

Chapter 8

Governing Dynamics of Intra-household Bargaining Relations in Informal Urban Spaces: Reflections from the Case of Female Domestic Workers Across India



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The shades of complexity present in understanding the governing dynamics of gender relations, in any given society along with its economic outcomes, emerge as a difficult, yet fascinating area of study. Lot of debates and discussions have happened in fields across social sciences, trying to study the gendered nature of economic outcomes within households based on the intra-household distribution of economic resources (say, income, physical assets and property rights) between women and men.

In economics, most of the mainstream neoclassical literature studying the economics of family still assumes a common utility and demand function in accounting for the material well-being of a household/family¹ and its members. The assumptions of a common utility function, reflecting a shared set of preferences and pooling of income between the woman and man in a family, were first modelled by Becker (1965, 1981) in his theory on the ‘unitary model’ of a family.

However, a number of economists over the past few decades have critiqued Becker’s ‘unitary’ conceptualization of households, offering alternative models of assessment of well-being while accommodating for varying preferences and interests present amongst multiple members present within a family set-up.² Some initial

¹ The terms ‘household’ and ‘family’ are interchangeably used by the author throughout the chapter.

² On a more theoretical level, Nancy’s (1986) work allowed a normative comparison between the neoclassical convention on aggregating individual tastes and preferences (in a joint/common utility function) with the Marxian approach of aggregating men, women and children into undifferentiated classes based on their household membership. Nancy’s (1986) argued how the emergence of capitalist relations of production (through access to its factors and means) transforms patriarchal systems, increasing the bargaining power of both women and children within the household setup.

³ John Nash (1950).

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critiques to Becker's unitary model used a 'cooperative bargaining approach' (drawn from John Nash's³ classic work on 'bargaining problems' in a two-person game), relaxing only the assumptions of *common preferences* (between women and men in a household) while retaining the assumption on *pooling of income* (between women and men) in a given household (McElroy and Horney 1981; Manser and Brown 1980).⁴

In case of countries in South Asia (particularly India), empirical studies (Sen 1981, 1983, 1990; Agarwal 1990) built on earlier findings⁵ proposed new alternative models while relaxing the assumption on *pooling of income* between women and men, to widen our understanding on different aspects behind the gendered nature of asymmetric distribution of economic resources within the family that significantly affects the social status of women in a household and their *bargaining power*.⁶ Most of these studies made valuable contributions in helping us understand the gaps present in the socio-economic arrangements of families working within formal, organized (or regulated) sectors as against those part of an informal and unorganized (or unregulated) sectors of the economy.

This chapter, focusing on urban families (being part of the informal⁷ economy) aims to analyse the socio-economic position of women working as domestic workers (in urban households) and cognize their relative bargaining power (i.e. their preference in decision-making abilities) in their own household arrangements. Most women working as domestic workers are rarely included in any framework of analysis attempting to objectively study their social and economic position in the household. This is because most domestic workers often remain a part of an *invisible* labour force (outside the formal accountable measures in documented employment statistics), making it difficult for undertaking any detailed analytical enquiry.

⁴These alternative models assumed a *pooling of income* between a woman and a man in any household based on which intra-household decision-making was shaped affecting the household's overall consumption expenditure, income accumulation. These 'cooperative models' assumed the attainment of Pareto-optimality in household decisions between the members of households involved in 'relation to information availability' and 'bargaining availability'.

⁵Some of these studies include more empirical insights from European countries, including studies by Mader and Schneebaum (2013) that closely examined the reasons for differences in the patterns of intra-household decision-making levels, between women and men employed in organized, formal sectors of the economy. The study emphasized how the gendered nature of intra-household decision-making levels depended on the differential nature of social and economic power, demonstrated by relative education and income levels of women and men, as part of a given household, highlighting how relative earnings of partners (women and men) working in regulated sectors of employment, their education level and the nature of relationship between the partners play an important role in determining the probability of one person (say, a woman or a man) making decisions on their own.

⁶For the purpose of understanding the intra-household decision-making power of women in different informal groups, the degree of bargaining power commanded by a woman in her household and the factors affecting it remain key for this study.

⁷Without getting into the details of an epistemological debate present in the literature on the conceptualization of 'formality' and 'informality' in the Indian labour market; for the purpose of this study, the chapter identifies the words 'formal' and 'informal' for labour markets in the aspects of regulatory, accountability principles.

Moreover, in studies on feminist economics and the economics of family (particularly, those focusing on intra-household gender dynamics in different societies), economists often assign a higher weightage to the status of *material* distribution of economic resources (say, income and accumulation of physical assets) to understand the ‘bargaining’ power of women as against men in a given household.

This framework of assessment, as important as it may be, often ignores some vital *extra-household features* rooted in social norms, ideological perspectives shaping the different social structures of family that define the role of women in it. Some of these *extra-household features* (i.e. social status of family, migration into urban cities, ideological perspectives and informal status of selected group) play a vital role in those working within the informal sectors, where access to basic utilities and material resources is a challenge and where the application of rule of law (in minimizing any social or economic injustices)⁸ remains circumscribed.⁹

The study thus seeks to: (a) highlight the role of some key variables, factors involved in shaping a woman’s intra-household bargaining level, and (b) isolate some of the intra-household (i.e. inside the household) and the extra-household features (i.e. outside the household) to include both *material and ideological* perspectives affecting a female domestic worker’s bargaining power (i.e. decision-making abilities). This is done using observational results from a randomized sample of interviews of female domestic workers conducted using a mixed questionnaire (with both subjective–objective questions) across different urban cities in India.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. The first part of the chapter introduces a background situation on the state of affairs for domestic workers working across India, as part of India’s rising informal labour market segment in urban cities. The chapter then goes on to discuss a few aspects of intra-household bargaining power identified as variables for this study. This is followed by an analytical description and findings inferred from the interviews conducted in different urban cities, putting in context the variables identified for this study. In the final part, the chapter mentions some of the limitations faced in this study, followed by a conclusion.

⁸Socio-economic injustices here may include a breach or subjugation of basic fundamental rights, minimum labour standards, minimum wage requirements, etc. which leads to the exploitation of workers (working within informal sectors).

⁹While there remains a limited focus of the economics literature (owing to limited availability of information on informal employment spaces) on studying the material and ideological aspects affecting the social position of women working in informal economic arrangements in their family, this study finds a convergence between the weightage of extra-household and intra-household factors affecting the relative bargaining power of female domestic workers in their own household (as against other members of the family).

