

Working as a Domestic Maid : Survival Strategy for Poor Women

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Abstract

Purpose : Since many domestic maids lost their employment and their houses became uncomfortable, it became crucial to comprehend their lives and the negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic. In this context, we discussed the difficulties faced by domestic workers during the lockdown and how, in the end, their employment provided a means of protection from verbal and physical abuse.

Methodology : Using data from a primary survey of married working women as part-time maids in the urban informal sector in a colony in West Delhi, this paper discussed survival strategies for poor domestic maids in general and during the coronavirus pandemic in particular. The study adopted simple convenience sampling, deemed suitable to minimize and control the bias. For the study, we floated a structured questionnaire and received 129 responses.

Findings : Although the benefits did not reach the general public, the policy of transferring cash to the Jan Dhan account during COVID-19 was a positive step. While the maids were grateful for the wheat and rice they got during COVID-19, the ration quality was appalling. Third, the issue of physical and verbal abuse was widely prevalent during COVID-19 times as the spouses knew there would be no serious repercussions or punishments for the same.

Practical Implications : For the benefits to reach the underprivileged appropriately, emphasis should be placed on the policies' effective implementation. Workers in the informal sector must find ways to deal with the issues they encounter daily because they cannot.

Originality : We were unaware of any research that explicitly looked at the working circumstances for part-time domestic servants after the pandemic, both generally and in detail.

Keywords : domestic maids, coronavirus pandemic, survival strategy, financial independence, working conditions, informal sector

JEL Classification Codes : J01, J46, J81

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While SDG Number 8 encourages decent work, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Number 3 aspires to promote good health and well-being. Though a lot has been achieved to improve the lives of women by trying to provide them with better working conditions, there is still a long way to go¹. Men

¹ Source : [Sustainable Development Goals](https://sustainabledevelopmentgoals.org/) | United Nations Development Programme (undp.org) (accessed in April 2022)

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are more likely than men to find work in the unorganized sector (63%) compared to men (58.1%) (International Labour Organization (ILO), 2018). In the unorganized sector, men are engaged in a wide range of jobs, including those of factory workers, street vendors, and domestic help.

In general, domestic help refers to the act of taking help from a person (male or female) who is paid to perform various household chores, like cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cooking food, and looking after the kids. These household chores are largely considered a woman's responsibility. Therefore, women, whom we refer to as domestic maids in this paper, comprise most of those employed in domestic service in India (Ferrant et al., 2014; Singh & Pattanaik, 2020). Most of the time, these domestic maids are employed by female employers who wish to free themselves from household duties. Prominently, there are three ways in which domestic maids are being hired: one, the maids who work full time for their employer and stay at the employer's house itself; two, the maids who work full time for the employer but do not stay at the employer's house (usually work from morning till evening at the employer's place); and three, the maids who work for more than one employer and hence work for a few hours at any single employer's house. The motivations for working as domestic maids, the issues these women confront, and the pandemic's impacts vary depending on the length of time each type of maid spends at the employer's location. This study centers on the third category of maids, whom we refer to as part-time maids.

This paper concerns the women we interact with daily and use their services. It is also about understanding the lives of domestic maids and how this pandemic has affected them. A growing number of studies don't view this sector as a residue. Instead, studies show this sector is extensive, continuing, and growing in many populations (Gupta et al., 2022). They view this sector as an absorber of surplus labor and a provider of income-earning opportunities for people experiencing poverty. Studying the lives of domestic maids becomes crucial as a result. The factors that lead a woman to work as a domestic maid, the issues she faces, the domestic abuse she must undergo, her financial independence, and how the pandemic-induced lockdowns (in March 2020 and April 2021) affected her life were all covered in this study. We also reviewed some government policies that helped maids survive through the pandemic and suggested improvements in such policies to help these women earn a decent living. In contrast, our study examines part-time maids' survival strategies qualitatively. Thanks to the paper's descriptive methodology, we can make significant inferences regarding their working conditions generally and during the two COVID-19 pandemic-induced lockdowns.

To bring out issues on the floor, we have conducted a detailed qualitative survey among the household maids in Paschim Vihar, a colony in West Delhi. Using a questionnaire-based survey, the study is based on primary data gathered from 129 women who work as part-time domestic maids in the West Delhi neighborhood of Paschim Vihar. In addition to personal information, the survey asks about women's decision to work as domestic maids, their income and spending, knowledge of various government initiatives to improve their financial autonomy and well-being, and certain issues about domestic violence.

