

'Some good from unpleasant work; they spend on children's schooling'

Lack of social security, exploitation at work and lack of government assistance are the main problems faced by female domestic workers in the city, the report stated.



Written by [Ardhra Nair](#) | Pune | Published on: May 5, 2015 2:23 am

- ◆ Almost 50 per cent of female domestic workers illiterate...
- ◆ 41 per cent of domestic workers send their children to private schools...
- ◆ Average monthly income of a family of a female domestic worker is Rs 7,772
- ◆ 13 per cent of female domestic workers spent upto Rs 5000 on their wards' education....

These are findings of a study by Prashant Bansode and Sunil Bhosale of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, submitted last month to the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

Their 'Female Domestic Workers and Socio-Economic Inclusion' includes survey of 731 households from Pune Municipal Corporation areas and 291 from Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation limits.

Bansode says awareness about labour laws was poor amongst domestic workers surveyed. They were keen on educating their children. "A bright spot in the survey was children's education. It was revealed that 59 per cent of the children enrolled attended municipal schools and 41 per cent attended private schools. Of those

enrolled, 15 per cent studied in English medium schools and 85 per cent in Marathi medium schools. Many domestic workers have enrolled their children in private schools," said Bansode.

"While reasons for women getting into domestic work are many, about 3.5 per cent of the surveyed domestic workers came into this profession for their children's education. From the survey it was also found that 15 per cent of them spent more money on their children's education," said Bansode.

Lack of social security, exploitation at work, a patriarchal set-up that refuses to identify their work and lack of government assistance are the main problems faced by female domestic workers in the city, the report stated. While increase in marginalised female workers—from 2001 to 2011—in Pune city is around 50 per cent, Pimpri-Chinchwad area showed an increase by over 100 per cent, says the report.

"The total marginalised workers in 2001 was 53,859 in PMC and 22,461 in PCMC area. It increased to 73,765 in PMC and 46,969 in PCMC area. This means there was 36.96 per cent increase of marginal workers in PMC area and 109.11 per cent in PCMC area. Marginalised women workers in PMC area was 20,929 and increased by 58.13 per cent in 2011 to 33,096. In PCMC, the count was 7624 and it increased by 15,352, a 101.36 per cent rise," said Bansode.

The main problem, said Bansode, is getting recognition of domestic work as genuine work. "The patriarchal notion conceives domestic work as an extension of women's work as housemaids. They are underpaid and their work is not considered work at all. It is undervalued because those performing such work belong to poor, migrant and lower caste women. There are no rules regarding their work, and they can be fired easily. This creates fear of losing jobs and hence they hardly ever protest against abuse. This is dangerous and makes domestic workers one of the most exploited segments in the unorganised labour force," said Bansode.

The report recommends health cards from PHCs for check-ups and treatment, standardisation of wages, weekly paid holidays, pension etc. "There should be some regulation on dismissal and committees at the local level to hear dismissal cases. A committee at each ward office in cities should be constituted to look into physical and psychological abuse of domestic workers. Awareness campaigns are needed to register domestic workers under the Female Domestic Workers Welfare Board, Maharashtra," added Bansode.

Source: <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/pune/some-good-from-unpleasant-work-they-spend-on-childrens-schooling/>

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