Domestic Workers Across India

The informal economy constitutes more than half of the non-agricultural employment base in most developing regions and as much as 82% in South Asia, capturing the large share of economic units and workers that remain outside the world of regulated, formalized economic activities and protected employment (Mohan 2017). Keeping aside the complexities involved in measuring informal employment statistics in countries like India (and elsewhere), a recent study by Rustagi (2015)¹⁰ observing the overall informal employment data released by National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO) 68th Round estimates shows how:

79% of the informal workers do not have a written job contract; 71% are not eligible for paid leave; and 72% are not eligible for any social security benefits...and 80% of the workers are engaged in activities which have no union or association. (Rustagi 2015; pp. 1)

Within this rising informal economy base, the domestic work market remains one of the fastest expanding sectors for low-skilled women and men. According to the Final Report of The Task Force On Domestic Workers (2011): a *domestic worker* refers to: 'a person who is employed for remuneration whether in cash or kind, in any household through any agency or directly either on a temporary or permanent, part-time or full-time basis to do the household work, but does not include any member of the family of an employer'.¹¹

The type of domestic work for workers is based on the number of hours of work and the nature of employment relationship shared with urban employers. The domestic workers can further be categorized as¹²:

1. *Part-time worker*: A domestic worker who works for one of more employers for a specified number of hours per day or performs specific tasks for each of the multiple employers every day.
2. *Full-time worker*: A domestic worker who works for a single employer for a specified number of hours and who returns to his/her home every day after work.
3. *Live-in worker*: A domestic worker who works full time for a single employer and also stays on the premises of the employer or in a dwelling provided by the employer and who does not return to his/her home every day after work.

The chapter focuses only on *part-time and full-time female domestic workers*. Being part of an unregulated sector, domestic workers are often subjected to social and economic exploitation and discrimination at the hands of their employer. As observed by a 2011 Report published by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (Government of India), the general problems faced by domestic workers include¹³:

- Lack of minimum wages and decent working conditions.

¹⁰The study by Rustagi (2015) includes data on employment available for workers from both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

¹¹Source: Ministry of Labour and Employment, Govt. of India. (2011, p. 12).

¹²Ministry of Labour and Employment, Govt. of India. (2011, p. 12).

¹³Ministry of Labour and Employment, Govt. of India. (2011, p. 46).

- No standard uniformity in receiving monetary and non-monetary benefits like leaves of absence etc.
- Violence, abuse and sexual harassment at workplace.
- Exploitation by placement agencies: The domestic workers who come through placement agencies suffer exploitation. Many even get caught in cases of trafficking (see part on placement agencies).

Studies evaluating the socio-economic status of domestic workers in India (Roberts 1997; Neetha 2004; Chandrasekhar and Ghosh 2007; Sampath 2013), broadly highlight the following **four** aspects while discerning the degree of social exploitation faced by domestic workers (especially women) working in urban households across metropolises:

- **Increased rural to urban migration**—Many domestic workers in different urban parts of India (especially the metropolises) are migrants from relatively poor rural areas belonging to socially backward, vulnerable communities with no support system in the city. With low literacy levels, lack of alternative employment opportunities and no state support, this leaves most domestic workers largely vulnerable and at the mercy of urban household employers and middlemen/agents/brokers (who facilitate ad hoc employment opportunities for them).
- **Cultural and economic devaluation of domestic work**—The social perception of domestic work in most parts of the country considers it as *unskilled, low-wage* work for women. This, of course, has a gender perspective attached to it. As Agarwal (1997) argues: ‘There can be, and not uncommonly is, a divergence between what a person *actually* contributes, needs, or is able to do and *perceptions* about her/his contributions, needs or abilities...In particular, a person’s contributions may be undervalued because of her gender or race...The work women do might be labelled ‘unskilled’ simply because of their gender’,¹⁴ their social position in the society and the nature of work undertaken by them. Such social perceptions of female domestic workers further affect their intra-household bargaining power or preferential decision-making capabilities affecting their overall well-being (discussed later).
- **Sexual exploitation and abuse faced by female domestic workers**—The majority of female domestic workers working in urban spaces face high level of discrimination at the hands of urban employers (female and male). Being part of an unregulated, helpless labour market segment, there is mounting empirical evidence documenting a widespread increase in cases of sexual abuse, domestic violence and crimes against women working as domestic workers (Chandrasekhar and Ghosh 2007; Mohan 2017).
- **Lack of distinction in regarding an employer’s household as a work place**—Across India, the house of an urban employer (hiring a domestic worker) is hardly recognized as a workplace for the person working there, making it difficult for agencies to enforce the rights of workers in such unregulated spaces.

¹⁴Agarwal (1997, pp. 10).

As a result, the household work (undertaken at an employer's residence) remains difficult to be captured in any official studies on informal employment estimates (Sampath 2013).

While the scope of this study does not go into the details of the nature of exploitation and harassment faced by female domestic workers or the violation of their rights (as done in earlier chapters of the edited volume),¹⁵ parts below focus more on the female domestic workers' own household set-up. Some of the observations made above from the existing literature on domestic workers are further validated from the results and analysis of the study.

Intra-household Gender Dynamics and Bargaining Levels

The role of households/families holds atomistic importance in the economic analysis on distribution, and optimization of limited economic resources for the overall well-being of women and men across societies. Within households, we witness varying conflicts in the pattern of preferences and interests shared by women, men and children (assumed to be the basic constituents in a household/family). In a traditional intra-household bargaining approach, one would expect the women and the men to mutually *cooperate* (via pooling of income) in spite of any degree of conflict, to maximize their utilities in a collective way.

However, as mentioned earlier, we often observe a higher degree of *non-cooperation* between a woman and a man in families within different societal groups (owing to differences in allocation of economic resources or due to social norms). As the relative bargaining power of a woman inside her family remains lower to the bargaining power of a man, this affects her ability to cooperate or demonstrate an equal say in the intra-household decision-making set-up for her well-being. In such *non-cooperative* models, most presumptions of *Pareto-efficiency*¹⁶ on *income pooling* at an intra-household level fall from the scope of analysis, leading to a need for accommodation of differed, gender-based, individualized patterns of bargaining power by members of a particular group.¹⁷

¹⁵There is hardly any exclusive literature studying the intra-household decision-making abilities of women working as domestic workers. While most of these women earn their monthly income independently through the services offered as a domestic worker (part-time or full-time), earning this independent income or having financial independence may have little effect on their intra-household bargaining position (i.e. in terms of their decision-making capabilities).