Review of Literature

The concept of domestic help is not a recent phenomenon. It was prevalent among the peasantry under the serfdom of the nobility. The peasants' daughters had no other way to support the family economically but to apprentice to the nobility. With the evolution of mercantilism during the 16th century in Europe, much emphasis was laid on building the nation's wealth through the accumulation of gold and silver (Milward, 1982). The result was abundant wealth that needed outside support to support large households. Following the Mughal aristocracy's lead, Indian bibis were either married off by their owners or kept as servants in early modern times. This partnership has lasted to this day. A distance was kept, and the maids were mistreated and viewed with distrust back then (Jha et al., 2019).

Using women as maids was common in ancient India and throughout India's independence. Even women traveled abroad to work as housemaids. There is proof that wealthy Indians who relocate overseas and hire Indian

maids mistreat their domestic helpers. Maltreatment is widespread around the world, not only among the Indian community. In America, there is proof of the racial discrimination and misery endured by black maids working in white families. According to Priyadharshini (2019), they are deprived of personal independence, particularly when using the restroom, eating utensils, and lavatory.

Though there was no official record for the number of household maids in India, statistics show that between 1991 and 2001, there was a 120% increase in the number of domestic helpers (Saldanha, 2017). With the rise in women working outside their homes, the demand for domestic help has increased. They are the financial backbone of their families (Pophale, 2021) and, hence, are willing to take care of others' houses and children, even at the cost of their well-being, livelihoods, and families (Fish, 2017; Kotikula et al., 2019). They have low bargaining power in deciding their pay for work, which aggravates their vulnerability (Mitra, 2020; Vasanthi, 2011). These women frequently experience abuse, whether it is sexual, physical, or mental (Kodandarama, 2018; Saldanha, 2017). The COVID-19 outbreak made matters worse for domestic workers. They lost their jobs and sources of money. Since having other housemates limits their ability to manage their homes, their homes are no longer places of comfort for them (Nigam, 2020; Suresha, 2020).

Aside from the aforementioned, their situation is worsened by limited access to official financial institutions and the exorbitant healthcare and education costs. Sahu (2019) discussed the community's battle for survival and sustenance. This was emphasized, as not having access to it would negatively affect their productivity and efficiency and keep them trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty and malnutrition. Nevertheless, despite all the problems mentioned above, one cannot deny the contribution made by such women to urban poverty reduction through informal activities (Hafeez et al., 2020; Mukherjee et al., 2019).

Their predicament was made worse by the lockdown brought on by the COVID-19 outbreak. The weight of household tasks grew. As a result of home confinement, which was implemented to safeguard the public's health and well-being, women experienced more sickness and domestic abuse.

Furthermore, the lack of supportive policies and resources for these women, as they were disconnected from their support networks during the COVID-19 pandemic, aggravated their plight (Chakraborty & Altekar, 2021; Deshpande, 2022; Krishnakumar & Verma, 2021).

After highlighting the significance of this industry and the struggles the maids have had for a long time, it is crucial to look into their lives. Consequently, a descriptive analysis of part-time maids' survival strategy is done in this paper. We can make critical decisions regarding their working circumstances generally and during the two COVID-19 pandemic-induced lockdowns, specifically with descriptive analysis.

Methodology

Using a questionnaire-based survey, the study is based on primary data gathered from 129 women who work as part-time domestic maids in the West Delhi neighborhood of Paschim Vihar. All married maids (widows, separated, and divorcees included) were the household maids surveyed.

Apart from personal details, the survey instrument includes questions on why women chose to work as household maids, their income and expenditure details, awareness about various government schemes to increase their economic well-being, financial autonomy, and some issues related to domestic violence. There is a special module on understanding the impact of two lockdowns, one in March 2020 and the other in April 2021, on household maids and their survival strategies. The analysis is divided into four broad sections: One, the reasons why these women chose the work of domestic help; two, their financial autonomy; three, an escape route from domestic violence; and four, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. The study adopted simple convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, to select the target respondents. This method was deemed suitable to minimize and control the bias and reduce the time and cost related to this survey. In the process of data collection, the snowball technique was employed. The survey was conducted from October 2021 to

December 2021. This was the period in India when lockdown restrictions were lifted, and market operations assumed normalcy.

