its architectural and transportation landscapes. In the newer areas of south, east and west Kolkata which have evolved under neo-liberalism and capitalism, where nuclear families live mostly in high rises and neighbourhood complexes and where women of the households are young or middle aged and working, the stance is usually professional with minimalist interaction beyond work. Similarly the maids also cite some problems unique to the city in getting new prospective employers, such as competition from new entrant women workers into this occupation from the villages (33.1%), lack of vacancy and over-crowding in to the occupation (17%), less wage and difficulty in getting work through placement agency (8.5%). Very often the

domestic workers find it very difficult to access the prospective work as they are restricted at entrance gates of the residential complexes by the security guards and asked for identity proofs and police verifications (23.1%) to get jobs. The slum maids complain about the train commuter women who they claim to have created over-crowding in the labour market and have spiralled down the wage rates and this has created an atmosphere of mistrust and fear among the slum maids against the commuters. Trust issues and recent participation in paid domestic work and lack of proper social networks make it difficult to search for new jobs (11%).

Figure 2.12

Pareto Chart Showing Problems faced by Domestic Workers in Acquiring New Employers
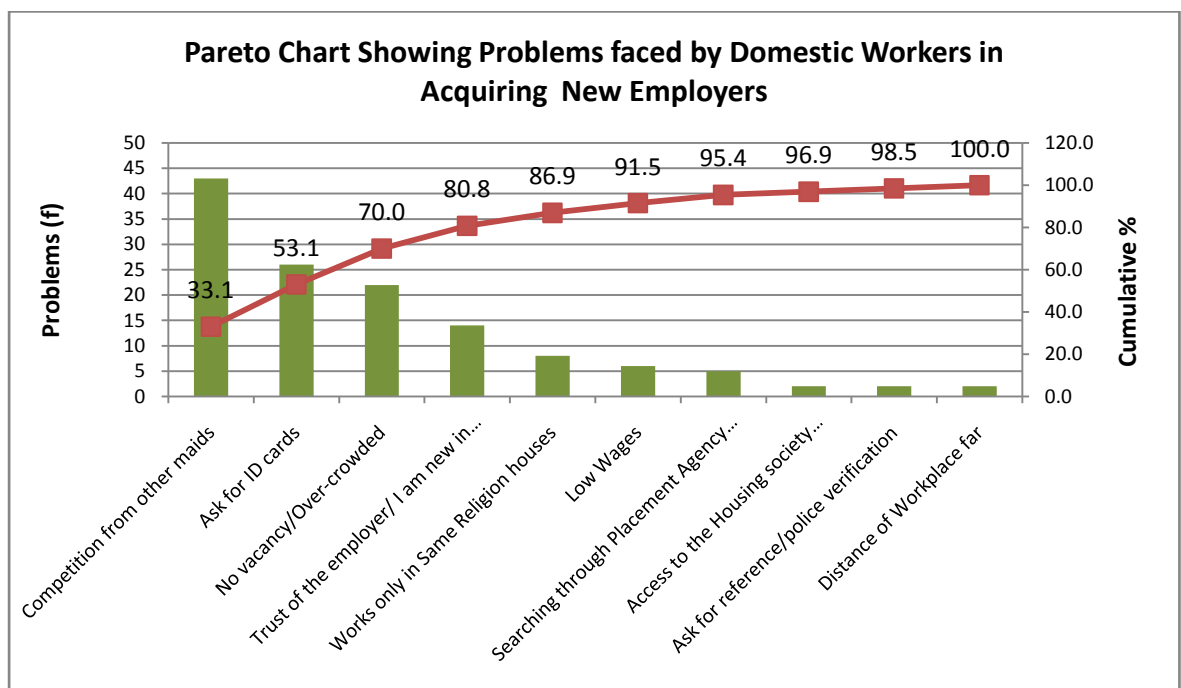
Source: Primary Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Around 10% respondents have been subjected to questions pertaining to their socio-cultural background such as caste and religion and origin before provision of job by the employers. Discriminatory behaviour in hiring women maids from similar cultural background as theirs and descent based casteist attitude in type of domestic work to be performed based on the maid's caste is visible in certain pockets of the city which reinforces the social inequality. Notions about which tasks constitute ritual purity or impurity within the plethora of work that a domestic worker performs keep alive the occupational segregation within the paid domestic work sphere even in the city; where casteist shadow is relatively weaker. But women (29%) also reported to have been

vehement in refusing to work for prospective employers on many unfavourable grounds. 25% of slum and 35.2% of commuter women fervently refused work in spite of better chances of earning more money, citing health and ageing issues (12%), desire for rest (3.4%) and lack of spare time (35.4%) from clockwork tight daily schedule as primary reasons. Low rate of pay (20%) and dislike for the employer and work profile (10.3%) along with unsuitable work timings and long commuting distance (12.3%) act as a deterrent in accepting few work opportunities. But many women are aware of the time during the year when the chances of getting new work is high; during the winter months and festivals.

6.8.1 Decent Work Index

The concept of decent work highlights the basic necessities that are essential in the work profile, work environment and the effects of which are manifested in the outcome of work participation. Decent work is comprehended broadly which brings in dignity, equality, fair income and safe working conditions. Six broad variables are used to compute DWI, whereby women workers are classified into 3 distinctive decent work groups based on their imputed DWI values into low, medium and high. Higher the index value, more decent will be the work for the women. Higher proportions of commuter workers are classified under low index relative to slum maids (23% commuters against 6.1% slum dwellers) and only 8% come under high index category while 27% slum women have high levels of decent work. Cooking emerges the most decent of all work specialization since 35.3% cooks fall under high DWI unlike 13.5% and 19.2% of housecleaners and ayahs. The long duration of paid work and low wage rates of the two groups affects the DWI. Geographically the women workers residing in central city (8.6%) slums and commuter women travelling from northern (33.3%) territories in to Kolkata have the highest proportions under low DWI. Northern slum maids emerges as having the best index scores and about more than 34% domestic workers here have high DWI. The inequality among the social and religious groups is evident from the statistics, where 24.1% general caste and 20% Hindu women have high DWI, while the 22.8% OBC and 27% Muslim women come under low DWI, which is more than two times that of the groups that fare better. The Bihari and Hindi (16.3%) speaking women have poorer DWI scores compared to the Bengali maids (12%). The high levels of decent work is found to exists more among literates (26.1%) and urban (25.2%) domestic workers who usually have a male

member (20.9%) as head of the household, unlike the illiterate (15.4%) rural (3.1%) women maids belonging to women headed households (16.7%). Again the occupation of household head and household type along with household size is seen to create variations in decent work scores. Similarly with rising educational attainments the likelihood of having higher DWI increases as the women have greater tendency to do better bargaining and take up work with high pay-scale (38% domestic workers studied more then elementary education have high DWI while it is 21.2% for women who studied up to class V). Women belonging to rural self employed in non-agriculture households (12.5%) and urban regular salaried households (28.1%) share the largest proportion of women maids under decent work, while rural agricultural self employed households and urban casual labour households have the highest percentage of low DWI women domestic workers at 33.3% and 16.2% respectively. The opportunity for leisure and decision making power on leaving or continuing paid domestic work, work satisfaction among other outcomes are comparatively in less command of married women (13.6% come under low DWI as against 20% of unmarried women) and women who live with her married daughter (only 11.1% women have high DWI) and separated women living with children only. The women living alone (24.4%) and with husband only (21.6%) have greater percentage share of women under high DWI. With rising household size the work burden rises and more time is spent on paid work as well with reduced individualism for personal decision power. Thus proportion of women with low DWI rises from 8.7% (single women household) to 13.2% (2 to 6 household members) to 18.8% with more than 6 members.

Table 1.4.20 Domestic Worker Groups according to Decent Work Index (DWI)

Domestic Worker Groups by Decent Work Index (DWI) in %				
Groups	Low DWI	Medium DWI	High DWI	Total
Slum North	1.1	64.5	34.4	100.0
Slum West	8.3	62.5	29.2	100.0
Slum South	6.9	68.3	24.8	100.0
Slum Central	8.6	74.3	17.1	100.0
Commuter North	33.3	56.2	10.5	100.0
Commuter West	10.0	86.7	3.3	100.0
Commuter South	16.2	77.1	6.7	100.0
Rural	23.3	73.6	3.1	100.0
Urban	9.1	65.8	25.2	100.0
Literate	6.4	67.4	26.1	100.0
Illiterate	16.5	68.1	15.4	100.0
Hindu	11.5	68.5	20.0	100.0

Muslim	26.9	61.5	11.5	100.0
SC	13.1	68.2	18.7	100.0
OBC	22.8	65.2	12.0	100.0
General	8.4	67.5	24.1	100.0
Slum	6.1	66.9	26.9	100.0
Commuter	22.9	69.2	7.9	100.0
Ayah	13.5	67.3	19.2	100.0
Cook	3.7	61.1	35.2	100.0
Housecleaner	18.6	67.9	13.5	100.0
Single Household	8.7	69.6	21.7	100.0
2 persons	8.3	75.0	16.7	100.0
2-6	13.2	66.5	20.3	100.0
6 and above	18.8	67.2	14.1	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

6.8.2 Work related Decent Work Indicators

There is a clear distinction between the slum and commuter domestic worker group in terms of DWI and also when working condition and workplace discrimination variables are tabulated as per low, medium and high levels. Only 18.3% commuter maids come under the 'good' working condition category and 8.8% have poor index, while the same among the slum workers is much higher at 60.6% under good and only 1.8% under poor working condition classes. Worker categories can be placed in hierarchy when work condition index is analysed as per work type, with 60% ayahs classified under good working conditions and 40% under moderate with none under poor group. The housecleaners are place at the bottom level amongst all as only 38% of them are exposed to good working conditions unlike 50% of cook and 61.1% of women who perform all three activities. 6.3% of house-cleaners work under poorest workplace environment and this connotes their higher levels of indecent work classifications. Similarly high level of workplace discrimination is faced by 19.7% slum workers, whereas it is almost double at 37.7% among the commuter workers. Around 22.5% slum maids have low levels of discrimination but it is much lower at 7.1% among the commuter women indicating that decent work clauses are almost entirely absent among the many commuting women. Then again the discrimination levels are as high as for 35% domestic helpers and 19.2% baby-sitters, but only in case of 15.7% of cooks. Cooking is considered as a ritually pure and essential activity, and women workers performing it are revered by the employers compared to the women who clean utensils, wash clothes and sweep floor and toilet spaces of the employers along with other impure tasks such as handling human body wastes (bathing and assisting in toilet usage, handling diseased, massaging etc).

Table 1.4.21 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Decent Work

Decent Work Indicators	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
Worked as a Child in paid Domestic work	77.5	91.3
Suffered Job loss in last 1 year due to Sickness	83.9	83.3
Getting Paid holiday per week	35.0	75.4
Getting Paid leave to visit Native place	38.3	28.8
Getting Paid Sick Leave	53.3	51.3
Getting Bonus granted by employed annually	88.3	86.3
Suffering Pay-cut upon Absenteeism	83.1	53.3
Doing Extra work than discussed during time of hiring	67.8	57.9
Retrenched from work by Employer	85.8	78.8
Doing additional Errands	51.1	43.8
Receiving Additional payment for Extra work	69.2	72.1
Abused/ mistreated at workplace for breaking things	86.7	84.2
Employer asking socio-religious background before hiring	90.6	89.6
Having Freedom to leave this profession	9.4	1.7
Allowed to touch/use electrical machines at workplace	50.8	37.1
Performing Ad-hoc/*badli* work	84.7	83.8
Having time for Leisure activity	38.3	22.9
Experiencing Work Security	64.7	44.6
Work > 6 hours per day &Want to work more houses/under-employed	92.8	77.5
Work Pressure experienced in daily life	60.8	67.9
Dissatisfaction from job	92.5	92.9
Food received from Employer	66.4	57.9
First Aid received from Employer	68.3	39.2
Provision of Toilet at workplace	59.2	47.9
Provision of Rest-place and Time at workplace	57.2	16.2
Agreements at the time of Hiring	36.9	14.6
Allowed to sit at par with Employer	46.9	21.3
Any Training received	4.4	5.0
Problems in getting new job/employer	90.8	88.8
Relation with Employer	98.6	97.9
Relation with Co-workers	57.2	39.6
Benefits received from Employer	51.4	42.5
Reporting of Negative aspects of this occupation	91.7	90.8
Frequency of Salary Increment within 1-2 years	32.2	24.2
Want to leave this occupation due to negative aspects	75.3	88.8
Experienced work related Psychological Problems	68.3	93.3
Provided with Separate Utensils to eat at workplace	60.0	60.8
Given notice before retrenchment by employer	95.0	87.1
Good Working Conditions	60.6	18.3

Work Discrimination	19.1	37.1

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Thus commuter women maids and especially the domestic helpers are the most disadvantaged paid domestic workers in Kolkata. The commuter women are underprivileged not only on account of working as domestic workers sans legislative safety nets but their relatively poorer economic background, weaker bargaining abilities and pressing need for work and earning money implies that they cannot endure longer waiting period before they get decent paid domestic work neither they can resign from any employer household even if they face discrimination and poor working condition. The time cost and physical journey cost invested in social networking and landing a job and likewise earning livelihood by the commuter women is huge and this in turn usually debars them to quit a certain employer notwithstanding getting low and irregular wages, bigoted treatment and confronting poor working conditions. This is true for the newly recruited commuter women who are yet to develop an intricate social network frame in the city and are slowly learning the nuances of their trade. With longer duration spent in this profession and with diverse experiences at work and commute space these women are able to cultivate a *work niche* in the neighbourhood locality in the city and are known to the closed social circles of fellow commuter friends, peers, security guards, small corner shops regulars and retail outlet owners and in rare cases the employer households in the vicinity. The occupation being based on very close and personal contact with the employers thus often results in the employers for whom the maid has been working since years, pitch in help in getting the maid newer jobs. The job approach scenario is very casual where the prospective employer networks with their neighbourhood houses, local shops and laundry or milkman and watchmen to search for appropriate paid domestic worker either for ad-hoc or long term employment. In most cases the maid seeks help of current employer to recommend them with newer employers in the area and the chances of getting a job also depends on the degree of social intermingling of the employer with their neighbours. In the residential localities comprising of housing societies, multi-storeyed gated higher class buildings, the professional approach is more likely to prevail, whereby the women maids are required to network with security guards and RWA representatives in order to seek job prospects. They also have to submit relevant documents supporting their identity

and proof of genuineness and sometimes are also issued entry passes to be able to work in the housing society, which very often the commuter women workers cannot provide due to absence of such documents. Here in the reputation about their competence and commitment to superior quality service and general goodwill along with trustworthiness of the women workers that develops over the course of their occupational engagement helps in getting new job offers.

The same externalities are applicable to slum workers, but the nearness of their place of stay to the employer houses and greater chances of visibility in their neighbourhood makes them more accessible cum reliable to the employers and this gives the slum maids an advantage over that of their commuter counterparts working in the same locality, resulting in relative ease and greater number of job offers to them. Thus commuter women are found to compensate the restricted prospects of job by accepting lower wages, poorer working conditions and trying to work longer hours to earn more, which goes underneath the minimum realms of decent work. When studied under the lens of work outcome and work related problem indexes an inter-group heterogeneity is seen among the worker categories. Though the ayahs are in a better state in other indexes, but they face certain typical work-related problems such as in accessing suitable work, retrenchment by the employer without ample notice. About 11.5% ayahs and 12.3% house cleaners face high level of work problems while 66% cooks and 71.2% ayahs respectively have lower problems. The specific requirement of ayahs and baby-sitters in employer's homes for taking care of elderly or infants or sick makes the work engagement with employers uncertain and of short duration. With death of the care-receiver or and growing up of infants the ayahs are no longer recruited at the house and thus their employment tenure gets shortened and they face phases of indefinite time without work. Moreover ayah work cannot be undertaken in multiple employer homes simultaneously as the work shifts are usually 8 to 12 hours long and thus at the discontinuation of services at an employer's house, there is no work to fall back up on immediately before a new work is got. Thus work problems like difficulty encountered in searching new job, and less time for leisure and laying off from work are more for the ayahs. Overall, 11.3% of domestic workers faced high degree of work problems, 8.6% of slum women and almost twice than this; 15.6% of commuters in the same. The commuter women having low problems at work is 12% less than slum women (68.3%). Lastly the work-related positive change

in the lives of the maids is noticeably higher among the commuter women than then slum women. Overall, 9.5% maids are classified having poor outcomes, while 12% slum maids reported the same. Surprisingly the experience of work pressure, psychological health issues, negative effect of work participation and job dissatisfaction is reported by smaller proportion of commuter women backed by ignorance and only 5.8% come under poor outcome class. This paradox is explained by unravelling the psyche of the women from poor EWS rural and small town households, who overlook these aspects either due to naivety, indifference and because the advantages received from work participation and earning livelihood coupled with being exposed to city-life is much higher than the negative outcomes. 62.5% commuters thus come under good outcome effect; 12 points higher than the slum women. There is not much clear difference among the exclusive worker categories, though house-cleaners (53.5%) emerge has having the lowest percentage under good conditions and the women overlapping the work categories have the highest proportion under poor outcome class (22.2%).

Ward-wise distribution of DWI shows that slum women residing in northern Kolkata slums like Shyambazar, Belgachia and western slums in Chetla, Tollygunge, Behala have high level of decent work while the commuter women alighting in the railway stations of New Alipore in the western part of Kolkata and Jadavpur, Dhakuria and Ballygunge in the south come under high DWI class. Most slum wards have moderate DWI while women residing in central zone slums of Wellington and Taltala have low DWI. Women mostly Muslim maids who reach Park Circus station and work in the neighbouring residential pockets have the lowest DWI.

A comprehensive comparability study between the slum and commuter domestic workers considering host of decent work indicators depicts that except in 4 to 5 indicators the former fares better in decent work with higher proportions of slum women having decent work profile. An interesting occurrence is that around 22.5% slum maids have worked as a child in this profession either in live-out work pattern or mostly as in live-in maid before taking a break in work. While most commuter women have started working as adults in live-out position and only 8.8% commuter maids have worked since their childhood. Paid holiday per week is received by 59% of the commuters while only 41% slum maids get weekly holiday.

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Map 3.33.1

LEVEL OF DECENT WORK AMONG DOMESTIC WORKERS
IN SLUMS, KOLKATA

Legend

KMC Wards

Decent Work Index

0.40 – 0.57 (LOW)

0.5701 – 0.67 (MODERATE)

0.6701 – 0.77 (HIGH)
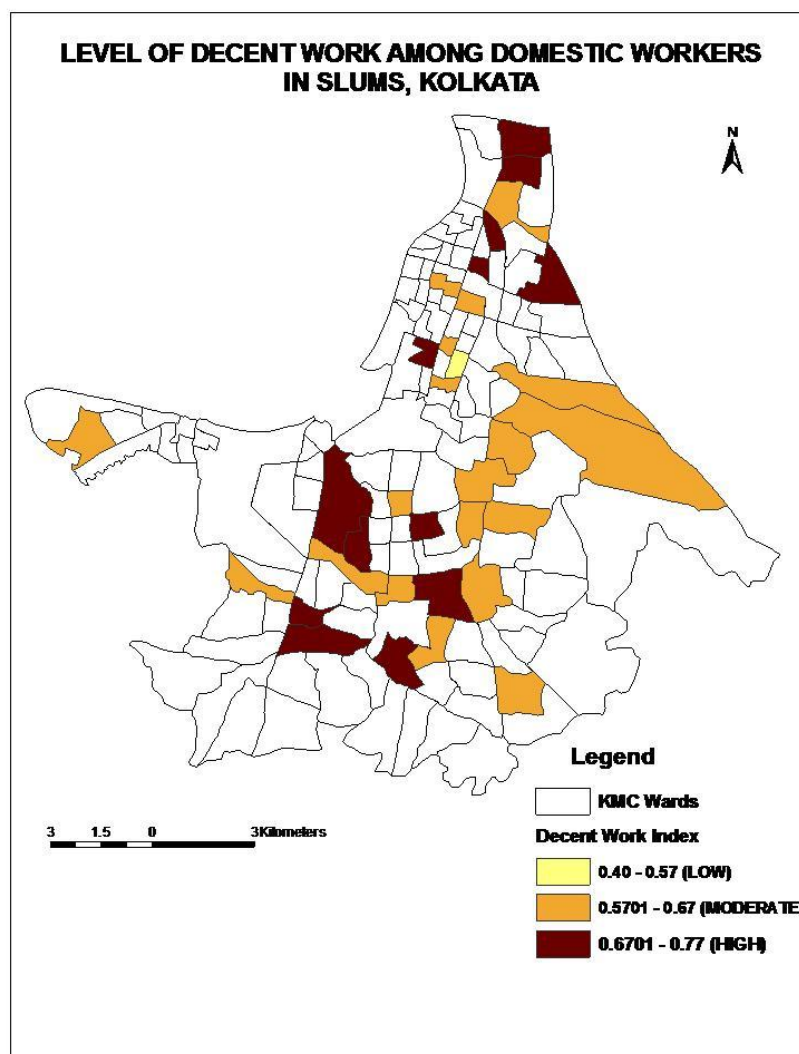
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The pay cut on absenteeism (46.7%), non-notified lay off from work (21.3%), performing additional work without pay (56.3%), having low job security (55.4%), poor relation with employer and co-worker (60.4%), yearly non-increment of salary (76%) and lower incidences of benefits (57.5%) received from employer which all designate indecent work is found to be much higher than the slum dwelling domestic workers. Poor working conditions and discriminatory behaviour is much severe for the commuters. 89% of commuters face some kind of discrimination as against equally high but relative lower 71% of slum maids. While good working conditions is only there for 18.3% of commuter maids. They also have less scope of leisure activities due to travel time and they have higher proportion of women who are

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underemployed (22.5% as against 7.2% of slum maids). The consequential outcome on experience of work pressure and psychological health is worse for commuter women even though they are unaware and indifferent to such occurrence.

Map 3.33.2
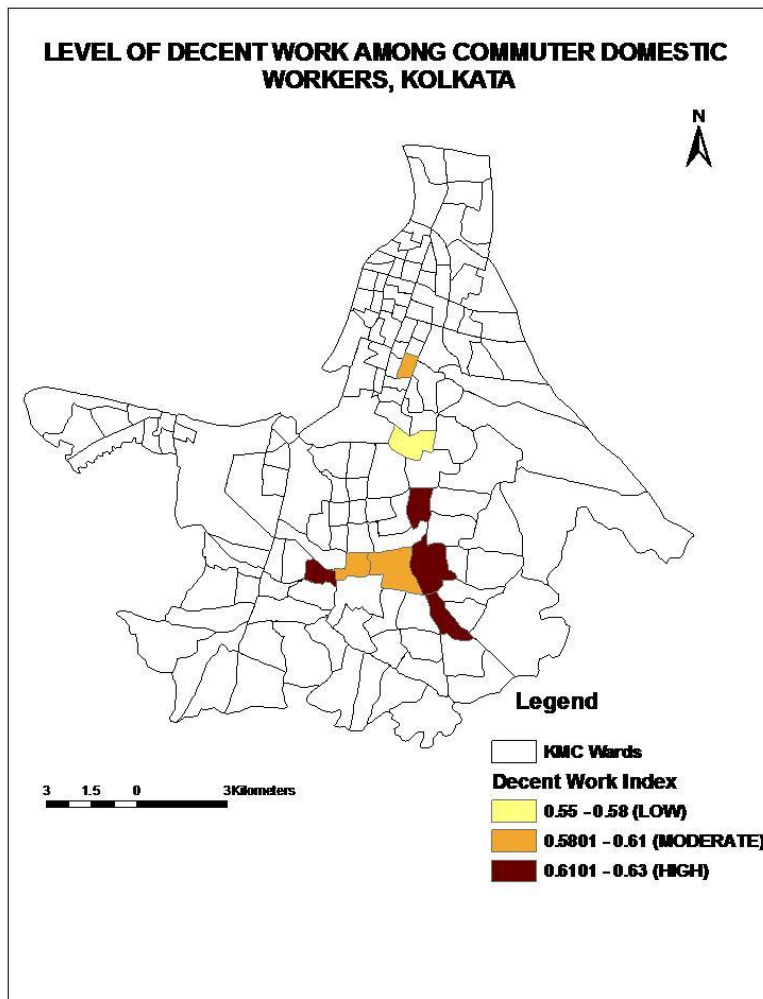
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The crucial differentiators are the income earned and time spent on SNA. Around 2% commuter maids work more than 8 hours a day than slum women. The variation of monthly income is less among the commuters and a higher proportion of commuter women receive less than 2/3rd of mean hourly wage due to locational differences in wage rates. Some descriptive statistics highlight the non-decent work characteristics among all respondents in Kolkata. Around 37% maids spent excessive hours (greater than 48 hours) at paid work per week and shockingly 47% out of the bunch work

more than 60 extreme hours per week at SNA activity, while 20.2% maids work beyond a man-day (normal 8 hours). Separated and widowed maids and single living women are at the worst spectrum as 14%, 13.2% and 24% women respectively work for 80 to 100 or more hours in SNA activities per week (**Table 1.4.22**). Urban (19.5%) and slum (20.3%) women spent extreme hours at paid work in greater proportion. Poor economic status of the women, the husbands of whom are sick and unemployed spent longer hours at paid work, with 29.4% women with sick husbands spend extreme hours at work while 16.8% without sick husbands at the same. Larger household size reduces the propensity of women to spent extreme hours at paid work per week under the increased amount of housework burden and other contributors into the household income pool. Thus 24% of single living women and 22.2% of women living with another member work more than 60 weekly hours as against 16.3% and 17.2% of women belonging to households with 2 to 6 and more than 6 members correspondingly. Work duration of an ayah being such that 73.1% of these women spent extreme weekly hours at work, while 61.5% spent 80 to 100 hours at care-giving work at employer's home. 20.2% maids who engage in extreme hours of paid work claim to not experience any work related load in daily life, but they do not want to work more hours as well. The mean monthly income among the commuter workers is Rs 2855 and hourly wage is Rs 14.1. The increasing distance is seen to determine the income earned as proportion of women who travel up to 20 kilometres and earning above mean monthly income is higher and this ratio keeps declining with increasing distance. About 57% of women travelling up to 20 kilometres earn monthly income above average value, while only 38.7% women earn above average when they travel more than 60 kilometres. Similarly 51.4% women commuting within 20 kilometres distance earn Rs 14.1 mean hourly wage rate, but with distance travelled rising to 60 to 100 kilometres the percentage share rises to 67.7%. Most commuting women work more hours at paid work to economise the time invested in travel and to earn more, more so if the distance travelled is large. About 60% commuters who travel distances of 20 kilometres spent more than 7 hours at paid work, but though the proportion declines by 30% with increment of 20 kilometres of journey distance, but again it is seen to rise by smaller amounts to 37.3% and 42% when distance navigated is 40 to 60 kilometres and 60 to 100 kilometres. The chi square value is 8.022 with 3 degrees of freedom and the relationship between the variables is significant with $p < 0.05$. The corresponding proportion of commuters working in more than 3 employer houses also

follows the similar pattern, from 28.3% women (20-40 kilometres) to 42% (more than 60 kilometres). Among the slum workers, the maids in west (14%) and central (13%) areas work for greater than 48 hours per week, while the southern zone maids has the lowest share (10%). Unless she is an ayah, the likelihood of a commuter domestic worker to spent more than 48 hours per week (4.2%) in paid work is less as the proportion of workers getting paid leave or taking leave with pay cut is higher among the train commuting maids. 33.3% cooks are seen to spent more than 7 hours per day in paid-work, 34.2% house-cleaners and 77% of ayahs. The relation is significant at 1% level of significance. Similarly work pattern guides the need for and availability of time to work in more than 3 employer houses. 40% housecleaners reported to have been working in more than 3 houses per day relative to 21% cook, 37.8% cook and housecleaners and 12.5% ayah cum cook and housecleaners. Chi square analysis shows the relationship to be highly significant with $p = 0.013$.

Table 1.4.22 Distribution of Domestic Worker Groups according to Net amount of Hours in Paid Work

		Net Amount of Hours Spent on Paid Domestic Work per Week (in %)						
Variables	**Groups**	**Less than 20 hours**	**20.01-40.0**	**40.01-60.0**	**60.01-80.0**	**80.01-100.0**	**100.01-120.0 Hours**	**Total**
Marital Status	Unmarried/Never-married	19.4	32.3	32.3	3.2	9.7	3.2	100.0
	Currently Married	13.4	36.7	34.2	9.6	5.3	0.8	100.0
	Divorced	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	100.0
	Separated	8.3	41.7	25.0	11.1	13.9	0.0	100.0
	Widowed	12.5	36.8	30.1	6.6	13.2	0.7	100.0
Type	Slum	19.7	34.7	25.3	8.3	10.6	1.4	100.0
	Commuter	3.3	39.6	43.3	9.6	4.2	0.0	100.0
	Total	13.2	36.7	32.5	8.8	8.0	0.8	100.0
Place of Residence	Rural	3.1	43.4	40.9	9.4	3.1	0.0	100.0
	Urban	16.8	34.2	29.5	8.6	9.8	1.1	100.0
Worker Category	Ayah/Baby-sitters	5.8	7.7	13.5	7.7	61.5	3.8	100.0
	Cook	27.8	43.5	20.4	8.3	0.0	0.0	100.0
	House-cleaners	12.6	40.8	36.9	7.2	2.1	0.3	100.0
Family Type	Nucleated	12.6	36.1	34.7	8.9	6.8	0.9	100.0
	Joint	15.6	46.7	20.0	8.9	8.9	0.0	100.0
	Extended	14.1	32.4	33.8	5.6	12.7	1.4	100.0
	Single	15.2	39.1	21.7	13.0	10.9	0.0	100.0
Husband Sick and Unemployed	Yes	5.9	35.3	29.4	17.6	9.8	2.0	100.0
	No	13.5	37.0	32.8	8.3	7.9	0.6	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The notion of decent work is closely interconnected with health status, asset and standard of living level of the women workers and her household, and it also determines the level of empowerment and favourable outcome in her life-course. Degree of heterogeneity among the two broad sub-groups can be mapped through coefficient of variation values, which is found to be slightly higher for the commuters (27.1%) unlike 23% for the slum domestic workers. But the CV for DWI is very low (less than 14%) for both the groups, emphasizing the overall general low levels of decent work among paid domestic workers in Kolkata. Variation in DWI and empowerment index is slightly higher among the women of western slums (CV of 13.8% and 29%) and commuter north (CV of 14.7% and 27.4%) respectively. All maids residing in northern city slums score equally high in decent work and empowerment indexes and thus CV is lowest in this zone with 10.7% and 17.2% correspondingly. Decent work is a cause and effect of both health and empowerment situation and thus a cross tabulation between the variables explains the mechanisms between them clearly, whereby the inverse relationship between DWI and health is visible. As the health and wellbeing status of the maids becomes fair to worse, the proportion of women with high levels of DWI declines from 40.5% to 0.9%. 21% of women with low DWI come under worse health index and 32% of women with fairly good health have high DWI. On similar ground, the decent work level is again inversely related with socio-economic cost of commuting, with rise in cost entailing lower DWI and vice-versa. About 9.1 % of women incurring low commuting cost index are classified under high DWI which becomes nil for women under high commuting cost. Less distance and time incurred in travel to work and low expenditure on it helps in also negating adverse effects on health and thus 79% of women classified as having high commuting cost, have low DWI. There is a positive and direct relation between the DWI and empowerment index, where decent work brings forth empowered outcome from these women and help them in having dignified living. 53.4% of women having high DWI come under high empowerment index category, while a mere 3.4% women with high DWI have low empowerment.

Table 1.4.23 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Composite Indexes and Decent Work Index

Composite Indexes	Index Score	DECENT WORK INDEX (%)			
		Low	Moderate	High	Total

Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting	Low	45.5	45.5	9.1	100.0
	Moderate	47.0	41.0	12.0	100.0
	High	78.9	21.1	0.0	100.0
Health & Wellbeing Index	Fair	6.5	23.3	40.5	100.0
	Bad	72.7	72.7	58.6	100.0
	Worse	20.8	3.9	0.9	100.0
Empowerment Index	Low	31.2	10.3	3.4	100.0
	Moderate	49.4	55.8	43.1	100.0
	High	19.5	33.9	53.4	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Degree of empowerment increases with increase in decent work index ($r = 0.381$), decision index ($r = 0.751$) and positive work outcome ($r = 0.340$) and the relations are highly significant. With increasing age, empowerment is seen to increase too as most of the middle-aged and aged women are widows and have decision making capacity lying with them, but the strength of relation is weak with 0.147 being the Pearson's value. An interesting occurrence is that women belonging to households having fairly good standard of living are seen to enjoy good working terms and good working conditions at paid domestic work but r value is low for both at (-0.230 and -0.307) respectively. Standard of living affects health and wellbeing as evidence from significant positive relation but with low r value of 0.226. Decision making capacity and participation of the maid increases with progressive improvement of the household conditions of the women workers with significantly strong positive relation between the two ($r = 0.909$). Household conditions include absence of domestic violence, increase in household position, degree of respect earned from family members, making important income contribution to household pool and help from family in performing household chores. Asset ownership index is a reflection of degree of decent work performed as a decent income helps the household to own specific assets. Similarly as the education level of the maid and the head of the household rises, the asset ownership index also increases and the two variables have significant relationship with moderate r values of 0.326 and 0.289 respectively.

Table 1.4.24 Binomial Logistic Regression explaining Determinants of Decent Work Employment among Domestic Workers

Binomial Logistic Regression Explaining Factors Influencing Decent Work					
Determinants	**N**	**B**	**S.E**	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**
Commuter (Ref- Slum)	240	-1.129	0.223	0***	0.323
Household Size	600	0.056	0.074	0.449	1.058

South Region (Ref - Rest of Region)	206	-0.155	0.248	0.531	0.856
Worker Category (Ref- Ayah, Cook & House-Cleaner)	107			0.012**	
Cook	108	0.29	0.33	0.38	1.336
Housecleaner	333	-0.462	0.263	0.079*	0.63
Ayah/Baby-Sitter	52	-0.762	0.447	0.089*	0.467
Occupation of Household Head (Ref- Regular Salaried)	79			0.39	
Self Employed	112	-0.258	0.345	0.454	0.773
Casual Labour	98	-0.45	0.355	0.205	0.638
Unemployed/Doing Domestic Chores	74	-0.544	0.403	0.177	0.581
Dependents	46	-1.042	0.491	0.034**	0.353
Domestic Worker	191	-0.568	0.586	0.333	0.567
Total Monthly Income	600	0	0	0.005***	1
Age of Domestic Worker	600	0.016	0.011	0.142	1.017
Family (Ref Joint)	45			0.594	
Nucleated	438	0.516	0.434	0.235	1.675
Extended	71	0.471	0.466	0.311	1.602
Single	46	0.295	0.656	0.653	1.344
Children (0-6 years)	600	-0.315	0.185	0.089	0.73
Education Level of Maid	600	0.083	0.039	0.035**	1.087
Education Level of Head of Household	600	0.033	0.033	0.325	1.033
Religion- Non-Hindu (Ref- Hindu)	54	-0.375	0.404	0.353	0.687
North Region (Ref - Rest of Region)	198	-0.046	0.266	0.864	0.955
Work Got (Ref- Agency & Employer)	51			0***	
Word of Mouth	233	1.366	0.451	0.002***	3.921
Peer Group & Mother	200	1.426	0.462	0.002***	4.164
Own Search	116	0.456	0.496	0.358	1.577
Work Information (Ref- Agency & Employer)	64			0.606	
Peer Group	280	0.123	0.363	0.736	1.13
Mother & Family	50	-0.32	0.476	0.502	0.726
Own Search	206	-0.086	0.381	0.821	0.917
Caste Non-General (Ref- General)	409	0.041	0.215	0.847	1.042
Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	31			0.206	
Married	397	-0.871	0.49	0.076*	0.419
Separated/Divorced	38	-0.616	0.57	0.28	0.54
Widowed	134	-0.231	0.535	0.666	0.794
Migration Status -Migrant (Ref-Non Migrant)	276	-0.098	0.196	0.617	0.906
Mother Tongue- Non-Bengali (Ref- Bengali)	93	-0.003	0.289	0.992	0.997
Head of the Household- Woman (Ref-Male)	227	-0.33	0.479	0.491	0.719
Constant		-1.053	1.017	0.301	0.349
*** Significant at 1% ** Significant at 5% * Significant at 10%					
Dependent Variable: Decent Work (DWI Values > Mean values of 0.6392)					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Model Summary				
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	N
1	686.095a	0.216	0.287	600

The predictors used to ascertain whether the domestic workers are in decent work employment is more or less the same used for decent monthly income with additional factors of peer networking and family type. Domestic workers are categorized to be employed in decent work if they score DWI values greater than the mean value of 0.6392 and it is the dependent variable in this model. The factors that determine the decent employment include educational level of maid, total monthly income earned, and social networking. (**Table 1.4.24**) With increasing educational attainment and income earned there is increased likelihood of being in decent work and the regression coefficients are significant at 5% and 1 % level of significance. Married women have greater probability to be employed in indecent work, as do the women having children (0-6 years) of age in their household and the regression coefficients are significant with ($p = 0.076$) and ($p = 0.089$) respectively. Religion, caste, migration status, mother tongue, age of the worker, occupation of the head, headship of the household and household size do not have significant influence on the dependent variable. Nature of work performed does influence the decent work as is seen from $p = 0.012$. Compared to the cooks, the ayahs and housecleaners are 0.47 and 0.63 times less likely to be in decent work respectively, whereby the coefficients are negatively significant at 10% level. Compared to the reference category of slum dwelling maids, the commuters are 0.32 times more likely to be in indecent employment and the coefficient is highly significant at 1% level. Strikingly the role of social network in attaining decent employment structure is seen to have positive impact and the regression coefficient is significant at 1% level. As against the job search made through self efforts and relative to the ones acquiring work via placement agency, the women who have been helped in getting work by peer group and their mothers are 4.2 times more likely to be employed in decent work, followed by women being helped by others through word of mouth ($p = 0.002$). The regression model is able to explain 28.7% (Nagelkerke's R^2) variance and correctly classifies 71.7% of cases.