¹⁶*Pareto-efficiency* is a condition used in welfare analysis where resources are said to be allocated or distributed (within a group) in an efficient way, if and only if, any one member's situation cannot be improved without making another member's situation worse off. The condition of Pareto-efficiency thus does not imply fairness or equality between members of a particular group.

¹⁷Also, the informational basis of comparing two independent households and their well-being in a given society not only embodies the material aspects of well-being (income, accumulation of physical assets) but also includes certain ideological perspectives (embedded in the social structure of the households) that endogenously affect distribution of economic resources between women and men (regardless of whichever sector of employment they may be positioned in).

With the application of more recent alternative models in this regard (Folbre 1986, 1998; Sen 1981, 1983, 1990; Agarwal 1990, 1994; Doss 1996), we now have a much better understanding of additional factors involved (in shaping the *bargaining power* of women in family arrangements) that goes beyond the *material* aspects to accommodate for the role of social norms, ideological perspectives and affecting her intra-household and extra-household decision-making capabilities.

Variables Shaping the Intra-household Bargaining Power of Female Domestic Workers

There can be a wide range of factors that can affect a woman's bargaining power at an intra-household level. While some of these remain more quantifiable, such as a woman's income and ownership of economic assets (example, land and house); some are less quantifiable, namely *social norms* (shaped by local institutions and traditional practices) and *ideological perspectives* (example, patrilineal family arrangements), both affecting a woman's intra-household (within the family) and extra-household (outside the family) decision-making capabilities. In discussing the case of rural women in South Asia, Agarwal (1997) in her study, argues¹⁸:

"A person's bargaining strength within the family vis-à-vis subsistence needs depends on following eight factors:

- (a) Ownership of and control over assets, especially arable land (in rural areas);
- (b) Access to employment and other income-earning means;
- (c) Access to communal resources such as village commons and forests;
- (d) Access to traditional social support systems such as patronage, kinship and caste groupings;
- (e) Support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- (f) Support from the state;
- (g) Social perceptions about needs, contributions and other determinants of deservedness; and
- (h) Social norms".

The relevance of the above factors allows a woman's ability to "fulfil subsistence needs" both within and outside the family (Agarwal 1997). In this way, these factors help in combining the effects of both the quantifiable aspects (denoted by factors (a), (b), (c)) and not-so quantifiable aspects (denoted by factors (d), (e), (f), (g), (h)) on the bargaining power¹⁹ of women at an intra-household and extra-household level (in terms of preferential decision-making). Also, there remains a possibility of reverse causality between the functions of the quantifiable and not-so quantifiable

¹⁸Agarwal (1997, pp. 8–9).

¹⁹In the analytical observations documented in this study, an increase in bargaining power of women (female domestic workers) within their households remains directly proportional to the degree of preference they have in terms of the variables identifies (i.e. spending allocation preference, fertility preference, children's education, children's marriage).

factors, i.e. a woman with the help of either (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) can command a higher bargaining power and level of independence in securing (a), (b) and vice versa. This is vital from a policy perspective and warrants a deeper understanding on the relationship of each of these factors in promoting, safeguarding the overall well-being of women and their free agency²⁰ in different social arrangements.

The four relatively more important variables or factors emerging from the existing literature on determining a woman's intra-household position focus on her bargaining power (or independent decision-making) in areas of consumption expenditure, fertility preference, child's education and marriage decision. As part of this study's primary research, the basic structure of evaluation uses these **four** variables (described below) for female domestic workers²¹ in the questionnaire of interviews conducted to explain the extent of their intra-household bargaining position:

- Spending Allocation Preference (for intra-household consumption purposes)
- Fertility Preference (i.e. in having a child or not)
- Child's Education Preference (i.e. in educating a child at a particular institution)
- Child's Marriage Preference (i.e. in taking a decision on a child's marriage)²²

Spending Allocation Preference: Sen (1981) in conceptualizing an "entitlement approach to famine" illustrated two factors that allow a person within a family to meet her/his subsistence needs (e.g., food, healthcare and rent cost for housing): *endowments* (i.e. what a person owns, such as physical assets and labour power) and *exchange entitlement mapping* (i.e. "the exchange possibilities that exist through production and trade, which determine the consumption set available to a person", given her/his endowments).

The objective of knowing the *spending allocation preference* is to somewhat identify an exchange entitlement mapping in a female domestic worker's own household and understand the extent of her role in contributing towards this entitlement mapping. We get this by accounting for the percentage distribution of monthly expenses from a female domestic worker's monthly income towards her household's overall—*food expenses, healthcare cost, rent cost* (if her house is on rent), *child's/children's education tuition* (if child/children is going to school) and so on.

This helps us in getting a quantifiable picture on the relative contributory role a woman has in taking decisions with respect to her household's basic expenses vis-à-vis her husband's contributory role. The *spending allocation preference* highlights one aspect of a woman's bargaining for subsistence within her own household.

Fertility Preference: While one may use incomes, commodities, access to economic resources as strong material basis of well-being for individual persons within a family, in case of women, a key behavioural factor affecting their overall well-being within the family remains closely related to the degree of preferential say they

²⁰Check Mohan (2017) for the difference between the well-being and agency aspects of freedom of women.

²¹We assume the case of only those female domestic workers who have their own independent household residence (with a spouse and children) without stay in residence with their employer (or at their place of work).

²²We assume here that a female domestic worker has a child (aged 20 years or more).

have in the decision on having a child (Sen 1983, 1990). In a recent study (Mohan 2017), the author discussed the importance of fertility preference in context to its relationship with literacy and employment opportunities for a woman, as a condition for her overall well-being inside or outside a household.²³

Child's Education Preference and Child's Marriage: These two variables demonstrate the degree of freedom and bargaining power commanded by a female domestic worker in her own household, in context of promoting or safeguarding her own child's well-being (assuming she has a child).

A child's education being critical for her/his own future well-being remains often related to the woman's motivation to work as a domestic worker in different households, i.e. in earning the extra income for affording the child's education. This is especially true for circumstances where a woman's husband pools little or no money towards their child's education and the incidence of financial burden falls more or less on the woman to manage her child's education expense (during the time the child goes to school). In such a case, the woman's role in having a greater say in the decision of educating her child even after a certain level (say, for secondary degree education after high school) is key for the child's own well-being.

The latter variable (on child's marriage preference) attributes a preferential say of a woman in deciding her child's own marriage (assuming the child to be above 20 years old and willingness to marry). While decisions on marriages in most rural societies across India reflect a union between two family arrangements (shaped by social norms, traditional value systems), the decision for a person to marry (whether a girl or boy) remains largely centred in the hands of their respective family, as a collective family group (Agarwal 1990, 1997).