The questionnaire was prepared in two phases. In the first phase, unstructured, in-depth interviews were conducted to create an initial questionnaire. Further, expert opinions on the questionnaire were collected, and improvements were made. In the second phase, a pilot survey was conducted with 22 women working as part-time maids to evaluate how well the questionnaire was understood and test alternative framing of the questions. The answers to the pilot survey were used to inform another revision of the questionnaire. The issues found in the pertinent literature and the input from academicians served as the basis for validating the questionnaire. Finally, the structured questionnaire was prepared, and the survey was conducted by explaining the purpose of the research to the respondents. We conducted personal interviews to secure and collect all correct and necessary information. A total of 146 questionnaires were distributed personally to all the respondents. Finally, 129 questionnaires fulfilling the criteria of completeness and accuracy of information were selected.

A 5-point Likert scale was used for some questions to measure the intensity of the respondents' attitudes toward the selected attributes, as numerous aspects cannot easily be measured with a single item. Detailed descriptive analysis of the working conditions of the part-time domestic maids has been done.

Thus, the present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- **R01** : Reasons why women have chosen to be part-time domestic maids?
- **R02** : Do domestic maids enjoy any financial autonomy?
- **R03** : Are these maids found to be the victims of domestic violence?
- **R04** : What was the working condition of household maids during the two COVID-19 pandemic-induced lockdowns?

Analysis and Results

Reasons for Choosing the Work of Domestic Help

According to John (2019), one of the main reasons women are forced to take on household chores is because alternative forms of employment are not sustainable. We found in our poll that these women choose to work in the home for various reasons. First, the women we surveyed mostly had small children who needed the care and support of their mothers. Around 90% of the maids in our sample have young kids who need to be looked after. Engaging in street vending or retail employment implies extended work hours, which might challenge individuals in juggling their home duties and professional obligations. These maids can spend a few hours of the day at their houses because they are part-time employees and typically reside in the neighborhood.

“Dopahar ko hum ghar chale jaate hain aur baccho ke liye khana bana dete hai, kuch samay aaram bhi kar lete hai...”

The respondent remains in close proximity. She returns to her house in the afternoon, makes her kids lunch, takes a little nap, and then returns to work. Secondly, the initial investment required to take up a street vendor's work selling fruits, vegetables, or other groceries is quite high per their standards. Working as a household maid does not require any initial funds. A related reason cited is the seasonality of these other types of work. One of the survey respondents said :

“Humare pati ka thiya hai. Har do mahine me maal badalna padta hai. Bika to theek, warna usko sambhalkar rakhne ki pareshani...”

The respondent's husband was a street vendor who had to change the items he sold every two months. If the items are sold off, then it is fine. Otherwise, they must worry about where to store it until next season. To avoid the expenditure on maintaining the stocks of unsold items and ensure they remain in a condition to be sold the next day (or the next season), the women in our survey prefer to become household maids.

Working with their husbands would allow them to schedule freedom in addition to the insufficient finances to begin their work. Still, it would prevent women from being financially independent despite their labor. Helping their spouses thus affords them flexibility, but at the expense of their financial independence (they will have to ask their husbands for money), which most prefer not to do.

Thirdly, being a household maid does not require any skills. It is doing the household chores, which any woman does at her own house. Working at a lady's beauty parlor, at a boutique, or as a sales girl at any shop requires these women to have a certain skill set. Acquiring these skills is another lacuna. Rather than doing menial tasks like cleaning toilets, becoming sweepers, and others, usually considered unclean and low-level jobs, being a household maid is a comfortable balance between the two. It helps earn respectable work and a livelihood. The other occupations included all other types of work, including saleswomen, women working at beauty parlors, cooks, and others, usually better than a cleaner or household maid².

Fourth, our survey asked women how they got their current jobs. Most women got the work through some of the connections mentioned above. This was quite expected. People in the same community usually connect faster and stay near each other. Since occupations are mostly related to the community to which people belong in India, people get employed in similar-level work if they stay together. If friends, family, or other relatives live far away, the neighbors can provide first-hand knowledge about opportunities in the unofficial sector. As a result, we discovered that women find employment through the labor they obtain through their networks, even if that employment is less lucrative than it would have been otherwise. It was not very hard to get houses to work. By word of mouth, the colonial maids who were already employed assisted them in finding employment. The maids have very low bargaining power and agree to work at relatively low wages. This is largely due to the persistence of notions that domestic work is considered unskilled, which lowers the identity of such women as workers and leads to depressed wages (John, 2019).