6.9 Working Conditions and Workplace Discrimination

According to the ILO, working conditions are essential determinants to the overall work satisfaction, employee productivity, occupational health, worker empowerment and wellbeing and degree of decent work guaranteed. The employer must ensure minimum standards of decent work so that it enables the workforce to be more efficient and render production of quality output and services. To analyse the scenario in the workplace conditions present for these paid domestic workers, some specific questions were canvassed. Tabulation of mottled group of indicators appropriate to decent work conditions among commuter and slum domestic workers, clearly shows that the former suffer worse conditions at work. It is all the more unfortunate that most of these workers are ignorant of what decent work is and what constitutes the distinctive characteristics and contributing attributes of the same. Decent working conditions are constituted by physical environmental factors such as ventilation, room space, lighting, toilet facilities, first-aid and medical services, resting place and time, and by the socio-economic environment. Social indicators of working conditions includes absence of discrimination based on caste, religion, language, healthy relations with co-workers and employers, absence of workplace abuse, mistreatment and oppression. Decent economic environmental conditions involves absence of wage discrimination, presence of income and job security, transparency in appointment and basic agreements verbally or written at time of hiring etc.

Table 1.4.25 Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Working Conditions

Availability at Workplace	First Aid (%)		Rest Time/Space (%)		Hot Water in Winter (%)		Appliances Aiding Work (%)	
	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter	Slum	Commuter
Yes	68.2	31.3	53.2	15.4	6.6	3.8	6.1	2.8
No	31.8	68.7	46.8	84.6	93.4	96.2	93.9	97.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.4.26 Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Provision of Toilet Facilities at Workplace

Toilet at Workplace	Slum Workers	Commuter Workers	Total
Employer's Toilet	319	205	524
	35.5%	27.7%	32.0%
Separate Toilet	178	66	244
	19.8%	8.9%	14.9%

Common Housing / Community toilet	206	168	374
	22.9%	22.7%	22.8%
No Toilet	184	257	441
	20.5%	34.7%	26.9%
Do not go Toilet Outside Home	12	0	12
	1.3%	0.0%	0.7%
Sulabh (Pay & Use) Toilet / Station Toilet	0	45	45
	0.0%	6.1%	2.7%
Total Employer Houses	899	741	1640
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Physical environment forms the critical part of working condition as it is the immediate surrounding of the worker. As reported by the women, lighting (97.6%) and ventilation (88.4%) facilities are generally sufficient at the employer's households but around 32% of slum and 61% of commuter women are administered no first aid upon medical emergency by employers. Similarly 57.2% of slum women and only 16.2% of commuters get opportunity for resting time and place at the workplace. Access to clean and functional toilet at workplace is crucial to determine the health status of these working women. Working conditions can be termed decent and not decent based on whether the indicator is present or absent; about 59.2% and 47.9% of slum and commuter women have access to toilets at the workplace, though discrimination does exist, in the usage and access in terms of location of toilets. Among the 1640 total employer households worked by 600 domestic workers, 27% employers do not give access to toilets, while 32% provide their own toilets. 22.8% maids use common housing society community toilets meant for watchmen, drivers and others, while 15% workers use separate toilets that are usually a part of traditional house structures of central and north Kolkata. Notions of pollution and purity, treatment similar to that of out-castes, and the class conflict issues, can be observed in permission of using toilet at employer's home. Women domestics often share the community or common toilets often available in the residential high-rises in the southern part of Kolkata. Much of the older house structures and architectural settings of northern and central parts of the city have traditionally separate toilets built for the servants and lower class employees. It is more difficult for the commuter women to work and journey for longer hours without access to toilets, and surprisingly they state that they are not allowed to use toilets at 34.4% of employer's house and its vicinity. Thus they depend on pay and use community Sulabh toilets (6.1%) and railway station toilets which are not well maintained, usually unclean, dysfunctional and unsafe. The commuters are at a greater disadvantaged position than the slum workers

as seen that only 27.7% are allowed to use employer's toilet as against 36% of the slum counterparts, and only 20.5% of slum maids do not use toilets which is 15% less than that of the commuters.

Provision of food and refreshments though not mandatory but is seen as a kind gesture and is tied to usually hiring agreements which also determines the scale of wages. The ayahs generally are seen not to partake food from employer and usually bring their own meals, as the daily wage would differ according to availability of food and beverage at employer's house. Thus 42.1% of commuters and 33.6% of slum maids are not entitled to food at workplace. Only 5.3% women are allowed to use hot water during winter months for washing and cleaning activities. A weighted average working condition index is computed using 6 physical environmental variables such as provision of lighting and ventilation at workplace, availability of food and resting time, first aid and toilet facilities at employer household, and the women workers are graded into 3 groups according to index scores namely poor, moderate and good. Situation for slum workers are relatively better with 61% reporting to work under good workplace conditions while only 18.3% of commuter women come under decent working conditions. The comparison between the northern and southern region households brings out a mixed picture with regards to working conditions. The permission to use employer's toilet (47.4%), rest time and space (39%) is higher in northern region of the city, than south with 34% and 25.5% respectively. First aid is received by 53.5% of southern region maids including both commuter and slum categories unlike on 41% of the northern Kolkata workers. There is not much distinctive regional difference in terms of paid leave, sick leave and provision of food to the workers.

During the time of hiring the maids are at times subjected to questions regarding their caste, religion and other socio-economic characteristics, (10.5%) which also at times have been seen to affect their employability, wage structure and relationship with employer. Upon probing it was found that many of the Muslim domestic workers were working in Muslim households, and Marwari homes prefer to keep non-Bengali women as maids. The preference for choosing to hire a domestic worker as per similarity of religion and caste by some of the employer households can also be noticed from the caste based distribution among the domestic worker categories. The subtle ways of discrimination at workplace on account of the maid's social standing

and a constant economic class separation and that of domination and subservience is also projected on to the treatment of the maids at the hands of her employers. About 54.2% of maids inform that employers do not allow touching electrical appliances such as refrigerator, microwave oven, geyser, television, water filter, toaster etc while it is primarily the cooks who can use such appliances as a part of their tasks. Refrigerator (35.8%), gas stove (25.7%), mixer grinder (17.2%), kitchen chimney and oven (13.7%), water filter (15.7%), microwave oven and toaster (13.7%) are more commonly used machines by the maids at the workplace.

Table 1.4.27 Discrimination and Conditions at Workplace among Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers

Workplace Discrimination	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Working Condition	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
High	19.7	37.1	Poor	1.7	8.8
Moderate	57.8	55.8	Moderate	37.8	72.9
Low	22.5	7.1	Good	60.6	18.3
Total	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The way the employers address their employee domestic workers can also come within the realms of decency at workplace. 31.4% of the domestics are called by names like '*didi*' (elder sister), '*mashi*' (aunt) by the employer household members and 3.3% are address by a third person reference or by the derogatory term as '*kajerlok*' (worker/helper). This is another aspect that creates informality in the employer-employee working relation and thus creates impediment in strengthening the bargaining power of the women workers. The maternal and feminine attributes woven into familial superficial bonds by way of addressing the domestic worker thus makes this work and the women maids more invisible in the economic spectrum. Similarly the work done by these women in employer homes never get due recognition and thus not remunerated as should be as the work is archaically typified as an effort undertaken out of love or as a non-important labour. Other discriminatory behaviour by the employers can be jotted down in terms of permission to sit at par with the employer at the workplace, separate utensils given to the maids by employer for food consumption, non-permission to address children in the employer house by their name etc. The delicately manifested yet deeply rooted prejudiced behaviour from some employers indicate the stature and the undignified existence of domestic workers in socio-economic sphere even in the urbane, educated, multi-ethnic

existence. It is evident from the unspoken behavioural protocols that is deftly followed by the domestic workers and by authoritatively administered the employer. About 53% and 79% of slum and commuter maids admitted to not have permission to sit on furniture at workplace. 40% of workers are given separate utensils by the employer for eating food while 16.4% of slum and 34% of commuter women are not provided with food, and only 33.6% and 17% of slum and commuter workers state that they can address employer's children at workplace by their names else they have to use respectful adjectives like, '*didi*', '*dada*' (elder brother) etc. On the other hand, few isolated cases were reported by handful of women respondents when they were retrenched from work upon suspicion of theft, were blacklisted by the employer and also when the domestic workers felt sexually abused, threatened and unsafe. Mistreatment in the forms of verbal abuse, complaints, rebuke and reprimands, threatening to retrench from work were substantially common from the employers. Incidences when the maid did not consent of performing an additional task given by the employer, she was verbally threatened, as reported by 33.3% and 55.6% of slum and commuter workers. Similarly 30% workers reported employers to scold and threaten when they damage or break some glassware or objects by mistake at workplace. The workers replace the object (10%) or money is deducted from their salary (20%) and in extreme cases they are laid off from work (14.3%). Greater proportions of commuter women are laid off from work due to this. Overall only 18.3% commuter maids perceive to have good working conditions while it is 60.6% among the slum women. Work satisfaction and psycho-social work environment is directly influenced by kind of relationship the employee has with the employer. It is the woman of the employer house (88.4%) who generally instructs and supervises the maids and hands over month end salary.

6.10 Training and Skill Development among Domestic Workers

Training and skill development is an essential feature to enhance the productive capacity of workers and thereby improve their wage earning chances. Paid domestic work being manual, repetitive and basic in nature and because it is performed primarily by women, it is assumed unnecessary to undergo training for the same. Even the care-work professionals like the ayah and baby-sitters who handle sick, elderly and disabled care-seeker, do not undergo basic training and they mostly learn on the job through observations or from external instructions such as from employers.

But the irony is that tasks like cooking and care-giving when performed by men and especially in higher wage ranges in rich and high-class employer households, is performed by workers who have had undergone some form of training. Thus training or brushing up professional skills is not considered necessary for paid domestic work which is thought to be forte of women owing to the gender based work segregation. But when the same is performed by men, the work is thought to be coveted, worth of training and being remunerated adequately. Moreover, the poor women who enter the paid labour market are mostly less educated and cannot afford to pay for attaining additional skills. Women ayahs or baby-sitters who enrol in placement agencies have more likelihood of being trained in handling a patient or is aware of the intricacies of care-giving. This is because the well known agencies which are into this business have their reputation at stake if they fail to provide quality services. In Kolkata, the proliferation of small agency establishments within close proximity of residential neighbourhoods and railway stations is a distinct feature and thus market competition is also substantial. Nevertheless, the steady increase in the participation of women in paid domestic work, does not affect the viability and profitability of placement centres and they are able to sustain in the market. This also depends on the neighbourhood reputation of the agency that takes time to build up backed by quality service and on the supply base of fresh recruits of women workers. Quality services include, trained punctual workers who do their work with politeness and professionalism, swift replacement of the workers when the employers are not satisfied with some worker, registering complaints and acting upon for improvements etc.

Training was asked for both pertaining to domestic work and to training in other areas that would help them in earning secondary income. It is disheartening that only 4.4% of slum and 5% of commuter women have undergone some training in their profession with expenditures around Rs 1000 to 3000 and more in some cases within training duration of 30 to 90 days or more. About 29% women received training in secondary activities for 30 days, 47.4% got for 1 to 6 months, 16% for 6 to 12 months and 8% for more than 1 year. Training areas included parlour-beautician work (10.8%), tailoring work (26.1%), nurse and ayah (26.1%), cooking learnt from formal sources; *Anganwadi* and food factory (6.5%) and informal sources; from family members (20%), bag making (4.4%) etc. Around 8% of sampled women have been exposed to some kind of training and they acknowledged to have received benefits in

their work life which improved their earning capacity (20%), greater efficiency of job (7.2%), gained knowledge to use medical apparatus and other unlisted benefits (73%). Around 10.2% of all the women thought that training has had some use in their lives while 16% and 18% of slum and commuter women said that they learned hands on from on the job at the workplace. Observation and own performance at workplace (45.5%) and employers are the two primary sources of on the job training, while additional trade tactics from co-workers (13.13%) and accompanying with mothers (10.1%) at young age helped in the learning process of the women.

6.11.1 Function of Placement Agency in Paid Domestic Work

In the sample the women working via agency constituted 5.6% of all women interviewed. About 66 (11%) women have approached and worked via placement agency, of which only 34 women or 55.5% are continuing to work via agency at the time of survey. Familial and social and monetary reasons were cited for leaving enrolment in agency. The women prefer to work on their own in the employer house or what they refer to as 'direct', as that would mean they do not have to share their hard earned wage as daily commission deductions that the agency have to be given. About 40% women cited money factor, while 7% women each mentioned that they fear about the agency sending them to unknown employer house locations and work pressure resulting in health problems. Most importantly, lack of permission from husbands and guardians to work long hours; 12 hours especially night time work of care giving at employer house (12.1%), to look after own household and children (19%) and the clause of submission of identity proof documents and sign and their own illiteracy (12.7%) are other hurdles that keep the women away from working through agency. 38.5% and 37% women working through agency received daily wage in between Rs 101-150 and Rs 151-200 respectively, while 15.4% and 9.2% women earn in between than Rs 200-300 and less than Rs 100 per day as gross pay fixed by centre. North and west Kolkata centres fix gross wage to even Rs 251 to 300. But the net wage the women get is up to Rs 20 (47.7%) or in between Rs 20 to 40 lesser (46.2%), on account of commission deductions, which results in 70.8% women earning less than Rs 150 per day of which 31% get less than Rs 100 and the remaining 29.2% earn in between Rs 150 to 250. There is variation among the placements agencies according to location within the city in terms of the commission subtractions made and security amount taken from the enrolled women workers. The placement

centres in the western (62%) and northern (50%) part earn mostly in between Rs 21 to 40 per day as commission from the domestic workers, while 70% of the central Kolkata agencies deduct up to Rs 20 per day as commission. Majority of women working via agencies in north (60%) and central (46.2%) Kolkata receive net wage in range of Rs 101-150 while in southern (50%) and western (43.8%) city areas most women get within Rs 100 per day. But central Kolkata zone stands out to be the one with wage range within Rs 200 per day indicating the lowest cost of hired domestic labour being at central part of the city, and the highest being in the south. About 12.5% of women receive net daily wage more than Rs 201, while the same for north and west is 10.3% and 6.3% respectively and none for central Kolkata. To decipher the functioning and influence of placement agencies in the wage fixation, wage pull and in supply side dynamics of labour, the earning profiles of domestic workers who had approached agency in the past but are currently working independently is compared to the daily wage receipts of women workers who have never worked through agencies. 70% of the never approached agency women earn up to Rs 100 per day while 42.2% of those who worked via agency receive daily earnings up to Rs 100.

Table 1.4.28 Wage Structure of Paid Domestic Work as fixed by Placement Agencies

Wage Rate per day as Fixed by Placement Agencies			Amount of Commission Earned by Placement Agencies per day			Net wage Received per day by Domestic Workers Working via Placement Agency		
						Wage (Rs)	N	%
Wage Rate (Rs)	N	%	Commission (Rs)	N	%	Less than equal to 100	20	30.8
Less than equal to 100	6	9.2	Less than equal to 20	31	47.7	101-150	26	40.0
101-150	25	38.5	21-40	30	46.2	151-200	14	21.5
151-200	24	36.9	41 and above	4	6.2	201 and above	5	7.7
201-250	8	12.3	Total	65	100.0	Total	65	100.0
251 and above	2	3.1						
Total	65	100.0						

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

About 15.6% women who approached and worked through ayah centres earned gross wage in between Rs 201 to 300 per day and more while only 10% of the women who no longer continue working via agency receive a little less gross wage of Rs 201-250.

Working contractually via placement agencies is found to have been economically profitable for the women, because women who discontinued association with centres earn a tad less per day relative to when they used to work for the agencies. Only about 23.5% women working via agency currently earned up to Rs 100, while a higher proportion (40%) women who left agency work to work on their own earn the same. Simultaneously only 20% women presently working on own after disassociating from enrolled agency receive daily wage more than Rs 151, while 35.3% of the women currently enrolled under agency fall in the same wage bracket. It was found that more number of women; 7 and 5 are earning Rs 1-50 and Rs 51 -100 less in independent employment set-up than what they earned with the agency work. Thus agencies definitely ensure better earnings as it enables a third party negotiator and monitor for employment structure, professional handholding of this occupation by pitching it in a commercialized manner and bringing the work under time-bound and task bound formalization. But the pitfall of this arrangement lies in the exploitative motive of the agency to usurp monetary benefits at the cost of women's labour, safety compromises of women workers who are send to unknown workplaces (7% women reported), or are asked to deposit lump sum as casualty money and enrolment commission when they seek employment initially from the agency.

6.11.2 Case-Study of Placement Agencies in Kolkata

Placement agencies or 'çentre' as they are referred to in the common lingo in Kolkata have come into the commercial market scenario in recent times. The share of such agencies which cater to supplying paid domestic workers to the households or establishments have risen steadfastly over the last two decades. In Kolkata as well, numerous 'aaya service centres' or nursing centres have proliferated in almost every neighbourhood of the city. Big and prominent centres with presence in public eye in terms of separate office-room structure and a definite address are found to be registered under government of India legal norms. While there are also many small agencies that dodge being registered and operate on a 'fly-by-night' modus operandi. These centres are floated in the market as short-term business ventures by crooks, who look for profit in this informal avenue of paid domestic work demands. Many times placement agencies are involved in trafficking women and children for domestic work, outsourcing them from backward areas and socially disadvantaged communities in Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa and from within West Bengal. Often such

agencies are not registered under any Act, neither they follow any regulations outlined by the government and avoid paying income tax. The Regulation of Employment Agencies Act 2007 provisions some guidelines to the employment agencies regarding the license, mode of operation, account keeping and labour laws. But often there is no terms of work or contract agreement between the agency and the women enlistee and thus the latter are subjected to varied exploitations at the hands of the agencies.

The agencies are highly heterogeneous in terms of capital investment, scale and mode of operations, quality of services catered to, skill of enrolled women, branches of business and physical presence in the market, but in most cases the cost of operations remain very small thus enabling profits. Most agencies in Kolkata are run by private proprietorship or partnership for the purpose of business profits and many instances can be cited where the agencies change their locations, registered names in between their services. The mechanism of word of mouth, social networking via already recruited workers, other subordinates and advertisements in the public domain through mass media are the chief sources of these agencies to promote business. Sometimes village mediators and agents bring potential women who are interested in working through agencies through persuasion. They earn a brokerage commission from the agency. Websites dedicate web pages to list the placement agencies and also contact the customer once the web-page is visited. Such offerings are found with many websites, whereas there is also high end and professional services provided by highly commercial ventures with wide placed exposure on virtual platform through exclusive websites and promotion through social networking websites. These claim to cater to exclusive and specific demands from customers of highly professional and semi-trained domestic workers with operations stretched on to multiple cities in India. With provisions of customer's choice from wide array of workers profile database these start-up business ventures also claim to abide by minimum humanitarian rules in work. Text messages, phone-calls and filling up forms are also ways in which a customer can place a requirement demand for a paid domestic worker to the agency. The aspect of worker welfare is never looked upon. The enrolled women have no job security even when listed under a private agency, such that unexpected sickness and breaks in work can oust them from the agency and get trapped in unemployment.

Thus to get a detailed idea on the work procedure and operations of placement agencies in Kolkata, few surveys have been conducted with the owners of the

agencies through field visits and via telephonic interviews, of which three case studies are discussed below. Most of the centres were chosen from the internet search and campaign pamphlets distributed with newspapers. The names of all the placement agencies have been changed.

Case Study: I

Seba Centre

This agency is strategically located in the Ballygunge residential neighbourhood of South Kolkata. Being very close to the Ballygunge railway station, the agency gets steady stream of commuting women workers from the suburbs and as well as from the nearby slum areas. The centre operates out of an extremely tiny one room establishment on the ground floor of a three storeyed building. The owner Mr. Nimai Krishna Maity informed that at the time of survey, around 40 women were enrolled in his centre, but the number fluctuates, swelling during winter months when demand for baby-sitters and ayahs increase. Apart from cooks, ayahs and domestic maids, he also supplies drivers, gardeners and care-takers on immediate and ad-hoc needs. He and his two assistants are well equipped with computer and multiple mobile and landline numbers to keep maid account and tap the customers with ease. Upon probing, it is known that the agency is registered as a Non Profit Organisation. An interesting finding was that some agencies are registered with private search websites and web portals, as evidenced from the immediate service call received from such websites, enquiring about the need of the client calling and whether the client is satisfied with the placement agency or not.

Mr. Maity informed that he switched his occupation from being a government employee to start his business, upon seeing the growing prospects of paid domestic work in recent times. The agency was founded in 2005. Since then it is supplying women maids in south Kolkata region on hourly wage basis. Wage rates are determined according to the type of work and number of hours worked. Length of time worked is disaggregated into 6, 8 12 hours and for ad-hoc short duration needs into 1 hour basis. For ayahs 8 hour day wage is fixed at Rs 270, for cooks it is Rs 220 and for helpers it is at Rs 180. Rs 20 is deducted for all cases if the employer provides meal to the maids. Thereafter per day the centre deducts Rs 30 to 40 from the maids as their commission. Usually the employer or the service hirer pays the maid on a 10

day interval basis against a receipt where the maid either signs or puts a thumb impression. To safeguard the interests of the employers and to keep a background check on the domestic worker, the agency has a record of essential personal documents of the enlistee such as voter card, *Aadhar* card and photo-identity etc with them.

Though some agencies charge an initial deposit fee for getting enrolled in their employee list, but this centre does not. He informs that women are also asked to undergo a 3 month ayah training course in a nursing centre in Jadavpur with a Rs 500 payment that they must deposit themselves. But training is not mandatory. If client household is unsatisfied from the work of the maid or if the maids do not wish to work in a specific house, then the centre exchanges with other maids. Sometimes the enrolled women also have a say in choosing the area of employer house. But there is no job security for the maids even though they work via centre, as the women can leave working via centres and take up 'direct' job that is contacting the employer's house on their own. The agency can as well terminate the enrolment of the worker and expel her from duty, as there is no aforesaid contract.

Case Study: II

Maa Nursing Centre

This centre being located in Deshapriya Park area in south Kolkata, operating since 2013, has recently ventured into this business activity of supplying women domestic workers according to clientele specifics. The information was gathered over telephonic conversation with the owner. He said that spatial area of the customer base usually falls within the radius of 4 to 5 kilometres from the centre and the maids are not sent beyond a threshold distance. This is because of the increasing cost of travel and time which has to be incurred by the maid if she needs to travel by public transport. Wage rates are same as the other centre usually fixed as per hour of maid service needed. It is wise to say that wage rates differ on the basis of locality that the centre is located and locality they are serving. Northern and central Kolkata areas are found to have a lower wage spectrum for almost all types of maid work. Interestingly, there are no strict guidelines for the kind and amount of food to be provided by the employer households to the maid if they chose to provide at all. Prospective women workers who get enlisted in his centre usually come from villages and small towns in

South 24 Parganas, namely Canning, Lakshmikantapur, Baruipur etc and also from Kolkata slums.

Case Study: III

Shree Ayah Centre

Another placement agency conspicuously located at the entrance of the Ballygunge Railway station, is rather a smaller establishment. Most maids enlisted are commuters travelling from South 24 Parganas daily into Kolkata city for work. The telephonic interview conducted allowed to explore further the interface of placement agencies between the employer-maid dynamics. They are in the market since 6 to 7 years and the provided the similar nature of information as the other centres. This time the information came from not the owner but a receptionist of the agency. He informed that '*jemon lok chaiben, temon paaben*', (you will get the specific domestic worker as per your requirement of work).

6.11.3 Work Participation through Placement Agency

To understand the role played by the placement agencies in the dynamics of paid domestic work in Kolkata, a comparative picture has been drawn between the wage structure of women working through agencies and non-placement agency workers. In sample of 600 women, around 64 women approached and worked via placement agencies. Out of that around 30 women do not work via agency at the time of survey. They preferred to work directly with the employer thereby avoiding paying a commission to the agency via payment deduction and also having a freedom to choose the multiple employers she would like to work for. Many women stated that they got absorbed in the households directly where they were working earlier through agencies. They stated various reasons for leaving work via agencies, such as objection from their family especially husbands to work via agency and at night time. Women also reported to be unable to devote 10 to 12 hours in a single employer household, responsibility of looking after own children, feel fear to sign pay receipts and being sent to unknown houses to work. Women who reported working through agencies do not enjoy paid weekly holidays, sick leave, grant of annual bonus, benefits from employer households and neither security of tenure. The payment is earned on a per day basis, thus one day of absenteeism from work due to sickness or emergency needs

leads to loss of that day's earnings. Thus agencies are found to not enhance the work conditions of the enrolled workers apart from improving the link between demand for hired work and supply of suitable workers.

The wage structure analysis of the two sub-groups of workers show an interesting occurrence. Around 57% of domestic workers who left placement agencies earn daily wage income bracket of less than Rs 100. While 41.2% women who presently work via agencies receive net daily wage in between Rs 101-Rs 150 and 67.6% receive wages in between Rs 101-200 per day, as against 36.7% of workers who left the agencies and now work on their own. Thus even though the agencies do much less for the enhancement of well-being of workplace scenario for the maids, but in Kolkata in a broad spectrum, the agencies surely improve per day wage earnings of the women workers. Though there are variations in the wage rates as fixed by agencies according to the locations more specifically between southern and northern parts of Kolkata, but overall the wage rate is higher for the agency than non-agency workers.

6.12 Summary

Paid domestic work in Kolkata city is highly in demand but overcrowding of cheap labour from neighbouring KUA districts brings down the wage rates. The location effect is quite discernable from the wage differential for the same tasks existing specifically between north and south Kolkata. Cooking is the best work activity among all, since it not only enables a higher income but the time invested and manual strength involved is much less compared to ayah and domestic help work, thus allowing time for housework and leisure. Presence of a strong social network especially peers, friends and relatives helps this occupation thrive at every step involving introduction to this occupation, sourcing work information, in recruitment negotiations and work substitution as well. But disappointingly conditions of decent work doesn't prevail as per the ILO standards, and working conditions are extremely poor among the commuter women. Workplace discriminations are widespread and manifested through denials of basic facilities such as access to toilet at employer's home, first aid, food and resting place. There is absolute non-existence of work agreements before commencing to work and thus women are subjected to exploitations like additional work burden without extra compensation, lay off from work with no former notice, poor level of wage increments and non-payment of

yearly bonus etc. Maids also face frequent wage deductions on absenteeism, even when they are sick. Many domestic cleaners also have discontinued working on account of low irregular payments and mistreatment by employers. But not all employer-maid relationship is surly, as the domestic workers also report to receive benefits such as medical aid, monetary support through loans and non-returnable charity, recommendation for more work etc from benevolent employers. Private placement agencies have proliferated in Kolkata, offering diverse contractual maid services to clients and is seen to improve daily wage of the maids, but conditions of decent work is again found poor.

The commuter women travel through long distances enduring huge socio-economic costs including inability to fulfil child care duties and housework responsibilities, along with hassles of long commute. But lack of alternative non-farm jobs in their native places and low irregular payments compel them to travel to Kolkata for earning livelihood. Commuting can become an obstacle in attaining empowerment in their lives, depending on the distance travelled. Longer distances are seen to correlate positively with decrease in standard of living, decent work levels and increase in social costs. Though women tend to participate in work nearest to their homes, but poverty and economic backwardness of the villages and lower tier towns in KUA forces these women to commute daily by train for work. Occupational shift to cooking and other clerical jobs is strongly aspired by these maids, as they view domestic work as lowly and disgraceful. Work problems specifically relate to lack of job and social security, over and above in managing suitable employment with a decent wage. The utter need to contribute into family income pool, poverty, widowhood and unemployment or sickness of household head are chief reasons for entering paid domestic labour market notwithstanding the hardships and adverse consequences they suffer. The double work burden and associated responsibilities that these women have to shoulder can be comprehended from the time use studies conducted alongside which is discussed in the succeeding chapter.

Chapter VII

Time-Use Analysis and Life History of Women Domestic Workers in Kolkata

7.1 Time -Use Survey

Time use survey is one most competent and infallible methodology to collect information regarding contribution of an individual to economic activities and all those other non-economic activities that one pursues and performs throughout a given time span. This method proves more beneficial when the subjects are women and performing informal paid work as it assures to fill in the large data gaps of what constitutes work and aids in measurement of even the trifling unnoticed occurrences of activities which may be are not repetitive or are overlapped with other major activities. This is true because informal workers are usually scattered spatially and their work pattern is intermittent in nature with seasonality and without job tenure security. Alongside data concerning the duration of engagement in an activity, allocation of time for different activities in a day (time budget), sequence of activities undertaken and thus identifying a generic activity pattern, location where the activity was performed and in the presence and assistance of which people and purpose of doing the activity and for whom is the activity performed are also gathered in a time use survey.

Though the diary method wherein the subjects themselves fill in the information on an hourly and activity basis is the best technique for time-use, but for the present study, the face to face interview method coupled with indirect observation was followed with the women respondents informing the interviewer about their daily normal routine since the time they wake up in the morning until the time they go to sleep at night. This method was chosen as majority of the domestic workers are illiterate and the interview was conducted in the vicinity of the workplace during their paid-work time for the commuters or during their unpaid work time in the slums with no scope of devoting longer observation time for each subject. But one must keep in mind that the perception of time is subjective based on how time is valued, whether the person has multiple activities to perform or not, multiplicity of roles assigned to the person, number of members in the household, nature of inter-personal and social relations

within household and with immediate neighbours and literacy level of the subject. Time use and preferences of time utilization is dependent on various factors such as age, marital status, presence or absence of children and other family composition, literacy, nature of work, monthly income earned and household type. Keeping aside the recall biases and non-capturing of unusual events during paid-holidays or events like sickness and festivals, or discontinuous episodic activities, the time use data is enrich with valuable multi-faceted information about life of the women maids and it effectively supplements the other data collected in questionnaire.

7.1.1 Rationale for Time - Use Methodology

Women work participation is Asia and India has seen decline in recent decades, which is attributed to varied explanations from researchers such as; withdrawal of women belonging to specific age cohorts from labour market due to marriage and childbirth, pursuance of higher education under the aegis of universalization and improvement of enrolments under effective education policies, relative economic prosperity of households on advent of rising income brackets in all sectors of economy including agriculture, MGNREGA job opportunities and up-gradation of wage structures and resultant lower requirement of women's reserve labour force participation and simply unemployment or lack of suitable work opportunities for women folk (Hirway, 2012). Other rationale given include gender based wage discrimination, lack of entrepreneurship opportunities for women, fewer choice to engage in socially acceptable and decent work, change in land-use and cropping pattern in rural areas, increase in agriculture mechanization, no-availability of shared hands to perform domestic responsibilities under growing proportions of nuclear family etc which create disincentives to participate in labour market.

But much has to do with the definitional limitations of economic activity and the term 'work' that brings down the WPR figures for women. Women are known to shoulder a substantial portion of unpaid work inclusive of household chores, care-work and as family labour in self employment business undertakings and in family agricultural lands. Measurement lacunae on account of incapability of capturing women respondents directly, gender bias in field response from women themselves due to their own ignorance of what constitutes the term work and invisibility in work participation due to the concentrations in women oriented jobs typically performed

within the confines of own home and other statistical errors and biases lead to underestimation. Social orthodoxy might be restricting women to only work in part-time set ups usually within home premises such as in piece-rate or hour based informal manufacturing sector in both rural and urban areas or in service jobs like domestic work, tailoring, construction hands etc.

But labour force measurements have remained inadequate to tap the exact numbers of women workers and thus the need for time use survey emerges. Non-inclusion of certain questions in NSSO surveys to non-workers and to women who report domestic chore duties as their Usual Principal Status regarding their participation in UN-SNA classification of activities which are considered within purview of economic production generates undermined data which does not represent the reality. Thus it is essential to collect information about the time-spent in diverse activities of an individual for estimating their status of work participation. Collection of articles for own consumption such as food, fodder, fuel (dung-cakes, firewood) and water from distances, rearing of animal and work on own orchards and poultry farms and cultivable lands, basket-weaving, tailoring, tutoring own children apart from other minor domestic chores are some of the activities that if considered SNA, would make women WPR to climb up drastically. The manual form of above mentioned works are regarded as low productivity activities but are essential in maintaining human health and well being and allows other family members to participate longer in SNA activities. Thus time-use survey helps in capturing the women involved in informal, casual and subsistence work and also on the time spent on recreational, community based activities and personal care. Gross underestimation of women's WPR also results from under-reporting and misinformation garnered from direct questionnaire based field surveys. There is likelihood of women not reporting their work status even if they earn income from such engagement (Pandey et al., 2000). This is exemplified to a sense of unworthiness attached by the women themselves or by the men in the household towards low skilled and low paid job profile or fear of rebuttal from family for official reporting. Work participation by women and especially in low paid manual work is often considered as leading to lack of societal respect and causing dent in family reputation and is mostly hidden from statistical citations at the time of survey.

Work variety, patterns of particular work schedules (work breaks, time of the day or night when work is performed) intensity of work on the summation of activity duration per day or week or month, multiplicity of work and whether working alone or in groups, individual mobility in a day due to work and other activities, range of distance negotiated and data on other aspects of living such as access to basic amenities, health care, family structure and social participation, family bonding and relationships, health and well-being status from work-leisure time ratio etc can be analysed from time use data. Separately time use surveys also help in understanding the cultural practices, institutional structures and regional essence in which the subject resides. An individual's position in the household and consequential behavioural pattern along with quality of living can be extracted from the daily activities he or she performs and the context behind it (Camporese et al., 1998).

7.1.2 Unpaid Work

Unpaid work are those activities that are thought to benefit other people apart from the ones performing it, while personal care and own-time activities are those where the intrinsic value and benefits accrued from the activity is received by the performer themselves only. Unpaid work sphere rests more or less substantially on women, because it is generally labelled as women's work; work that requires lower standards of skill and intellectual capabilities to accomplish and tasks that are suitable to the relatively frail physiology and biological structure of women and also appropriate as per the societal approval and limitations on regarding spatial mobility of women outside homes. This gender related skewness in the distribution of unpaid work time has its roots in the parenting and socialization process (Cunningham, 2001) and perpetuates through marriage related responsibilities on women (Hochschild, 1989). Thus there exists a severe trench in unequal division of labour in India irrespective of household income, type of occupation, social background, age and place of residence. The amount of unpaid household work and care work performed by men is generally much less than women and there is a considerable asymmetry in the gender roles marked by conspicuous demarcation of activities backed by defined gender roles. Women's domination in unpaid work arises from the patriarchal mindsets that categorises women's role into biological reproduction, social reproduction and care work which are considered non-productive and non-economic; beyond the ambit of market economics. Unpaid care work is crucial as it frees the workers from home and

allows them to participate in economic activities of production and distribution, and also enables maintenance of life, health, recovery from illness and wellbeing of all.

The gender disparity in housework arises from the archaic roles that women are typified into that of a mother, wife and housewife and thus are thought to fulfil unpaid house chore duties and care-work out of love and responsibility. These traditional social norms and practices in a patriarchal Indian society are rightly referred to as 'housewifization' places constraints in women's labour market participation (Mies, 1998). The lack of personal care time, time for leisure and community participation or group socialization occurs even if the paid work time is reduced. This is because the residual spare time also goes into performing more of housework burden, emotional care work and supportive activities towards self-consumption and subsistence by these women. After marriage women usually sacrifice their free time and choose to stay at home for child rearing or home maintenance or most times they are coerced to leave their paid work entirely or shift into part-time flexible work to suit their requirement at homes (Palomba & Sabaddini, 1995). Women belonging to economically poorer households cannot afford to leave their jobs, thus they find a midway of tackling both paid work within a flexible, part time structure and also accomplish household chores. Thus time-use survey becomes imperative for statistically identifying the women who remain undetected and hail and understand their contributions to the economy and also to document the change in cultural behaviour of gender roles over time.

Gender roles are played out since early childhood through learning by imitation, and teaching via parenting and socialization, through toys and children's games which are also centred around an identity of boy and a girl. Paid domestic work is seen as an extension of gendered role play which is socially conditioned, where the girl child is taught to look after household matters and introduced to activities like cooking and housekeeping via toys she is allowed to play with. Domestic chores like animal rearing, working briskly everyday at own farmlands or orchards or assisting males in family business is attached with no economic value as they are performed by women and within household premises, but if hired labour is employed for the same then those works would be considered regular work and its value would be increased profoundly in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimation.

7.1.3 Free Time, Leisure and Recreation

The amount of free time that women receive is depended on age and presence or absence of children in the house. Most women domestic workers use their free time for rest and relaxation, usually whiling away sitting idly or sleeping. Because the concept of free time for them is when there is nothing else to do excluding the time for personal grooming and leisure activities. Free time is enjoyed best when the men of the household are absent as there presence often marks extra load of work and a sense of urgency in serving their husbands or other men. This clearly emerges from the gendered position in society and notions of who should serve the other norms. Unfortunately housework is generally not shared much by men who are unemployed or retired or partially sick, rather it poses additional burden of care responsibilities on the women, in this case the maids. Even if men assist in domestic chores, they mostly perform the activities which need movement outside home premises or the ones that define masculine essence in a greater amount than others. Another explanation that emerges of lower proportion of men sharing domestic chore burden is based on the job-strain aspect involved in manual occupational pattern of men. Men who are employed in physically exhausting repetitive work have greater tendency to schedule leisure activities and sleep once they reach home after a day at work as they are drained off their energy to participate again in productive activities at home (Blekesaune, 2005 and Parker, 1971).