Assuming the existence of such social arrangements and family practice to be true²⁴ in the households of female domestic workers (interviewed for the study), the focus was to observe: to what extent the female domestic worker on her own tends to command an equal or lesser preferential say in her child's decision to marry, as compared to her husband or/and extended relatives?

While social norms and perceptions play a vital role in the family arrangements of children (assumed to be at a time when they are about to get married), it was observed for most women interviewed that in their own children's marriage, the woman (i.e.

²³While a utilitarian conceptualization of well-being (assessed via a quantifiable scale of material pleasure) fails to encompass such an aspect in its scope, we include this aspect as a variable shaping a female domestic worker's intra-household bargaining power (i.e. decision on having a child or not). Check Mohan (2017) for a detailed explanation on this.

²⁴In the interviews of female domestic workers, we observed that the children of these workers (aged 20 or more) tend to have less or no say in their decision to get married and the decision remains conditionally dependent on the family of the respective children (including the woman, her husband and extended relatives).

female domestic worker) tends to have a much lesser say (as observed in a few patrilineal and patriarchal family arrangements of interviewed domestic workers).²⁵ This raises an interesting point, as argued earlier by Agarwal (1997), on the role of social *perceptions* in a woman's bargaining power.²⁶

The Weighting of Variables: Do all Variables Carry Equal Weight?

It is quite evident that each of the variables identified above does not affect a female domestic worker's intra-household bargaining power (linked with her decision-making capabilities) to an equal extent. While having an independent financial position with an earning may give the woman a greater decision-making preference in making spending allocation (for livelihood purposes), it cannot be seen to directly affect her preference to have a child (or not have one) or any other variable. This observation (as discussed latter) is quite an anomaly seen in the case of female domestic workers as against other income-earning female groups (discussed in earlier studies).

At the same time, it would be unfair to attach any standardized weight of importance to any one variable. In the analysis put forth, there is an understanding to allow for a degree of subjectivity to remain pertinent (discussed as *extra-household factors*), given the level of dynamism present in social contexts of interviewed women and their family set-up. It is thus vital to isolate each variable to its own independent merit while providing our analytical observations in the part below.

Analytical Findings (Variable-wise)

In observing the analytical findings from the 46 interviews conducted in different urban cities across India, there is a variable-wise focused explanation to underline some of the key observations from the interviews conducted. The city-wise sample size of interviews of female domestic workers includes: Tamil Nadu (Chennai)—5 interviews; Haryana (Sonapat)—13 interviews; Rajasthan (Jaipur)—10 interviews; Maharashtra (Mumbai)—5 interviews; Punjab (Chandigarh)—7 interviews, and Delhi—6 interviews.

Box Table 1 and Box Table 2 provide aggregate details of the profile of all female domestic workers interviewed, along with the details of their work, nature of services

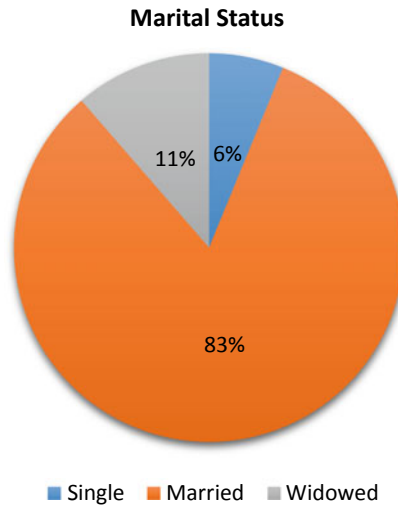
²⁵This also seeks to highlight the degree of interdependence between a female domestic worker's own economic freedom (having independent income, access to other economic resources) with her social freedom.

²⁶As Agarwal (1997) states in her paper, 'There can be, and not uncommonly is, a divergence between what a person *actually* contributes, needs or is able to do, and *perceptions* about her/his contributions, needs or abilities...'.
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offered and monthly income earned. Box Table 3 reflects variable-wise aggregated responses that were identified for the study. The following sub-category explanation of 'Analytical Observations' is of pertinence owing to spatial differences highlighted in the responses sought (particularly in Box Table 2).

Box Table 1: Profile of Respondents (Female Domestic Workers)

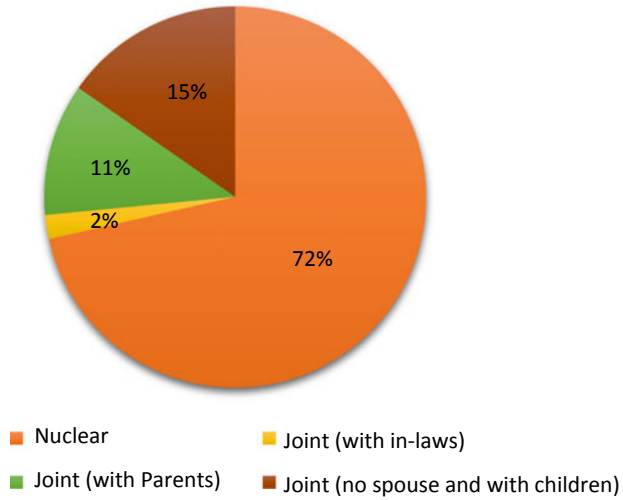
(a) **Marital Status**



83% of the respondents interviewed were married. In case of two respondents, one was divorced and had a child (in Mumbai), while another respondent was married twice and had two children (Jaipur).

(b) **Nature of Intra-household Family**

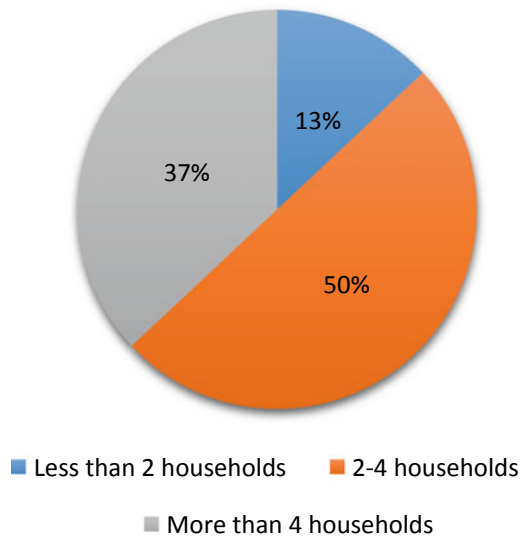
Nature of Intra-Household Family



72% of the female respondents were staying in an independent household with their spouse and kids only. 15% stayed with their in-laws and kids and 11% stayed with their parents only.