The fifth reason cited is the non-monetary support maids get from their employers, especially female employers, which is usually unavailable in other types of work. Over time, the maids develop an intimacy with the employer, who then helps the maids in varied ways. In addition to distributing meals and beverages, the employers offer these maids used clothing, books, bags, toys, cutlery, and other items rather than simply discarding them. This raises the maids' standard of living by reducing the amount of money they must spend on these things. One of the respondents in our survey said :

“Bhabhiji ne hamko teen saal pehle silai machine diya tha Diwali par. Ham to sabka kapda ghar par hi seelte hain. Padosiyon ka bhi seel lete hain. Bhabhiji ke ghar ka bhi seelayi ka kaam ham hi karte hain.... Thoda bahut usse bhi kama lete hain...”

The employer has gifted a sewing machine to the maid, which is used to stitch the clothes of her family members, the employers' family members, and the neighbors, and she manages to earn some money from it.

In addition to gifts, the employers assist their maids in completing other paperwork and documentation, which is typically challenging due to ignorance or illiteracy. Employers assist with various duties, such as creating ration cards, opening Jan Dhan accounts, participating in the Ujjawala Scheme, Ladli Yojana, etc. Since most of these government activities require visiting government offices, which has huge opportunity costs for these women in

² As per the National Classification of Occupation Codes (2015), cooks, beauticians, salespersons, and related work come in occupation family code 5, while washers and cleaners come in occupation family code 9. Thus, our classification of different occupations is divided into the above-mentioned three categories.

terms of missing out on working days, the employers have links in offices and get work done quickly; they also help them to get it done online, with the help of their employers.

We found that most maids clean utensils, mop, and wash clothes out of choice. They are forced to do it because of a scarcity of financial resources. Sen (1999) discussed women's autonomy to engage in outside-the-home paid work. Women could use "their reasoned agency," presumably because they would have greater financial independence due to better access to employment possibilities. We speak of the household maids free to go out and work, but the work they choose is forced on them because they have no other choice due to their poor economic circumstances. Do they enjoy the freedom of doing work? This is a question that needs to be addressed.

Furthermore, around 40% of household maids pointed out domestic violence as another reason for them to come out of the house and work. Domestic violence can be defined as violence committed by someone in the victim's domestic circle. Domestic violence can take the form of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse (EPW Engage, 2020; Krishnakumar & Verma, 2021). It was believed that working outside the home would make them less visible, which would lessen the possibility of domestic violence. As a result, there is a decreased chance of experiencing abuse from partners and other relatives.

Financial Autonomy

We have also examined the extent of financial autonomy that household maids enjoy within a household setup. Against this backdrop, the paper tries to determine the factors that signal her financial autonomy, like having a bank account of her own, if she can keep her income to herself, and if she can spend her income earned independently without asking anyone. Studies show that women with financial literacy are more empowered and have more financial liberty when making decisions (Andriamahery & Qamruzzaman, 2022; Jariwala & Dziegielewski, 2017).

We acknowledge that these questions might not adequately reflect a woman's level of financial independence in her home. Still, they are useful tools for determining the degree of flexibility a working woman has in spending her income. A woman may not always be able to utilize her bank account independently because male household members typically have the final say when making financial decisions. Therefore, we view a woman's solely named bank account as the foundation for achieving financial independence. Additional inquiries in the survey regarding a woman's autonomous utilization of her income and savings should yield valuable information regarding the level of financial independence maintained by housemaids.

It is important to note that knowing and understanding the importance of financial autonomy versus having financial autonomy to manage the funds are two different things for these household maids. All the household maids in our survey knew and understood the importance of knowing their funds, managing them, and spending them independently. Still, around 30% of the household maids don't have an account. The maids working in this colony reported that it was not just about having a bank account of their own, which would help them have a bank account, but the tedious process of getting work done and lack of documents also came in the way of getting work done for these maids. They were able to get their work done with the help of their employers, who have links with banks, schools, and other places and expedite the formalities needed to open the account.

Just 10% of household servants with accounts reported having a combined account; the other 70% had personal accounts. We observed that the housemaids were making progress toward greater financial literacy. But we must remember that this is an elite colony in West Delhi where the maids' employers play an important role in helping them become financially literate. This once again justifies their point about why they choose to be household maids.