The amount of free time is function of amount of time spend by the women at workplace, and also the family structure. In a nuclear structure with a spouse and their non-adult children, free time is much less as no one is available for helping the women in domestic chores, and this free time shortage is more pronounced if a family member is disable or aged. Leisure activities are vital as they help in improving working capability, strengthening social bonds, helps in boosting health and resting and recovering working bodies. Sometimes pursuance and practicing of some skills in leisure time can enhance the productive capacity and can be used at workplace and vice-versa (Blekesaune, 2005). Work both paid and unpaid is thought to be instrumental in this sense i.e. it helps in achieving something else, which includes income, societal position, personal satisfaction and benefits are derived by others also except the work performer. While leisure and personal time activities are enjoyed as an end in itself. The ratio of paid work and unpaid domestic chores is a choice that the

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individuals and family makes economically, as the former earns an income and also helps in paying for the activities that is performed during leisure (Blekesaune, 2005). Leisure time activities contribute to well being of the person but sometimes the 'forced leisure'(Pandey et al., 2000) situations might crop up when the women desire to work and are available to employment but do not get appropriate jobs that suit their abilities and requirements and right payments in return of their service.

7.1.4 Time Use Analysis among Women Paid Domestic Workers in Kolkata

It is ironical that here the time use summaries are made for the women workers who perform tasks at private boundaries of an employer home and get paid, while the same activities that they carry out in their own household are considered unpaid and undervalued. Thus the activities that earn them their livelihood in the employer home are considered economic and SNA and are remunerated while the same tasks executed in own homes are termed as unpaid and is non-economic, non-productive and remain unremunerative. Time use thus here acts as quantitative measurement tool enhancing the comprehension of work dynamics, socio-economic interactions and life-course of women paid domestic work in Kolkata. The activities were classified under the protocol of UN System of National Accounts (UN-SNA) into SNA, Extended SNA and Non SNA activities and also under paid and un-paid categories (UN, 1993 and 2008). Data collected was with a recall method of a usual day at work and time spend on activities on daily routine were documented.

Household chore and child care took up much of the women's time in a day and in most cases they did not receive assistance from their household members. The double day syndrome and problem of double burden (Hochschild & Machung 1989) of these working women were severe and transformed in to various physical and psychological health issues. Work activities like cooking, cleaning utensils, washing, drying and ironing clothes, sweeping and mopping floors, dusting, caring for their children, sick and disabled etc awaited the women when they reach home after a laborious day at workplace. The plight of the commuting women who have to cope with unpaid burden of care at home were relatively worst as they had an additional component of long distance travel which made the experience of paid work all the more strenuous and demanding. Assistance is received from other household women especially daughters and daughter in law, and men folk mostly were undependable.

Occupational burdens are all those disincentives and disadvantageous negative externalities which affect the overall outcomes of participation in paid work adversely also influence the time ratios towards paid work, housework and leisure activities. Paid work in the case of domestic workers is generally not enjoyable as seen from work satisfaction and likeness perceptions of the respondents. The occupational stresses that they endure are poor working conditions, travel exhaustion, stigmatised societal and familial outlook towards paid domestic work and are also related to some personal causes such as lack of coping strategies to sickness, unhealthy conditions, poor living surroundings, etc are though not suffered equally by all respondents, can lead to decrease in the degree of empowerment drawn from work participation.

SNA activities includes all activities falling within production boundary in all sectors of economy of UN SNA and are economic in value and market oriented, while the 'SNA' activities which are non-economic and non-marketable but productive are the ones classified as 'Extended-SNA' and lastly 'Non-SNA' activities which includes learning, social and cultural activities and personal care and self- maintenance activities which are both non-productive an non-economic. Women maids usually spend 4 to 8 hours (35.2%) and 8 to 12 hours (32.7%) in SNA paid work activities, while 16.3% also spend extreme 12 to 16 hours in SNA activities including travel between workplace and home. (**Figure 2.13**) House work, child care, shopping for household and other extended SNA tasks takes up 4 to 8 hours and 8 to 12 hours for 43.3% and 40% of women's time per day. The proportion of women maids spending more amount of time on domestic chores and other extended SNA tasks increases when they get no assistance at home from family members. Some maids who do paid work for few hours usually spend more than 12 hours in extended SNA with no help (71.4%) as against among who receive help (28%). (**Figure 2.14**) The proportion of slum women who perform household chores and unpaid care work without any help from family members, amount to 35.3% while the same for commuters is 31.3%.

Figure 2.13

Time Spent on Activities per Day by Domestic Workers
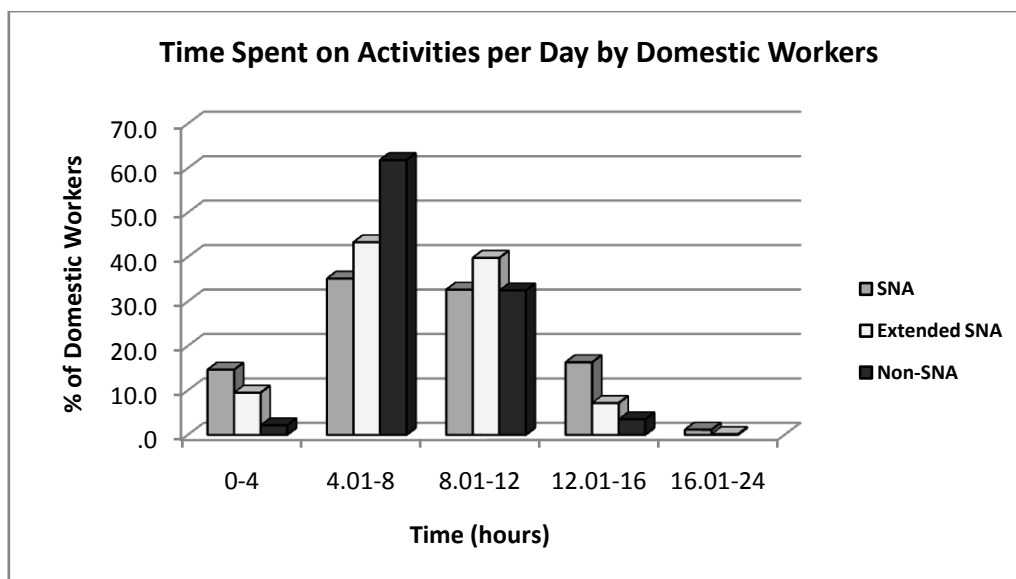
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Distribution of maids employed for hours greater than a normal man-day (8 hours) across social groups shows that OBC (56.5%) and ST (58.3%) spend excessive hours at paid-work in order to compensate for lower hourly wage payments. While about 40.4% of Muslims work anywhere between 8 to 12 hours, the same for Hindus is at 32.1%. But with higher ranges of time slots Hindus are more in proportion than Muslim women in participating in paid work. In Muslim households, domestic chores seem to be sole responsibility of the women, where in 56% women in Muslim households are fulfilling domestic duties for more than 8 hours, while among the Hindu homes it is 10 points less. (**Table 1.5.1**)

Time use comparisons between rural commuter domestic workers alongside urban slum dwelling ones show the difference in paid work engagement time due to the long distance and lengthy duration commute for the former group. Around 55% of commuters and 54.1% journeying from villages into Kolkata spent 8 to 12 hours in paid work, while it is only 18.1% for the slum workers. Unpaid work burden is much greater for the slum women than commuters, whereby 57.5% of the former spend in between 8 to 18 hours as against 31.7% among the latter, but still 31.3% of commuters spend 8 to 12 hours in unpaid care work. The 12 hours usual duty time of ayahs transcends that 60% of ayahs fall in the time range of 12-16 hours followed by 20% under 8 to 12 hours. Cooking as an occupation is the most decent of all work as 31.5% and 44.4% cooks perform SNA work up to 4 hours and 4 to 8 hours

respectively while 47.1% domestic helpers have to work for 8 to 16 hours a day to earn sufficiently. (**Table 1.5.2**)

Table 1.5.1 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Time spent on SNA Activity

Domestic Worker Groups	Time spent in a day on SNA activity (in %)					
	Up to 4 Hours	4.01-8.00	8.01-12.00	12.01-16.00	16.01-24.00 Hours	Total
SC	15.4	37.0	30.5	16.4	0.7	100
ST	8.3	33.3	50.0	8.3	0.0	100
OBC	8.7	34.8	38.0	17.4	1.1	100
General	16.8	32.5	32.5	16.2	2.1	100
Hindu	15.6	34.2	32.1	16.8	1.3	100
Muslim	3.8	46.2	40.4	9.6	0.0	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.5.2 Distribution of Domestic Worker Categories according to Time spent on SNA and Non-SNA Activity

SNA Activity (in %)				Non SNA Activity (in %)			
Time (in hours)	Ayah	Cook	Domestic Helper	Time (in Hours)	Ayah	Cook	Domestic Helper
Up to 4.00	3.8	31.5	14.4	Up to 4.00	2.5	1.7	2.2
4.01-8.00	11.5	44.4	37.5	4.01-8.00	42.8	90.4	61.8
8.01-12.00	19.2	20.4	35.7	8.01-12.00	48.9	7.9	32.5
12.01-16.00	59.6	3.7	11.4	12.01-16.00	5.8	0.0	3.5
16.01-24.00	5.8	0.0	0.9				

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Thus extreme number of hours in paid work is indicative of indecent work and low rate of wage per employer compels domestic helpers to work more to earn enough for sustenance. But domestic chore burden is not lessened due to more free time available to the cooks, as 57.1% and 31.3% cooks spend 4 to 8 hours and 8 to 12 hours on extended SNA. Very clearly the household size and family structure affects the housework and care activities of the working women. Around 11.1% and 11.3% of women belonging to joint and extended families correspondingly spent 12 to 18 hours in extended SNA, as against only 6.6% among nucleated and 4.3% among single member families. Thus women living alone (4.3%) can afford to engage in SNA activities for longer duration of more than 16 hours per day, while only 12% of women living with spouse and children can work in between 12 to 16 hours per day only due to housework and care work responsibilities. The presence of children in the household increases the time span the women has to set aside for extended SNA for

care-work and thus 42.1% women living with children only spend 8 to 18 hours in care and unpaid work while the same among women living with spouse only is 36% and with spouse and children the proportion of women shoots up to 52%. But it must be remembered that few women especially the slum-dwelling ones take their small children along with them to the workplace and other places outside home (1.2%). It is thus difficult to distinguish total amount of exclusive time spend on child care, when even at home these women perform passive child-care simultaneously with other primary domestic chores like cooking. Primary child care activities are feeding and bathing child, tutoring them and dropping and picking children from school etc. Passive child care of children up to 14 years (23.5%) at the time of sleeping is another aspect of extended SNA.

Table 1.5.3 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Time spent on Paid Work Per day

Time Spend on Paid work per day by Groups of Domestic Workers (in %)							
Time (in hours)	Slum	Commuter	Rural	Urban	Women Headed Households	Male Headed Households	Total Workers
0.01-2	10.8	1.7	0.6	9.5	6.6	7.5	7.2
2.01-4	28.6	10.8	11.9	24.9	24.7	19.6	21.5
4.01-6	20.8	31.7	34.6	21.8	24.2	25.7	25.2
6.01-8	17.2	30.8	28.9	20.4	20.7	23.9	22.7
8.01-12	20.3	25.0	23.9	21.5	22.0	22.3	22.2
12.01 & Above	2.2	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.8	1.1	1.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

As the household size increases, the amount of time for extended SNA and unpaid care work rises as is evident from the fact that 7.4% women belonging to households with 2 to 6 members spend 12 to 18 hours and as household size rises to more than 6, the proportion of women rises to 12.5%. Single women (52.2%) get no help and thus spent more time (8 to 12 hours) in housework as against two member households (33.3%). The usual time spent on household chores only is 6 to 9 hours and there is and household size does not affect the distribution of women maids, strikingly the size factor becomes important for more than 9 hours. Most women residing in bigger sized households of 8 to 10 persons (36%) and more than 10 members (40%) spent 9 to 12 hours in household chores only, while less than half of that figures are reported by women living in households with 2 or 2 to 4 people.

Figure 2.14

Time Spent by Domestic Workers on Own Household Chores
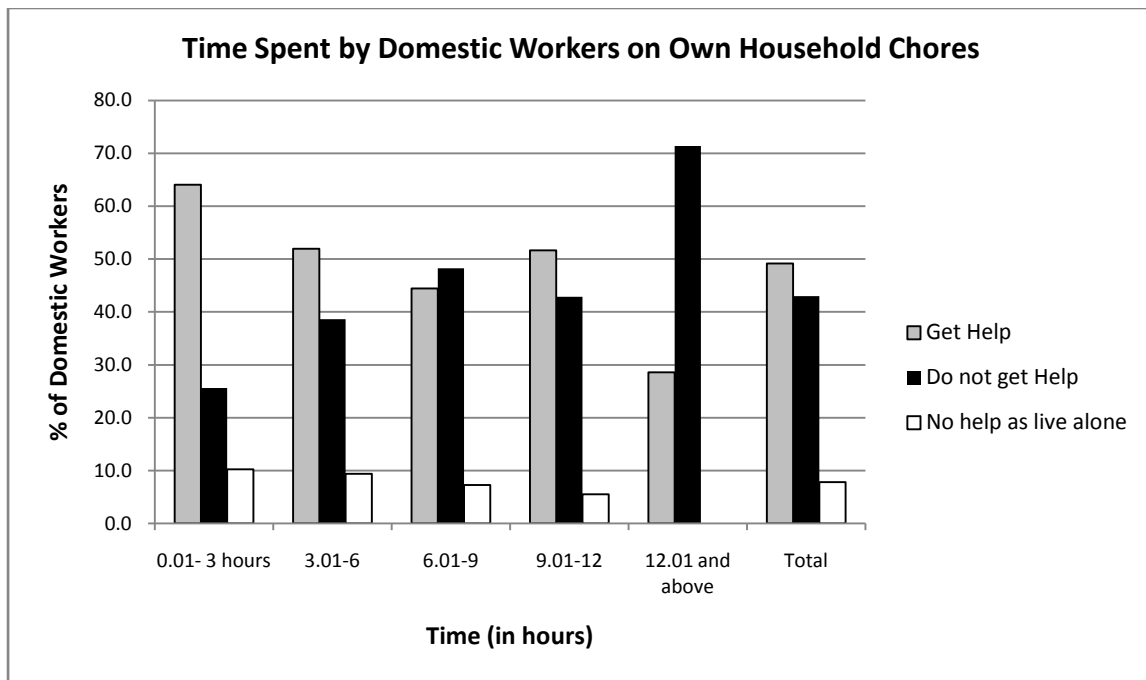
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The currently married women are usually in fertile age group with below 5 years of adolescent children thus spent anywhere in between 8 to 18 hours in extended SNA (48.4%), and 8.1% in between 12 to 18 hours, with significant portion of this time devoted to child care activities. Moreover women in Asian especially in Indian society are expected to take care of the ageing and child care responsibility. In households with two aged people, proportion of women maids spending 9 to 12 hours time on housework jumps to 40% from 14.1% women in households where 1 aged person resides. Among all the samples, it is the unmarried women mostly of whom (16.1%) spent in the lowest time slot of less than 4 hours daily for domestic work. The separated women (25%) with children and widowed women (20.6%) are relatively financially poor as a consequence of desertion by husbands and thus spent longer hours (12 to 16 hours) at paid work including secondary occupation to earn more income. Non-SNA activity time for sleep and personal maintenance in the slot of 8 to16 hours is lowest among the women coming from joint families (29%) and among separated (27.8%) and married (33.7%) women the highest is obviously among women living alone (45.7%) and those who are unmarried (52%). Age wise distribution also shows that youthful women in the 21-35 years and those in working age-group of 36-59 years have highest burden of unpaid work and work strain and

they get the least amount of time for personal care and rest among all age groups. Only 35% and 34% of these women respectively get more than 8 hours a day for non-SNA activities. 55% of the aged women (60-80 years) make time for more than 8 to 12 hours for personal care. But it is worrisome to see aged women performing unpaid work for 4 to 8 hours (48%) and 8 to 12 hours (35%) daily which takes toll on their already fragile and weak bodies. (**Table 1.5.4**) Most aged women are widows, living alone or in nuclear households with son and daughter in law, who do not take care of the elderly. The young adults of less than 20 years of age spent much time in house work with 60% of them spending anywhere between 8 to 18 hours in the same. Literacy and level of education is seen to impact the time use of the women indirectly with type of tasks chosen and wage income earned.

Table 1.5.4 Distribution of Domestic Worker Age Cohorts according to Time spent on SNA and Extended SNA Activity

Age (in years)	SNA ACTIVITY (in %)					EXTENDED SNA ACTIVITY (in %)			
	Up to 4 Hours	4.01-8.00	8.01-12.00	12.01-16.00	16.01-24.00 Hours	Up to 4 Hours	4.01-8.00	8.01-12.00	12.01-18.00 Hours
Up to 20	26.7	46.7	20.0	6.7	0.0	6.7	33.3	46.7	13.3
21-35	17.5	36.2	34.5	11.3	0.6	4.5	43.5	44.1	7.9
36-59	12.7	33.4	33.7	18.5	1.7	11.9	43.1	38.1	6.9
60-80	15.2	41.3	21.7	21.7	.0	10.9	47.8	34.8	6.5
Total	14.7	35.2	32.7	16.3	1.2	9.5	43.3	39.8	7.3

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Among the literate women, the ones who completed elementary education spent less time in paid work; 21% women working up to 4 hours as against 12.8% women educated below standard 8th. But the residual free time the educated women get is mostly distributed in performing unpaid work at home, with 11.6% women who completed elementary schooling working more than 12 hours in extended SNA relative to 7.3% of illiterate women. But time for sleep and personal care among women with more than elementary schooling is highest at 9.3% than the ones not completed (2.8%) and illiterate (3.2%).

Extended SNA activities include sub-heads of domestic chores, child care, tutoring household children, marketing and shopping activities for self consumption and unreported time use. While the non SNA activities comprises the recreational and leisure activities primarily of sleep and rest time, meeting and socializing with

neighbours and friends, visiting religious places like temple and active participation in community activities, watching television, pursuing hobbies like weaving and singing, and personal maintenance and care activities. About 11.2% and 18% women reported to spent leisure time meeting friends and watching television, while only 4.2% said they also engage in pet care, pursuing hobbies and in religious tasks. Maids working as unpaid family labour in secondary occupation at own home amounts to 29.2% of the sample. Unpaid care work is performed for longer hours by women in male headed households with 35% living in male headed household spend 8 to 12 hours on care work unlike 29% living in women headed households. The spare time that the cooks get by finishing their paid work early is mostly spend on unpaid care work, with 55% women cooks spending 8 to 12 hours in unpaid work at home, while the same is seen for 15.4% of ayahs. This is observed among the married (10.3%) women maids, who are seen to perform unpaid housework for more than 10 hours per day in greater proportion than unmarried women (6.4%) and widows (3.7%). 54.4% urban dwelling women work for 8 to 18 hours in extended SNA tasks, while due to longer commuting time, only 27% of rural commuters spend the same. The additional chore-time that women have to invest to fetch water from sources outside premise and also accessing fuel and fodder sources especially in villages also reduces much time for rest and leisure. In city slums, most houses draw drinking water from municipal stand- posts of taps or tube-wells outside their premises and women await their turn in long queue to collect water and this lengthens their house-work schedule and tightens their work time.

Women domestic workers were also tabulated according to the amount of time they devote to household chores and their experience of work-related pressure or psychological stress. Two interesting things noticed is that at lower time intervals (up to 3 hours) spent on domestic work, majority women (72%) reported to not experience daily work pressure. But as the time intervals are incremented, more women report work pressure but again at higher time ranges (9 to 12 hours) a higher proportion of women (75%) deny experiencing work pressure. Secondly among the women experiencing work pressure, proportion reporting to undergo pressure rise sharply up to 6 to 9 hours of domestic chore time, and again falls sharply beyond this time slot as the amount of SNA activities that these workers are engaged in is relatively less. Although most women workers were oblivious of their mental health

status, amongst the ones conforming, more concentrations are in the interval where amount of domestic chore performed is 6 to 9 hours per day. Another shocking finding is that women under all three categories of the ones who desire to work more and engage more hours in SNA activities, who do not desire and the ones who gave no reply, proportions of women getting no time for leisure is 61.3%, 54.5% and 33.3% respectively. Underemployment can be seen from the response of women who enjoy less than 1 hour (13.7%) or 1 to 2 hours (15.2%) of leisure but would want to work more hours per day. This is what can be termed as wage-income underemployment where the women maids are willing to work more hours than what they are currently engaged in even though they are short of time, but are uncertain about their availability to work more hours. This is resultant of the incredibly low wages and monthly income that these women earn despite spending more than a threshold of hours in paid work. Work satisfaction and likeness is not affected much with increasing hours spend in paid work. Monetary earnings make these women feel work satisfaction but work likeness is related to perception about the occupation in society and by self. Thus around 12.3% of the women who perform unusual hours (more than 8 hours) of paid work daily dislike their job.

Location of activities is important variable as it helps in comprehending the gender roles, spatial mobility and distance factor in social structural framework. Paid domestic work and household chores are performed at employer's home and own house and its immediate vicinity. While 60% of secondary paid activities are carried out in maid's household, 11.1% and 20% on the street or market place and neighbourhood respectively. The presence of other people when the activity is performed provides information about probability of getting assistance, additional burden of secondary supervising or monitoring if the persons are dependents or sharing of the emotional bond etc. Around 52.5% women perform domestic chores in presence of no one, 25.2% and 16.3% are accompanied by other women of the household and children respectively. Journey to workplace especially the commuters are accompanied by co-passengers (44%), and 1.5% by husband and children. While television viewing is also done at a friendly neighbour's house (10.3%) or at employer's home (3%) apart from own home with family (87%). Watching television (mean duration of 1.73 hours among slum and 1.32 hours among commuter women) and time spent in friendly discussions and meeting neighbours (1.28 hours and 1.25

hours respectively) is a common recreation and socialization source especially because the nature of work performed is low paid, monotonous and low autonomy physical labour and low skilled. These leisure activities provide a sense of autonomy and self-esteem and worth and fulfilment of own choice which is compensatory to the low autonomy at the workplace. (Blekesaune, 2005) Leisure activity range was limited in diversity among the women workers considering their time constraint under the long hours spent at paid and unpaid work and abiding the fact that unlike better informed educated women belonging to middle and upper middle or higher classes who work in professional high skilled required work profiles, these illiterate or less educated paid domestic workers do not have avenues of diverse leisure opportunities and affording capacity to undertake different leisure tasks; like reading, exercising, extended personal care, learning new hobby or skill to name a few. Around 32% women did not report any activity and 21.8% maids claimed to have no time for leisure in their daily schedule. Watching television (41.5% responses) and finding leisure in performing own house-work (13.3%) is the major sources of relaxation for the women. Mid-afternoon rest, sleep and sitting idly (7.7%) and socializing with friends and neighbours (31% responses) are the other major sources of recreation. Indirect socialization in the form of visiting market and religious spaces like temples, teaching children and playing with grandchildren along with rearing of domestic pets are reported by 12.2% of women. Pursuing hobbies like singing, weaving and other crafts along with investing time in preparation of secondary activity (3%) forms the other minor leisure activities.

Table 1.5.5 Time Use Activities across Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers

Time Use Activities	% Slum Maids	% Commuter Maids
Sleep Time less than 6 hours per night	47.0	48.8
No Sleep at Night (Due to Night Shift for Ayah)	4.0	0.8
No Time Spent on Leisure/Recreation	47.0	71.3
Time-spent on household Chores and Unpaid care work without help from Family Members	35.3	31.3
No Time spent / Time spent less than 30 minutes on Personal Care activity	18.1	93.8
Performing > 8 hours of work per day (Unusual hours)	22.5	25.0
Performing > 48 hours of paid work per week (Excessive hours)	35.8	38.8
Performing > 60 hours of paid work per week (Extreme hours)	20.3	13.8

Paid work participation is relatively a little higher in terms of hours spent at SNA activities among women who work on account of unemployment and sickness of their husbands. Around 33.3% and 26% of women work for 8 to 12 hours and 6 to 8 hours whose husbands are sick and unemployed respectively. In terms of whether the paid work is decent or not as per ILO, 20.2% of maids perform unusual hours (greater than 8 hours) of paid work per day. About 37% and 18% of maids perform indecent hours of paid work per week (more than 48 hours) and extreme hours of paid work per week (more than 60 hours) respectively. Often the night time ayah duty is prohibited by the male head of the households, thus among the women ayahs engaged in 12 hour service daily, only 31% work at night from 8 pm to 8am.

7.1.5 Sleep Time, Leisure and Recreational Activity Time

Adequate amount of sleep is an essential for healthy mind and body and recovery from exertion encountered from daily string of activities. Uninterrupted hours of sleep required differs according to age, lifestyle, work pattern, gender and health status of an individual and various studies have shown that sleep deprivation is detrimental and linked to chronic health issues. Sleep duration studies across cohorts and population groups brought out that as per the age cohorts of young adults (18-25 years) and adult (26-64 years) are recommended 7 to 9 hours of sleep, while 6 hours is considered 'may be appropriate' (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015). The same for older adults or aged (65 years and above) came to be 7 to 8 hours and 5 to 6 hours respectively. Sleep quality, time of the day when sleep needs are met and associative and allied environment of sleep are essential factors that contribute to the cognitive, physical and emotional health and wellbeing achieved through sleep. About 33.3% and 48% of commuter women especially the coming from villages get less than 5 hours and 5 to 6 hours of continuous sleep respectively while 50% of the slum workers get sleep for 6 to 9 hours and 47% slum maids make less than 6 hours of sleep time daily. Sleep is essential for achieving work life balance, as it rejuvenates body and maintains a harmonized neurological and cognitive functioning. A minimum unremitting 6 hours of sleep is prescribed by physicians, but women workers who are doing multi-tasking and doing more than one task (cook and cleaners) get less hours of sleep (only 21.4% women in this category get 6 to 7 hours or more sleep), unlike cooks; 41% of whom

get 6 to 9 hours of sleep. Again with increasing household size (41.4% with size of 2 to 6 members to 33% with household size of 6 and above get sleep within 5 to 6 hours) amount of sleep hours a women receives lessens up to a threshold of 6 to 7 hours, (4.3% to 11% women with household size of 2 to 6 and 6 and above members) after which sleep hours increase with increasing household size.

Table 1.5.6 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Time spent on Sleep and Leisure

Time in Night Sleep per Day (in %)				Time in Leisure & Recreation (in %)			
Time (in hours)	Slum	Commuter	Total	Time (in hours)	Slum	Commuter	Total
No Sleep as Night work	3.9	0.8	2.7	No leisure time	46.9	71.3	56.7
0.01-5	12.8	33.3	21.0	Up to 1	16.1	15.4	15.8
5.01-6	34.2	47.5	39.5	1.01-2	20.6	12.1	17.2
6.01-7	40.8	17.9	31.7	2.01-4	12.2	1.3	7.8
7.01-9	8.3	0.4	5.2	4.01 & Above	4.2	0.0	2.5

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Larger household size is attributed to joint or extended family owing to presence of daughter in law, granddaughters and other women among whom the housework is divided and shared, thereby the women maids getting scope of increased sleep duration. Thus currently married women spent least number of hours in sleep with 65% married women getting in between 1 to 6 hours and only 3.5% get 7 to 9 hours due to housework load. While unmarried (45.2%) and separated (44.4%) women get 6 to 9 hours of night time sleep. Sleep delays and sleep loss are high for middle aged married women, especially with the presence of children less than 5 years in the house. 80% of baby-sitters and 44% of ayahs work more than normal 8 hours and get less than 6 hours of sleep respectively. Out of the ayahs who perform 12 hour shifts, 31% ayahs do night shifts which means they don't get night time rest and are prone to altered body-clock.

At the same way, leisure related activities like resting, pursuing hobbies, socializing and religious pursuits are often performed in limited time by the commuters, rural women and currently married and unmarried women living in male headed families. The mean leisure hours spend by commuter women is strikingly low at 0.38 hours

against 1.14 hours among the slum maids and thus about 72.3% rural commuters get no time for leisure compared to 51% of urban dwelling women workers.

Figure 2.15
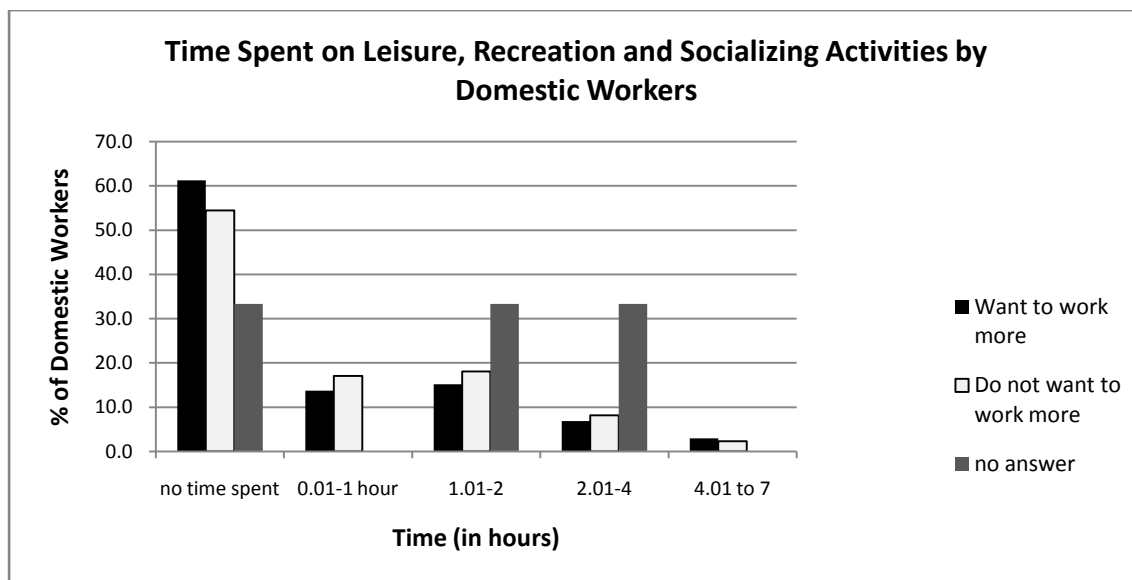
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Commuting long distances to work eats up the personal care time to an average of 0.41 hours which is less than half of the slum dwelling workers (1.38 hours). In all other individual activities the duration of time spent by slum resident women is greater than the commuters but the difference is not much. It is an astonishing find that 18.1% of slum women spend no time or less than 30 mins per day on personal grooming and care activities, while the same for commuters is further extremely high at 93.8%. The amount of leisure and recreation hours is much lower for women in male headed households (59.5% maids have no time for leisure as against 52% in women headed households). About 60% married women get no time for leisure as against 38.7% unmarried and 47% widowed women. Among the women according to work categories, 60% house-cleaners, 52% ayahs and 55.6% cooks get no time for leisure, but in the higher time slots of more than 2 hours it is the cooks (16%) who enjoy greater leisure time relative to 11.5% ayahs and 10.2% housecleaners.

The mean hours on SNA is 10.5 for commuting women while it is 6.7 for the slum women, while the mean values for net hours spent on paid work weekly is 41.8 and 44.1 hours for slum and commuter workers respectively. Even though women tend to find work near homes to avail flexible working opportunity so as to be able to look

after house and perform major share of unpaid care work, but in case of the commuters, the amount of relative monetary compensation they receive is greater than the opportunity costs they sustain, even if the absolute money wages are extremely low. The average hours at paid work become lengthier due to lengthy journey time and thus in all categories of work schedules the mean time spent by the commuters is less than the slum women workers. The average time spent on personal care is 0.41 hours for the commuters while it is 1.38 hour for the slum women. (**Table 1.5.7**) On similar note, mean time for leisure and recreation is 0.38 hour for the commuter as against 1.14 hours for the slum women. The commuter women spend on an average 10.5 hours in SNA whereas it is 6.72 hours among the slum women.

Table 1.5.7 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers according to Mean Time spent on Activities

Mean Time Use for Activities by Domestic Workers (in hours)					
Activities	Slum	Commuter	Activities	Slum	Commuter
Meeting Neighbours	1.28	1.25	Leisure & Recreation	1.14	0.38
Religious (visit temple/ *namaz*)	1.69	0.50	Child Care	0.27	0.03
Resting	1.66	1.12	Extended SNA	8.69	7.10
Watching TV	1.73	1.33	Non-SNA	8.59	6.40
Children Care	1.56	1.38	SNA	6.72	10.50
Leisure	1.31	1.25	Paid work (Gross Hour/ Week)	42.95	48.28
Weaving	1.50	1.33	Paid work (Gross Hour/ Month)	184.08	206.93
Teach Children	1.33	1.00	Holiday Hours/ Month	4.94	17.95
Rearing Pets	2.50	0.43	Paid work (Net Hour/ Month)	179.14	188.98
Visiting Market	0.83	0.75	Paid work (Net Hour/ Day)	5.97	6.30
Personal Care	1.38	0.41	Paid work (Net Hour / Week)	41.80	44.09
Secondary Occupation (Paid-work)	1.98	1.53	Unpaid Care-work	7.65	6.47

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

7.2 Biography and Case Study of Women Paid Domestic Workers

A few women respondents were interviewed elaborately about their livelihood, social environment in which they live and work, their aspirations, growing up time period, opportunities and challenges. The locally used jargon for some of the tasks and work related aspects include, '*babur bari kaaj*' (domestic helper), '*baccha dekha*' (baby-sitting), '*jhadu-pocha aar bashon maja*' (sweeping-mopping and utensil cleaning), '*kamai*' (absenteeism), '*dhaar*' (borrowing loan, debt), '*kaaje nama*' (entering this occupation), '*thike*' (contractual or hired help), '*radhuni*' (cook). All of the names of

the domestic workers used have been changed. Some of the notable ones are thus documented henceforth.

Case Study: I

Mala Mistry

Mala Mistry, age 42 is one of the commuter women domestic workers who resides 'Khal Garia' in a one-room rented tenement in the south-eastern fringe of Kolkata. She commutes daily into the posh neighbourhood of Ballygunge for paid work en-route south-eastern suburban railway network. Married at the age of 17 to her rickshaw-puller husband, she started working as a maid when she was 26 years to supplement household income. She migrated with her husband, children and in-laws from Sandeshkhali in Sundarbans; in search of better economic prospects and job. Having worked previously as a sharecropper and casual farm hand in her village, she wanted to try her luck in Kolkata. At present she works as a domestic helper washing clothes, brooming and mopping floors and cleaning utensils in handful of houses. She is partially blind in one eye, having suffered loss of vision in a childhood disease. Apparently she is the only regular bread-winner in her home. Her husband is an abusive alcoholic, suffering from liver disease and is reluctant to earn money. He also beats her in fits of drunken state. Her sole '*sampod*' (treasure) in life is her 25 year old daughter who has Master of Arts degree and is pursuing teachers training course. She helps out her mother with small contributions to family income through tuition fees which she earns. A notable incident that Mala proudly shares with me that her daughter refused to marry a well settled boy as his family asked for dowry. The daughter aspires for becoming a school teacher and looking after her mother. Despite being an illiterate herself, Mala never wanted her daughter to get stuck up in paid domestic work. She worked hard to educate her daughter Shibani in best of her capacity. They share a friendly relation between themselves and watch television together in leisure hours. Mala's son is a college drop-out and is unemployed and just passes days in '*ghure ghure beray*' (wastes time in loitering). In spite of the financial constraints she sends monthly remittances to her in-laws in the village. She informs me that most of her employers are kind and benevolent to her, especially an elderly man in his 70s who lives alone and whom she calls '*dada*' (elder brother). She recalls that she has been regularly receiving benefits like '*salwar-kameez, sari, purono kagoj,*

oshudh, taka, aro onek kichu' (clothes, old newspapers, medicines, money and many more things) from that employer.

Case Study: II

Apala Pannigrahi

In my survey I met Apala, a hard working woman of age 48, who dabble three kinds of work everyday. Born in a large family with 7 siblings to sharecropper father in Haora district, she got married in Ganjam district Orissa and then migrated to New Garia at the city fringes thereafter with husband. She was introduced in this profession by her sister when she was 12 years of age and was sent to Kolkata to work as full-time live-in maid with an employer family in Ballygunge where she worked 10 years before being married off in Orissa. She works as a cook in 4 houses in Ballygunge and also earns subsidiary income from selling vegetables in the nearby '*sobji-bajar*'(vegetable and fruit market) in Gariahat and by vending lunch time meals in a nearby road-side makeshift food stall along with her son and daughter in-law and grandson. Her day begins early at 6 am and she reaches the market around 7am and starts selling vegetables. Thereafter her routine incorporates cooking at employers's house and then hurrying to cook for road-side food shack business that her son manages. She visits employer homes again in the evening and cooks dinner and wraps up the stall proceedings for the day and takes the 8pm train back to her home. Thereafter her own household chore, care giving to her ailing unemployed husband inflicted with brain tumour and doing '*hisheb*' (keep accounts) for the income for the day keeps her busy until she retires for the night late around 12am. She has a reputation for culinary skills which brings her additional income opportunities through ad-hoc work or catering orders during festivals. Playing with her grandson in between work is the only recreation she looks forward to.