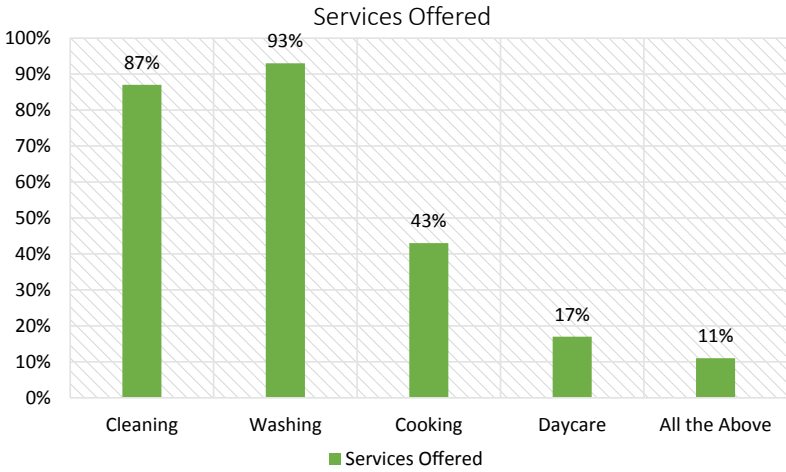
(c) **Average Number of Employer Households (As Work)**

Average Numer of Households (As Work)



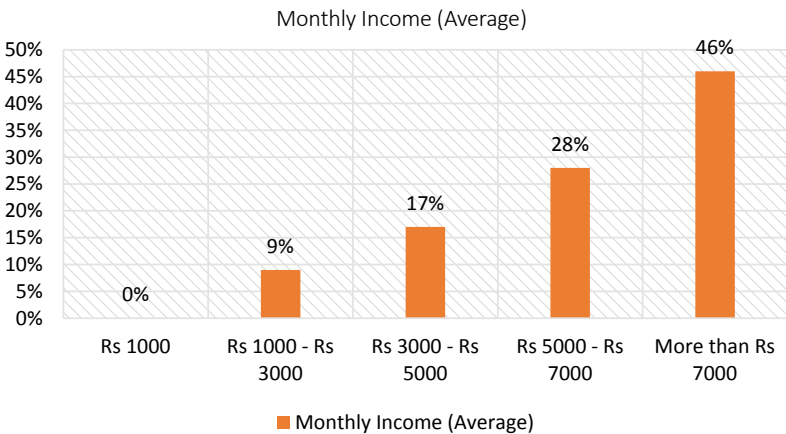
50% of the female respondents were working on an average 2–4 households as their place of work while 37% were working in more than 4 households. Only one respondent (in Mumbai) worked as a full-time-domestic worker in one household.

(d) Nature of Services Offered as a Domestic Worker



Most female respondents interviewed prefer performing two to three services together at their working household and are paid according to each of the services offered.

(e) Total Monthly Income (Average)

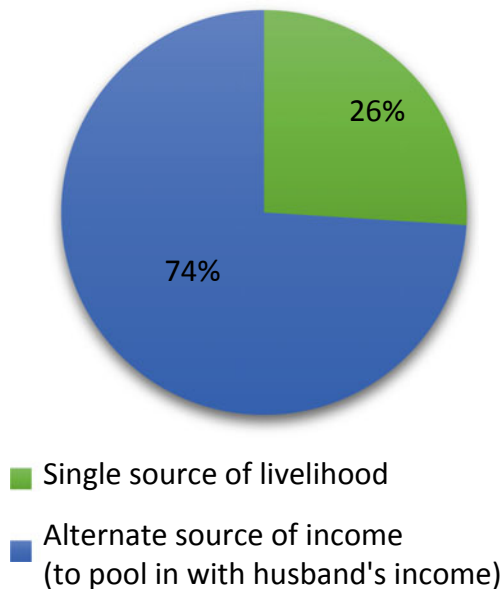


46% of the female respondents earn more than Rs. 7,000 as monthly income for the services offered. In Sonapat (Haryana) and Mumbai (Maharashtra), it

was observed that all respondents on an average earn more than Rs. 7,000 per month as domestic workers.

(f) **Motivation to Work as a Domestic Worker**

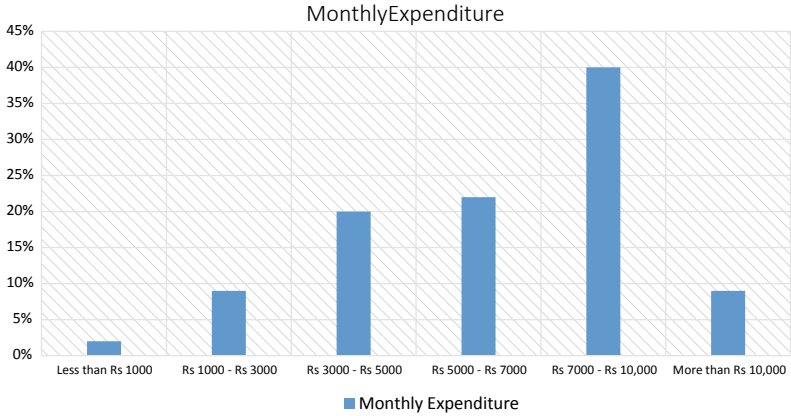
Motivation to Work as a Domestic Worker in the city



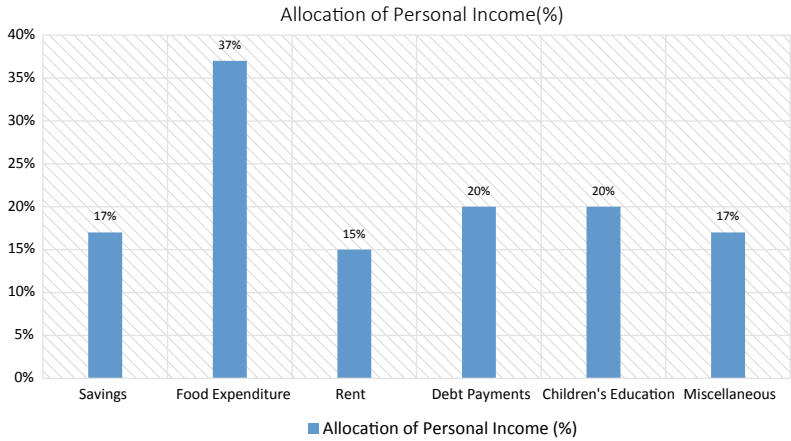
As observed from the data collected, most respondents work as domestic workers to pool in their income with their husbands to manage household expenditure. 74% of the female respondents chose domestic work due to unavailability of an alternative employment opportunity, and to meet their household expenses use the income from domestic work for supplementing the household income; while 26% chose domestic work as that is only source of occupation for subsistence and livelihood means available to them. In Chennai, it was noted that the husbands of most respondents were addicted to alcohol and contributed nothing towards household expenditure. As a result, most respondents (under the 26% group) worked as domestic workers and saw it as a single source of livelihood.