Furthermore, around 60% of the maids in our sample reported keeping their earnings completely to themselves and contributing to household expenditure independently. In contrast, 40% reported pooling their income with their husbands and spending it as one fund. The ones who pool their funds don't do it forcefully

because of their husbands' pressure, whereas the maids who keep their funds with them are the ones who face some form of physical or verbal abuse from their husbands and hence don't trust them. This demonstrates that all women in our sample agreed to give their husbands the money. This emphasizes having maids work for them, whether voluntary or forced. Again, we want to mention that this is an elite colony, and women's employers are important in making maids move towards financial awareness.

All of the aforementioned is true, but we also know that the women in our poll who were employed as housemaids did so due to their dire financial circumstances. Again, this stresses our point of increasing financial autonomy amongst women because they know that the money earned will be theirs and can be used independently.

Escape from Domestic Violence

It is commonly known that women worldwide account for the majority of victims of domestic abuse and that the types of violence experienced by women are typically more severe (McQuigg, 2011). According to predictions from the World Health Organization (2021), one in three women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives (World Health Organization, 2021). Similar responses were reported in our investigation. Most of the maids' spouses mistreat them both physically and verbally. They make an ineffective attempt to resist and ask the neighbors for assistance. They occasionally summoned the police, but nothing strictly happened. Men are even more bold and self-assured to verbally and physically abuse their wives because of the authorities' callous and apathetic attitude. We want to emphasize the need for stern action, which scares men into thinking that mistreating their spouses will have dire repercussions. Whatever laws the concerned authorities make and pass regarding domestic violence will not stop these men from coming back home drunk and beating their wives (Krishnakumar & Verma, 2021) unless they know they will be punished for doing the same. Some resist and have arguments and fights with their spouses; some women go to their parents' house but return soon. In fact, in most cases, they are sent back by their parents, as it is difficult for their parents to meet the additional expenditure of keeping their daughters home. Thus, no support or very little support from their parents also makes the spouses more confident to resort to physical abuse.

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

Our study examined how the COVID-19 pandemic affected maids' lives during the two lockdowns. The majority said that during the initial lockdown, their employers had paid their paychecks for March 2020 but not April or May 2020. All the maids in our sample reported a drop in their income due to their inability to go out and work during the first lockdown. They somehow, by borrowing or using their past savings and eating food provided by the government, managed to survive the first lockdown. The maids with a Jan Dhan account reported a subsidy of ₹ 500 credited to their account four times in the crisis. The maids also reported receiving the gas subsidy in their accounts during the first lockdown. Their condition deteriorated after the second lockdown. The lockdown was not as strict as it was the first time; some maids did go to work, leaving their kids home alone with their mothers, who made them more vulnerable to contracting the illness. Also, the support provided by the government in the form of "langar"³ was not very regular. The subsidy coming to the Jan Dhan account and the gas subsidy were irregular. Their accumulated debt during the first lockdown, cuts in jobs during the second lockdown, and fewer benefits from the government worsened their situation during and after the second lockdown.

Apart from the economic sufferings faced by these women, working from home, closures of schools, and studying from home have led to a worsening of their plight. Gendered roles the world over have put household work as women's responsibility (Arora & Majumder, 2021; Deshpande, 2022; Dogra & Kaushal, 2022; EPW

³ Free food.

Engage, 2020; Mishra & Majumdar, 2020). These maids could not go out to work and had to do all household work, which became very taxing. A lockdown may be controlling the spread of viruses, but it cannot prevent men from dominating and controlling women. Lockdowns were ineffective in stopping men from mistreating women at home and displaying their superiority complex. The problem worsened when maids were forced to perform unpaid caregiving duties in houses.

Concluding Remarks and Theoretical Implications

There is a need for effective implementation of the policies for the betterment of household maids in particular and domestic workers in general. An urban employment guarantee scheme for women maids in urban areas is needed (Mukherjee et al., 2019; Pophale, 2021). To standardize their employment, appropriate leave policies and compensation schedules could be established (Chakraborty, 2020). We want to emphasize that implementing different policy measures during trying times won't make the issues disappear. What's needed is the efficient execution of the existing plans. The need for the recognition of a wide set of rights, including privacy and forced labor at the workplace, the identification of the hazards of work, the need to provide for appropriate social security schemes, and other mechanisms remain to be addressed (Vasanthi, 2011).