Case Study: III

Asha Mondol

Asha, aged 57 a relatively older short stature woman briskly hurried on her way after responding to my detailed interview schedule, shouting back that '*abar dekha hobe didi, ekhon kaaj pore ache, dourate hobe*'(we shall meet again in future, I have to run to work now, employers are waiting). This aptly portrays the way of life of live-out

women domestics who keep running in between multiple employer houses throughout the busy day. She is working for the past 36 years as a domestic help in the neighbourhood of Ballygunge. Her nuclear family comprises of her 30 year old daughter who is a cook and her aged husband who does *'jogar er kaaj'* (casual wage earning mason helper). With the help of loans borrowed from her employers she was able to marry off her elder daughter. She changed her occupation into paid domestic work from being a farm-help on own farm upon insistence of village neighbours and migrated to Picnic Garden slum in Kolkata from Patharprotima village in Sundarbans. Income was inconsistent in the village and presence of a social network of friends and relatives in the city gave the impetus to Promila to sell off a portion of land (15 kata) and migrate to Kolkata. She reminiscences that her monthly salary has crawled very slowly in the past 3 decades unlike the cost of living. She started with a salary of Rs 60 in 1980s which has now been raised to Rs 800 per month. But she mentions that due to her trustworthy character known households in the workplace area give her ad-hoc paid errands like grocery shopping, buying fish, procuring kerosene from ration shop etc. Watching television soaps at her employer's home and taking minor breaks for consuming *paan* (betel leaf) are the ways she relaxes. She mentions that she is now sick and old and wants to retire from work and sit at home. But unfortunately, in the recent counterfeit scheme of Rose Valley investments by Sarada chit fund scam she has lost around Rs 80,000 of her savings and thus cannot afford to stop working all together. She cried and lamented *'amader koshter taka mereche ora'* (we have been duped of our hard-earned money by them) and *'amader aar kono goti nei go didi, loker-bari kaaj korei khete hobe'* (we have no other way in life, we have to earn our living through working as domestic help only).

Case Study: IV

Rekha Majhi

She is a 30 years of age woman with a smiling face, living with her husband and 2 children aged 15 and 12 in the Siriti slum in Tollygunge. She is fluent in Hindi apart from her mother tongue which is Bengali. Her extended natal family lives in Champahati in South 24 Parganas, whom she visits twice a year. She was married off to a Bihari rickshaw puller who is from Samastipur in Bihar. Rekha told me her heart-wrenching tale entwined with misery and awe of child trafficking and child abuse. As

an 11 year old he was sent off by her aunt to work as a live-in maid in Delhi to supplement family economic duress notwithstanding her father's disapproval. She was beaten; mistreated and starved by her employers and in return did not get her earned money in hand. Thus she escaped one night and roamed on the streets until she was rescued by a kind man who took her to a Punjabi household where she worked for another 5 years in return of food and lodging, but no cash. She recalls she slowly forgot about her family and Bengali. But somehow her employers put her on train to Kolkata, aboard which she befriended a woman from Champahati. Though illiterate, she insists she is smart since childhood. She could remember her village and postal address that her father taught her and this helped her to reunite with her family eventually. After a traumatic episode, she has happily reverted back into paid domestic work, performing cooking, dusting, mopping etc.

Case Study: V

Parbati Mondol

Parbati is a 43 year old widow living in the Jodu colony slum of Behala along with her son. She is loved by all in her *'para'* (neighbourhood) because of her good behaviour and bonding with her colleagues and employers. She insisted me to have food cooked by her and so treated me with *'narkel-nadu'* (home-made coconut-sweetmeat) and a welcome warm behaviour during the interview. She tells me that she and her son who works as a caretaker both worked tirelessly to convert their home into a mezzanine floor pacca structure and bought refrigerator, television set along with many other assets. She used to work in 12 houses as maid, but slowly has reduced the work load due to lack of time and physical exhaustion. Being married at a young age of 13, she was never send to school due to poverty. She seemed to be very informed about the survival problems that the slum dwellers face and also about health issues. A diabetic herself, she regularly goes out for walk in her leisure hours. Having managed her home single-handedly she mentions that her extended marital family lives across the gully and they share a cordial relation. She is also known to have helped women who are new entrants into paid domestic work, by teaching cooking skills and finding them work. She informed that though the monotony of daily routine and anxiety about her son's future prospects makes her anxious and depressed, but her jovial and cheerful attitude keeps her motivated.

Case Study: VI

Malati Srivastava

Malati Devi is a 56 year old ayah who is trained person in baby-sitting and care giving intricacies from a nursing home located close to her home in Halderbagan slum of Shyambazar. She is respected among her superiors and is much in demand for work and she had visited cities like Delhi and Bangalore too. She works double shift each of 12 hours in different employer households and earns a handsome income of Rs 19000 per month. She visits her home twice daily for a short duration. Her daughter Pampa; separated from her husband lives with her along with her two sons and grandchildren. Malati is educated up to primary level and is head of her household. Pampa informs that her mother is a firm lady and her decision is given due respect by all. Malati is enrolled in a placement agency run by the nursing home mainly providing ayahs to clientele. During the interview I sensed that a wider spatial exposure, training and dealings with 'ayah-centre' have helped her groom her sense of hygiene and work ethics. She is a pensioner and also earns additional income through a home-based sari business financed by the micro-loan borrowed from Bandhan Bank. This is joint venture she manages in partnership with her daughter. Her mother was an ayah and now her daughter has taken up baby-sitting as her profession as well. Thus as seen in many cases, paid domestic work is somewhat inter-generational in nature.

7.3 Summary

Commuting women workers are at a disadvantaged position relative to slum workers due to long hours of journey to and from workplace and thus they end up spending more than 10 hours on an average in SNA activities. But ironically the women spending less time on paid work are seen to spend longer hours of their free time in unpaid work taking care of children and performing house chores, because of gendered notion of what constitutes women's work and a man's work. Household size, presence of children, marital status and nature of paid work all affect the ratio of time devoted to unpaid work and personal recreation and grooming activities. The low wage rates and underemployment among maids in Kolkata can be traced from the response of women who work more than 6 hours daily in paid work and those who get no time for indulging in leisure activities, but who contrarily want to do more amount of paid work. Serious health concerns can develop for women who get less than 6

hours of continuous undisturbed night time sleep as is the case for many commuting maids living in villages who reach Kolkata after traversing distances covered by more than 2 transport modes. The indecent SNA work involving more than 48 hours per week compromises the health and work-life balance of these women. It brings to the consequential serious matter of empowerment achieved through work participation and general health of the domestic workers, which have been dealt with in the eighth chapter.

Chapter VIII

Health Condition and Outcome of Work Participation among Women Domestic Workers in Kolkata

8.1 Health Status among Paid Domestic Workers

Health status of the women workers are strictly tied to the housing and housing amenities available to them and the nature of work and working conditions they are exposed to. Quality of living has a two directional interrelation with housing amenities and the latter in turn determines the health status. In the crowded, unhygienic and insanitary environmental surroundings, in general one may note that health structure of the resident population of the slums is not robust. Disease prevalence rates can be above average compared to rest parts of the city, owing to lack of room space, higher number of heads sharing one room accommodations, household indoor pollution due to usage of polluting and cheaper unclean cooking fuels such as coal, cow-dung cakes, wood, lack of sufficient ventilation, narrow alleys and open drains amongst all. Location of kitchen is a crucial determining factor behind level of indoor pollution and consequent health status of the household. About 43% of slum households have their kitchen located in the living room. Amongst the commuter households as well the wider usage of wood, hay and other biomass combustibles significantly affects the health of the occupants. Almost all households except few in village and small urban centres do not use kerosene or LPG for cooking. Location of kitchen in a separate room is usually prevalent with usage of LPG as the primary cooking fuel. Moreover the practice of open defecation by 30% of the households and usage of non-piped drinking water by 79% make them susceptible to serious health issues. Thus incidences of water-borne diseases like diarrhoea, food poisoning, indigestion are commonly reported along side urinary tract infections (UTI), gastro-enteritis, also leads to psychosomatic health issues in rare cases.

Table 1.6.1 Distribution of Domestic Worker Households according to Living Conditions and Cooking Fuels across Slum Zones in Kolkata

Living Conditions across Slum Zones (%)					Cooking Fuels Used across Slums, Kolkata (%)				
Variable	Categories	North	West	South	Central	Cooking Fuel	North	West	South	Central

House Type	Pacca	63.4	59.4	60.4	41.4	LPG	50.5	39.6	40.6	17.1
	Kaccha	0.0	0.0	4.0	5.7	Kerosene	46.2	47.9	46.5	71.4
	Mixed	36.6	40.6	35.6	52.9	Coal	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	Wood	1.1	12.5	11.9	4.3
Room Density	Healthy	67.7	70.8	70.3	54.3	Organic waste/ Dung Cakes	2.2	0.0	1.0	4.3
	Not Healthy	32.3	29.2	29.7	45.7					
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

8.1.1 Occupational Health, Disease Prevalence and Treatment

Occupational health is an important area of concern as it affects the worker productivity and in consequence the income earning capacity and in the long run the burden of care (Neil & Ross, 1991) at household and societal level. Health assessment of the women domestic workers envisages the degree of productivity at workplace and 'burden of care' (Neil & Ross, 1991) they have to endure in response to disease outbreaks and other health related dysfunctions. As per the health status of the domestic workers is concerned, more than 34% reported to suffer from blood pressure related chronic diseases, followed by diabetes (10.1%), gastric or abdominal ulcer and tumour incidences (10%), arthritis and joint pain(8.7%) and eye infections (7%). Thyroid deficiency, spondylitis and nerve disorders, and gynaecological diseases and UTI occurrence is also widely reported by the maids. Most women reported frequent occurrence of primary illnesses of gastro-intestinal problems (37%), fever and cold (20.1%) skin allergies, knee joint pain (24.2%), headache, sinusitis and migraine (5%) bronchitis and respiratory tract diseases which affect their productivity at the work-place, often resulting in losing out on job on account of consequent absenteeism. **Table 1.6.2** is provided to show the combined primary, secondary and other diseases both chronic and acute under disease groupings that affect the maids.

Table 1.6.2 Distribution of Chronic and Acute Diseases among Domestic Workers

Chronic Illnesses Suffered by Domestic Workers (in %)			
Diseases	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Blood Pressure Diseases	34.4	29.1	10.0
Gastro-intestinal /Abdominal/Digestive Disorders	13.4	16.5	10.0

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ENT Problems	11.3	11.4	5.0
Diabetes	10.1	5.1	0.0
Musculoskeletal Disorders	8.9	5.1	10.0
Coronary Problems	6.5	12.7	25.0
Nerve Disorders/Headache	5.7	7.6	20.0
Gynaecological Problems	4.0	5.1	15.0
Thyroid Disorder	3.2	1.3	0.0
Asthma/Respiratory Diseases	2.4	6.3	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Acute/Short Term frequent Diseases Suffered by Domestic Workers (in %)				
Diseases	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Others
Gastro-intestinal /Abdominal Problems	37.3	3.5	4.1	7.1
Musculoskeletal Disorders	31.9	53.9	46.3	46.4
Respiratory and Pulmonary Problems	20.9	26.6	20.7	3.6
Headache/Sinusitis & Other Aches	7.3	15.2	25.6	39.3
Dermatological Problems	2.6	0.8	3.3	3.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

About 100 respondents (17%) of domestic workers lost their job in the reference period of 1 year before the survey because of their illness related leave or absenteeism from employer household and in most cases adequate compensation was not handed over to them. Usually these women reported to have neglected their health problems and become accustomed to live and work with these over the course of time. Lack of financial stronghold, lack of employer cooperation in arrangements of temporary substitute workers and fear of job loss due to frequent work leaves, non-cooperation from family members in house-work help, absence of work and unemployment of male head of the household, attitude of nonchalance towards own health priorities can be listed among many reasons that prohibit these women to seek timely and regular treatment for their ailments. Poverty and low affordability in these low-income households make adequate medical interventions beyond reach. The situation for women's health in Indian society is all the more agonising because limited household monetary resources is generally entirely expended on males and children of the household in seeking treatment, buying medicines and consumption of balanced diet and women are overlooked. Low income households are no exception; rather the low educational attainments make them all the more ignorant about varied health issues that women must address to. Moreover tobacco and betel leaf intake and addiction habit by the domestic workers was found to be quite conspicuous with 25.3% of slum and 13.3% of commuter women maids being habituated to take chew and smoke

tobacco products, indicative of bad health. Interestingly, women maids who consumed tobacco did that cautiously away from public eye and also tried to conceal the fact upon probing. This shying to admit tendency of these women is because the tobacco habit among women is disapproved and scorned by society. 10% and 11.2% women seek no treatment and continue with their self medication methods respectively for treating diseases like asthma, diabetes and gynaecological health problems. Allopathy stands out as the primary treatment procedure followed by homeopathy with 56.17% and 10.3% women reporting respectively. (**Table.1.6.3**) It is usually the government facility or hospital (20%) that they visit for curative or operative care.

Table 1.6.3 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Occupational Health Hazards and Type and Place of Treatment Accessed

Occupational Health Hazards			Type of Treatment Used (%)				Place of Treatment Accessed (%)			
Factors	Hazards	%Domestic Workers	Type	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Place	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Physical	Perform Unsafe & Unhygienic Tasks	5.0	Allopathy	56.17	2.27	0.0	Govt/municipal hospital	19.83	1.03	11.11
	Climbing to Clean hard to reach places/ injury	5.0	Homeopathy	10.33	14.77	0.0	Private clinic/private hospital	29.83	15.46	0.00
	Heavy Lifting /Strenuous activities	15.0	Self medication	6.83	53.41	50.0	Self medication	11.17	9.28	0.00
Chemical	Work With Toxic Chemicals	25.0	Employer's medication	1.50	12.5	37.5	Medicine store	11.83	68.04	77.78
	Work in heat & smoke due to Cooking	10.0	No treatment	10.83	15.91	12.5	No treatment	10.00	1.03	0.00
Biological	Inhale Dust/Gasses	25.0	Ayurveda	0.0	1.14	0.0	Dispensary/local health centre/club	2.50	3.09	11.11

Other (Long hours of Standing / get cold due to water)	10.0	Not fallen ill	14.33	0.0	0.0	Employer gives medicine	0.67	2.06	0.00
Contagious illness from Ayah Work	5.0	Total	100	100	100	Not applicable	14.17	0.00	0.00
	Total	100				Total	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Private clinics are easy to access and so it is the primary place of treatment for 30% of women and their households, who can afford consultation fees from private medical practitioners, while around 14.5% go to the medical shop and local dispensaries to buy medicines according to self medication or as suggested by others. Another factor that impedes with seeking treatment by these women lies in the fact that limited household monetary resources is generally entirely spend on males and children of the household. Overcoming health disorders isn't easy for these women due to poverty, ignorance, lack of adequate institutional, legal protections and governmental health coverage schemes.

Table 1.6.4 Distribution of Domestic Worker Categories across Slum and Commuter Groups by Disease Prevalence

Work Categories	Worker Type	Musculoskeletal Disease (%)			Chronic Disease (%)		
		No Muscle Disease	Musculoskeletal Disease	Total	No Chronic Disease	Having Chronic Disease	Total
Ayah, Baby-sitters	Slum	53.8	46.2	100	48.7	51.3	100
	Commuter	76.9	23.1	100	76.9	23.1	100
Cook	Slum	56.0	44.0	100	42.9	57.1	100
	Commuter	66.7	33.3	100	79.2	20.8	100
House-cleaners	Slum	60.0	40.0	100	60.6	39.4	100
	Commuter	70.3	29.7	100	69.6	30.4	100
Cook and House-cleaners	Slum	67.3	32.7	100	50.0	50.0	100
	Commuter	56.8	43.2	100	59.5	40.5	100
Ayah, Cook and House-cleaners	Slum	60.0	40.0	100	30.0	70.0	100
	Commuter	62.5	37.5	100	25.0	75.0	100
Total	Slum	59.4	40.6	100	52.8	47.2	100
	Commuter	67.9	32.1	100	67.9	32.1	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Work related diseases and medical problems can also be listed but most respondents seem to be clueless about how their rudimentary work activities that they also are accustomed to perform daily in their own homes can create medical situations. Almost all of the respondents (95.6%) believe that they do not suffer from any medical condition that may arise or be exasperated by their nature of work preformed. Likewise it is also difficult to isolate work environment and investigate the diseases that may emanate from work profile of a person. Nevertheless, some occupational hazards were listed by few of the maids that they assume to stem from the tasks they perform. Hazards are categorized into physical, chemical and biological.(**Table 1.6.3**) Few women (3.3%) who were aware of such hazards, claimed that dust and gasses (25%) emitted from cooking and sweeping activities and harsh chemicals in floor cleaners and detergents (25%) used for mopping and washing tasks can expose them to respiratory and dermatological diseases like bronchitis, eczema, allergies. Long hours of standing (10%) and lifting heavy objects (15%) can result in musculoskeletal and nerve related deformities.

8.1.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing among Paid Domestic Workers

Similarly when probed into the work related psychological conditions which have been short lived and affected these women, an interesting picture came forward. The interviews portray the absence of self-awareness and indifference of the domestic workers about their mental health issues. About 78.3% respondents report about their lack of knowledge or non-existence of any day to day psychological health concerns such as irritability, tensions and work related exhaustion. Monotony (24%), anxiety (44%) and depressive mood conditions (21%) are common occurrences among those who acknowledged to have suffered phases of such mental issues.(**Table.1.6.5**) They grapple with long working hours of managing own homes, travelling to the workplaces and perform monotonous manual work, which provide them with no sense of pride or contentment in lives.

Table 1.6.5 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Mental Health Issues

Work/Work Place related Psychological problems/Illness Experienced by Domestic Worker						
Problems	Primary (N)	Secondary (N)	Tertiary (N)	% Primary	% Secondary	% Tertiary
Anxiety	57	0	0	43.85	0.00	0.00

Depression	27	21	0	20.77	27.27	0.00
Exhaustion	15	8	2	11.54	10.39	8.33
Monotony	31	45	18	23.85	58.44	75.00
Irritability	0	3	3	0.00	3.90	12.50
Tension	0	0	1	0.00	0.00	4.17
Total	130	77	24	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

This aspect of outcome of work participation must be addressed so that worker productivity and wellbeing can be enhanced. Living with ailments and anxiety disorders might impede job performance, daily routines and hamper social life of the women workers. It is discerning from the time-use data gathered alongside especially for the commuter women, who devote less than 30 minutes to personal care activities and sleep time is often less than 5 hours on account of performing manual repetitive domestic chores both at employers home and own homes coupled with long hours of commute. These women are at more risk of suffering from psychosomatic distresses especially in the environment of constant work pressure, juggling paid work and home making, worries regarding earning enough to enable savings and making day to day ends meet, bringing up their children in desired way. It is imperative to mention that degree of productivity at workplace declines with progressive increase in number of hours spend at work continuously, more so if there is absence of work-breaks and rest-periods in between. The first few hours at work yields the best results in terms of performance and speed of task completion with meticulousness. But as the work-day progresses, the physical fatigue and decline of mental stamina and faculties hampers the work achievements and performances. Other indirect channels of psychological pressures emanate from the lack of emotional support from the family. Around 13.2% of the maids (14.4% slum and 10.8% commuter women) face objection and disapproval from family for participating in paid work, 58.9% maids receive no respect from household for performing unpaid care work. Similarly the degree of satisfaction from work and likeness for own occupation is extremely low and that affects the work environment and mental wellbeing of the women. Dissatisfaction from work emanates from considering this occupation as a lowly job stigmatised in society (15.6%) and also from envisaging no future economic growth (14%). Moreover the treatment at work by the employer and also at home counts for affecting the health and wellbeing of the worker. The relation with the employer and co-worker, the abandonment by son in middle and old age, mistreatment by abuse and

threats by employer, say in family planning, perception about own profession and notions of neatness and personal hygiene all come under the purview of influences that affect health. Working conditions also determine the overall wellbeing and health. Ventilation, proper timely meals during work, rest period and access to proper toilet facilities, first aid, relation with the employer and co-workers etc do influence physical and mental health status of a worker. Availability and access to toilet facility which is essential factor for wellbeing at workplace is there for only 60% of slum workers and 48% of commuter workers. Heavy work load coupled with low nutritional intake both in terms of quality and quantity of food eaten during work-timings and longer time intervals in between meals are some of the reasons behind occurrences of non-communicable circulatory system and lifestyle diseases such as gastro-intestinal disorders, stomach ulcer and other ailments, acidity and heart burns and deficiency diseases (anaemia, scurvy, osteoporosis etc).

8.1.3 Health and Wellbeing Index

Around 16 to 17% women faced job loss on account of absenteeism from work due to health related causes. Work pressure is categorized in various sub heads like having to work too fast (36.4%) and do numerous things (28.6%), without ample scope of rest and no work breaks (3.3%) and tight schedules (18.6%). Experience of domestic violence is quite common (29% slum women and 13% among commuter), largely initiated by the women's husbands (80%) and son and daughter in law. Alcoholism, physical beatings, name calling and lack of support from immediate family or voluntary organisations leave these low educated women at the mercy of own wit and uncertainty.

The health and wellbeing index scores for the worker categories and zones are ranged into fair, bad and worse. 5.5% of all the women are categorised under worse health and wellbeing conditions, while the commuters perform even badly with 9% of commuting women having inferior health, while the same for the slum women is at 3.3%. In totality, domestic workers commuting from southern and western zones into Kolkata enjoy fair health status, while the slum dwelling women of all zones except the western zone have the worst health status among all the subgroups. Women commuting from northern KUA districts perform poorly, with 13.3% women suffering worst health status, followed by the commuter south at 6%. Women

commuting from western regions of KUA and slum dwelling women of central Kolkata have the lowest proportions of women maids with fair health status (20%). (**Table 1.6.6**) The domestic workers categorised as per their work tasks performed are also analysed as per their health index. The ayah and the house-cleaners are at the lowest level of the health and wellbeing index and they have the worse health condition, relative to cook and cook cum house-cleaners who have fair health status. (**Table 1.6.6**) Among the exclusive category of cooks 31% women have fair health and only 1% come under worse status. The house-cleaner and baby-sitter women group do not have good health conditions, as seen from the figures of 7.2% and 5.8% women respectively come under worse health category.

Table 1.6.6 Health and Wellbeing Index across Spatial Zones and Worker Categories

Health and Well Being Index		
Composite Index	Values	Zones
Fair	< 0.45	Commuter South, Commuter West
Bad	0.451-0.51	Commuter North, Slum West,
Worse	0.511-0.57	Slum Central, Slum North, Slum South
Composite Index	Values	Worker Categories
Fair	< 0.45	Cook & House-Cleaner, Cook
Bad	0.451-0.52	Ayah-Cook-House Cleaner
Worse	0.521-0.58	Ayah, House-Cleaners

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The long duration nature of work time which is more than 8 to 12 hours per day and the no work so no pay rule for ayahs who are generally paid on per day basis makes about only 10% of ayahs under fair health status. (**Table 1.6.7**) The physical environment is mapped as fair, bad and worse as per the weighted composite score, and except 26% and 9.2% households categorised as living under bad and worse environment conditions, majority households had fair index. But when decomposed into slum and commuter households, strikingly a much higher percentage of the commuter households are seen to be exposed to bad (52%) and worse (22.5%) conditions while contrasting figures are 9% and a negligible 0.3% among the slum households respectively.

Table 1.6.7 Distribution of Domestic Workers across Work Categories and Spatial Zones by Health and Wellbeing Index

Work Category	HEALTH & WELLBEING INDEX			
	Fair	Bad	Worse	Total
Ayah/Baby-sitters	5	44	3	52
	9.6%	84.6%	5.8%	100.0%
Cook	33	74	1	108
	30.6%	68.5%	.9%	100.0%
House-cleaners	76	233	24	333
	22.8%	70.0%	7.2%	100.0%
Cook and House-cleaners	28	57	4	89
	31.5%	64.0%	4.5%	100.0%
Ayah and Cook and House-cleaners	5	12	1	18
	27.8%	66.7%	5.6%	100.0%
Zones	HEALTH & WELLBEING INDEX			
	Fair	Bad	Worse	Total
Slum North	26	64	3	93
	28.0%	68.8%	3.2%	100.0%
Slum East	30	63	3	96
	31.3%	65.6%	3.1%	100.0%
Slum South	25	72	4	101
	24.8%	71.3%	4.0%	100.0%
Slum Central	14	54	2	70
	20.0%	77.1%	2.9%	100.0%
Total Slum	95	253	12	360
	26.4%	70.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Commuter North	16	75	14	105
	15.2%	71.4%	13.3%	100.0%
Commuter West	6	23	1	30
	20.0%	76.7%	3.3%	100.0%
Commuter South	30	69	6	105
	28.6%	65.7%	5.7%	100.0%
Total Commuter	52	167	21	240
	21.7%	69.6%	8.8%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

On the other hand, across the work category groups, the domestic helpers are seen to live under worse physical environmental conditions, 11.1% women while proportion of ayahs and cooks under the same is very low at 5.8% and 3.7% correspondingly. More than 82% of women cooks live in fairly good conditions pertaining to quality of civic amenities. Women performing multiple tasks especially the one who work as cook and helper have relatively poorer physical environment (11.2%) than women who perform ayah work along with it (5.6%). The degree of wellbeing index is also disaggregated and 9.3% respondents have low index, and 55.2% come under high level of wellbeing. The proportion of commuter women having low degree of wellbeing is very small at 4.2% unlike 13% among slum counterparts and this anomalistic trend can be explained by the fact that most commuter women did not

respond to the experience of mental health (93.3%) on account of ignorance and 79.2% claimed to have never experienced domestic abuse and also chose not to respond most times. Thus 49% slum women and 64.6% commuter maids have high level of wellbeing. The workers employed as ayahs or babysitter have highest share under high wellbeing index (67.3%) followed by helpers (54.7%) and the cooks (44.4%). About 14% of cooks and 10.2% helpers have low wellbeing which is more than three times than 3.8% of the ayah workers. Health and wellbeing has positive significant relation with toilet density and room density and household size with r value of 0.339, 0.194 and 0.201 respectively and also with standard of living. With worsening standard of living, the health and wellbeing also worsens with r value of 0.226. With increasing level of educational attainment of head of the households and of the domestic worker, the household income tends to rise as workers of the households are employed in better paying regular jobs. Thus it has significant positive relation with the monthly household expenditure under various sub-heads and with asset ownership (r = 0.326). Greater the number of hours spend in SNA activity, greater will be the likelihood of worsening health and standard of living as denoted by significant positive Pearson's value of 0.245 and 0.221 respectively.

The geographical disparity in health and wellbeing score can be well depicted by disaggregating the index at the ward level. Among the slums, the worst performing wards are 58 in the central zone and 89, 95, 97, 101 in the southern zones. Slum women in the north around Dum Dum and Chatubaburbazar pockets have fair health status, while all other wards come under bad health status category. Among the commuter women the ones arriving at Sealdah and Park Circus stations in the north and Jadavpur station in the south have the worse health status and women arriving at Ballygunge, Dhakuria and Tollygunge have better health condition and they are designated with fair category. (**Map 3.34.1 and 3.34.2**)

Health and wellbeing situation among the women workers are studied according to the literacy status, religion and caste groups, age and marital status and place of residence. There is a marked distinction between literate and illiterate women, with 8% of the latter having worse health relative to 2% of the former. With progressive rise in educational attainment among the literates, the proportion of women with fair and good health also rises. As expected, 10.1% of rural commuting women are

categorised as having worse health environment and higher health risks unlike only 4% of the urban commuter and slum dwellers.

Map 3.34.1
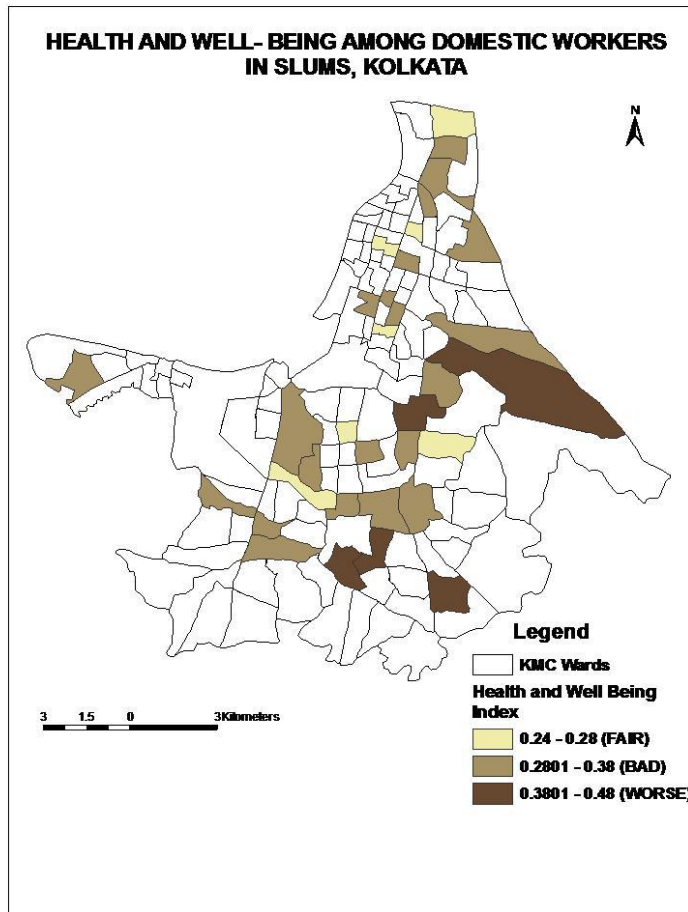
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

This can be attributed to the perils of commute and inferior physical environmental factors and lower standards of living of the rural households. About more than double proportion commuter women sleep less than 6 hours per night (49%) as against 21.4% slum dweller women. Currently married women workers have greater responsibility of household chores and bringing up children alongside paid work and this entails them with lesser personal and leisure time. Work-life balance becomes all the more difficult to manage for married women, especially in the age-group of 36-59 years, which has the highest proportion of women with worse health status among all age-groups (6%). Muslim (9.6%) and ST (8.3%) and OBC (8.7%) women have greater proportions of women under worse health category, almost double as compared to the

Hindu (5.1%) and general caste (3.7%) women. (**Table 1.6.8**) Within the slum dwelling workers, 7.1% Muslims and 6.1% of OBC women maids come under worse index unlike 3.2% Hindu and 2.3% general caste women. Young adults (18-21 years of age) have the highest fair health index (37.5% slum and 43% commuters) while the lowest is among the 36-59 years and aged women (26% among slum women and 18% among commuters).

Map 3.34.2
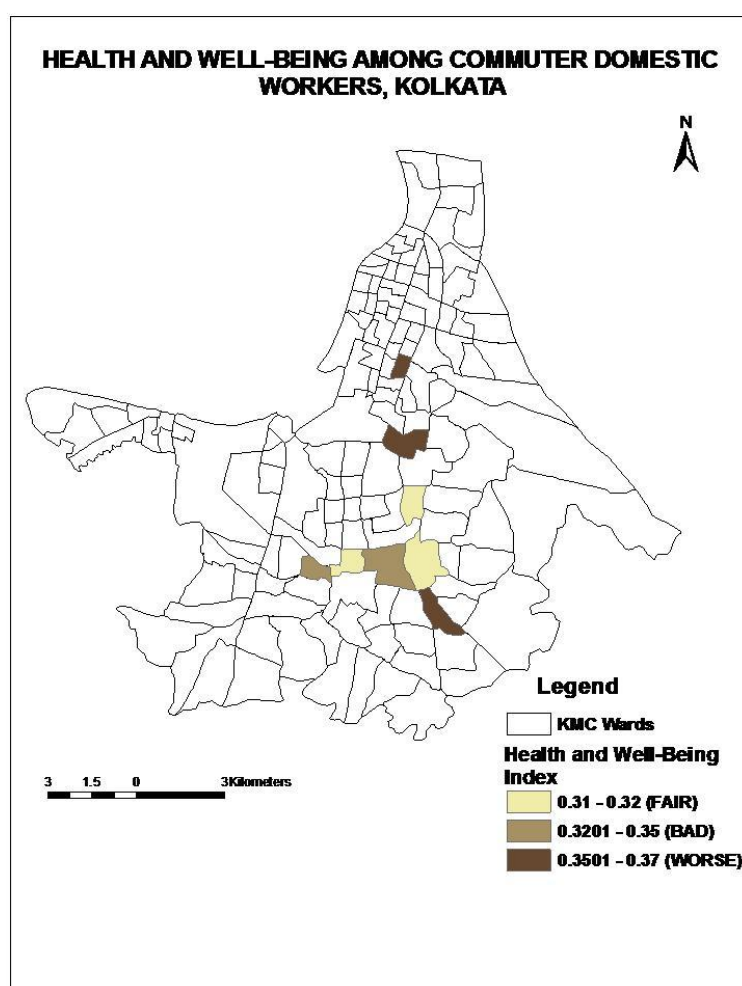
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

On comparison of health and wellbeing index with the paid work it was revealed that about 64% and 76% of the women having bad health status are very dissatisfied and dislike their work profile respectively. Among the women who desire to leave paid domestic work as a profession and those who don't want to work more, 75% and 70% come under bad health status. Women who want to change into other profession

enjoying a good health are 6.3% less than ones who have good health status but who do not want to leave. 80.5% slum workers who are dissatisfied and 84.2% who dislike their work have bad health. Likewise 48.3% and 37% slum maids who strongly like their occupation and are very satisfied have fairly good health. While 61.1% commuter workers who are dissatisfied have worse health status and 57.5% women who like their job have fair health condition.

Table 1.6.8 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Caste, Religion and Literacy by Health and Wellbeing Index

Caste / Religion / Literacy	HEALTH & WELLBEING INDEX			
	Fair	Bad	Worse	Total
SC	72	216	17	305
	23.60%	70.80%	5.60%	100.00%
ST	3	8	1	12
	25.00%	66.70%	8.30%	100.00%
OBC	15	69	8	92
	16.30%	75.00%	8.70%	100.00%
General	57	127	7	191
	29.80%	66.50%	3.70%	100.00%
Hindu	138	380	28	546
	25.3%	69.6%	5.1%	100.0%
Muslim	8	39	5	52
	15.4%	75.0%	9.6%	100.0%
Literate	52	162	4	218
	23.9%	74.3%	1.8%	100.0%
Illiterate	95	258	29	382
	24.9%	67.5%	7.6%	100.0%
Total	147	420	33	600
	24.50%	70.00%	5.50%	100.00%

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Numerous health and well being indicators designate an inferior health condition among the commuter women than the slum counterparts. (**Table 1.6.9**) About 17% of commuter workers go untreated for their diseases, while it is 7% for the slum ones. Working conditions are much worse for the commuter maids, with more than 75% and 40% workers not entitled to paid weekly leave and first aid at the workplace. Good working conditions that reflect one aspect of decent work as proposed by ILO, is enjoyed only by 18.3% of commuter maids unlike the substantial 61% of the slum maids. Other indicators have a direct bearing on paid work as health condition of the women influences their work participation. Almost 22% of maids do not want to work more number of employer houses due to sickness and about 11% and almost thrice

proportion of 29% slum and commuter women want to leave paid domestic work. Similarly 16% refused to work for potential employers who wanted to hire these women on account of health related factors. Ageing related health issues and lack of stamina and robust health were frequently cited by women maids as the reasons behind taking a work break (14% of slum women) and leaving working with any employer house (9% for slum and 3% for commuter women). Frequent illness and related absenteeism is the dominant cause of retrenchment of 7.1% commuter and 4% slum maids. The commuter domestic workers have almost 20% lower share of maids reporting good relation with their employers and co-workers, which poses a challenge in attainment of decent work and around 15 to 16% workers are mistreated adversely affecting the psychological health of the worker in a longer term.

Table 1.6.9 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers according to Health and Wellbeing Indicators

Health and Well Being Indicators of the Domestic Workers	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
Suffered Job loss in last 1 year due to sickness	16.1	16.7
Getting Paid Holiday per week	35.0	75.4
Getting Paid Sick leave	53.3	51.3
Food received from Employer	66.4	57.9
First Aid received from Employer	68.3	39.2
Provision of Toilet at workplace	59.2	47.9
Provision of Rest-place and time at workplace	57.2	16.2
Performing any kind of Leisure activity	38.3	22.9
Experience of work related Psychological Problems	31.7	6.7
Open Defecation	5.0	30.0
Inferior Quality Fuel used	10.0	99.6
Toilet not within Premises	58.3	45.0
Kaccha House	2.2	40.4
Kitchen inside Living Room	42.8	23.7
Experience of Domestic Violence	28.9	12.9
Inferior source (non-tap) of Drinking water	1.7	78.3
Consume Tobacco	25.3	13.3
Consume *Paan*/ Betel nuts/Betel Leaf	3.1	5.0
Do not go for treatment	6.9	16.7
Room Density (more than 4 people/room)	33.3	22.9
Musculoskeletal diseases	40.6	32.1
Time-spent on household Chores and unpaid care work without help from Family members	35.3	31.3
Experience Work Pressure	39.2	32.1

	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
Extreme hours spent on Paid work (>60 hours per week)	20.3	13.8
Having any Chronic Illness	47.2	32.1
Amount of Sleep time < 6 hours per Night	21.4	48.8
Health Information received at place of Residence	72.5	5.8
Regular monthly Frequency of visits by Health personnel	48.1	2.5
Good Working Conditions	60.6	18.3
No time or time < 30 mins per day spent on Personal Grooming activity	18.1	93.8
Health Related Reported Events	**Slum (%)**	**Commuter (%)**
Retrenched by employer due to Absenteeism & frequent Illness	4.00	7.08
Left Employer house due to Sickness	8.60	2.91
Taken break from work due to health	13.97	0.0
Changed Occupation due to Health	8.16	20.0
Dissatisfied from work due to health	10.34	15.0
Refused Potential employer to work due to health	15.38	15.29
Leave Profession due to health	10.19	28.21
Do not want to Work more houses due to health	21.51	21.76
Health Factor as Negative Outcome of this Occupation	1.40	0.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Moreover 15% commuter and 8% slum women are not looked after their adult son, which also creates negative impact on health and wellbeing of the maids. Again a northern and southern region evaluation (**Table 1.6.10**) shows the latter to perform better in some health indicators concerning treatment, health information, work related pressure and associated disease prevalence. This has background relation with the standard of living of the households.