Box Table 2: Intra-household Allocation of Income Expenditure

(a) Household Monthly Expenditure

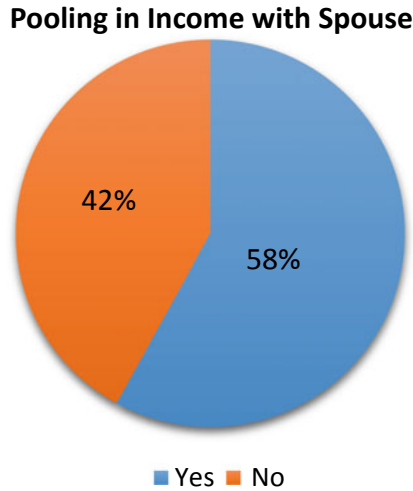


(b) Allocation of Personal Income towards Intra-household Expenses (%)



Irrespective of the city, the overall percentage allocation towards each identified component of household expenditure (for each respondent) was similar. More than 37% of the overall monthly income expenditure of female domestic workers was utilized for their household food requirements and 20% towards children’s education.

(c) **Percentage of Respondents Pooling in Income with Their Spouse**

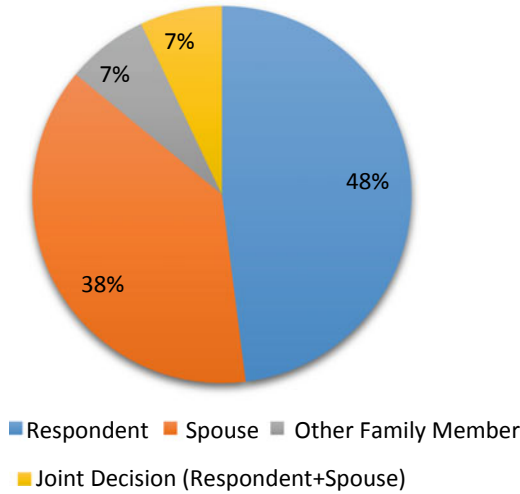


In terms of the overall responses collected on the question of how many female domestic workers received financial support from their respective spouses in managing their intra-household expenditure needs, 58% consented towards receiving some supports towards pooling in their income, while 42% received no support from their respective spouses. One of the most common reasons cited by respondents (not pooling in income with spouses) was alcohol addiction where spouses of female respondents (especially in Chennai, Delhi, Sonapat) faced this problem, managing most of the household expenditure on their own.

Box Table 3: Variable-Focused Responses

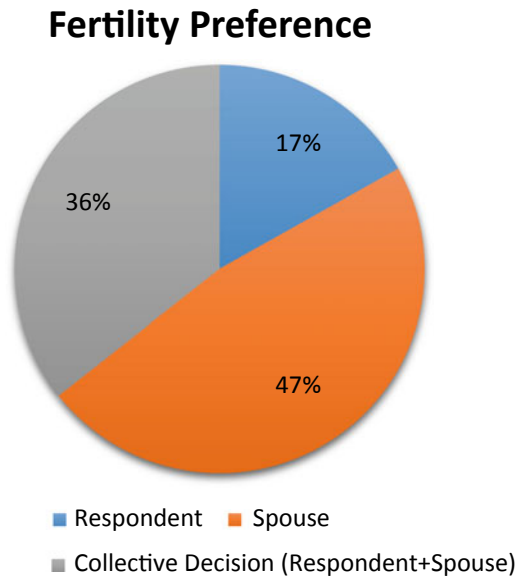
(a) Preferential Say of Respondents in Spending on Intra-Household Budget (Spending Allocation)

Spending Allocation Preference



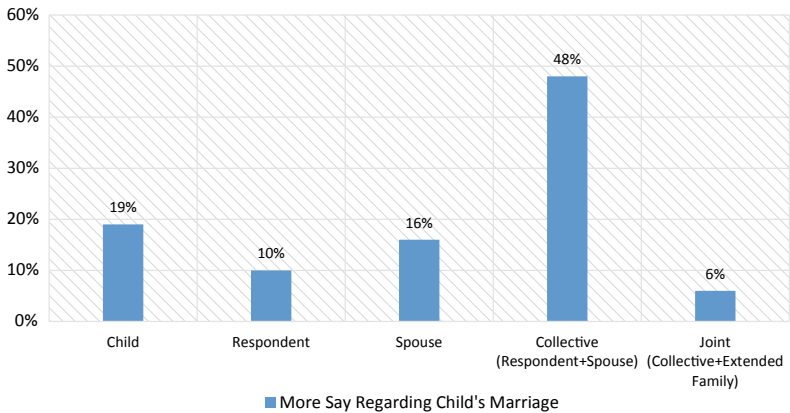
All respondents interviewed in cities of Chennai and Mumbai were found to be solely responsible for taking all household decisions on expenditure allocation. Overall, 38% of the female respondents (in spite of earning more than Rs. 7,000 or more monthly) had no preferential say in their intra-household consumption spending decisions (as against their spouse). In the city of Chandigarh, spouses (husbands) of female respondents had greater say in household expenditure allocation (irrespective of who contributed more money in the household budget).

(b) **Preferential Say in the Decision of Having Children (Fertility Preference)**



47% of the female respondents indicated that they have little or no preferential say in the decision of having a child. In the city of Chandigarh, it was observed from the interviews conducted that there was more of a collective mutual decision-making process (including the respondent and her spouse) in having a child. In Sonapat and Delhi, the spouse had a greater say in having a child (as against the respondent). However, in Chennai, the respondents demonstrated a greater say in having a child (fertility preference—as against their spouse).