The government has implemented lump-sum cash payment policies to address domestic workers' pressing needs (Dogra, 2021). Policies like PMJDY (Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana) have made it feasible to make direct cash transfers to vulnerable people's PMJDY accounts whenever necessary, which has helped lift many people out of perpetual poverty (Thakur, 2022). Despite a welcome step by the government, the benefits do not reach the masses. It is important to ensure that everyone has a Jan Dhan account to get this benefit of cash transfers. Thus, the government greatly benefits low-income people, yet there is a long way to go.

Second, free dry rations of a larger quantity and for a more extended period are useful (Dogra, 2021). The maids reported getting wheat and rice during COVID-19, a welcome step. But at the same time, the quality of the ration supplied has to be ensured; otherwise, eating such poor-quality ration will make them ill. Thus, the irony is that rations are provided to reduce health problems, but what is reported by the maids is that the rations provided are of very low quality, leading to illness. One of the respondents said :

“Itna ganda ration hota hai ki saaf karte karte itna samay nikal jaata hai or aankhen bhi dard hone lagti hai.....”

The wheat and rice they get are sometimes so dirty that it takes long hours to clean them. Talking to the maids, we can infer that most of them got wheat and rice, but it was of inferior quality and took hours to clean before it was edible. Thus, it is not just the quantity but the quality the government needs to care for. On the one hand, the government takes pride in providing free rations, but on the other hand, the poor quality creates hassles for them. This again brings out the need for successful implementation of the policies.

Third, the issue of physical and verbal abuse, which is widely prevalent among household maids and has aggravated during COVID-19 times, needs to be immediately addressed. The spouses are not scared of physically abusing their wives, as they know there are no serious repercussions or punishments for the same. In fact, because of the lack of proper implementation of policies, men have become more daring. Emphasis should be laid on effective execution so that the benefits reach the needy at the right time.

Further, there is a need to provide financial literacy to women to ensure greater financial autonomy and empower them. There is substantial literature that indicates the importance of providing financial literacy to women to empower them, help them become self-sustaining entrepreneurs (even in small businesses), and become independent decision-makers, both within and outside their homes (Andriamahery & Qamruzzaman, 2022; Johnson et al., 2016). Financial literacy is seen as one of the remedies that alleviate poverty by helping

people understand finances better. Microfinance training has been recognized as an efficient vehicle to deliver financial literacy to the population (Sonam et al., 2019; Vijaykumar & Naidu, 2018). Introducing self-help groups in India is also considered one of the most significant tools to attain economic security through decent work conditions (Giribabu, 2021).

To summarize, we would want to say that, being out of the formal channels of support, there is a need for workers in the informal sector to form strategies to cope with the problems they face in their everyday lives. Informal institutions and networks have been developed over the decades to form a mechanism by which they can enhance their earnings and help experience upward occupational mobility over time (Mitra, 2020). These social mechanisms can help the entire community leave their traditional (low-skill) occupations and experience upward economic mobility. Thus, there is a need to tap into these institutions and develop new institutions that can act as an engine for social change (Colovic & Mehrotra, 2020). Awareness about access to better working conditions can be imparted to women through self-help groups, non-governmental organizations, and informal talks with the workers.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

We accept that there could be various limitations to our study. First, we acknowledge that, due to logistical reasons, the study's sample size is small; however, we have tried to get as much heterogeneity in the sample as possible by surveying various areas of the Paschim Vihar colony under study. Second, we do not cover the male aspect of the analysis. We have only surveyed females in our survey. If we had surveyed husbands and/or fathers of women (where applicable), we might have gotten a better idea about their work conditions. In this paper, we did not interview non-working women. If we had, the analysis could have been done at two different stages: the first stage could be the decision for a woman to enter the labor market or not, and the second stage could be the decision to work as a domestic part-time maid. We hope to overcome these shortcomings in future research work.

Authors' Contribution

Dr. Sonia Goel conceived the idea and developed a qualitative design for the empirical study. Dr. Suvojit Lahiri Chakravarty extracted research papers with high reputations, filtered these based on keywords, and generated concepts and codes relevant to the study design. Dr. Sonia Goel and Dr. Suvojit Lahiri Chakravarty went in person to collect data in the first round. The questionnaire was designed, and data were collected by the two authors again. Dr. Suvojit Lahiri Chakravarty did the descriptive analysis in consultation with Dr. Sonia Goel. Dr. Sonia Goel and Dr. Suvojit Lahiri Chakravarty wrote the manuscript in consultation.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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