Table 1.6.10 Distribution of Northern and Southern Kolkata City Region Domestic Workers according to Health and Wellbeing Indicators

Health and Well Being Indicators of the Domestic Workers	North Region (%)	South Region (%)
Getting Paid Holiday per week	13.1	17.5
Getting Paid Sick Leave	55.1	59.7
Food received from employer	54.5	53
First aid received from employer	38.6	36.5
Provision of Toilet at Workplace	40.9	53.5
Provision of Rest-place and time at workplace	47.4	33.9
Performing any kind of Leisure activity	38.6	25.5
Experience of work related Psychological Problems	32.3	27.2
Consume Tobacco	18.2	23.3
Do Not go for Treatment	13.1	11.2
Room density (more than 4 people/room)	30.8	24.3

Musculoskeletal diseases	41.4	35.9
Time-spent on household Chores and unpaid care-work without help from Family members	37.9	34.0
Experience Work Pressure	42.4	29.6
Extreme Hours spent on paid work (> 60 hours per week)	12.1	18.9
Having any Chronic illness	41.9	41.7
Amount of Sleep time < 6 hours per night	40.4	30.1
Health Information received at place of Residence	30.3	50.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Table 1.6.11 Binomial Logistic Regression explaining Determinants of Poor Health and Wellbeing Condition among Domestic Workers

Binomial Logistic Regression explaining factors Influencing Unhealthy Status of Women Domestic Workers					
Determinants	N	B	S.E	Sig.	Exp(B)
Age of the Domestic Worker	600	0.019	0.011	0.065*	1.02
Commuter (Ref- Slum)	240	0.178	0.302	0.556	1.195
Decent Work Index	600	-4.345	1.268	0.001***	0.013
Religion- Non-Hindu (Ref- Hindu)	54	0.772	0.363	0.034**	2.164
North Region (Ref - Rest of Region)	198	0.441	0.214	0.039**	1.555
Worker Category (Ref- Ayah, Cook & House-Cleaner)	107			0.439	
Cook	108	0.066	0.331	0.843	1.068
Housecleaner	333	0.241	0.274	0.38	1.272
Ayah/Baby-Sitter	52	0.629	0.424	0.138	1.877
Total Monthly Income	600	0	0	0.612	1
Living Arrangement (Ref- Others)	265			0.001***	
Spouse	39	-0.453	0.41	0.268	0.635
Spouse & Children	212	-0.652	0.244	0.008***	0.521
Children Only	38	-1.167	0.449	0.009***	0.311
Alone	46	-1.275	0.437	0.004***	0.279
Place of Residence- Rural (Ref- Urban)	159	0.657	0.317	0.038**	1.928
Work Place Relation	600	2.66	0.432	0***	14.295
Decision Autonomy Index	600	2.284	0.477	0***	9.82
Education Level of Maid	600	-0.011	0.037	0.758	0.989
Empowerment Index	600	-10.675	1.804	0***	0
Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	31			0.04**	
Married	397	1.529	0.535	0.004***	4.614
Separated/Divorced	38	1.124	0.633	0.076*	3.077
Widowed	134	1.364	0.566	0.016**	3.911
Work Satisfaction (Ref-Dissatisfied)	39			0.674	
Moderately Satisfied	369	-0.028	0.461	0.952	0.973
Satisfied	192	0.198	0.495	0.69	1.219
Work Likeness (Ref- Dislike)	57			0.038**	
Moderately Like	352	-1.024	0.403	0.011**	0.359

Like	191	-0.945	0.428	0.027**	0.389
Constant		2.918	1.097	0.008	18.509
*** Significant at 1% ** Significant at 5% * Significant at 10%					
Dependent Variable: Poor Health & Wellbeing (Index Values > Mean Value of 0.3221)					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Model Summary				
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	N
1	684.354a	0.213	0.285	600

To identify the factors which influence the unhealthy status of the domestic workers, binary logistic regression is performed using various nominal and continuous and ordinal variables (**Table 1.6.11**), whereby domestic workers scoring more than mean value of 0.3221 in health and wellbeing index are categorized as having poor health and it is the dependent variable in the model. Increasing age ($p = 0.065$) and better workplace relation ($p = 0.0$) and higher degree of decision autonomy ($p = 0.0$) is seen to be positively associated with unhealthy status of the women workers but increasing empowerment levels ($p = 0.0$) is associated with the reduction in the likelihood of unhealthy condition. This is because proportion of widow and separated women workers is greater in higher age groups who are mostly head of their households and are living in nucleated families or alone, thereby registering higher decision making capacity relative to other households. These women have been working for longer duration in employers home and thus have developed a close trustworthy relation with their employers and their co-workers, which contrarily can be used against them as a medium of exploitation. Thus women enjoying good relation at workplace and having greater autonomy in decision making have 14.2 and 9.8 times greater odds ratio to be unhealthy than others. Although caste and mother tongue is found to have no significant effect at all on the health of the workers, but relative to the Hindu workers, the Muslim maids are 2.2 times more likely to have poor health and wellbeing with the regression coefficients being at 5% level of significance ($p = 0.034$). Similarly work category wise distribution is seen to have no significant influence on health status, but degree of decent work does. Domestic workers who are categorized under high DWI have lower probability to come under poor health status and the coefficient is highly significant at 1% level. Women workers who seem to like their occupation moderately ($p = 0.11$) and strongly ($p = 0.027$) are seen to have increased likelihood of

coming under worse health status. Living arrangement and marital status of the women have significantly determined the unhealthy status, with *p* values of 0.001 and 0.04 respectively. The women living alone (widowed and separated) are seen to be more likely to be unhealthy followed by women living with children only and then by women who cohabit with husband and children. The coefficients are strongly significant at 1% level of significance. In terms of marital status, the married women have greater odds ratio of 4.6 times to come under worse health and wellbeing status ($p = 0.004$). This is owing to the work burden they have to share for both paid and unpaid care work at home along with child rearing, which compromises their leisure, sleep and rest timings. The widowed women and separated or divorced maids have 3.9 times and 3.1 times greater likelihood of being unhealthy relative to the reference category of unmarried women and the coefficients are significant at 5% level. Degree of work satisfaction and education level of the maid does not have any significant influence on their health condition, though 36.4% women who are very satisfied have fair health and 23.4% who are dissatisfied have come under worse health category. Again 42% maids who strongly like the work, have fairly good health, while only 2.3% women categorised having worse health index strongly like their work. Geographical localities are taken as dummy variables. Interestingly the place of residence is important determinant of health, as evident from significant values of regression coefficients which are at 5% level of significance between northern region location and workers dwelling in urban centres relative to rest of the region and rural women respectively. Women workers employed in the northern region of Kolkata and women residing in slums of Kolkata along with commuter women who live in lower tier small towns in KUA have 1.6 and 2 times greater odds ratio to be unhealthy than rest of the region and rural dwellers. The regression model explains 28.5% (Nagelkerke's R^2) variance in the unhealthy status of women domestic workers and correctly classified 70.0% of cases.

8.2 Outcome and Effect of Work Participation in Paid Domestic Work

Participation in paid domestic work can be seen as a affecting the economic, social and personal spheres of the women workers. The resultant outcomes can be summarised as positive and negative which includes changes that labour market participation brings about in the thought processes, aspirations, degree of empowerment, challenges and shortcomings among the women workers. The women

domestic workers were asked about their experiences in their life pertaining to their work especially its presence and consequences in their lives. Empowerment is a broad and dynamic term which is an amalgamation of one's innate abilities which are allowed to prosper in an environment of equitable and just opportunities for harnessing one's potential and performing diverse activities freely within individual capacity or in harmony along with others. Empowerment as a result of work participation of these women is manifested in the decision-making ability for themselves and for their household members regarding their work-life and their family-life, household chores and functioning, family planning etc.

The survey reveals that decision to enter the labour market and especially finding work as a paid domestic labour, is generally a self made decision by these women. Out of the slum women interviewed, 81.7% admitted to have decided to work on their own, while 71% of commuters decided themselves which can be indicative of a certain degree of empowerment and assertiveness. The age and the situations under which these women started working as domestic helper, influences their decision making power. Most women who have been working since their childhood reported that their parents especially mothers (7.2%) had been instrumental in deciding to send them into the labour market to earn their living early on in their childhood. Poverty and lack of awareness about schooling, other adverse familial circumstances have affected their decision to send children to school. Husbands also have been seen to control their worker wives in terms of not only deciding whether they would work or not and where they would continue working but also making the final choice regarding matters within their households. A dominant stream of patriarchal system of setup is noticed in matters of decision making on day to day household expenditure and purchases of durable assets, education of children etc. Even there are numerous incidences of husbands deciding on the manner in which these women workers spend their earned income (10% for slum and 15% among commuters), where they visit at leisure hours and with whom is very much observable. While 8% of slum and 17% of commuter married women inform that it is the joint decision of their husbands and themselves. There is a marked difference in the degree of voice these women have on deciding upon everyday functioning of household expenditures and in purchasing expensive assets. 61% women run their house with regular expenditures while only 51.3% women have complete say in buying durable objects. Major financial decision

is thus left in the hands of the household head; the husbands (16%) and parents (3%) while day to day household expenditure is relatively less in hands of household head; 10.7% among husbands and 3.8% among parents. Family planning decisions were seen to churn out mixed answers from the respondents. Both the spouses (12.5% and 37.5% among slum and commuter households respectively) made these decisions, and husband alone controlled the fertility and reproductive decisions of about 11% and 28% of these slum and commuter women respectively. Many of the respondents chose not to respond to the question pertaining to family planning (25%). Decisions about the children and their education are mostly made by the husband alone (18%) or by joint decision of the spouses (23.7%) or by the son (10.5%). The husbands of the married women not only exercised control directly by way of supervising their wives work and personal and family life, but indirectly also compel the women to venture out to earn livelihood on account of being unemployed or sick, alcoholic, or simply being reluctant to work and take care of family responsibilities. Women also reported to have faced objections in joining paid work venturing outside their premises. About 80 women (13.2%) admitted to have faced slight to severe objections from there families; both natal (1.5%) and marital (2.5%) who criticized and reprimanded these women for entering paid labour market. It is the husbands that oppose from working outside home especially the ayah work at night and neglect household chores and children (16.5%), stating that married women must not work outside house premises. Fear of unknown places and stepping far away outside home precincts is protested against by their family members (26.6%). It is thought that women's work is within the boundaries of own home (15.2%) and that men are the primary breadwinners and especially paid domestic work is looked down upon as a lowly task (14%) which brings humiliation for the family. Elderly maids state that their children object against them working to earn livelihood (12.7%), and ageing coupled with poor health conditions (14%) are other reasons cited for protest. Handful of women workers informed to have kept their employment status (3.7%) and nature of work (2.3%) hidden from their family and relatives due to being afraid of being granted no permission and reproach.

8.3 Domestic Violence and Intra-Familial Relations of Women Paid Domestic Workers

Family life of many women was found to be not as smooth as they themselves discussed upon how their alcoholic husbands remain unemployed and reluctant to work and depend on their wives for sustenance. In few cases the son and daughter in law of the maids abandon them in their old age and after their father's death to fend for themselves. Many of these women though were not so vocal about their distress in their marital and familial surroundings, but around 27% of slum and 13% of commuter women confirmed to have been subjected to physical and verbal abuse from their husbands and son. In most instances, the adult and employed son of the domestic worker does not take care of their parents, thus forcing them to earn their livelihood. Around 70% of the women interviewed have male children, and out of the adult and employed sons, 11% do not take care of their parents. Incidences of wife-beating and domestic violence among them are quite rampant as evidenced from 22% of the respondent women as is alcoholism (5.5%) and related aggressive behaviour by husbands, which surely dented the work-life balance of these hardworking breadwinners. (**Table 1.6.12**) Largely it is the husbands (80%) and son and daughter in law (10%) of these women that resort to physical and emotional abuse. These helpless women usually responded by keeping quiet or getting out of the houses or crying (51%), and few react by abusing back (31%). This also adds to the psychological pressures that already these women are found to grapple with associated with the work and commute they do.

Table 1.6.12 Distribution of Domestic Workers by Reaction to Domestic Violence and Work Pressures Experienced

Reaction of Domestic Workers to Domestic Violence (%)				Types of Work Related Pressure Experienced (%)			
Reaction	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Pressure Type	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
I Abuse back	30.77	0.00	0.00	Having to work too Fast	36.43	0.00	0.00
Keep quiet	42.31	17.65	0.00	Having to do many things	28.68	58.33	0.00
Do Not pay attention	2.31	11.76	0.00	Tight Schedules	18.60	28.33	80.65
Get out of the home to avoid	13.85	29.41	25.00	No Chance for conversation with Fellow workers	0.78	0.00	3.23
Cry helplessly	3.85	23.53	75.00	Heavy Work Rhythm / Exhaustion	15.50	10.00	16.13
Family members support me/seek neighbour's help	1.53	0.00	0.00	No Breaks	0.00	3.33	0.00
Beat the torturer	0.77	17.65	0.00	Total	100	100	100

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No answer	4.62	0.00	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Women report of being exhausted mentally continuing with the repetitive, monotonous manual work of cleaning, washing, cooking etc which they also do in their own homes without substantial help and appreciation. Work pressures and physical and mental stress is suffered by 39.2% and 32.1% of slum and commuter women. Thus many women aspire to change their occupation to something which will ensure a different work rhythm and pattern than what they perform presently. About 43% of slum and 51.4% of commuter women who say they face work pressures desire to change their occupation or leave entirely paid work, as against a lower figure 27.4% and 11% women respectively who do not experience work related pressures want to change their occupation. Work pressures are typically related to work in multiple employer homes within tight schedules (19%) and speedy manner (36.5%) and to perform multiple tasks (29%) and heavy work rhythm without any breaks (15.5%). Experiences of daily tensions in managing both paid work and household chores, along with gruelling daily commute, in maintaining tight time schedules and diverse demands at workplaces, almost little or non-existence of leisure time, health concerns, all culminate in creating stressful situations in lives of these women. Alternative occupations that these women prefer to earn livelihood from are mostly related to respectable better paying jobs (11.6%) such as home based piece rate hand made goods production job (14%), clerical private office job with a fixed timing (13.3%) with which they associate societal respect and better income prospects. Aged and women with chronic health problems want to quit paid work and retire at home (12.2%). Jobs such as child carer (8.3%), school caretaker and cook in *Anganwadis* (7.7%), personal grooming services (3%), flexible part-time work (5%), tailoring (2%) and other self employment like food (5.5%) and grocery business (1.1%) were much in demand. Women perceived ayah and nursing care work profile as one with higher social eminence than domestic help work, thus 5% women who worked as domestic servants desire to upgrade their work profile and 16% did not give any response in wake of their ignorance of any alternative job preference.

Household chores take up much of women's time and the burden of housework swells up if there is no assistance received from household members. Around 43% of the

women workers especially the commuters (45%) do not receive any kind of help from their family members in accomplishing their household chores, while 7.8% women live alone. As was projected that most of these women face the challenge of an exhaustive burden of 'double-day', drudge throughout the day, almost working without any leisure breaks or rest first inside the homes of their employers and later within the confines of their own homes. This can be attributed to the gendered stereotypical attitudinal problems of the society in general and men in particular regarding what nature of tasks are they deemed to perform. In the sampled households, the respondent women are the primary unpaid care worker (77%), followed by daughter (7.1%) and daughter in law (6.5), mother (3.2%) and husband (3.2%). Help from women family members in substituting at workplace during the emergency absenteeism is non-existent with only 3.3% household members; mothers and daughters of the slum women workers are found to substitute at work.

8.4 Perception Study of the Paid Domestic Workers

In this section, the general awareness and perception that these women have regarding themselves and their work is discussed to understand the effects of work participation on the psychological, attitudinal, observational outlooks of the women maids. About 38% and 20% of slum and commuter workers perceive paid domestic work as a dishonourable work which brings them bad repute and low social status and about 30% women inform that they face objections from their husbands to permit their joining in paid work. The image of this occupation in the society is stigmatised especially for the domestic helpers who are addressed as '*kaamwalis*', '*bai*', '*naukraanis*' and other derogatory names. Many of the women respondent maids have expressed their dislike in usage of terms like, '*jhi*', '*kajer-mohila/lok*', '*chakraani*' which are used to address them in Bengali language. They also lament and complain that because of their emergency financial crisis and tragic economic downfall in their households, they had to enter paid domestic labour market and take up ayah or cleaner jobs as this is the only skill and only work they know how to perform. Otherwise, they themselves despise working in such humiliating position for other households and are unwilling to continue with the profession and also advice their daughters away from taking up this occupation in future.

But contrarily, financial independence matters to around 9% of slum and 6% of commuter workers to participate in paid work which is also hailed by 3.1% of slum women to be a safe and easy job option, and 24% of the commuter women view travelling long distances to workplace to be beneficial to their lives. More than 75% women maids are satisfied with annual bonus they receive and 36.4% slum dwelling women discuss own personal problems with her employers. Winter and post festival seasons are perceived to be lucrative for landing new employer houses and about 20% of commuter women maids are aware of the job market trend. Commuter women are more decisive that their personal hygiene is an important determinant (16.3%) in getting access to new jobs, a knowledge which may have developed over time due to unsuccessful job-seeking encounters with prospective employers. Placement agencies are not popular among 7% of interviewed women on account of difficulty in accessing their enrolment services. (**Table 1.6.13**) Women also view agencies unreliable as they deduct money from their hard earned income and also because of limited choice of employers for whom they are made to work for. Slum women are more open to skill training as around of them 46.3% perceive training to be beneficial to their income earning capacity but contrarily 42% slum and 63.3% commuter women believe informal training or imparting work related advises to their contemporaries is not important. Only about 24% commuter women think that commuting to Kolkata has brought beneficial alterations in their life-course and that in 64% responses the women have praised about their employer's kindness to have extended helping hand in solving the problems discussed by the maids to them.

Table 1.6.13 Perception Study among Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers

Perception Among the Domestic Workers	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)
Not looked after by Own Son	7.48	15.00
Do Not want their Daughters to take up maid work	64.10	66.39
Can Sign even though Illiterate	14.22	10.80
Tips from employers when they have guests-Benevolent employer/good work experience	19.20	16.20
Husband don't like Work participation/Objection to Work	34.62	29.63
Satisfied with the Bonus paid	78.30	85.92
Working for Financial & Personal Independence	8.89	5.83
Paid domestic work is a safer work option	3.37	0.45
Difficulties experienced in getting work	23.05	19.58
Does Personal Hygiene matter in getting recruited	3.60	16.30

Refused to work with any employer	24.70	34.20
Aware when the Chance of getting new employers is high	6.94	20.0
Perceives Benefits received from Training attained	46.37	11.68
Discuss Personal problems with employer	36.40	27.50
Employer helping in Solving problems discussed by maids	59.54	63.64
Commuting perceived to have Advantages	0.0	23.75
Addressing employer younger to maids by their name	33.60	16.70
Participation and say in Family Planning	21.00	53.30
Profession as Lowly Job	37.93	20.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

The general perception of the women workers regarding their work can be seen to be of low regard, and they themselves consider their work as something to be stigmatised. Most women report not to enjoy this kind of work and that poverty, insufficient household income and lack of alternative job opportunities among many other unfortunate reasons that are compelling them to remain working as paid domestic workers. Most of these women are oblivious about their position in own household after joining paid work. About 60% did not answer, while 14% and 3% stated that their position has increased and decreased respectively, while 24% felt that there has been no change. An encouraging situation was that 27.1% commuter workers reported that paid domestic work and contribution to family income has improved their status within their families. Only 5% of slum women state that their position in their family has improved ever since they have started to work outside their homes. The sense of empowerment and realisation of personal worth and consequent status within household is reflected from whether the maids feel to make significant contributions to household income pool. About 12.2% of slum and 55% of the commuter workers believed to make a difference in their household income by work participation, while 68.7% remained undecided on that. The perception of respect and value one has within a family is influenced by age, income earned, decision making power, gender among other factors. Even though 34.3% respondents did not answer, 41% women were affirmative in getting due respect from family members, while 11% and 6.4% of commuter and slum women state that they are not respected, instead they are victims of domestic violence. The degree of respect received from household members has a significant relation with whether the worker is slum dwelling or commuter and also with the religion of worker. A higher share of commuter women and Muslim workers report not to receive any respect from

household but the association is relatively stronger for the former (Phi value is 0.231) than latter (Phi is 0.119). About 42.7% Hindu and 22.1% non-Hindu women maids receive respect from their households, while 6.4% slum and 10.8% commuter women report not to get any respect.

8.5 Work Satisfaction and Likeness and Job Security

Work satisfaction is a function of monetary remuneration, decent working conditions, relationship and degree of trust with employers and associated workers, opportunities for skill development and individual growth, conscience of value addition and contribution to the organisational structure, accomplishments of challenges under mentorship and consequential appreciation, promotion and increments, good work-recreational balance, involvement in decision making and ability to voice grievances and suitable redress. But given the invisible nature of work pattern involving manual and repetitive tasks of domestic workers, high degree of informality with no tenure security, no verbal or written contract, indecent working conditions that most women report to receive less work satisfaction.

Table 1.6.14 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers according to Degree of Work Satisfaction, Work Likeness and Work Security

Work Satisfaction	Slum (%)	Comm uter (%)	Work Likeness	Slum (%)	Comm uter (%)	Work Security	Slum (%)	Comm uter (%)
Very Dissatisfied	1.4	2.5	Strongly Dislike	.8	1.7	Very Low	2.8	7.1
Dissatisfied	5.3	3.8	Dislike	11.4	3.8	Low	4.4	13.3
Moderately Satisfied-Moderately Dissatisfied	52.2	75.4	Moderately Like-Moderately Dislike	49.2	72.9	Moderate	28.1	35.0
Satisfied	33.6	15.8	Like	30.6	15.8	High	34.2	23.3
Very Satisfied	7.5	2.5	Strongly Like	8.1	5.8	Very High	30.6	21.3
Total	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

In a 5 point Likert scale, 52.2% of slum and 75.4% of commuter women state to be moderately satisfied to moderately dissatisfied. 41.1% slum women felt visibly satisfied to high level of satisfaction, as against only 18.3% of commuter women. The respondents view their increased ability to earn income, monetary freedom and contribute financially to their household (55.6%) as the single largest satisfactory outcome. They felt satisfied in terms of working under familiar, safe and good

working conditions (23.6%) which allowed them to learn new things like operating electrical gadgets (5.6%), in a flexible time schedule of their convenience (5.6%). (**Table 1.6.15**) Around 4.2% women felt that participation in paid work allowed them to achieve a sense of empowerment and independence as it also allowed them to utilize their free time economically. Work satisfaction and degree of work security has significant relationship with type of domestic worker, literacy and religion of the domestic worker. Only about 18.3% commuter, 27.7% illiterate and 24.1% non-Hindu women workers have high level of work satisfaction unlike 41.1% slum, 39.4% literate and 32.8% Hindu women in the same. The association is moderate between slum and commuter workers at 0.245 Phi value. Degree of work satisfaction is high for 38.2% general and 29.1% non-general caste and the relation is significant at 5% level.

Table 1.6.15 Satisfactory and Negative Outcomes of Work Participation among Domestic Workers

Satisfactory Outcomes (%)				Negative Outcomes (%)		
Outcomes	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Outcomes	Primary	Secondary
Monetary Self Sufficiency	55.56	15.38	0.00	Low Esteem/Humiliation	30.77	40.00
Independent / Use of time	4.16	0.00	0.00	Monotony	13.46	0.00
Employer is Good	8.33	7.69	0.00	Work Pressure & Exhaustion	13.46	20.00
Work Likeness	9.72	23.08	0.00	Unable to look after Children	11.54	20.00
Safe & Good Working Environment	5.56	23.08	0.00	Developed Health Problems	9.62	0.00
Flexible Part-time work	5.56	7.69	0.00	Low Wage/Unable to Save	9.62	0.00
Learnt many things	5.56	7.69	100.00	No Job Security	7.69	0.00
Improved Quality of Living	5.56	15.38	0.00	Forced to Work & Earn	3.85	20.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

On the other hand 7% women seemed extremely dissatisfied with their kind of work. Though for some women stepping out of their households and working and earning their own income, however meagre it is can provide them a sense of worthiness and recognition among themselves. But it is seen that about 83.1% and 41% of women are

not been able to judge and identify the changes that their participation in the paid labour market might have brought in their lives. They provide the interviewer with no answer regarding their household position among her family members and their perception of degree of respect that they receive from them as well. Around 12.2% slum women and 6% of commuter women complain of strongly disliking their work, while 49.2% of slum and 73% of commuter women moderately like to moderately dislike their job. It must be remembered that for these illiterate and lowly educated women who participate in paid labour market, choices and preferences for tasks and work activities are limited and compulsion to earn livelihood becomes essential. Self employment is difficult due to scarcity of capital and entrepreneurship skills, thus casual jobs such as helper at construction sites, agricultural labour and piece-rate work are the alternatives. But women report to dislike such jobs on account of them being laborious, tedious and under meagre pay-scale. It is evident from the occupational shift that many rural commuter women admitted to have made into paid domestic work. Thus degree of likeness for their work can become subjective and contextual for many women. However, the part-time arrangement of paid domestic work, flexibility to oversee their own housework and family, and utilizing residual time for secondary work for some women is perceived to be beneficial and fosters likeness for their work. Dissatisfaction from work emerges from the feelings of disgrace and dislike for the paid domestic work being lowly task (29%) and from the unpredictability of the job security together with low income and augmented work load (30.6%). Lack of economic security (6.1%), monotonic task with no opportunity for upgrading skills , lack of motivation (10.2%), and the compulsion to report to work everyday irrespective of health and ageing issues (10.2%) and taxing commute to work which takes away quality time with children at home (14.3%) are the other dissatisfactory consequences listed by the respondents. The southern region domestic workers employed in Kolkata (both commuter and slum dwellers) have a little higher proportion towards attainment of work satisfaction and work likeness at 6.8% and 8.3% as against 2.5% and 3% of the northern region maids. Work likeness is also greater among the slum (38.7%) than commuter (21.7%) women and there is significant relation between the two variables with Phi value of 0.253. Literacy also creates difference in degree of work likeness as it creates variation in type of work tasks the women worker performs. About 40.4% literates who are usually cooks and ayahs like their work while only 27% illiterates who are mostly domestic helpers do

the same. The relationship is significant at 1% level but association is weak (Phi value is 0.196).

Figure 2.16

Pareto Chart Showing Reasons for being Dissatisfied at Work
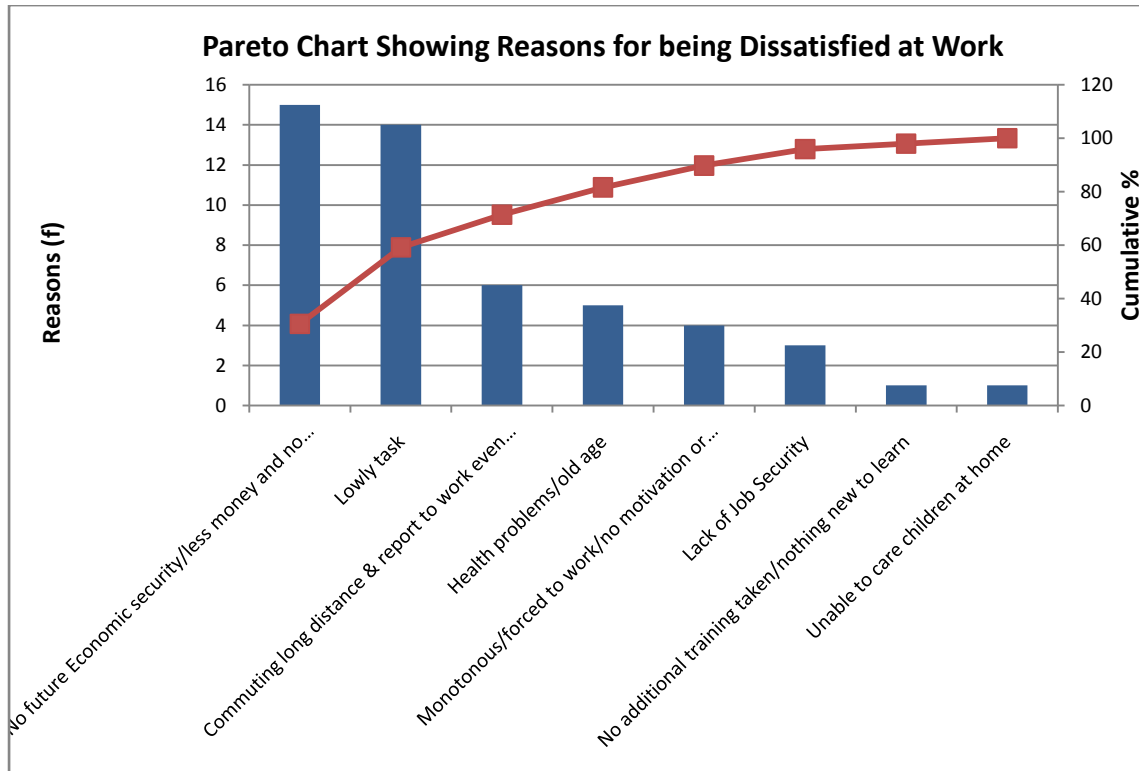
The degree of work security experienced by most women that is around 30% and 27% positively report work security to be 'high' and 'very high' respectively and only 12.5% state it to be low to very low in the 5 point Likert scale index. Again literacy, religion, type of worker and worker category based on task has highly significant relation with the degree of work security, whereby association is relatively better for religion (0.206) and whether the worker is in slum or a commuter (Phi value is 0.233). 58.8% Hindu, 64.7% slum, 65.1% literate and 58.2% Bengali domestic workers have high degree of work security unlike 35.2% non-Hindu, 44.6% commuter, 51.8% illiterate and 48.4% non-Bengali workers. Mother tongue has statistically significant relationship with work security at 5% level of significance. About 71.3% cooks and 57.7% ayahs have high work security while only 51.1% domestic helpers perceive the same. The commuter women (20.4%) perceive lower work security relative to the slum counterparts (7.2%).

This can be explained from the fact that it is bit difficult for the commuters to get access to jobs due to trust issues and are easily laid off from work on absenteeism, and are easily replaced by other women workers. They report that in most cases of their work dynamics with the employer households, the choice mostly depended on the maids themselves whether they would continue or leave working with the employer. According to them, most employers fall in the category of well behaved ones and they share very cordial employer-employee relations which at times have grown much more familiar, informal, strong, intimate and well-bonded over the long duration of working in their households. This translates to the emanating control that these paid domestic workers feel they have on their work tenure. Though it is wise to say that these women are unaware about the bigger complex dynamics of informality and insecurity of their holistic work structure and also the several degrees of exploitation and mistreatment they face daily in their work-lives in diverse nuances. Relation with co-workers and the individual employers was ranked according to hostility and friendly as reported by the women. As noted earlier 40% of slum women state their relations to be 'friendly' and 28% say 'very friendly' and 31.1% term it moderately functional with their employer, while the same among the commuter women is 30.4%, 17.5% and 50% respectively. (**Table 1.6.16**) A similar picture is seen with the mutual working relation with the co-workers with 19% and 13.3% of slum and commuter workers share a 'very friendly' term with others at their workplaces. Relative to the ayah and cooks, a much lower share of the domestic helper workers inculcate good work relation and trust levels with her employer and co-worker. This affects the perceived magnitude of work security which is seen to be much higher for the cooks (71.3%) followed by ayah (57.7%) and least by domestic helpers (51%). Thus the ease of leaving this occupation is felt by 13% of cooks as against 7.7% ayahs and 4.3% of helpers.

Table 1.6.16 Distribution of Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers by Relation at Workplace and Degree of Trust at Workplace and Respect at own Household

Relation with Employers	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Relation with Co-Workers	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Degree of Trust	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)	Degree of Respect	Slum (%)	Commuter (%)

Hostile	1.4	2.1	Very Hostile	0.3	0.4	Very Low	0.8	0.4	Respect	41.7	40.8
Moderate	31.1	50.0	Hostile	1.1	1.7	Low	1.7	5.0	Moderately Respect	11.4	23.8
Friendly	39.7	30.4	Moderate	41.4	58.3	Moderate	35.0	46.7	Do not Respect	6.1	10.8
Very Friendly	27.8	17.5	Friendly	38.3	26.3	High	33.6	32.5	No Answer/Cant Say	40.8	24.6
Total	100	100	Very Friendly	18.9	13.3	Very High	28.9	15.4	Total	100	100
			Total	100	100	Total	100	100			

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The worker-employer relation dynamics was also assessed from some associated questions pertaining to whether the domestic workers discuss their problems (personal, familial, work- related) with their employers or not. Around 36.4% of slum and 27.5% of commuter maids said that they share their problems in friendly conversations with their employers and among them almost all (21.1% for slum and 100% for commuter women) workers said they receive advises from their employers on their own. Similarly on the reverse, very few employers (7.3%) discuss their own problems with their employed maids. Simultaneously the workplace environment and the terms of conduct at the workplace, is judged from the degree of trustworthiness that these women perceive to enjoy at the workplace. In the 5 point Likert scale the slum maids (30%) score better than commuters in the 'high trust' (15.4%) category, simultaneously 5.4% of commuters come under 'very hostile' category which is double than that of slum women.

The fellow feeling and degree of belongingness felt by these women workers towards other paid domestic worker women can be assessed from the help that respondents stated to have extended towards the women who newly entered in this profession. Only about 32.3% of the respondents said to have helped newer women in getting jobs, helping in introducing them to potential employers, spreading word of mouth for known vacancies and also bargaining with the employers advocating the other new worker women and imparting trade tactics and advices (10.3%). Trust issues (36.6%), concerns of loss of own repute, non-availability and ignorance of jobs (15%), non-interaction with fellow workers (15.2%) and being new in the occupation themselves (13.02%) were the chief reasons behind the visible indifference towards other women domestics. This was because there is more supply of women in the paid domestic labour market and women report that they are faced with problems like over-crowding

and increased competition for access to work and no vacancy coupled with a lower demand at the employer's side. They shared their antagonistic feeling for the maids who commute from neighbouring villages and towns and crowd Kolkata domestic paid labour market, accepting lower wage rates and thereby snatching vacancies and livelihood from these slum dwelling women folk (8.1%). Another problem that deters them from seeking work is that they face barriers in searching jobs in high-rise residential societies and colonies which have been mushrooming in the newly developed southern section of the cities and elsewhere. Wading through the security guards and watchmen interrogating these women, probing for identity cards and referrals are some of the problems that women account to have severely confronted for accessing better paid and fulfilling job profiles.

The future ambition that these women have regarding their daughters and their lives is rather non-uniform. About 28% and 34% of slum and commuter women voice their dislike and non-permission for their daughters to take up paid domestic work as profession later on in life. Most of them want their daughters to study well and get into a respectable occupation such as the office work and get married off to a well to do family in future. They don't want their children to struggle in life as they are doing and perform such menial work and remain stuck up within the low socio-economic class position as they themselves are. The maids desire a socio-economic mobility for their daughters; while 12% maids have left the choice of occupation to their daughters' decision and 54% maid do not have daughters.

Similarly the aspiration for themselves is to change their occupation into something secured and honourable ones. Women observed that they do not have much choice to leave this occupation for lack of alternative jobs. Only 29.2% and 15.4% of slum and commuter women express their choice to leave paid domestic work though they list many negative outcomes of working as paid domestic workers. Low self esteem and dishonour (31%), difficulty in time management and work pressure (13.5%), monotony (13.5%), inability to dedicate time to children and family on account of commute (11.5%), development of occupational health issues (9.6%), additional tasks with low compensation and no job security (17.3%) are the major unwanted negative consequences as per the opinions of the women. Women reported to have been undergoing continuous abuse, criticism and displeasure from their husbands and family for giving less time to children and homecare.