(c) **Preferential Say in a Child’s Marriage**²⁷



In the case of most respondents, particularly those residing in Chennai and Mumbai, the decision regarding their child’s marriage was observed to be dependent more on the collective decision of the respondent and her spouse. In case of Sonapat and Delhi constituting for 22% of the overall responses here, the respondents seem to have a limited say (on their own) in their children’s decision to marry. The decision in these cities was made by either spouses or the members of joint family (i.e. in-laws and other relatives). Overall, 48% of the respondents agreed that the decision on their children’s marriage was jointly taken with the spouse while 19% agreed that the decision rested more or less on the choice of their adult children, which means that only in 6 out of 33 interviewed cases, adult children (above the age of 20) being able to decide by themselves on their decision to marry (i.e. including 2 such cases from Delhi, 1 such case from Jaipur and 3 from Chandigarh).

Analytical Observations

Without reiterating the micro-details made in the observations column in the Box Tables above, what is evident from the study and interviews conducted across different urban parts of the country is that it is extremely difficult to model a general framework for assessing a female domestic worker’s intra-household bargaining or decision-making capabilities (on a given pre-identified set of factors). The assumptions on common utility function or pooling in of income (between the woman and her husband) have a marginal role in influencing the woman’s intra-household bargaining power, i.e. her decision-making abilities, allowing us to discount any unitary

²⁷If the child of the respondents is more than 20 years old.

method approach or application for studying her intra-household bargaining power, which, as we see here, is shaped by both intra-household and extra-household factors.

For further illustrative evidence to support this, here are some observational statistics drawn from the 46 interviewed female domestic workers, on the question:

Being financially independent (or since working as a domestic worker), do you think you have an equal or greater say in your household decision-making abilities²⁸?

- (a) 4 respondents (9% overall) said 'No', feeling that they have little or no say in the household decision-making process.
- (b) 9 respondents (20% overall) said that they take all the household decisions (based on the variables given and questions asked).
- (c) 5 respondents (11% overall) said that they have greater say in household spending allocation but limited or no say (as against their spouse) in their children's education and/or children's decision to marry.
- (d) 23 respondents (52% overall) said they have support of their spouses in taking household decisions (in a collective way).
- (e) Since starting to work as a domestic worker in the city, almost 70% of the respondents agreed that their decision-making abilities with respect to household spending allocation preference had improved, also allowing them to spend more on their own clothes, personal hygiene and personal items.
- (f) In terms of fertility preference, there was little or no difference in the bargaining power of respondents in the Northern cities (Chandigarh, Jaipur, Delhi and Sonapat), while in the Southern part (Chennai) and in Mumbai, respondents had relatively a greater say in having a child.

Observation (e) here highlights an important aspect of how an increase in financial independence allowed most female domestic workers to take better personal care and have a greater say in intra-household spending allocation. This observation is in alignment with the results from earlier studies (Agarwal 1994; Sen 1990), where the relative increase in financial income-earning opportunities amongst women (in formal or informal sectors) positively impact their intra-household bargaining power.

Observation (f), however, points to a different sociological finding, where, in spite of having a greater say in household spending allocation decisions, most female domestic workers (in Northern parts of the country) have little or no say in the decision of having a child (regardless of their economic position in the family). This is observationally true due to the presence of various geo-spatial sociological arrangements (based on social norms, family values and ideological perspectives), qualifying as part of extra-household features (i.e. features present as an influential factor outside any given household).

²⁸Taking into consideration all the variables involved in our study.

Further, below are some key points of observation, qualifying as interesting areas of research that remain centred to the case of domestic workers as against other working groups (i.e. within the informal sector).

- i. Most of the respondents (female domestic workers) started working as domestic workers after getting married and moving to the city with their husbands or family members. The motivation to work as a domestic worker was primarily to earn additional income, owing to the weaker financial circumstances at their respective household. Thirty-four of the respondents (73%) interviewed are migrants from other cities, rural areas and 12 belonged (27%) to the same city. These observations validate one of our previous points highlighting the socio-economic challenges faced by domestic workers across India.
- ii. The income charged for the number of services offered by respondents (across all cities) depends on the size of the employer's house, the total number of household members and negotiations with the employer (conditional on total number of domestic workers in the residential space, union-based service charges). The presence of informal labour union (amongst female domestic workers working in a residential space) allows them to negotiate a good monthly wage for the services offered.
- iii. On being asked if the respondents would prefer being part of a formal, organized group (regulating their services, income and rights as domestic workers), 27% of the respondents showed interest in being part of such a forum while 73% didn't show much interest, reflecting a lack of awareness on rights-based issues.
- iv. A high prevalence of alcoholism present amongst the spouses of respondents (in cities of Chennai, Sonapat and Delhi) forces respondents to increase the total number of hours of work which negatively impacts their own health and overall well-being.
- v. Higher female literacy (amongst female domestic workers) combined with a small-nuclear family (comprising of a spouse and less than two children) in urban cities like Mumbai, Chandigarh and Chennai reflects a greater decision-making ability amongst women in areas of fertility preference and children's education.
- vi. In most interviews conducted (across cities), it was observed that as part of the household spending allocation preference, female domestic workers preferred to save more money (as against their spouse) for future contingent expenses. At the same time, almost 70% of the household budget towards children's education and overall medical expenses were contributed by women alone.

Observation (i) raises a key feature that shapes the family arrangements for most female domestic workers in urban cities. A lack of alternative employment opportunities within rural areas pushed most of the rural families to migrate into the nearest urban city in search of better livelihood opportunities. Almost 73% of all interviewed female domestic workers were a part of this migrating group of families who under-

took domestic work for managing basic survival and livelihood. This was seen as a major factor in affecting their motivation to work as domestic workers.

Observation (ii) relates to a classical problem faced by most informal workers (as raised earlier in the chapter) where in the absence of being covered or governed by state regulation on minimum labour standards and minimum wage laws, most domestic workers find it difficult to collectively *bargain* and negotiate a fair wage for the services they offer. The high variance seen in the income earned by female domestic workers across different urban cities points out, how in selected areas within cities like Mumbai, Chandigarh and Jaipur (as against other cities), there is a stronger informal union (amongst domestic workers in a given residential area)²⁹ that enables them to negotiate a monthly income of their choice. It was in these cities that around 27% of the respondents (as noted in Observation (iii)) seemed more aware of their rights to negotiate or demand for a fair wage (because of informal union groups created by themselves) and preferred to be a part of a formal group³⁰ or an organized portal for domestic workers that helps them in regulating a fixed wage structure in alignment with the type of services offered, and protecting their rights.³¹

Observations (iv) and (vi) reflected a common pattern in the households of most respondents (especially across Chennai, Delhi and Sonapat) where spouses of the female domestic workers were found to contribute very little towards household decisions (across all variables) nor offered any financial assistance to respondents (with no opportunity of *pooling of income* to manage household expenses and children's education) and were alcoholics. While this objectively increased the concerned respondent's intra-household bargaining power (on a whole), it was not seen as a desirable outcome by the interviewed respondents, as it often pushed them to increase their hours of work (at their employer's household) and manage more than 70% of all household expenses. In fact, as mentioned earlier (Sampath 2013), the nature of domestic work (in spite of being informal as per official employment records) is hardly perceived to be seen as work at all.³² The hours of work spent at the employer's household by female domestic workers is seen to be exclusive

²⁹Such an informal union (formed in most residential colonies) helps in minimalizing the exploitation of female domestic workers working there and further ensures an annual income revision (up to a range of 10%) in selected residential areas. Having said that, there is no formal space for negotiating a fair, decent wage for domestic workers across cities (including interviewed areas) which subjects the female domestic workers to face exploitative conditions (at work).