Figure 2.17

Pareto Chart Showing Reasons for Desiring to Leave Paid Domestic Work as a Profession
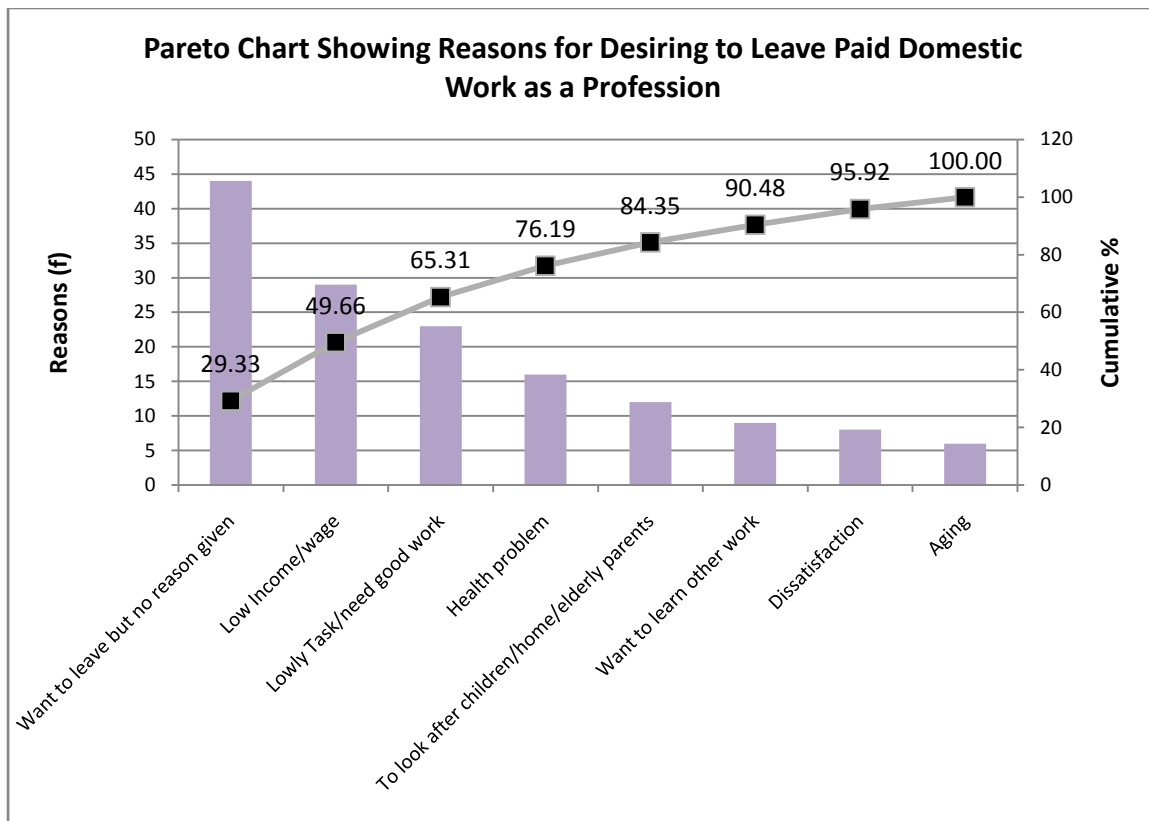
Notwithstanding the monetary support that these maids provide to their families, the gender based oppression and misogynist stance of the men in the families pose an obvious underlying discouragement for women's participation in economic activities. But many women still want to work in more number of employer houses, even under tight time schedule, which is indicative of under-employment. It is shocking to see 30% and 40% of slum and commuter women maids yearn to work in more hours and more employer houses than at present, to capitalise on residual free time they have. Prospective opportunities to earn more monthly income in order to be able to spend and save more (80%) and to utilise free time (5%) are the fundamental reasons. The rest 15.6% women want to work more but are short of time and job vacancies. While the women who do not want to work more cite sickness and ageing reasons (22%), lack of time and responsibility of care giving to own children (31%) and desire for leisure and rest. Domestic workers, who want to leave this occupation, want to learn and perform other better paying jobs (26%) and to spend time with family (8.2%) apart from health and ageing reasons (15%). Women dwelling in slum (29.2%) and

preferably Hindi speaking (36.6%) and literate (28.4%) women workers desire to leave the profession of paid domestic work unlike 15.4% commuter, 21.3% Bengali and 20.9% illiterate women workers and there is significant relationship between the variables at 1 and 5% level of significance. Higher participation in decision making procedures indicate a greater power of autonomy within the women workers lives who realize their sense of empowerment through life choices brought about by work participation induced economic strength.

8.6 Consequences of Work Participation across Social Group and Work Category

The consequence of work participation in paid domestic work among women is studied across the social groups and communities. The changes in the inter-personal relationships and effect on the social position of the domestic worker within her household and outside can be traced across the social groups. Similarly the changes in self perception and about own work; both paid and unpaid is important as it also ascertains their decision making capabilities and opportunities within family. Almost all women irrespective of caste and religious differences are moderately satisfied and like their work moderately, but 16.6% (ST) and 15.2% of OBC women are slightly or severely dissatisfied with their work as against only 5% SC and 4.2% general caste. Simultaneously 39.3% general caste women like their work whereas 21.7% OBC and only 16.7% ST like their occupation. Around 13.5% Muslims are dissatisfied and 15.4% dislike their paid work, whereas the contrasting outcomes are seen among Hindu workers at less than half of 5.7% dissatisfaction and 8.8% dislike. The background factors such as experiences of work pressure and assistance received from family members in household chores are found to not vary much and women across the caste and religion groups report about work pressure (less than 40%) and help in housework (less than 50%). As mentioned before, the relative economic status of women belonging to non-general caste and non-Hindu households, equates with lesser propensity to quit their profession. Thus 24.4% Hindus and 26% general caste women want to leave this occupation which is marginally higher than 17.3% Muslim and 19.3% OBC women. Domestic violence is common but there is again a bit difference among the women corresponding to their caste not only due to absence of physical and verbal abuse but also because the women from OBC and Muslim community are accustomed to be treated without dignity and respect and they do not consider wife

beating and mistreatment as part of domestic violence. Thus among the respondents only 15.4% Muslims,16.3% OBC report violence at home, while 22.3% Hindus, and 20% general caste women report the same. Likewise, degree of respect received at home by the women workers vary, with 42.7% Hindus and only 25% Muslims reporting the self perceived respect from their family members, and 40 to 42% SC and general caste women report the same as against 36% of OBC counterparts. Interestingly, Muslim and OBC women are seen to be less aware and more indifferent about their surroundings and psycho-social changes within their family and workplace and themselves in corollary of their work participation. While Hindu women especially SC and general caste are much vocal and definite in comprehending and acknowledging these changes. Thus 8% general caste, 9.5% SC women and 8.2% Hindus report 'no respect', while the same among OBC and Muslims is 5.4%. But on a positive note 15.3% SC, 20.7% OBC and 19.2% Muslims think that work participation has helped their household position to increase. Among the work categories of domestic workers, cooks have the highest share of work satisfaction and 12% report to be 'very satisfied' followed by ayah (9.6%) and the least by housecleaners at 3.6%. Around 10.2% domestic helpers dislike their job and 22.5% want to leave this job or upgrade into cooking, but only 3.8% ayahs dislike their job. Contrarily 50% and 39% ayahs and cooks 'like' and 'strongly like' their profession respectively. Women, who perform multiple tasks pertaining to care giving, house-cleaning and cooking, feel higher degrees of work pressure (40%) and understandably desire to exit this profession (44.4%). The proportion of ayahs receiving help from household members in domestic chores is substantially high at 67.3% while it is lowest among the cooks (40.7%). All categories of workers (around 25%), suffer some form of domestic violence. The cooks (42%) report to get highest share of respect from family, whereas 11.5% ayahs and 8.7% domestic helpers and 16.7% of the women doing overlapping tasks get 'no respect' from their household. Again work participation has made the biggest positive impact among the domestic helpers as 16% of them reported their importance in their household has increased over the due course after they started working. Though there were mixed reactions to the change in intra-familial stature of women and most women left the question unanswered on account of ignorance, many women also noted that work participation and earning bread did not lead to any significant change in their housework routine, or family responsibility, domestic violence incidences or their power of decision making within

their family life. Instead 3.3% housecleaners and 3.8% ayahs lamented that working has led to decrease in their household position as their husbands subject them to emotional and psychological torture (use of shaming behaviour, foul language, swear words and passive aggression) for going out of home into public space and commuting over distances to earn a living. Literacy of the domestic worker and household position of the maid post work-participation has a weak relation with a Phi value of 0.138.

The change in household position of these women can be analysed under vivid lens of their interactions within their family set up. The proportion of married women having their family planning decision solely made by their husbands jumps up from 21.1% to 31.3% when their household position changes from 'same as before' to 'decrease'. About 84% of women who felt they contribute significantly towards household income pool perceive their household position to have increased due to work participation, while 48% feel their status has remained unchanged though their changed employment status. 53.3% workers claim to make all decisions related to household matters entirely by themselves, 21.3% share the decision making responsibility with other family members and the remaining 25.3% have no control on decision. Decision making does contribute to perception of increase in household position which can be counted as a positive outcome of work participation. About 24.1% maids who have no control in decision making, perceive a relative increase in their household position based on whether their opinion in assessed, whereas women making decisions jointly with others (33.7%) and share of self decision maker women rises to 42.2% perceive increase in position. (**Table 1.6.17**) On the other hand 37% women who have no control on decision making process perceive no change in their position post paid-work participation. 38% maids who perceive their household position to have decreased receive no respect from family and only 10.5% women who perceive no change in position get no respect. 57% maids who think their position within family has improved get help for completing domestic chores, while the share is only 47% for women who feel no change in position. Among the women maids having adult sons, 38% report that their children do not look after them and that they experience a lowering of their position within house, while the proportion is less than half at 16.4% for women experiencing no change and still lower for women perceiving improved position within their homes. Irrespective of affirmative change

family relationships, most maids do not aspire for their daughters to take up paid domestic work as profession.

8.7 Decision Making Capacity and Household Position of Women Domestic Worker

The sense of empowerment achieved among domestic worker women is best comprehended from the degree of control exerted by them on 9 selective indicators on decision making on matters extending from within the household to work related choices. This composite score decision autonomy index provide a window to understand whether work participation and earning own income does bring forth any power to the women on making their life decisions concerning themselves and their children and family members or not. Financial independence usually promotes individual's societal standing, provides him or her with a sense of self-worth, a platform to make their voices and opinions heard and make certain material and intangible choices in life, that an economically dependent person would not relatively enjoy. Self earned money can be expended on own-self and for betterment of immediate family and this is what the women folk acknowledge as one of the prime satisfactory outcome of paid labour market participation. Monetary safety cushion provides these women an invisible mental competence in aspiring for a better future for themselves, and especially their children, a chance of self improvement, raising standard of living. But in traditional patriarchal societal set up of marriage and family institution, income earning among women from paid labour employment does not culminate into self command over decision making. Male guardians like fathers of unmarried women, husbands of married women and other elderly male members of a widow would often be seen to pose as a decision making authority, ruling the life situations and making choices for and about the concerned women; irrespective of whether she engages in paid work or remains within sphere of unpaid household chore activities.

Higher decision autonomy index values were considered equivalent to high degree of involvement in decision making by own person or part of a joint decision with husband or immediate family members like parents and children. The participation in family decision making garners a sense of respect from household members and also determines the women's relative authority and position within.

Table 1.6.17 Distribution of Domestic Workers by Household Position after Work Participation

Household Position	Significant Income Contribution (%)				Decision taken in Household (%)			
	Yes	No	Cannot Say	Total	No Control on Decision	Joint Decision with other Members	Self	Total
Same as Before	47.9	6.3	45.8	100.0	37.3	15.5	47.2	100.0
Increased	83.1	0.0	16.9	100.0	24.1	33.7	42.2	100.0
Decreased	68.8	0.0	31.3	100.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	100.0
No Answer	7.8	0.8	91.4	100.0	20.9	20.6	58.5	100.0
Total	29.3	2.0	68.7	100.0	25.3	21.3	53.3	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Decision making power is usually influenced by the person's age, relationship with the head of the household and in case of a woman there is sometimes an apparent demarcation regarding the matters on which she can or cannot opine. Often the day to day operation of a household system lies in her hands, while the important decisions like family planning, a child's education future, buying an expensive asset like television etc rests on the male head like husband or others, even though when the male decision maker is unemployed. The decision autonomy index is seen to vary across the social groups and this highlights that work participation and contribution to household income pool does not generate similar level of empowerment across women from different social and economic backgrounds. About 53% maids come under high decision index category but the figure is even higher among slum women (60.3%) unlike much lower (42.1%) among commuter. 24% commuter maids have low index scores; 10 points higher than the slum dwelling counter-group. Religion and caste affiliations do not bring much noticeable difference with an exception that SC women (49.2%) has lowest proportion under high index than general caste women (57.6%). Most widowed and separated (around 75%) maids live alone or with small children and are heads of their households, thus have higher share under high index, while married (44.1% have high index score) women have their husbands making maximum decisions. Literacy doesn't make much difference in decision making capacity except that proportion of illiterates classified under low index is 5 points greater than literates. 60% of cooks and 56% ayahs and maids in southern Kolkata

(58%) have high decision autonomy index while it is lowest for domestic helpers (49.2%) and north region women (47.5%). The decision taking capacity reflected in decision autonomy index has a significant relation with the marital status with weak association (Phi value of 0.277). The married women usually participate less in decision making at own household with only 44.1% coming under high index category, unlike widows (72.4%) and separated and divorced women (79%).

Table 1.6.18 Distribution of Domestic Worker Groups according to Decision Autonomy Index

Decision Autonomy Index Across Domestic Worker Groups (%)										
Index	Slum	Commuter	Hindu	Muslim	SC	OBC	General	Ayah	Cook	House Cleaner
Low	13.9	23.8	18.5	11.5	20.3	14.1	16.2	21.2	12.0	18.9
Moderate	25.8	34.2	28.9	32.7	30.5	30.4	26.2	23.1	28.7	31.8
High	60.3	42.1	52.6	55.8	49.2	55.4	57.6	55.8	59.3	49.2

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Strikingly in general domestic helpers are seen to be governed by household members in matters of decision to start work, even though they perceive themselves as an important contributor to the family (31.5% domestic helpers) and experience a general raise in their household position (15.5%). On the other hand the proportion of cooks who take financial decisions such as on matters of buying durable assets is 57.4%, which is a higher figure than the helpers (48.3%) or even the ayahs (53.8%). This occurrence can be explained on the grounds of greater income earnings among the cooks due to higher average wage rates which permeate into increased decision making power on critical aspects of her household. Commuter and Muslim women workers feel that they are an important contributor to the household income pool with 55% and 48.1% women affirming respectively unlike 12.2% slum and 27.5% Hindu women. Thus there is a significant relation between type of domestic worker and religion of the worker with notion of contribution made to household income pool, but the former has a very strong association (Phi is 0.461) as against the latter (0.139). Likewise the domestic workers in the southern region have higher proportion of women domestics who participate in decision making processes on their own than the northern region counterparts.

8.8 Empowerment Index across Slum and Commuter Paid Domestic Workers

Thus to understand the locational variability and diversity among the work categories in terms of level of empowerment as a consequence to work participation in paid domestic work, a weighted index was generated using selected variables related to decisions to work, outcomes and workplace relations and impact in households and family life of the maids. Decision to participate in paid work is a crucial indicator about the family structure; authoritative or individualistic and throws a light on a person's position within household. In this case, the maid's sole decision to work outside home premises and also leave work at own will is a clear proxy of her power within the household setup. Similarly the work is hailed to have positive effect when the total time spent in paid work is up to 8 hours equivalent to a normal man-day, as it helps in maintaining a work-life balance. Work satisfaction can be judged directly from work-place relations with employers, co-workers and degree of shared trust and respect. Work outcomes that are directly manifested towards personal growth, aspirations and change in own perceptions such as work satisfaction, likeness, security, leisure-time availability and activity, psychological impacts if any, work pressure etc. Lastly the impact of work participation on the family life of the maids manifested in external forces such as position and degree of respect earned from family members, decisions regarding spending own income and other major household matters, assistance and emotional support from members and domestic violence. The positive values of all variables would give the empowerment index which is categorised as high, medium and low.

The thematic representation of empowerment index across slum wards and as per commuter women at arrival railways stations within KMC portrays that high degree of empowerment is attained at only two wards; in the north and western slum, while most central, southern and western slum wards are classified under low index categories.(**Map 3.35.2 and 3.35.2**) Among the commuters, the ones reaching at Ballygunje, Dhakuria and Jadavpur stations and working in its vicinity, have the highest empowerment while women maids coming from KUA in to Tollygunje and New Alipore stations have the lowest empowerment level.

Map 3.35.1

LEVEL OF EMPOWERMENT AMONG DOMESTIC WORKERS
IN SLUMS, KOLKATA

Legend

KMC Wards

Empowerment Index

0.46 – 0.55 (LOW)

0.5501 – 0.65 (MODERATE)

0.6501 – 0.75 (HIGH)
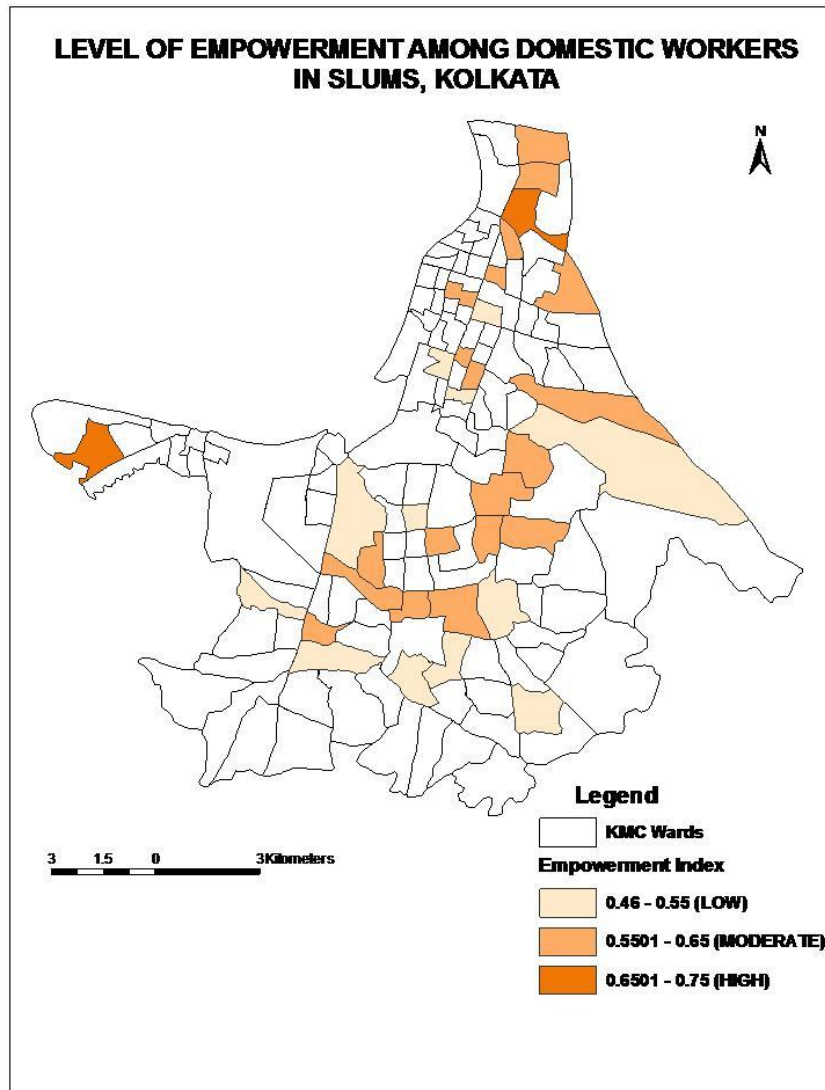
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Work-place relation is an important determinant of empowerment achieved but there is disparity among the workers based on work type. 33.8% maids endure unsatisfactory relations and 53.5% have good relations. The commuters have higher degree of unsatisfactory relation at 42% much higher than slum women (28.6%). The basic lack of trust between the employer and the commuter domestic worker results in a hostile and less friendly relation, while 60% slum women report to have good workplace relation index. Among the work categories, the cooks (58.3%) and ayahs (56%) share good relations whereas the figure is marginally lower at 49.5% for the domestic helper sub-group. In the work-outcome related empowerment degree, only about 8.3% women maids are classified under good outcome and 42% under unsatisfactory outcome. Between the slum and commuter maids, 50% of the latter

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have unsatisfactory work outcome, whereas the former shares 36.4% women. Following the pattern, domestic helpers rank first in terms of unsatisfactory outcome (47.1%), the lowest among the baby-sitters (30.3%) while shockingly only 4.8% of helper women register good outcome index, which is 1/3rd of that of the ayahs and cooks.

Map 3.35.2

LEVEL OF EMPOWERMENT AMONG COMMUTER DOMESTIC WORKERS, KOLKATA

Legend
KMC wards
Empowerment Index
0.47 – 0.51 (LOW)
0.5101 – 0.55 (MODERATE)
0.5501 – 0.59 (HIGH)
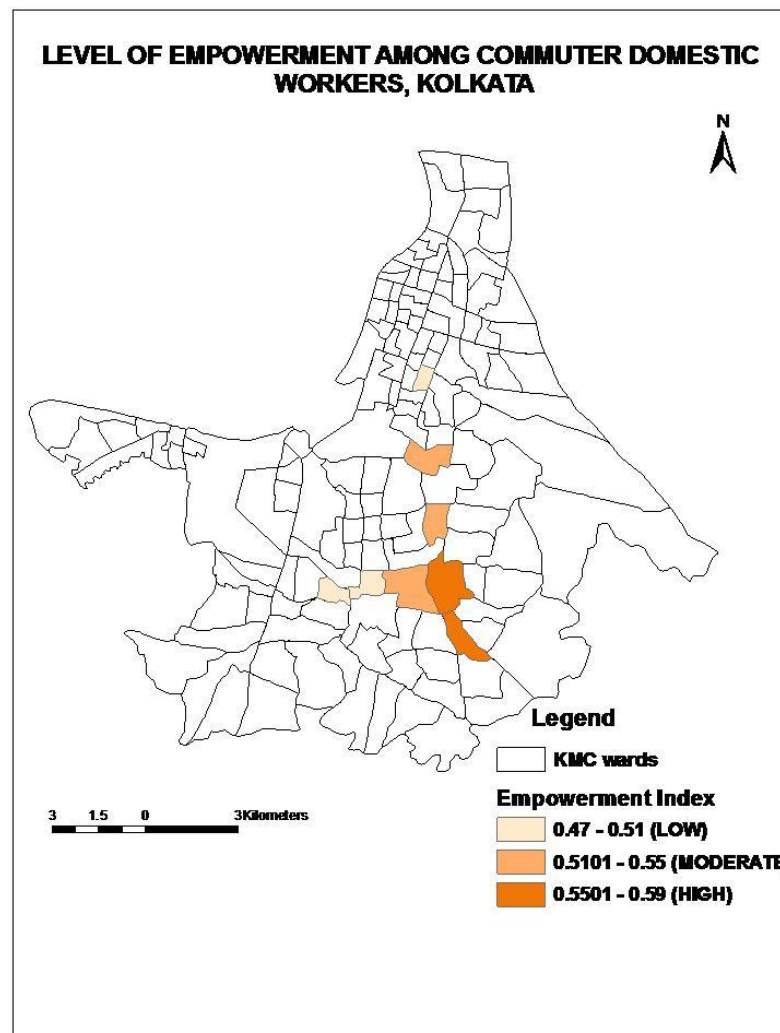
Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

The empowerment is in general moderate (52.5%) among the domestic workers with 11.7% women being classified under low and 35.8% under high empowerment index. Slum and commuter workers show variability with greater proportion of commuter women encountering low empowerment (16.7%) which double than that of slum counterparts (8.3%).

Table 1.6.19 Distribution of Domestic Worker Groups according to Indicators of Empowerment

Empowerment Indicators of the Domestic Workers	% of Domestic Workers						
	Slum	Commuter	North Region	South Region	Ayah	Cook	Domestic Helper
Own Decision to Leave work in an Employer's House	93.9	91.7	96.5	90.8	76.9	92.6	94.3
Own Decision to Start working as Paid Domestic Worker	86.1	70.8	76.3	80.6	88.5	88.0	75.4
Own Decision in spending own Earned Income	79.4	64.2	73.2	74.8	73.1	71.3	74.5
Own Decision making in own Household Matters	59.7	43.8	49.5	55.3	55.8	57.4	51.4
Own Decision in day to day Running the house	61.9	59.6	57.1	63.1	69.2	65.7	57.4
Own Decision in Buying Household Assets	60.0	38.3	45.5	55.8	53.8	57.4	48.3
Own Decision in Children's Education	33.9	34.6	31.8	36.4	34.6	35.2	32.4
Family Planning	12.8	40.4	26.7	28.7	9.6	17.6	27.9
Improvement in own position within Own Household	5.0	27.1	16.7	14.6	11.5	12.0	15.6
Significant income Contribution in Own Household	12.2	55.0	34.8	31.1	26.9	25.0	31.5
Work Satisfaction	7.5	2.5	2.5	6.8	9.6	12.0	3.6
Work Likeness	8.1	5.8	3.0	8.3	13.5	13.0	3.6
Experience of Work pressure	39.2	32.1	42.4	29.6	26.9	37.0	36.6
Getting Help from household members in household chores	50.8	46.7	47	44.2	67.3	40.7	49.5
Experience of Domestic Violence	28.9	12.9	21.2	16.5	26.9	22.2	21.9
Good Relation with Employer	67.5	47.9	62.1	58.3	63.5	63.9	55.5
Trust of Employer	62.2	47.9	57.1	57.3	57.6	60.2	53.4
Good Relation with Co-worker	57.2	39.6	48.9	49.0	53.9	56.5	44.8
Respect Received in Own Household	41.1	40.8	33.8	49.5	38.5	41.7	37.8
Normal Hours time spent in Paid Domestic Work	76.9	25.0	78.8	74.7	25.0	89.8	83.2
Performing any kind of Leisure Activities	38.3	22.9	32.3	27.1	25.0	31.5	31.0
Experience of work related Psychological Problems	31.7	6.7	23.3	15	21.1	25.1	20.1
Work Security	64.7	44.6	53.6	61.7	57.7	71.3	51.0
Freedom in Leaving this Occupation	9.4	1.7	11.6	3.9	7.7	13.0	4.8

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

The index facilitates in comparing across the social groups and their attributes and thereby identifies the likelihood of certain groups of women to remain oppressed and subjugated and upon whom the work participation makes no visible life changes. Low

levels of empowerment is found in greater proportions among illiterate (14.1%) women than literates (7.3%), among unmarried (19.4%) and married (12.8%) women than widowed (6.7%), non-migrants (13%) than among migrants (10.1%) and among rural (20%) than the urban (8.8%) residing women. Educational attainments and schooling levels have positive relation with empowerment, as evidenced from index scores, around 9% women who did not complete elementary schooling (up to standard 8th) come under low index as against only 2.3% of the women completing elementary schooling and above. This can be explained from the fact that widowed women are mostly the head of their households and are the sole decision makers, while urban women are more aware about their individual wants, more awakened about their entitlements from work. Thus 8.8% of women headed households have low index relative to 13.4% of male-headed households. Across the slum dwelling women workers, northern slums perform better in degree of empowerment with 51% women in that zone coming under high index score followed by western slums (43%). Central Kolkata slums have the highest percentage of women having low empowerment index at 10%.

Table 1.6.20 Distribution of Social, Economic and Spatial Groups of Domestic Worker by Level of Empowerment

Domestic Worker Groups	EMPOWERMENT INDEX (%)			
	Low	Moderate	High	Total
Slum	8.3	49.7	41.9	100.0
Commuter	16.7	56.7	26.7	100.0
SC	12.1	52.8	35.1	100.0
OBC	8.7	58.7	32.6	100.0
General	12.0	48.2	39.8	100.0
Literate	7.3	55.5	37.2	100.0
Illiterate	14.1	50.8	35.1	100.0
Unmarried	19.4	45.2	35.5	100.0
Married	12.8	54.9	32.2	100.0
Separated	11.1	61.1	27.8	100.0
Widowed	6.7	44.8	48.5	100.0
Hindu	12.1	51.6	36.3	100.0
Muslim	7.7	61.5	30.8	100.0
Migrant	10.1	50.4	39.5	100.0
Non-Migrant	13.0	54.3	32.7	100.0
< 20 years	13.3	66.7	20.0	100.0
21-35 years	16.4	52.0	31.6	100.0
36-59 years	9.4	53.9	36.7	100.0
60-80 years	10.9	39.1	50.0	100.0
Single Household	2.2	50.0	47.8	100.0
2 people	11.1	48.6	40.3	100.0

2-6 people	11.7	53.8	34.4	100.0
> 6 people	18.8	50.0	31.3	100.0
Women Headed Household	8.8	49.8	41.4	100.0
Male Headed Household	13.4	54.2	32.4	100.0
Ayah	15.4	55.8	28.8	100.0
Cook	4.6	50.9	44.4	100.0
Housecleaner	13.2	53.2	33.6	100.0
Cook & Housecleaner	11.2	52.8	36.0	100.0
Rural	19.5	53.5	27.0	100.0
Urban	8.8	52.2	39.0	100.0
Nucleated family	12.1	51.6	36.3	100.0
Joint family	15.6	53.3	31.1	100.0
Extended Family	12.7	59.2	28.2	100.0
Single Family	2.2	50.0	47.8	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Literacy does influence the degree of empowerment but at the lower end as seen that 7.3% literates are categorized under low empowerment unlike 14.1% of illiterates and the association is weak. (Phi is 0.102). The type of domestic workers as in they are slum dwelling or commuter has significant relation with standard of living, asset ownership and empowerment levels, but the strength of relation is weaker for empowerment levels (Phi value at 0.179), and moderate to strong for standard of living (0.359) and asset ownership at (0.406). About 42% slum and 26.7% commuter women have high empowerment index. Though there is relation between gender of the head of the household and standard of living, asset ownership and empowerment, but all have weak association except standard of living (Phi value is 0.26). 35% of women headed and 16% of male headed households are categorized under worse standard of living.

But task related work categories do create differences in empowerment. Cooking emerges as the best job as 44.4% of the women who earn living as cooks come under high empowerment category, while only 29% of ayahs and baby-sitters and 33.6% of domestic cleaners have high empowerment. Distribution of caste and religion based women groups shows that Hindu (36.3%) and general caste (40%) women are highly empowered than Muslim (31%) and other castes (35.1% for SC and 32.6% fro OBC and 16.7% among ST). Empowerment is found to increase with age as seen from high index scores among 36-59 years (36.7%) and among the aged population (50%). Household characteristics like family structure, household size, household type and living arrangements affect degree of empowerment among the working women. Single member family structure (48%) with the maids living alone or women living

with her children (58%) only perform better in high empowerment category. With more members living in a joint family (15.6%) and with increasing household sizes especially with more than 6 members (18.8% women have lower index) empowerment for women is seen to be lower. Thus maids living with their marital family (28%) have smaller proportions of women under high index category unlike women who live with their spouse or children only. In the urban sampled households, self employed (36.1%) and regular salaried ones (36.4%) have greater proportions of women with high index class. Similarly among the rural commuter women, proportions of women belonging to casual labour in agriculture households (66.7%) and self-employed in agriculture households (44.4%) have the lowest empowerment, while women from non-agricultural households have higher empowerment levels. Empowerment can be influenced by socio-economic condition, health and wellbeing and both paid and unpaid work characteristics.

Table 1.6.21 Distribution of Domestic Workers according to Composite Indexes and Level of Empowerment

Composite Indexes	Index Score	EMPOWERMENT INDEX (% of Domestic Workers)			
		Low	Moderate	High	Total
Asset Index	Low	16.2	52.5	31.4	100
	Moderate	10.2	52.5	37.3	100
	High	3.0	55.2	41.8	100
	No Assets	14.7	47.1	38.2	100
Socio-Economic Cost of Commuting	Low	11.0	61.9	27.1	100
	Moderate	22.7	53.6	23.7	100
	High	20.0	44.0	36.0	100
Health & Wellbeing Index	Fair	6.8	51.7	41.5	100
	Bad	11.2	53.3	35.5	100
	Worse	39.4	45.5	15.2	100
Standard of Living Index	Fair	1.7	59.3	39.0	100
	Bad	11.4	51.6	37.0	100
	Worse	16.7	52.2	31.2	100
Decent Work Index	Low	31.2	49.4	19.5	100
	Moderate	10.3	55.8	33.9	100
	High	3.4	43.1	53.4	100

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Asset ownership and standard of living indexes were cross tabulated by the levels of empowerment and the results showed that asset ownership and standard of living has positive influence on degree of empowerment. As the asset index of the household increases from low to high, the proportion of women enjoying high empowerment

index also rises from 31.4% to 42%. Similarly as the standard of living of the household reduces from fair to worse, the degree of empowerment of women also decreases from 39% to 31.2% respectively and chi square computed shows significant relationship with $p < 0.05$. Long and tedious commute to workplace increases socio-economic cost of travel and it negatively impacts the degree of empowerment. Thus 50% women with low commuting cost have high empowerment while only 14.1% of women with high commuting cost have high empowerment. As the health and wellbeing index of the women change from fair to bad to worse, the proportion of maids with high empowerment progressively declines from 41.5% to 35.5% to 15.2% respectively. Work has a major role to play in liberating or repressing these women out of poverty, monetary dependence and instilling a sense of worth within family and in own eyes, and this is made possible more if paid work follows basic norms of decent work. Thus 31.2% of women domestic workers with low levels of decent work have low empowerment and 53.4% with high decent work index register high empowerment index and the relationship is highly significant with $p < 0.01$ and chi square (51.591) at degrees of freedom (4).

Commuter domestic workers in general have low percentage share of women in good or high value scores in all computed indexes including the decent work and fair health status compared to their slum counter parts. But there exists a condition of indecent work and low empowerment along with poor health and wellbeing invariably among all the 600 respondents, with the intra-group variation being lowest in decent work (CV is 13%) and empowerment level (CV at 23% for slum and 27% for commuter). Asset ownership and health index sees the largest variance, with CV of 33% and 34% for the former and 46% and 67% for the latter variable between the slum and commuter households correspondingly. Within the slum dwelling women maids group, decent work (14%), empowerment index (29%) and health-wellbeing status (34.3%) sees the highest variation in western section of Kolkata, while northern slums register lowest CV for DWI and empowerment index at 11% and 17.2% respectively.

Table 1.6.22 Distribution of Domestic Worker Groups according to Coefficient of Variation in Composite Indexes

Coefficient of Variation Showing Inequality Across Paid Domestic Workers (%)			
Indexes	Sub-Groups	Slum Zones	Commuter Zones

	Slum	Commuter	North	West	South	Central	North	West	South
Standard of Living Index	27.9	24.3	27.6	26.1	28.8	26.0	20.6	22.8	26.8
Empowerment Index	23.0	27.1	17.2	28.7	21.1	23.7	27.4	25.7	26.2
Decent Work Index	13.0	13.6	10.7	13.8	13.3	11.9	14.7	8.8	13.5
Asset Ownership Index	46.0	66.7	38.9	49.8	44.5	52.5	67.7	49.3	65.7
Health and Wellbeing Index	32.5	33.9	33.1	34.3	31.2	30.6	30.8	29.2	37.5
N	360	240	93	96	101	70	105	30	105

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

Central city slums are more or less homogeneous in standard of living and health status with lowest CV values of 26% and 30.6% is found in this part of Kolkata. Asset index widely varies within households of central (52.5%) and western (50%) slum. Among the commuter households, asset ownership varies widely in both north and south zones with more than 65% CV values, while the northern zone commuter households have relative degree of homogeneity in their living standards as CV values are lowest at 20.6% unlike 27% among southern commuter households. In all indicators the western commuter households have homogeneity and thus score lowest CV values, especially the decent work index where CV is a mere 8.8% as against 14% in south and 15% in northern commuter households. Health status is mostly similar within north and western commuter zones with CV 30% while a relative disparity is seen among maids in commuter south with 38% CV. All three commuter zones have similar intra-zone variation in empowerment levels, thus indicating that outcome of work participation does not differ much like the decent work levels differ, and the resultant effect of work participation is poor to moderate in general terms. (**Table 1.6.22**)

Table 1.6.23 Binomial Logistic Regression explaining Determinants of Level of Empowerment among Domestic Workers

Binomial Logistic Regression Explaining Factors Influencing Empowerment					
Determinants	**N**	**B**	**S.E**	**Sig.**	**Exp(B)**
Commuter (Ref- Slum)	240	0.915	0.33	0.006***	2.497
Household Size	600	0.066	0.11	0.551	1.068
South Region (Ref - Rest of Region)	206	0.619	0.311	0.047**	1.857
Worker Category (Ref- Ayah, Cook & House-Cleaner)	107			0.183	
Cook	108	-0.11	0.486	0.821	0.896
Housecleaner	333	-0.421	0.434	0.332	0.657

Ayah/Baby-Sitter	52	-1.438	0.706	0.042**	0.237
Children (0-15 years)	600	0.158	0.189	0.404	1.171
Occupation of Household Head (Ref-Regular Salaried)	79			0.902	
Self Employed	112	-0.203	0.489	0.679	0.817
Casual Labour	98	-0.298	0.498	0.55	0.743
Unemployed/Doing Domestic Chores	74	-0.534	0.545	0.327	0.586
Dependents	46	-0.632	0.643	0.326	0.531
Domestic Worker	191	-0.534	0.59	0.365	0.586
Decent Work Index	600	5.05	1.874	0.007***	156.087
Total Monthly Income	600	0	0	0.001***	1
Decision Autonomy Index	600	7.298	0.677	0***	1477.426
Work Satisfaction (Ref-Dissatisfied)	39			0.071*	
Moderately Satisfied	369	0.166	0.58	0.775	1.18
Satisfied	192	0.912	0.618	0.14	2.49
Work Place Relation	600	4.858	0.586	0***	128.708
Marital Status (Ref- Widowed)	134			0.824	
Married	397	-0.502	0.534	0.347	0.605
Separated/Divorced	38	-0.258	0.605	0.67	0.773
Unmarried	31	-0.397	0.757	0.6	0.672
Constant		-13.652	1.997	0	0
*** Significant at 1% ** Significant at 5% * Significant at 10%					
Dependent Variable: High Empowerment Level (Index Values > Mean Value of 0.5598)					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Model Summary				
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	N
1	340.157a	0.555	0.742	600

Binomial logistic regression model is used to identify the factors that determine the level of empowerment achieved by the domestic workers in return for the work participation in labour market. (**Table 1.6.23**) The model explains 74.2% (Nagelkerke's R^2) variance and correctly classifies 86.5% of cases. Women maids who attain high level of empowerment with index values of greater than mean value of 0.5598 are considered empowered and it is the dependent variable. With increasing units of decent work index, decision autonomy index, total monthly income, and good work place relation of the maid, the likelihood of these maids reaching high degree of empowerment also increases and the regression coefficients are highly positively significant at 1 % level. The likelihood of attaining empowerment is 156 and 128.7 times greater among women who have higher levels of decent work and good

workplace relation respectively. Work satisfaction also influences empowerment level positively with $p < 0.1$. Occupation of the head of the household, marital status of the maid, presence of children below 15 years of age in the house and household size have no significant influence on the empowerment attained. Geographical regions are taken as dummy variables. Whereas commuter workers and women employed in the southern region of the city are seen to have 2.5 times and 1.9 times greater likelihood of attaining empowerment relative to the reference categories of slum and other regions. The coefficient values for these variables are significant at 1% and 5% level correspondingly. Among the worker category the ayahs and baby-sitters are seen to have decreased probabilities of attaining higher empowerment level and the coefficient is also significant ($p = 0.042$). This is exemplified on account of their longer working hours and less amount of leisure time activities which nullify their empowerment.

8.9 Comparison of Women Domestic Workers across Socio-Economic and Spatial Groups

8.9.1 Literate and Illiterate Domestic Worker

Literate domestic workers have a higher mean value for decent work index ($p = 0$) and lower values for poor standard of living ($p = 0$) compared to the illiterate women. There is high significance in difference between the two groups based on literacy, but within the literates and illiterate groups there is low variation as seen from the CV values (13.5% and 15.5% correspondingly). Thus literate women have higher levels of decent work employment and fairly good standard of living than illiterate women workers. Literate domestic workers also earn higher monthly income and daily ($p = 0.10$) and hourly wage ($p = 0.04$) than the illiterate as the mean values is significantly different for both groups, with mean monthly income for literates being Rs 3070 as against Rs 2689 for illiterates. Similarly mean daily and hourly wages for the literate group is Rs 103 and Rs18 unlike Rs 90 and Rs 15.2 among illiterates respectively. But the variation in wage rates is more among the literates than illiterates as evidenced from the CV values of 70.5% and 53.7% respectively.

8.9.2 General and Non-General Castes of Domestic Workers

According to the social groups, there is significant difference among the general and non-general castes in terms of level of decent work employment including degree of workplace discrimination, standard of living, health and wellbeing. The means of both caste groups are different at 1% significance level ($p = 0.005$ and $p = 0.004$) with non-general castes having lower means for decent work and absence of workplace discrimination. Thus non-general castes face higher levels of workplace discrimination and are likely to be engaged in indecent work along with poorer standard of living and worse health and wellbeing condition. The degree of variation in monthly income is more among the general than the non-general castes (CV of 72% and 55.8% respectively).

8.9.3 Hindu and Non-Hindu Domestic Workers

Similarly compared to the Hindu women the non-Hindu women have much lower mean monthly income and daily and hourly wage and the mean differences between the groups is significant at 1% level. Mean monthly income for non-Hindus is Rs 2082 as against Rs 2901 among Hindu domestic workers. The mean daily and hourly wages are Rs 69.3 and Rs 13 among non-Hindus while it is Rs 97 and Rs 16.4 among Hindus. The non-Hindus have higher share in worse health and wellbeing ($p = 0.043$) and standard of living condition ($p = 0$) compared to Hindus ($p = 0.024$ and $p = 0$) and the difference between the groups is significant at 5 % and 1% level respectively. Besides, non-Hindu workers are also seen to face higher levels of workplace discriminations and have poorer levels of workplace relations and work under poor working conditions and likewise are employed under lower levels of decent work relative to the Hindu women and the difference is highly significant, but the variation is higher for the former group with CV values of 74.4% for workplace relations and 42.1% for workplace discrimination.

8.9.4 Slum and Commuter Domestic Workers

There is significant difference (at 1%) in levels of decent work, degree of empowerment and health and wellbeing condition between the slum and commuter domestic workers and in all the three variables the commuters fair poorly than the slum women. Similarly the level of standard of living is fairly good and degree of participation among the slum domestic workers in household decision making processes is higher relative to the commuter counterparts and the differences in the

two groups is highly significant. In other words, the degree of workplace relations is poorer for the commuter relative to slum women, likewise level of workplace discrimination, working conditions and working terms is very poor and deplorable among the commuter group than the slum maids. The CV value for workplace relations is higher at 66.3% among the commuter women as against 53.2% among slum workers. This is because the southern region commuters in some residential localities are in better workplace relation than northern region. Commuter women face greater incidences of work problems such as frequent job-loss and difficulties in recruitment relative to slum women. Higher share of slum women are seen to take work related decisions all by themselves unlike the commuter workers who frequently consult with household members for leaving and participating in job. Positive outcome of work participation is more likely to be found among the slum domestic workers.

8.9.5 Northern and Southern Region Domestic Workers of Kolkata

Dynamics of paid domestic work is significantly different between the northern and southern region of Kolkata. The striking difference is in the wage rates and standard of living conditions at 1% and 5% significance level. The mean monthly household expenditure of south Kolkata households inclusive of both slum and commuter households (Rs 3244) is more than double than that of north (Rs 1535) and thus share of northern region households with worse standard of living is much higher than the south ($p = 0.040$). The differences are not statistically significant for health and wellbeing ($p = 0.053$), decent work ($p = 0.803$) and empowerment levels (0.942). The mean monthly income for northern region is Rs 2538 while it is Rs 3217 in the southern region of the city, but the degree of variation is large at 72.2% in the former region than latter (CV of 49.2%) the occurrence of which is depended on the neighbourhood locality where the maid has her workplace. Similarly mean wage per day and per hour is much higher for south at Rs 107.2 and Rs 18 while it is Rs 85 and Rs 15 in the north respectively. The mean differences in wage rates are significantly different between the two regions at 1% level of significance. The slum households also vary significantly spatially across the Kolkata city in terms of economic condition as is proven by the independent T-test values between north and south Kolkata households. The highly significant values (at 1% significance) records mean monthly household expenditure of Rs 3770 in the latter against Rs 1760 in the

northern Kolkata slums. Though the mean monthly household expenditure among commuters reaching from northern and southern regions of KUA in to Kolkata vary widely with Rs 1336 and Rs 2738 respectively, but the mean differences is not statistically significant.

Regarding the work structure there is not much significant difference between northern and southern city region in terms of workplace relations, work outcomes, working conditions and work problems except the work-related terms and conditions such as paid leaves, bonus and sick leaves etc. The northern city has poorer working terms and greater levels of workplace discrimination for paid domestic workers irrespective of whether they are from slum or are commuting women. The variation in working condition among the southern region domestic maids is slightly higher (CV 37%) than northern counterparts (CV 32%), while workplace discrimination in northern region has a slight higher variation (CV 39%) compared to southern region (CV 32.1%).

Among the commuter domestic workers, the standard of living ($p = 0$), health and wellbeing ($p = 0.006$) and decent work ($p = 0.004$) levels varies significantly between the northern and southern region women workers whereby the commuter maids who travel from North 24 Parganas fairing worse in all three variables relative to the women who come from South 24 Parganas. Variation in terms of workplace relation (70%), workplace discrimination (38.5%) and total monthly income (48%) is higher among commuter women coming from northern part of KUA as seen from CV values in parenthesis. Contrastingly, among the northern and southern slum domestic worker groups, there is not much significant difference in health and standard of living, but the difference in decent work and empowerment level exists and is significant at 1% level with the northern slums performing better than the southern ones. Workplace relation and working condition among the southern slum workers registers a higher variation (CV values of 56.5% and 28.2% respectively) than northern ones. Specifically the northern slums have much better workplace relations and lower work related problems than the southern slums. The commuter domestic workers in the southern region have better working terms and lesser degree of workplace discrimination than the northern commuter women workers.

8.9.6 Worker Sub-Categories within Paid Domestic Work

The overall mean difference between the work categories of domestic workers in terms of decent work index, level of empowerment, health and wellbeing status and standard of living is statistically significant at 1% level of significance as determined by the one way ANOVA. (p = 0, 0.002, 0 and 0 respectively). There is statistically high significant difference in decent work employment between cook and housecleaner (p = 0), and between housecleaner and women workers who are performing all three activities (p = 0) and also between cook and ayah (p = 0.014). However there is no difference between ayah and women who worked in multiple tasks (p = 0.516) and with housecleaners (p = 0.499). Work participation in paid work confers a higher level of empowerment to the cooks followed by the house-cleaners and ayahs as determined from the one way ANOVA results, whereby there is statistically significant difference in the level of empowerment between cooks and ayahs (p = 0.002) and cooks and housecleaners (p = 0.015). The one way ANOVA performed between health and wellbeing index shows that ayahs have the worst health followed by housecleaners, next by women who are engaged in multiple tasks and lastly by cooks and the mean differences between all are statistically significant. There is significant difference in health and wellbeing conditions between ayahs and cooks (p = 0), cook and housecleaner (p = 0.013) and between ayah and women who are ayah cum housecleaner cum cook (p = 0.042). But there is no statistical difference in degree of poor health status between ayah and housecleaner (p = 0.093). The standard of living is worst among the housecleaner, ayah and cook in the descending order. The one way ANOVA results show that there is significant statistical difference between housecleaner and ayah (p = 0.014) and housecleaner with women employed in multiple task (p = 0.013). Likewise the difference in living standards between cook and housecleaner (p = 0) and cook and women with multiple tasks (p = 0.022) is statistically significant. But there is no statistically significant difference between ayah and cook (p = 0.344).

The mean difference in monthly income earned from paid domestic work between the work categories is highly significant (p = 0). The ayahs earn much higher than women doing multiple tasks, followed by cooks and then housecleaners earn the least. The mean differences in income earned is highly significant between ayah and cook and with housecleaner (p = 0 for all), and also between cook and women employed in multiple tasks (p = 0.038).

8.9.7 According to Marital Status of Domestic Workers

The difference in health condition, empowerment, total income earned and standard of living is statistically significant across the domestic workers based on their marital status ($p = 0.01$, 0.001, 0.039 and 0 respectively). As determined from the one way ANOVA, there is greater level of empowerment achieved by widowed and separated workers relative to the currently married and the difference is statistically significant with $p = 0$. But there is no statistically significant difference between widowed and unmarried ($p = 0.283$) and separated women workers ($p = 0.521$). Unmarried women have fair health and wellbeing condition compared to the widowed women and the difference between the two groups is statistically significant ($p = 0.038$), whereas again the unmarried workers perform better in their health condition against currently married with statistically significant difference between them ($p = 0.006$). However there is no significant statistical difference between women who are widowed and currently married ($p = 0.878$) and widowed and separated or divorced women ($p = 0.898$). In terms of living standards women who are separated from their husbands have poorer standards of living than currently married ($p = 0.001$) and widowed women have worst living standards than currently married ($p = 0$) are the differences between the pairs are statistically significant. However the mean differences between widowed and separated women ($p = 1$) and currently married and unmarried women ($p = 0.323$) is not statistically significant. Separated women are more likely to have higher decision autonomy than currently married ($p = 0$) and widowed also have higher decision capacity than currently married women ($p = 0$) with statistically significant differences between the groups. In the sample the separated women are usually young with or without children, deserted from their marital and natal family and are the head of their households relying on own-selves completely for taking life decisions, while the widowed women usually have adult son and other members in their family and sometimes decisions are jointly made. The mean difference in monthly income earned is significant between widowed and married women ($p = 0.049$) and the latter is likely to earn Rs 450 more than the former on an average.

8.9.8 Factors Determining Work Category of a Paid Domestic Worker

A multinomial logistic regression is performed using selected covariates and factors namely socio-economic, employment related variables and household factors to

understand the determinants which cause variation in choice of work categories within the paid domestic work domain. (**Table 1.6.24**) The reference category for the dependent variable is women performing multiple tasks of a cook, ayah and a helper. The covariates that determine work participation as an ayah are age, education level and poor health and wellbeing index and empowerment index. Increasing age and educational attainment is positively associated with increasing likelihood of a domestic worker to take up ayah work and the coefficients are at 10% level of significance. Unhealthy women and women who have higher age and schooling more than primary levels are 62.5, 1.04 and 1.1 times more likely to work as an ayah or baby-sitter respectively. With every unit increase in the degree of poor health and wellbeing index, age and level of schooling attainment, there is increase in probability of a domestic worker to work as an ayah and all the coefficient values are significant at 10% level. While women having higher degree of empowerment are seen to be less likely to take up ayah work and it is evident from coefficient figures at 5% level of significance ($p = 0.027$) but relative to the reference category, the likelihood of this occurrence decreases 0.027 times. This is because most ayahs are head of their household on account of being aged and widowed. Women belonging to extended family are seen to have more chance of being an ayah ($p = 0.069$) but the coefficient is significant only at 10% level. Whereas women belonging from households with head being unemployed are seen to be less likely to take up ayah work ($p < 0.1$). Compared to the other family structures, women who belong to extended family are 4.4 times more odds ratio to work as ayah. This can be explained by the fact that ayah work entails longer working hours of more than 8 to 12 hours at a stretch and married women especially with small children do not work as ayah as they have to devote substantial time in reproductive and child care activities. It is mostly the widowed elderly women living with extended relatives that are seen to work as ayah. OBC and Muslim women are less likely to work as ayah and relative to the reference category the likelihood of occurrence of OBC women as ayah decreases 0.072 times.

The factors that influence the likelihood of domestic workers taking up cooking job exclusively are strongly influenced by caste system. Relative to the general caste, the OBC and scheduled castes and tribes have lower chances to be employed as cooks with significance of 10% and 1% respectively. Marital status and household type do not have conspicuous effect on cooking as an activity. Women belonging to nucleated

family and extended family are 3.5 times (where $p = 0.089$) and 5.3 times (where $p = 0.048$) more likely to work as a cook than women from joint and single family structure. Again the women who have their household heads employed in regular salaried ($p = 0.023$) and self employed ($p = 0.034$) households are 5.6 and 4.6 times more likely to work as cook and both the coefficient figures are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. Other variables such as living arrangements, age and education level of the worker and other continuous independent variables does not show significant influence on the work type of cooking.

Table 1.6.24 Multinomial Logistic Regression explaining Determinants of Choice of Work Sub- Categories among Domestic Workers

Multinomial Logistic Regression Explaining Factors Influencing Likelihood of Work-Category of Domestic Worker					
Work Categories	Determinants	B	S.E	Sig.	Exp(B)
Ayah,Baby-Sitters	Intercept	-0.104	2.711	0.969	
	Age of the domestic Worker	0.039	0.022	0.072*	1.04
	Decent Work Index	-1.044	2.44	0.669	0.352
	Standard of Living Index	0.017	1.919	0.993	1.017
	Education Level of the domestic worker	0.133	0.076	0.082*	1.142
	Health & Wellbeing Index	4.135	2.182	0.058*	62.517
	Education Level of the Head of Household	0.092	0.065	0.155	1.096
	Children (0-6) years	-0.045	0.408	0.911	0.956
	Empowerment Index	-3.628	1.66	0.029**	0.027
	Household Size	-0.016	0.154	0.919	0.984
	SC & ST	-0.602	0.418	0.15	0.548
	OBC	-2.634	1.157	0.023**	0.072
	Caste (Ref- General)	0b	.	.	.
	Widowed	-1.31	1.075	0.223	0.27
	Married	-1.611	1.027	0.117	0.2
	Separated/Divorced	-1.215	1.088	0.264	0.297
	Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	0b	.	.	.
	Nucleated	0.491	0.746	0.51	1.634
	Single	-1.873	1.472	0.203	0.154
	Extended	1.49	0.818	0.069*	4.435
	Family Type (Ref- Joint)	0b	.	.	.
	Regular Salaried	0.29	0.936	0.757	1.336
	Self Employed	-0.181	0.963	0.851	0.834
	Casual Labour	-0.446	0.865	0.606	0.64
	Unemployed/Doing Domestic Chores	-2.015	1.195	0.092*	0.133

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	Dependents	0.413	0.813	0.611	1.512
	Occupation of Household Head (Ref-Domestic Worker)	0b	.	.	.
	Others	-0.218	0.88	0.805	0.804
	Spouse	-0.96	1.16	0.408	0.383
	Spouse & Children	-0.471	0.986	0.633	0.624
	Children Only	0b	.	.	.
	Living Arrangement (Ref- Alone)	0b	.	.	.
	Rural Agricultural	0.593	1.141	0.604	1.809
	Rural Non-Agricultural (Self & Casual)	-1.191	1.21	0.325	0.304
	Rural Regular salaried (including Maid)	0.138	0.801	0.863	1.148
	Urban-Self employed	-0.865	0.859	0.314	0.421
	Urban Maid-Regular salaried	0.982	0.641	0.125	2.67
	Urban-Casual Labour	0.813	0.78	0.297	2.256
	Household Type (Ref- Urban-regular wage/salary earning)	0b	.	.	.
Cook	Intercept	-0.751	2.308	0.745	
	Age of the domestic Worker	0.018	0.017	0.304	1.018
	Decent Work Index	-0.395	1.875	0.833	0.674
	Standard of Living Index	-1.677	1.506	0.265	0.187
	Education Level of the domestic worker	0.056	0.062	0.369	1.057
	Health & Wellbeing Index	-0.554	1.591	0.728	0.575
	Education Level of the Head of Household	-0.045	0.049	0.36	0.956
	Children (0-6) years	-0.095	0.369	0.796	0.909
	Empowerment Index	1.36	1.298	0.295	3.895
	Household Size	-0.24	0.147	0.101	0.787
	SC & ST	-1.056	0.329	0.001***	0.348
	OBC	-0.877	0.504	0.082*	0.416
	Caste (Ref- General)	0b	.	.	.
	Widowed	0.134	0.913	0.884	1.143
	Married	-0.465	0.88	0.597	0.628
	Separated/Divorced	-0.705	0.977	0.47	0.494
	Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	0b	.	.	.
	Nucleated	1.258	0.739	0.089*	3.52
	Single	1.655	1.201	0.168	5.233
	Extended	1.659	0.837	0.048**	5.252
	Family Type (Ref- Joint)	0b	.	.	.
	Regular Salaried	1.721	0.758	0.023**	5.588
	Self Employed	1.521	0.718	0.034**	4.576
	Casual Labour	0.692	0.752	0.357	1.998
	Unemployed/Doing Domestic Chores	0.588	0.699	0.401	1.8
	Dependents	1.162	0.755	0.124	3.195
	Occupation of Household Head (Ref-Domestic Worker)	0b	.	.	.
	Others	0.784	0.81	0.333	2.19

	Spouse	-0.83	0.981	0.398	0.436
	Spouse & Children	0.227	0.862	0.792	1.255
	Children Only	0b	.	.	.
	Living Arrangement (Ref- Alone)	0b	.	.	.
	Rural Agricultural	-0.067	1.138	0.953	0.935
	Rural Non-Agricultural (Self & Casual)	-0.975	0.801	0.224	0.377
	Rural Regular salaried (including Maid)	-0.457	0.625	0.464	0.633
	Urban-Self employed	-0.304	0.592	0.608	0.738
	Urban Maid-Regular salaried	-0.179	0.523	0.732	0.836
	Urban-Casual Labour	0.478	0.64	0.455	1.612
	Household Type (Ref- Urban-Regular wage/Salary earning)	0b	.	.	.
House-Cleaners	Intercept	2.761	1.795	0.124	
	Age of the domestic Worker	-0.016	0.014	0.248	0.984
	Decent Work Index	-4.391	1.55	0.005***	0.012
	Standard of Living Index	2.259	1.183	0.056*	9.573
	Education Level of the domestic worker	-0.019	0.054	0.721	0.981
	Health & Wellbeing Index	-0.513	1.25	0.682	0.599
	Education Level of the Head of Household	-0.005	0.041	0.905	0.995
	Children (0-6) years	0.272	0.238	0.253	1.313
	Empowerment Index	0.926	1.017	0.362	2.526
	Household Size	-0.116	0.112	0.299	0.891
	SC & ST	-0.043	0.284	0.879	0.958
	OBC	0.114	0.389	0.77	1.121
	Caste (Ref- General)	0b	.	.	.
	Widowed	-0.333	0.799	0.677	0.717
	Married	0.132	0.766	0.863	1.141
	Separated/Divorced	-1.011	0.822	0.219	0.364
	Marital status (Ref- Unmarried)	0b	.	.	.
	Nucleated	0.972	0.526	0.0658	2.642
	Single	0.446	0.895	0.618	1.562
	Extended	1.646	0.605	0.006***	5.187
	Family Type (Ref- Joint)	0b	.	.	.
	Regular Salaried	0.667	0.622	0.283	1.949
	Self Employed	0.894	0.575	0.12	2.444
	Casual Labour	-0.004	0.569	0.994	0.996
	Unemployed/Doing Domestic Chores	0.109	0.526	0.836	1.115
	Dependents	0.222	0.596	0.71	1.249
	Occupation of Household Head (Ref- Domestic Worker)	0b	.	.	.
	Others	-0.067	0.605	0.911	0.935
	Spouse	-1.998	0.742	0.007***	0.136
	Spouse & Children	-0.495	0.644	0.443	0.61
	Children Only	0b	.	.	.

	Living Arrangement (Ref- Alone)	0b	.	.	.
	Rural Agricultural	0.484	0.877	0.581	1.623
	Rural Non-Agricultural (Self & Casual)	-0.019	0.52	0.971	0.981
	Rural Regular salaried (including Maid)	0.102	0.469	0.828	1.107
	Urban-Self employed	-0.309	0.497	0.534	0.734
	Urban Maid-Regular salaried	0.347	0.435	0.425	1.415
	Urban-Casual Labour	0.395	0.517	0.444	1.485
	Household Type (Ref- Urban-regular wage/salary earning)	0b	.	.	.
*** Significant at 1% ** Significant at 5% * Significant at 10%					
a. **The Reference Category for the Dependent Variable is: Cook & House-cleaners & Ayah.**					

Source: Field Survey, (2014-2015)

The women workers belonging to nucleated (p =0.065) and extended families are more likely to work as house cleaners and the regression coefficients are significant at 10% and 1% level of significance. But women workers who belong to extended families have 5.2 times more probability to take up house-cleaning as their occupation relative to cooking and baby-sitting. Women who live with spouse only are seen to have lower likelihood to be employed as housecleaner and the coefficient figure is highly significant at 1% level, but the likelihood of occurrence of women living with husbands only to work as domestic helpers decreases by 0.136 times relative to the reference category. Worsening standard of living condition is associated with increasing likelihood of women workers being employed as domestic helpers with $p =$ 0.056. Thus relative to the reference category the women from households categorized under worse living standards are 9.5 times more likely to work as domestic helpers than working as ayah and cook. On the other hand, with every unit decline in level of decent work index, the probability of the domestic worker to work as a domestic cleaner increases and the coefficient value is statistically highly significant ($p = 0.005$), but relative to the reference category the likelihood of the occurrence decreases by 0.012 times. The model explains 38.2% (Nagelkerke's R^2) variance in the work category likelihood of domestic workers and classifies 60.5% of cases correctly. The model statistically significantly predicts the work category likelihood better than the intercept model as is indicated by $p < 0.001$. The independent variables which are statistically significant at 1% and 5% significance level in explaining the variance in the dependent variable of choice of work sub-categories are decent work index ($p = 0.007$), standard of living index ($p = 0.012$),

empowerment index ($p = 0.013$), caste ($p = 0$) and age ($p = 0.016$) of the women domestic workers.

8.10 Political Awareness and Participation in Women's Union/Association

An important aspect that the survey has highlighted is the general lack of awareness among these women regarding the legal ramification and NGO participation in the city for the upliftment of these working women, to make their work and voices be more visible and converge towards the idea of decent work in paid domestic work. Almost none of the respondents claim to have knowledge regarding the notion of decent work, rights and privileges they are entitled to and are ignorant about favourable tactics of bargaining ways for their folk in the wage and work market. Political awareness is also of very limited knowledge confined to knowing names of the ruling government party and candidates for municipal elections and mostly the local councillors, which is a mere 3% of women who say they are aware about. None of the respondents ever participated in any women's association, though about 3% claim to know the presence of '*mahila samiti*' (women's association) and political women's wings around their neighbourhoods. Thus one can gauge the sorry plight of these women and their lives, where they are completely ignorant about their minimum basic rights at workplace. The workplace set up being within private realm of the employer, and the domestic workers being spatially scattered, they are subjected to invisibility in work participation and various degrees of exploitation and they are unable to foster professional and unionized bonds with fellow domestic workers. Collective bargaining capacity and equivocal participation in grievance redressal, mitigation of non-decent employment patterns irrespective of work structure, work hierarchy and location and raising consciousness among the women earning livelihood under this occupation is therefore a difficult task.

8.11 Summary

Health and wellbeing of the women domestic workers is a amalgamation of the interacting dimensions including access to housing amenities, quality of living, occupational pattern, age, innate body composition and psycho-social environment. The commuter women score poorly in health index owing to their worst living standards and unusual hours of work per day. Chronic illnesses and diseases like musculoskeletal disorders, nerve related issues are fairly common among these

women. But maids mostly rely on self medication or go untreated resulting from ignorance and financial problems. Mental and emotional health is a matter of concern as these women endure domestic violence coupled with bouts of irritability, depression and stress incidences emanating from difficulty in making the two ends meet. Health and wellbeing was also influenced by the work satisfaction and likeness for occupation, which was profoundly low and moderate among women irrespective of the work tasks performed. Women wanted to change their occupation and majority of maids who had daughters fervently refused to allow them to work as domestic workers in future.

The level of empowerment attained is gauged from capacity of these women to make varied decisions about own work and personal life along with exercising their autonomy and influence in crucial family decisions related to purchasing household assets, spending own earned income, matters regarding children etc. Empowerment was seen to be low among domestic helpers and among commuters. Important decisions were mostly undertaken by male household heads, especially the husband. Domestic work was not recognized as work by their households and in most cases the women experienced no significant change in respect received from family and attitude regarding their work participation. Most importantly, the women feel stigmatized under the societal class distinctions which look down upon paid domestic work to be ritually unclean, dishonourable. The women are despised and are subjected to myriad forms of discriminations and humiliations from among their own families. But sections of commuter and especially the Muslim women workers feel to have improved household economic position and intra-familial relationships and position with own selves post their participation in paid domestic work. But remarkably none of the women respondents were aware about notion of decent work, women's association, NGOs and unions that are active in their work area mobilizing women informal workers towards safeguarding their rights and interests. Herein lies the biggest challenge in India and in Kolkata city specifically regarding getting these illiterate women domestic workers organized, awakened and united towards fighting for basic rights at work and of human dignity at large.

Chapter IX

Conclusion

Female labour force participation is influenced by a combination of factors pertaining to economic, socio-cultural, demographic, historical, technological and geographical factors. Age structure, education parameters, caste and religion, place of residence, marital status, motherhood and fertility status, standard of living and household income, nature of employment and job characteristics, wage rates, public policy, regional and local economic condition etc all affect women's participation in economically gainful work. Contractual and outsourcing work, with increase in share of casual work, cheaper supply of low skilled and semi-skilled work-hands in developing world, the proportion of female workers have risen, but is concentrated in particular industries only. Women are more likely to be in irregular paid, low-waged, unskilled and non-unionized industries and sub-sectors which are likely to provide jobs that are flexible, part-time and manual in nature. Paid domestic work is one such work that is also stigmatised in society as it entails degrading and undignified tasks having to handle waste and menial work. Even the domestic maids themselves dislike their occupation and cite extreme financial crisis and lack of alternative earning modes as the reasons behind taking up this profession. In popular films in India as well, stories projecting higher caste women taking up paid domestic work in times of financial crisis is commonly portrayed. Apart from that, often phrases like '*bai / naukrani ki tarah dikhti hai*' (looking like a domestic maid/servant) are used in common everyday lingo by upper class women folk to refer to shabbily dressed women in public space.

9.1 Major Findings of the Study

The uniqueness in Kolkata about the paid domestic market emanates from the presence and mutual interaction of slum residing or *foot maids* and commuter workers or *track maids* who are in a mutually competitive situation. Unlike the other big metro-cities in India, a substantial proportion of domestic workers are found to travel by the railway from neighbouring districts into Kolkata. The urban space in the city and life of the women domestics has undergone reorganisation affected by commuting, by intermingling across socio-cultural realities, with city-dwelling slum

women domestics, with unspoken rules of cooperation and conflict. This *dualism of maid market* gives a distinctive character to the paid domestic labour market of Kolkata city. Some startling revelations of the study broadly include prevalence of child marriage among the women maids, common occurrence of child labour in this occupation, dislike of the commuter women for agricultural labour and MGNREGA manual work, functional importance of microfinance organisations and now banks like Bandhan in West Bengal especially among the small savers group of domestic workers and peer networking among the commuter women maids. Husband's sickness and unemployment is one of the primary reasons for work participation of the domestics. Nature of work participation is also influenced by the life events of the women pertaining to marriage, childbirth and ageing. Often it was seen that women transformed from a live-in fulltime work into live-out work after becoming an adult or after their marriage. The degree of empowerment being negated by the effect of long distance commute and spatial inequality in cost of living, wage rates across tasks performed by the maids along with level of decent work and other variables, makes geographical space as a crucial decider for wellbeing and welfare among the women workers. There is a distinct north-south difference in the city and a powerful influence of location economics. Work related inequalities are wider among scheduled population and minority social groups of Muslims and OBC, while the sub-category of domestic helpers fare worse in all aspects of socio-economic variables. There exists varied degrees of information asymmetry in the paid domestic labour market in terms of operation of placement agency and wage rates in different parts of city among the domestic workers especially in few of the slum pockets. The study would have benefited from detailed analysis and interview of large sample of the employers to know their perspective on paid domestic work, along with field visits to the villages and smaller tier urban centres where the commuter women live. Moreover observations at the workplace of the maid which is the employer's house would have enabled greater scope of comprehension of work dynamics. Conducting interview of the maids in presence of employers and at the workplace would not have generated truthful responses. But given the constraints on time and feasibility of unbiased assessment and true validation of the domestic worker's perspectives in absence of employers that these were interviews could not be made possible.

Though in this study women did not report sexual harassment by the employers but often many unwanted gestures, gender based insults and physical intimidation go unnoticed and unreported by the women workers out of fear of losing the job. The work life balance is better managed by the slum women workers relative to the commuter counterparts not only due to the workplace being in the shorter distance from their homes, but also they are sometimes able to make brief visits home and finish their own household chores in between shifts with multiple employers. The intensity of work is relatively higher among house-cleaners working with multiple employers than ayahs, due to travel in between from one to other workplace. Though the proportion of general and higher castes in this occupation is not that substantial like scheduled castes and OBC, but poverty and shortfall of suitable work is forcing more and more women from general caste to crowd paid domestic work market. The stagnant rural sector economy largely on the base of poor agriculture production and growing inequality through mechanization, unexpected under-performance of rural non-farm sector, all have created surplus cheap labour who are left to search casual unskilled jobs such as in paid domestic work .

Hierarchies of social stratification develop within the paid domestic work territory in two ways. First the unequal power relation of dependence, domination, obligation, authority and simultaneously an intimate personal attachment also grows between the employer and the maid. Secondly the multifarious interactions among the task based domestic worker (cooks, house-cleaners, ayahs) in a workplace and in between the employer and each of them reinforces the work-activity based class differences within the domain of domestic work. Elderly women are conspicuous in ayah work as it involves working with a single employer in a day as it saves exhaustion from movements among multiple employers per day, also because the elderly women especially the widowed can devote more than 6 to 8 hours in the absence of child-care responsibility at home.

Attaining empowerment is not the ultimate goal of the workers, because empowerment is a sense of realization which is contextual and subjective. It is pivoted on the changed resource ownership base and concomitant autonomy in various spheres of living; the intensity of which might vary in different situations. As discussed earlier, the bargaining power of the maid within her intra-household and familial network is restricted by various socio-economic factors that also determine

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the range of arenas over which the women are allowed to negotiate. For instance in the sample, substantial proportion of women reported that family planning decisions were taken by husband. Similarly decision regarding paid work participation of the maid was made by her husband or her parents in many cases. While, the decision to migrate with husband post marriage was not usually kept open to discussions to the women maid, considering the traditional patrilocal norm of post-marital habitation that prevails in north Indian region. Most of the domestic workers are also socialized to be adjusting, meek and undervalue their own lives, not only because of their gender but also on account of their weaker economic existence. The bargaining power of these maids is seen to be also highly restrained because of their self perceived abomination for their occupation. Moreover, there is conspicuous inter-caste and inter-religion difference on the decision making capacity of the domestic workers stemming from the difference in socialization and hierarchical status of castes and religion in the economic continuum. The acceptance of domestic violence as a social and gendered norm and silent suffering that these women endure show how women are brought up in Indian society not to question the anomaly in social ideologies, nor do they have powers to raise an issue against it. On similar front, the notions about who are responsible for performing housework and child rearing tasks within a household are gendered rule of society. Women are socialized into domesticity through within the home responsibilities, maternity and child care, restrictions on paid work type and by societal customs.

Basile (2013) points out to the role and operation of the 'social regulators' in the form of caste, gender bias, patriarchy and family in informal sector in India which determines social relations, economic and work relations. Thus even though the informal sector workers, domestic workers do not fall within labour laws, they are controlled by the social forces. Caste is not only a social institution but it is in the mindset of the people as an ideology which affects the social interaction and agency in political and economic ways of life as well. Thus in paid domestic work market, caste does influence, recruitment chances, type of work assigned, operation of social network in getting access and information about work and wages also to some extent. The plight of these domestic workers can be assessed from their multiple identities in the labour market. Apart from being casual wage workers, these women also are unpaid family labour, home-based workers, own-account self employed workers,

owing to their secondary occupational status, which complicates their socio-economic existence as they are vulnerable to various forms of exploitations through diverse channels. Paid domestic labour market in India is highly competitive as the over-crowding of women and increasing participation pull the wage rates down.

9.2 Effect of Commute to Work on Empowerment and Wellbeing

Kolkata city has a bustling transport network owing to its strategic location, out of which the suburban railway system forms an integral node as it links the KUA with the city which is cost and time efficient. The daily rider-ship of the EMU trains and its role in the economy of the city cannot be denied. The frequency of the trains is commendable and so is the connectivity it provides. Train commute to workplace and reaching the mega city from the villages and small towns is empowering to them economically and psychologically. But the concept of wellbeing and welfare attained via long distance train travel to work is subjective and varies across the caste, religion, age cohorts and personal experiences among the maids. Thus maids travelling the same distance and time are seen to differ in opinions regarding benefits acquired and adversities encountered during the journey to workplace. The commuter domestic workers schedule their daily lives based on the train service timings which controls their time distribution to daily activities and their inter-personal communications. Irregularities and interruption in train services does generate anxiety among the maids as it might lead to pay-cuts and make the job all the more insecure. Similarly women interviewees had reported to face suspecting questions and reproach from husbands and family upon missing a train service back home. Thus most women are always on a scurry and have detailed knowledge about the departure and arrival timings of the trains, which also helps them avoid the waiting time. Commuting of women workers thus affects the time use in other activities, social bonds and intra-familial distribution of chores, agency and autonomy among other family members (especially other women and children of the maid).

 The negative and positive externalities in the form of hassles and stress involved in journey, separate women's compartments, the social networking and genuine companionship from fellow passengers influences the commuter maid's lifestyle. The associated feeder sub-systems used for reaching the workplace like auto, walking, bus and vans also exert impact on overall commute. Often the women commuters seek

reduction in travel costs and greater time flexibility notwithstanding their inconvenience in travel, which might even jeopardise their health in the long run. Many women also revealed that they travel on feet from the rail terminal to the workplace or to their homes, even though a vehicular travel might help. This sacrificial behaviour of the maid is primarily a consequence of monetary limitations and as a propensity to save for more essential expenditures supposedly for their children.

An attempt has been made to disentangle the conceptualization of space that surrounds the realm of paid domestic work in myriad forms. The space traversed by the commuter maids geographically and by the slum workers socially has been discussed. The inter-caste and inter-lingual interaction of women maids and employers, the proximity of people across the work and travel space physically yet maintaining the separation of social space is an intriguing phenomenon in Kolkata. The caste ideology of purity and pollution blends smoothly yet imperceptibly within the urban employer households of Kolkata, whereby the discriminatory practices of refusing the domestic maid to use the same toilet, provisioning separate utensils, denial to sit on the furniture etc are ways of class distinctions but is rooted in casteist dogma. Thus notwithstanding the intimacy and physical closeness of the maids with their employers, both preserve their hierarchical distances through common habitual activities within and outside the work space. Work place discrimination is humiliating to the maids as they are forbidden to enter certain spaces within the employer household, restricted to voice their opinion, not permitted to touch certain objects apart from the usual do's and don't do's. Work category among the domestic workers is ranked based on ritual purity and importance of tasks in everyday life, and it is observed that discrimination is greater in intensity for the bottom ranked maids like the ones performing house-cleaning tasks. Many respondents in the survey who were primarily domestic help refused to clean toilets or handle or discard solid kitchen wastes at the employer's house citing the tasks to be associated with untouchable sweeper castes or '*jamadar*'. Another interesting occurrence was that Muslim maids were barred from working in Hindu workplaces and vice-versa, but in handful of cases Muslim maids were working as house-cleaners in upscale southern Kolkata households; an example of newer urban locales where identity politics gets diffused under social urbanism. But again these Muslim women could not access work in the

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sacred places of the employer's home such as in kitchen as cook or as ayah which would require direct physical contact with the care-recipient even in such localities. It is thus clear that task based segregation is practiced not only by the employers but is also fervently followed by the domestic workers themselves by reluctance and non-participation in activities that they consider disgraceful. The workplace relations among the different ranks of domestic workers; say a ayah, cook and a helper is influenced also by this perceived difference among themselves based on the degrees of access to the employer's household space, closeness of interaction with the employer and amount of time spent at the workplace. Thus in the response set, many domestic cleaners reported to experience hostile or competitive relations with her co-workers which does impact the working conditions unfavourably. Some women domestics; usually the cooks aim to maintain task exclusivity and refuse to perform multiple tasks such as sweeping, washing clothes or doing the dishes as it would perceptibly lower their position in the work hierarchy.

Agency theory discussed about the role played by the domestic workers in enacting their choices which are congruent to the intentions for uplifting their living standards. In the group discussions and few case studies and in the course of the interviews conducted, many women maids were vocal about their preference for employers and workplaces. What was evident that Bengali maids disliked working with '*baniya*' (merchant/trader) or Marwari employers as they are known for being supposedly hard task-masters who overburden the maids with additional tasks. Many cook maids also disclosed their non-preference for Punjabi or Gujarati employers as they are infamous for ordering preparation of many meals per day. Thus cultural similarities between the domestic worker and her employers is a prominent occurrence which emanates from not only geographical proximity of urban living in Kolkata where religion and linguistic pockets have historically grown up, but also perpetuates due to the active agency of both the employers and the maids. Both parties usually try to find commonalities and basic similarities in culture so as to ease the interaction and reduce chances of cultural conflict. Many cooks had expressed that while choosing a job she sometimes considers the employer's linguistic background (rarely and as a minor factor) as then they would have to make greater adjustments towards understanding their language; food habits, learn new cuisine which would affect their wages and

ease of work. Likewise, few baby-sitters and ayahs reported to not partake any food from the employer as they are scared of being served stale and left-over food.

Paid domestic work in modern times has been accused to perpetuate the historical colonial legacy of servitude. In the capitalistic world structure scholars argue that it is in the garb of service the presence of the superiority-subordination that was existent between the master and servant classes in colonial and feudal societies is made operational. The stigma associated with this occupation is such profound that women engaged with this work feel ashamed to acknowledge their participation to their families lest they taunt and disown them. The shame has its origin in the pollution notions and also in gender ideologies. Domestic work performed for own household is a responsibility and duty that women are given respect for as it falls within the preordained space where women are allowed to exert their autonomy. But the same work pattern when performed as waged employment in others houses, the work is considered mortifying. (Ray, 2000)

The interplay of intermediaries in the paid domestic work market such as placement agencies and private business start-up companies in bridging the supply and demand of domestic workers is also located prominently in Kolkata. Electronic and print media, ICT has enabled hiring of maids with a click and is slowly gaining ground in the Kolkata market, but the operation of placement agencies is extremely popular and wide spread in the city. Though the enrolled women have say in their work preferences, but they usually follow the directions issued by the placement centres. The agencies do not usually have any specific criteria for enrolling the maids, but in times of dispute resolution between the employer client and the domestic worker, most agencies show apathy. The contribution of the social network in the form of close family members, distant relative, kin, native acquaintances is the driving force in this occupation. But the network is highly feminized. They influence job search, wage fixation, financial cushion in crisis, migratory behaviour, emotional support to the domestic workers. Oral work agreements, absence of safety nets in form of job tenure, lack of compensation at the time of job-termination, low base wages are some of the weak links in labour exploitation in this occupation. The wages for the paid domestic tasks have not risen in the pace as the cost of living has over the decades in the city.

9.3 Employer-Domestic Worker Relationship

To understand the dynamics of this occupation, the approach of the employers towards paid domestic work and maids need to be kept in mind. Generally as the data also suggests, religious similarity and preference for cleanliness is of utmost importance before recruiting a worker. Though caste functions does determine the tasks to be performed but it does not have a stronghold like religion does in an urban setting. The employers also prefer women who are into the profession for a considerable duration as it would mean they do not have to invest much time in instructing them and teaching nuances of the work. Trustworthiness, punctuality and politeness are the vital virtues that enable ease at employment. The dealings with the domestic maid varied across the hierarchy of work profile. It was observed through the interviews and discussions with few employer households in a pilot survey that ayah and cooks are dealt with less strictly, less authoritatively and with more subjectivity by the employers than the housecleaners. This was because cooking and care work was thought to be skilled and good cooks are not easily replaceable unlike the relatively cheaper non-skilled performers like house cleaners and utensil washers.

The relationship between the worker and the employer is manifold which also transforms into a congenial bond. The employer is not only the master at the workplace but is also at times the lender to the maid, caring for the maid's children at times and in return the maid also becomes an emotional support to the employer family especially to the women employer head. But in all respects the employer holds the reign of such relationship. There is also a psychological threat that sometimes the employer perceives from the maid in forms of leaking private family information to the neighbourhood through gossiping, of trespassing into controlled personal and household spaces and of theft. The perceived class difference with the domestic worker thus affects the tone of interaction and behavioural pattern of the employers. It is a common sight in present day big metropolitan affluent Indian households to employ nannies and baby-sitters who accompany the family on outings in shopping malls and restaurants taking care of the infants and children whilst the parents spend quality time with each other. Very often the ayahs are seen to supervise the children in the makeshift crèches and child care centres in the malls, while the parents busy themselves in other leisure work. The ayahs are at the same time not provided similar food that her employers consume at the restaurants and even at home. Women in

upper middle class and rich households who do not perform paid work also employ retinue of domestic workers so that they have entitled free time to spend on personal and family needs. This also makes domestic chores look all the more abhorring and low standard work in public eyes, which further damages the work value of paid domestic work (Anderson, 2001). The emotional attachment and dependency that develops between the baby-sitters and the employer's children and vice-versa is though necessary and an inevitable outcome is perceived as a threat to the unequal power relations which can destabilize employer's authority in future. In the routine absence of the working woman employer mother, the baby-sitter or the ayah of the child develops what can be termed as an *occupational pseudo-motherhood* with the employer's child. In reciprocation women maids are also seen to be detached and reluctant beyond work relations, but sometime maids who are working for the same employer through many years, develop a sense of belongingness with the employer family that they preserve, protect and take care of the house even in their employer's absence like they do to their own property.

Domestic worker in modern urban household has become an indispensable part and they ensure the smooth functioning of the life of their employers and their absence from work for even one day can make the normal schedule go haywire. Invisible and scattered nature of work performed within the precincts of private employer household makes collectivizing and organising these women into trade unions and women's associations and monitored implementation of welfare schemes a difficult proposition. The biggest challenge lies in acknowledging appropriate productive value to the mundane and repetitive yet essential tasks of housework and care-work that permits other economic activities to be performed without glitch. Unfortunately domestic chores and unpaid care-labour has always been thought not as work rather an obligation of the women folk. This nonchalant attitude towards all those activities that constitute running the household poses a barrier in getting paid domestic work its due remuneration and recognition.

9.4 Need for 'Decent Work' Agenda in Paid Domestic Work

Stupendous amount of discourse and deliberations by International Labour Organization (ILO) has shaped the context of decent work and helped improving the lives and livelihood of workers. But amidst the global awakening on safeguarding

workers' rights and bridging gender equality it is disappointing that India has still not ratified ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers that was adopted on 16th June 2011, thereby leaving immense gap in ensuring formal rights and entitlements to the domestic workers. Though Karnataka, Kerala and Gujarat state legislature have passed Minimum Wages Act for domestic workers employed within state, there is urgent need of an inclusive and holistic union legislation specifically for paid domestic workers in India. But at the foremost the definitional criteria of 'work' must be rethought and reformulated in order to understand the volume of women's contribution in the economy. Moreover in the scenario of paid domestic work, the tasks performed by the maids are not considered work in economic sense coupled with the complexities involving an employer-servant relationship that is not strictly based on payment of remuneration against the services, but transcends into pseudo-familial psycho-social bonds.

There is also a need to form a consensus among the data collecting authorities as to clarity of terminology used to describe and classify paid domestic workers based on duration of work time. Definitional shortcomings create confusions in enumeration and defeat the whole purpose of identification of women participant in the first place. It is rightly highlighted by Palriwala and Neetha (2009) that the terms that may apply to other labour categories must be used with caution for domestic workers. The terms like part time and temporary has to be enquired into from both sides, that is, from of the employer and especially from worker's viewpoint. A domestic worker, who performs work in multiple employer houses, has a full time work which may even be more than a normal 8 hour man-day, but she is categorised as a part time worker considering she is spending just few hours in one employer home. For that one employer, the maid is a part timer, but in reality she is earning through full time work. This is also true for a live-out worker who spends whole day at only in one employer's house working errands, only to go back to her house in the evening. The proportion of live-in maids has been declining in recent times attributed to housing space shortages in cities, rising costs of living and increase in share of nuclear family. The maid who can afford living in the city in slums, choose to be a live-out worker which would also allow them to avoid total dependency on their employer and have free time to themselves. The live-in maids are usually seen to be employed in affluent higher middle income and high income rich employer houses, one who can provide

the workers with separate living quarters and larger monthly salary. Often children are employed as live-in maid and they have no specified hours of work and are paid less, easier to control. Hiring a full time live-in maid is often hailed as a status symbol in the rich and wealthy households. Usually live-in maids are employed in households where one of the employer family members; generally the aged, does not participate in paid work outside home. This ensures greater safety, control and also companionship to the aged. Employers also prefer women live-in maid especially adolescent girls in case there are girl children in the employer's household for that guarantees security to the children and besides the maid also substitutes as a play-mate for the employer's children.

The data collection methods in India on domestic workers need to be less ambiguous regarding the tasks performed. There is overlapping of workers who work in an institutional set up and within domestic confines of private homes. Multiplicity of tasks and varied degree of specialization has to be canvassed in future surveys as is pointed out by (Neetha, 2009). Invisibility of the workers arises not only from workplace characteristics but also from definitional shortcomings and ambiguities. In India the definitional differences about who is a domestic worker between NSS, NIC and the Domestic Worker Bill Registration Social Security and Welfare Act, 2008 is an example. It would be a positive approach if NCO classification can enumerate domestic workers in a separate sub-category else the current data is grossly underreporting the actual share of domestic workers, as gardening, chauffeur, gate-keeping is male dominated.

Again terms like temporary and permanent creates confusions as the paid domestic work sector witnesses women who take frequent breaks in work due to social obligations, marriage, reproductive and child rearing activities and also are laid off or leave working for employers. Flexibility in schedule, instability in work and income, job insecurity, non-uniformity in remuneration, sporadic and ad-hoc work involvements characterises paid domestic workers in India. The workplace being homes makes it challenging in implementing and monitoring decent work norms, ensuring delivery of worker's entitlements and organizing them into unions. The government must formulate separate policy for the domestic workers for provision of vocational skill training to them where handling of electrical machines normally used for housework, ethics rights and responsibilities of work, handling of patients and infants should be made so that they can add a professional approach to the occupation.

Raising awareness about the value of their work and awakening in them the importance of demanding decent work conditions is a crucial initial step that the government must start with foremost.

As the national statistics on the likes of National Sample Survey (NSS) and Census of India indicate paid domestic work market in India is witnessing an overcrowding of cheap women labour due to economic downturn in many backward states. Thus with increasing proportions of women entering this occupation, there would arise conflicting interests, deprivation and greater marginalization of these women workers in future, unless necessary steps are implemented in accordance with decent work directives, participation of legislature and NGO along with responsible citizenship towards safeguarding the interests of domestic workers. The registration and regulation of placement agencies and network of contractors needs to be stringent. Stricter punishments to persons and organisations involved in trafficking of children and women in lieu of providing domestic work job have to be handed over. The flip side of earning a living from paid work outside their homes can be immense in terms of leaving their small children all alone or with elder siblings. Lack of crèche facilities and day-care institutions in the native places especially among the commuter workers poses as challenges, especially in the villages and small towns in West Bengal especially that are government run and affordable.

Paid domestic work in future is likely to transform from the simplistic, manual low paid job into a profession where women need to learn to operate machines, be more professional in outlook and must possess a minimum skill set and training. Globalization and technological up-gradation means higher degree of automation in the household activities and greater demand of quality service from the affluent strata of society. But this is more appropriate in the western world which has resources for wide scale application of labour saving devices. But employment structure should be modelled on decent work to protect the rights of the workers. Training and professionalism would add a dimension of due respect and dignified stature to paid domestic work. Employers must become proactive in ensuring the rightful labour privileges and due recognition of the maids as workers. As domestic work is socially significant, indispensable and necessary part of living, thus it must be given its due status politically, socially and of course economically.

9.5 Policy Implication

Domestic workers are not included in any legislative enactments of the country. They are excluded from Minimum Wages Act 1948, Trade Unions Act 1926 and also from the Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal), 2013, Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, Workmen Compensation Act, 1923. Though in 1959 and 1970s Private Member Bills were introduced in Indian Parliament having clauses to safeguard their work related interests, but they were rejected. The House Workers (Conditions of Service) Bill, 1989 also failed to become an Act. There is urgent need of a separate legislative enactment exclusively for domestic workers particularly to ensure them their labour rights, decent work conditions as it would directly impact the growing proportion of women and disadvantageous social groups associated with this occupation. Kerala (2010), Karnataka (2004), Tamil Nadu, have included domestic workers under Minimum Wages Act of the respective states under patronage and pressure of voluntary organisations (Neetha, 2013). Manual Workers Act (Regulation and Employment and Conditions at Work Act), 1982 in Tamil Nadu, Kerala Artisans and Skilled Workers Welfare Fund, State Welfare Board Bill in Maharashtra, 2008 include domestic workers in their ambit. In Maharashtra, the state provides provident fund, health insurance, pension, paid leaves to these workers. Bihar (2007), Andhra Pradesh (2007), Odisha (2012), Rajasthan (2008) and Jharkhand (2010) also brought in the domestic workers under State Minimum Wages Act under the direction of union labour ministry. But the ambiguity behind definitional differences among the states in terms of minimum hours and tasks to be performed which entitles the worker the minimum stipulated wage makes the implementation of the Act a difficult exercise and thereby excludes many women. Moreover, the minimum wages criteria in all the implementing states have attributed the domestic workers as unskilled and thus fixed the lowest slab of wages. This move has thus formally stamped domestic work to be undervalued. The Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008 has brought in the domestic workers in its spectrum but maternity benefits and disability entitlements are not included. The Act also directs creation of State Social Security Board which is authorized to report, advice and supervise schemes for the workers, but in case of domestic workers, the execution is weak. In Maharashtra the scheme of Janashree Yojana has provision of health coverage to the domestic workers for incurring death

and accidents and also education scholarships for two children of the workers. Vocational training, completion of basic schooling and education, organising maids into voluntary groups, self-help groups and assistance in accessing and utilizing microfinance have been taken up by various NGOs along with legal services, assisting in child-care, subsidiary self employment strategies. Few NGOs under the aegis of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship implemented by Domestic Workers Sector Skill Council and NGO Prayas operate to undertake free skill training of special certificate courses for women domestic workers according to tasks performed across many states in India. They are taught professional handling of the tasks, operating household gadgets, waste segregation procedures, hygiene and sanitation and other relevant skills in a dignified manner apart from communication skills in English.

Domestic workers need to be brought inside the social security coverage with provisions for occupational safety and compensation for injury, maternity benefits and health and old age pension schemes. As there is no age for retirement from work, and there is evident financial crisis owing to abandonment by children so that women domestic workers are compelled to continue working in their old age as well. In West Bengal the domestic workers are also not entitled to the government provident fund scheme that other informal workers receive since 2001. Organising and collectivizing domestic workers has become a crucial step in forwarding their interests, problems and raising issues that affect them in public and government domain. Many NGOs and private voluntary groups have associated regionally and also at national level focusing on decent work, labour rights, condemning and highlighting the trafficking issues, child labour reporting etc. National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM), Parichiti (West Bengal), Mahila Kaamghar Sangathan (Maharashtra), Domestic Workers' Rights Union (Karnataka), Manushi Domestic Workers Union (Tamil Nadu), Astitva (Uttarakhand), Jagori (New Delhi), National Platform for Domestic Workers (2012), Manushi (Delhi), Domestic Workers Forum of India etc has been looking into the issues of organising these workers, providing child care facilities and education to their children, ameliorating wage problems. Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organising (WEIGO), International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) now International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) and other women's organizations have been

catalytic in mobilizing, organizing raising responsiveness among the domestic workers and preparing drafts alongside collaborating with ILO into formulating decent employment agendas. The recent ratification by India in June 2017, to the ILO Conventions 138 and 182 related to Minimum Age to Work and Worst Forms of Child Labour respectively, thus would ensure complete prohibition of children below 14 years to any kind of employment is a welcome move by the government towards curbing the menace of child labour in paid domestic work. But it is disheartening that though many draft bills are being considered in the union legislative assemblies in the country, they are yet to be passed into an Act. These include Domestic Workers (Registration, Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2010, Domestic Workers (Regulation of Employment, Conditions of Work, Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2008 and The Domestic Workers Employment Rights Protection Bill, 2004, promoted by National Commission for Women (NCW), National Campaign Committee for Unorganized Sector Workers and SEWA, Kerala (UNDP India, 2012). The draft bill on domestic workers 2010 proposes formation of a welfare fund, issuance of identity cards and registration for the workers along with committees which would review the Act functioning. Another exclusive policy has been synthesized by Ministry of Labour; National Policy on Domestic Workers, 2009, but the ministries is yet to reach agreement over the coverage of domestic workers under extensive labour rights (Negi, 2014). On the other hand, Rashtryia Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) has included these workers, but the clause of obtaining registration of employment from verified authorities such as RWA, police and employers in order to receive the medical benefits defeats the purpose for these marginalized women (Sampath, 2013). On similar note, the coverage of domestic workers of Delhi and Hyderabad under Employees' State Insurance (ESI) on experimental basis is found to be ridden with loopholes and ambiguities. It requires presence of lot of paperwork, verification procedures, and only covers medical expenses of the maid partially. The employer is not accounted responsible for any contribution towards the scheme as the domestic worker is thought to be self-employed and the aged women maids are not included within it as well (Neetha, 2017).

The domestic workers in India are subject to diverse vulnerabilities as no labour laws include them and the clauses are not fool proof and holistic. Living conditions in the informal settlements and slums are dreadful and it affects their health and likewise

they fall prey to illness and absenteeism from work. This adds to the insecurity of job that already exists. Wage cuts and uninformed deductions by deceitful employers in absence of written contracts make matters worse. Presence of a responsible and wide network services concerning training, health and residential aspects would ensure good quality of living and enhancing the human capital of the women. The administration and legislation must approach to also lay down legal rules which would address the context specific problems that the domestic workers most likely confront in their occupation.

9.6 Planning propositions for Railway Commuting Women Domestic Workers

As per the commuter women maids are concerned, the government must collaborate with the railway sector for refurbishing the investments into city mass transit systems especially the suburban railway. That would not only facilitate the travel for the women domestic workers but would be beneficial for the other users of the railway services as well. Efforts should be made to make rail travel safe and accessible by the women maids, which must include renovating the toilets and drinking water booths to make them serviceable and accessible for the disabled women, better train information and announcement mechanisms in not only Bengali but Hindi language, regulation and sufficient space for sitting and waiting rooms and presence of efficient railway policing systems preferably by women police as well and grievance redressal cells at the stations. An important revelation from the survey was about the complexities involved in getting a monthly train ticket issued, which acts as a disincentive for non-ownership of train pass. Corrupt practices by the railway station authorities must be put under strict inspection and simple procedures must be put into operation for dispensation of monthly tickets to the women travellers. Steps must also be mobilized to decongest and widen the approach roads to the stations and sanitation maintenance at the platforms. Special attention must be intended for maintenance of adequate lighting within the train coaches and in the stations, platforms and over-bridges, approach roads as these are crucial for women's safety and mobility. Given the rapid rise in the proportion of women travellers, especially the informal sector workers, the survey respondents uniformly complained about the need for more space reservations in trains exclusively for women. Overcrowding especially during the peak hours force women to take to general compartments amidst the fear of harassment by men or travel perilously in the packed women coaches. Thus positive

efforts like running of all women trains must be continued and the frequency of services must also be increased. Organising commuter domestic workers is more difficult due to their scattered distribution in terms of residences, thus more efforts are required from NGOs and charitable organisations to track and mobilize them. NGOs like Parichiti works for the welfare of commuter maids by organising weekly meetings in some railway stations in Kolkata, addressing problems faced by them and giving informal advices to them. The collective bargaining and organised participation of women domestic workers in Kolkata is weaker which can be explained owing to a competitive and subdued rivalry between the slum dwelling and the commuter workers.

The future of paid domestic work and improvement in the state of work and life for women workers in Kolkata and elsewhere in India is tied to the participatory leadership of NGOs, voluntary organisations, strengthening of social movements, and general awakening of the women workers themselves about the value of their work and their role in the economy. Engaging employers in representative dialogues, organising protest marches, observing labour days, distributing the message through mass media, weekly meetings are some of the tactics of social movements that can play a major part. At the root of the solution lies the gender sensitization and reduction of gender pay gap in all sectors of economy as highlighted in the recently concluded 106th ILC at Geneva, 2017. The gender discrimination is responsible for devaluing domestic work. The conference also emphasized the ways in which men can be also encouraged to join care economy as they do other streams of work, which would balance out the gendered segregation in occupation and likewise the pay structure. Many national level NGOs like NDWN do not have presence in West Bengal unlike their strong-willed activism in Delhi, Maharashtra and southern Indian states. There is greater scope for extension of NGO and voluntary community based interventions in the state, as the survey revealed lack of complete awareness among the domestic workers about notions of decent work and their basic rights. The efficacy of social media and networking portals in generating and disseminating awareness among the educated masses about trials and tribulations of women maids, their problems is a way forward of collectivizing people for a cause in today's digitally networked generation.

The activism of social groups, movements and equivocal protests and demands from the marginalised group of domestic workers and allies have brought about minor yet powerful changes in labour laws internationally and to some extent in India. There is a long way to travel ahead to achieve decent work norms in India, which requires holistic support and participatory approach from the state, all sections of concerned authorities, common people and domestic workers themselves. But norms and legalised rules alone cannot pave any enormous improvement in the status of the women domestic workers. Simultaneously there is a principal need for attitudinal and behavioural change in society towards domestic work both paid and unpaid and inculcation of gender sensitization amongst all. Alongside the public and private efforts in the process of social and economic inclusion of these women has to be made more elaborate and powerful. Unless the labour rights are properly consolidated and strictly implemented and monitored along with social change, the violation of human rights and the apathy towards the most vital yet neglected group of workers would continue.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Standard of Living Index across Work Categories of Domestic Workers

Variables (in %)	Min	Max	(Max-Min)	Variables (in %)	Min	Max	(Max-Min)
Open Defecation	5.6	19.2	13.6	No Land Owned	85.4	95.4	10
No Toilet within premises	44.4	61.1	16.7	No Ration Card	7.9	25	17.1
Inferior Cooking Fuel	13	36.9	23.9	No Bank Account	27.8	58.6	30.8
Temporary House	5.8	22.8	17	Rented House	34.8	50	15.2
Non-Tap water	15.4	39.3	23.9	Illiteracy	40.4	71.5	31.1
Inferior secondary water source	13.5	29.2	15.7	Primary Education	19.8	38.5	18.7
Kitchen inside living room	27.8	40.7	12.9	Self head of Household	24.1	44.2	20.1
No Electricity	0	13.2	13.2	Women Headed Household	32.4	57.7	25.3
No PDS	11.1	32.7	21.6	Loan from Bank	92.3	100	7.7
No TV	19.4	45.6	26.2	Loan from Microfinance	88.9	96.6	7.7
No Mobile	17.3	40.8	23.5	Want to Work More	22.2	38.4	16.2

Min- Minimum, Max- Maximum

Living Condition					
Variables	Ayah	Cook	Domestic Helper	Cook and Helper	Cook and Helper and Ayah
Open defecation	0.154412	0.132353	1	0.661765	0
No Toilet within premises	0.335329	0	0.724551	0.371257	1
Inferior Cooking Fuel	0.259414	0	1	0.774059	0.619247
Temporary House	0	0.094118	1	0.652941	0.641176
Non-Tap water	0	0.129707	0.949791	1	0.748954
Inferior secondary water source	0	0.140127	0.878981	1	0.55414
Kitchen inside living room	0.829457	1	0.496124	0.286822	0
No Electricity	0.143939	0.143939	1	0.424242	0
Total	1.722552	1.640244	7.049447	5.171086	3.563517
Mean	0.215319	0.205031	0.881181	0.646386	0.44544
Asset Ownership					
No PDS	1	0.300926	0.569444	0.111111	0
No TV	0.358779	0	1	0.889313	0.954198
No Mobile	0	0.051064	1	0.744681	0.208511
No Land Owned	0.5	1	0.56	0	0.35
No Ration Card	1	0.187135	0.643275	0	0.187135
No Bank Account	0.347403	0.24026	1	0.483766	0
Rented House	1	0.269737	0	0	0.269737
Total	4.206181	2.049121	4.772719	2.228871	1.96958
Mean	0.600883	0.292732	0.681817	0.31841	0.281369
Socio-Economy					
Illiteracy	0	0.369775	1	0.797428	0.308682
Primary Education	1	0.475936	0	0.385027	0.427807

Self Head of Household	1	0	0.054726	0.144279	0.457711
Women Headed Household	1	0	0.15415	0.142292	0.695652
Loan from Bank	0	0.519481	0.883117	1	1
Loan from Microfinance	0.441558	0.363636	0.623377	1	0
Want to Work More	0.290123	0.345679	1	0.574074	0
Total	3.731682	2.074507	3.71537	4.0431	2.889853
Mean	0.533097	0.296358	0.530767	0.577586	0.412836

Work Categories	LIVING	ASSETS	SOCIO-ECONOMY	Standard of Living Index
Ayah	0.215319011	0.600883	0.533097414	1.35
Cook	0.20503056	0.292732	0.296358092	0.79
Domestic Helper	0.881180827	0.681817	0.530767153	2.09
Cook and Helper	0.646385759	0.31841	0.577585652	1.54
Cook and Helper and Ayah	0.445439679	0.281369	0.412836111	1.14

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Appendix 2 Standard of Living Index among Domestic Workers across Spatial Zones

Variables (in %)	Min	Max	(Max-Min)	Variables (in %)	Min	Max	(Max-Min)
Open Defecation	1.1	34.3	33.2	**No Land Owned**	52.7	76.2	23.5
No Toilet within Premises	28	80.2	52.2	**No Ration Card**	15.2	35.7	20.5
Inferior Cooking Fuel	3.2	68.6	65.4	**No Bank Account**	21.8	33.3	11.5
Temporary House	0	49.5	49.5	**Rented House**	29.7	48.6	18.9
Non-Tap water	0	79	79	**Illiteracy**	83.8	97.8	14
Inferior Secondary Water source	2.2	66.7	64.5	**Primary Education**	10	49.5	39.5
Kitchen inside Living Room	18.1	55.7	37.6	**Self Head of Household**	3.3	23.8	20.5
No Electricity	2	20	18	**Women Headed Household**	26.9	83.3	56.4
No PDS	3.3	36.5	33.2	**Loan from Bank**	95.7	100	4.3
No TV	20.4	68.6	48.2	**Loan from Microfinance**	90.3	99	8.7
No Mobile	16.8	55.2	38.4	**Want to Work More**	25.7	42.9	17.2

Min- Minimum, Max- Maximum

Living Condition							
Variables	Slum North	Slum West	Slum South	Slum Central	Commuter North	Commuter West	Commuter South
Open Defecation	0	0.156627	0.057229	0.310241	1	0.96988	0.713855
No Toilet within premises	0	1	0.733716	0.557471	0.358238	0.229885	0.321839
Inferior Cooking Fuel	0	0.142202	0.148318	0.125382	1	0.665138	0.795107
Temporary House	0	0	0.080808	0.115152	1	0.943434	0.59596
Non-Tap water	0	0.065823	0	0.017722	1	0.970886	0.988608
Inferior Secondary water source	0	0.063566	0.103876	0.187597	0.762791	1	0.631008
Kitchen inside Living Room	0.090426	0.736702	0.861702	1	0.202128	0.494681	0

No Electricity	0.011111	0.527778	0	0.283333	1	0.261111	0.366667
Total	0.101537	2.692697	1.98565	2.596898	6.323156	5.535015	4.413043
Mean	0.012692	0.336587	0.248206	0.324612	0.790394	0.691877	0.55163
Asset Ownership							
No PDS	0.451807	1	0.64759	0.545181	0.560241	0	0.243976
No TV	0	0.267635	0.029046	0.228216	1	0.338174	0.682573
No Mobile	0.263021	0.268229	0	0.307292	1	0.864583	0.528646
No Land Owned	1	0.485714	0.307143	0.65	0.678571	0.442857	0
No Ration Card	0.312195	0.653659	1	0.673171	0.907317	0	0.395122
No Bank Account	0	0.187943	0.189716	0.384752	0.705674	1	0.671986
Rented House	0.916456	0.564557	1	1.518987	0.349367	0	0.253165
Total	2.943479	3.427737	3.173495	4.307598	5.20117	2.645615	2.775467
Mean	0.420497	0.489677	0.453356	0.615371	0.743024	0.377945	0.396495
Socio-Economy							
Illiteracy	0	0.506383	0.242553	0.068085	0.795745	0.451064	1
Primary Education	0.570732	0.326829	0.370732	1	0.512195	0.721951	0
Self head of Household	0.913043	0.46087	0	0.713043	0.26087	1	0.426087
Women Headed Household	0.931217	0.359788	0	1	0.343915	0.544974	0.142857
Loan from Bank	0.488372	0.023256	0.767442	0	1	0.232558	1
Loan from Microfinance	0	0.517241	0.091954	0.45977	1	0.735632	0.022989
Want to Work More	0.319767	0.261628	0	0.75	0.773256	0.44186	1
Total	3.223132	2.455995	1.472681	3.990899	4.685981	4.128039	3.591933
Mean	0.460447	0.350856	0.210383	0.570128	0.669426	0.58972	0.513133

Zones	**LIVING**	**ASSETS**	**SOCIO-ECONOMY**	**Standard of Living Index**
Slum North	0.012692	0.420497	0.460447379	0.89
Slum West	0.336587	0.4896767	0.350856467	1.18
Slum South	0.248206	0.4533565	0.210382969	0.91
Slum Central	0.324612	0.6153711	0.570128386	1.51
Commuter North	0.790394	0.7430243	0.669425789	2.20
Commuter West	0.691877	0.377945	0.589719912	1.66
Commuter South	0.55163	0.3964952	0.513133229	1.46

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Appendix 3 Health and Wellbeing Index among Domestic Workers across Spatial Zones

Variables (in %)	**Min**	**Max**	**(Max-Min)**	**Variables (in %)**	**Min**	**Max**	**(Max-Min)**
Domestic	10.5	31.3	20.8	**Inferior Cooking Fuel**	3.2	68.6	65.4

Violence							
Mental Health	5.7	40.9	35.2	Kitchen inside Living Room	18.1	55.7	37.6
No Leisure Activity	47.9	83.3	35.4	Inferior water Source	0	78.1	78.1
Unpaid House-care without Help	28.1	44.1	16	Open Defecation	1.1	34.3	33.2
Tobacco Intake	6.7	30	23.3	No Sick Leave	35.5	60	24.5
Chronic Disease	20	53.8	33.8	No Paid Leave	21	72	51
Musculoskeletal Disease	23.3	49.5	26.2	Extreme Work per week	9.5	25.7	16.2
No Treatment	7.1	21.9	14.8	Work Pressure	26.7	50.5	23.8
Sleep time	14	63.8	49.8	Job Loss	10.8	20.8	10
Room Density	13.3	45.7	32.4				

Min- Minimum, Max- Maximum

Well Being							
Variables	Slum North	Slum West	Slum South	Slum Central	Commuter North	Commuter West	Commuter South
Domestic Violence	0.995192	1	0.639423	0.9375	0.182692	0.298077	0
Mental Health	1	0.84375	0.542614	0.528409	0.053977	0.028409	0
No Leisure Activity	0	0	0.745763	0.745763	0.935028	1	0.663842
Unpaid House-care without Help	1	0	0.65625	0.03125	0.26875	0.325	0.0875
Total	2.995192	1.84375	2.584049	2.242922	1.440448	1.651486	0.751342
Mean	0.748798	0.460938	0.646012	0.56073	0.360112	0.412872	0.187835
Health Condition							
Tobacco Intake	0.819742	0.429185	0.652361	1	0.201717	0	0.446352
Chronic Disease	1	0.825444	0.813609	0.505917	0.337278	0	0.47929
Musculoskeletal Disease	1	0.225191	0.622137	0.854962	0.419847	0	0.347328
No Treatment	0.831081	0.858108	0.527027	0	1	0.871622	0.804054
Sleep Time	0	0.263052	0.116466	0.23494	1	0.25502	0.522088
Total	3.650824	2.600979	2.7316	2.595819	2.958842	1.126642	2.599113
Mean	0.730165	0.520196	0.54632	0.519164	0.591768	0.225328	0.519823
Physical Environment							
Room Density	0.583333	0.490741	0.506173	1	0.5	0	0.175926
Inferior Cooking Fuel	0	0.142202	0.148318	0.125382	1	0.665138	0.795107
Kitchen inside Living Room	0.090426	0.736702	0.861702	1	0.202128	0.494681	0
Inferior Water Source	0	0.066581	0	0.017926	1.011524	0.982074	1
Open Defecation	0	0.156627	0.057229	0.310241	1	0.96988	0.713855
Total	0.673759	1.592853	1.573422	2.453549	3.713651	3.111772	2.684888
Mean	0.134752	0.318571	0.314684	0.49071	0.74273	0.622354	0.536978
Work Condition							
No Sick Leave	0	0.293878	0.653061	1	0.767347	0.591837	0.302041
No Paid Leave	1	0.915686	0.694118	0.84902	0	0.307843	0.07451
Extreme Work per week	0.345679	0.765432	0.635802	1	0	0.234568	0.530864
Work Pressure	1	0.672269	0.084034	0.319328	0.357143	0	0.159664
Job Loss	0	1	0.7	0.35	0.44	0.92	0.63
Total	2.345679	3.647265	2.767015	3.518347	1.56449	2.054248	1.697079

	Mean	0.469136	0.729453	0.553403	0.703669	0.312898	0.41085	0.339416

Zones	Wellbeing	Health	Physical Environment	Work Condition	Health and Wellbeing Index
Slum North	0.748798077	0.73016471	0.134752	0.469136	0.521
Slum West	0.4609375	0.5201959	0.318571	0.729453	0.507
Slum South	0.646012356	0.54632006	0.314684	0.553403	0.515
Slum Central	0.560730451	0.51916375	0.49071	0.703669	0.569
Commuter North	0.360111957	0.59176843	0.74273	0.312898	0.502
Commuter West	0.412871503	0.22532834	0.622354	0.41085	0.418
Commuter South	0.187835452	0.5198225	0.536978	0.339416	0.396

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

Appendix 4 Health and Wellbeing Index across Work Categories of Domestic Workers

Variables (in %)	Min	Max	(Max-Min)	Variables (in %)	Min	Max	(Max-Min)
Domestic Violence	18	27.5	9.5	Inferior Cooking Fuel	13	36.9	23.9
Mental Health	20.1	38.9	18.8	Kitchen inside Living room	27.8	40.7	12.9
No Leisure Activity	55.6	75	19.4	Inferior Water Source	13.5	38.2	24.7
Unpaid House-care without Help	7.7	48.1	40.4	Open Defecation	5.6	19.2	13.6
Tobacco Intake	14.8	27.8	13	No Sick Leave	41.7	76.9	35.2
Chronic Disease	35.1	72.2	37.1	No Paid Leave	43.5	88.5	45
Musculoskeletal Disease	35.1	41.7	6.6	Extreme Work per week	8.3	73.1	64.8
No Treatment	5.6	21.9	16.3	Work Pressure	26.9	40.4	13.5
Sleep Time	25.9	44.2	18.3	Job Loss	5.6	19.8	14.2
Room Density	21.3	33.3	12				

Well Being					
Variables	Ayah	Cook	House-Cleaners	Cook & House-Cleaner	Ayah-Cook-House Cleaner
Domestic Violence	0.936842	0.442105	0.505263	0	1
Mental Health	0.058511	0.260638	0	0.005319	1
No Leisure Activity	1	0.664948	0.695876	0.262887	0
Unpaid House-care without Help	0	1	0.700495	0.420792	0.358911
Total	1.995353	2.367692	1.901634	0.688998	2.358911
Mean	0.498838	0.591923	0.475409	0.172249	0.589728
Health Condition					
Tobacco Intake	0.492308	0	0.592308	0.246154	1
Chronic Disease	0.245283	0.377358	0	0.296496	1
Musculoskeletal Disease	0.80303	1	0	0.30303	0.575758
No Treatment	0.717791	0.282209	1	0.484663	0
Sleep Time	1	0	0.338798	0.42623	0.404372
Total	3.258412	1.659567	1.931106	1.756572	2.980129
Mean	0.651682	0.331913	0.386221	0.351314	0.596026
Physical Environment					
Room Density	0.95	0	0.95	0.1	1

Inferior Cooking Fuel	0.259414	0	1	0.774059	0.619247
Kitchen inside Living room	0.829457	1	0.496124	0.286822	0
Inferior Water Source	0	0.202429	0.995951	1	0.801619
Open Defecation	0.154412	0.132353	1	0.661765	0
Total	2.193283	1.334782	4.442075	2.822645	2.420866
Mean	0.438657	0.266956	0.888415	0.564529	0.484173
Work Condition					
No Sick Leave	1	0	0.085227	0.090909	0.551136
No Paid Leave	1	0.102222	0	0.006667	0.391111
Extreme Work per week	1	0	0.020062	0.200617	0.557099
Work Pressure	0	0.748148	0.718519	1	0.474074
Job Loss	0.28169	0.190141	1	0.950704	0
Total	3.28169	1.040511	1.823808	2.248897	1.97342
Mean	0.656338	0.208102	0.364762	0.449779	0.394684

Work Categories	Wellbeing	Health	Physical Environment	Work Condition	Health and Wellbeing Index
Ayah	0.498838186	0.651682485	0.438656671	0.656338028	0.561379
Cook	0.591923004	0.331913416	0.266956418	0.208102243	0.349724
House-Cleaners	0.475408624	0.386221101	0.88841509	0.364761504	0.528702
Cook & House-Cleaner	0.172249457	0.351314438	0.564528998	0.449779453	0.384468
Ayah-Cook-House Cleaner	0.589727723	0.596025832	0.484173259	0.394684063	0.516153

Source: Field Survey, (2014-15)

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