³⁰The notion of a formal, organized group was identified given the recent role played by some small-scale entrepreneurial e-initiatives like *mybai.com* and *Gharkamai.com* (in Mumbai and elsewhere), providing a formal, regulated, socially protective platform to domestic workers for improving their work conditions, negotiating a decent wage while safeguarding their fundamental rights.

³¹In Mumbai, there are already common portals (with online presence) like *Bai on call*, *BookMyBai*, *Taskbob* and many more that offer help to domestic workers in finding work in different parts of the city and protect them against any form of exploitation (faced at the workplace) by reporting any complaints (raised by domestic workers) to concerned authorities.

³²In the formal employment statistics, household work (primarily performed by women) is seen in the category of 'self-employed'. In case of the unorganized, informal sector, there is no process to see domestic work as organized work, which makes the measurement of overall labour productivity a complex exercise.

to the traditionally understood nature and value of work within labour productivity standards (see Mohan 2017).

In our case, as highlighted in the column of observations in Box Tables above, in addition to the problem of viewing domestic work as organized work, there seems a need to give equal or greater importance to the role played by *extra*-household factors like: social norms (prevalent in Southern parts of the country as against the North and the West); ideological factors on woman's role in family arrangements³³ (diverging across Southern and Northern parts of the country); the nature of work (largely informal and unregulated in our case); or the geo-spatial positioning of women (in urban spaces as against rural areas), in affecting her relative decision-making power at an intra-household level.

These extra-household factors go beyond an exclusive focus on the monthly income earned by the female domestic workers. The results attach less relative importance to the amount of income pooled in by the female domestic worker (with her spouse) towards her household which is a key independent variable in analysing a woman's intra-household bargaining power. Further, most of the above observations help us gauge the substantial degree of sub-optimal conditions present in the household dynamics of domestic workers and the economic and social position of women (working as domestic workers), within and outside their households.

The analysis provided here validates some of the earlier highlighted challenges pertaining to domestic workers across India. The primary research done here does, however, give way for further research investigation in studying the socio-economic position of women who work outside the regulated, formal sectors of the economy. Also, those who seek to understand the gendered nature of intra-household bargaining power may do well to go beyond a given set of pre-defined modelled factors (say, assumptions from unitary models, common utility functions and objective socio-economic indicators) and widen the informational domain of assessment by including more subjective information (in form of extra-household features) that affect any woman's intra-household bargaining power.

Limitations to the Study and Conclusion

Any attempt to undertake a multi-variate primary study involving subjective and objective frameworks of assessment across different spatial areas is bound to face strong resistance in its method of analysis. An acknowledgement of some of the main limitations of this study (given below) is therefore important in understanding the scope of the author's analysis itself:

- The overall randomized interview samples, i.e. 46 across all urban cities (Jaipur, Chandigarh, Delhi, Sonapat, Chennai and Mumbai), are disparately segregated across cities. One may identify the city-wise sample to be relatively low in some

³³Refers to the social, cultural factors influencing the decision-making preferences of females–males from an intra-household perspective.

- cases, but detailed questions and responses on subjective and objective indicators help us still in giving a robust, circumstantial trend in the situation of female domestic workers in their own households and on the nature of domestic work.
- The part of the study on documenting the income earned by female domestic workers only includes income earned in cash, excluding any in-kind payments or services offered by the employer (in form of food, clothing and other utilities).
 - The quantifiable indicators present the mean (average) and percentage figures. For additional work on the data, standard deviation on each city-wise responses can give further insight into city-wise trends in gendered nature of intra-household bargaining power of respondents. Discreet levels in primary data collection with different sample sizes made this difficult. There was also a strong resistance seen from respondents in getting access to information on their intra-household expenditure which made validation of data difficult in some cases.
 - With limited city-wise sampling, one can argue that any intra-city variations owing to the geo-spatial positioning of the respondents' household (i.e. in the middle of the city vs. in the peripheral, outskirts part) will be difficult to ascertain. To capture that, it would be useful to carry independent surveys within each city to validate the findings noted here.
 - Questions on fertility preference, decision-making abilities on children's marriage invoked stiff initial resistance from female domestic workers in Sonapat, Delhi and Chandigarh and required a longer time span for interviewers to seek responses to these questions.

Conclusion

Through a detailed analysis undertaken for female domestic workers (as part of India's large informal economy base) across different cities in India, one finds the presence of multifaceted, intertwined crescendos operating as part of *intra-* and *extra-*household features (i.e. both within and outside their household) that significantly affect their social and economic position in their own household and the society at large. While the analysis drawn here is studied only in terms of selected variables that affect a female domestic worker's bargaining power (i.e. in terms of her household spending allocation preference; fertility preference; children's education and marriage), the study emphasizes the need to widen our informational domain of analytical factors pertinent to the theme of studying the women's intra-household decision-making abilities within unorganized, informal sectors (i.e. the domestic worker base across India). This includes accommodating for various extra-household features (i.e. social status of family, migration into urban cities, ideological perspectives and informal status of selected group) that affect the well-being of those working outside the formal, regulated sectors of the economy.

Beyond this, the observations discussed here offer insights in substantiating the case for enabling a rights-based policy discourse, aimed at improving the overall well-being of female domestic workers (in their own households) and protecting their rights. There remains an urgent need for policy makers, agencies of the state (including non-state actors) to use some of the empirical details highlighted here to take the scope of this analysis further in formalizing means of social justice, ensuring basic standards and rights for domestic workers who currently lie outside the domain and means of institutional justice.

Appendix

See Tables 1 and 2.

The tables below provide information as per each variable (identified in Part II) that highlights the degree of respondents' bargaining power, i.e. preference in intra/extra-household decision-making (in her own household) (Tables 3, 4 and 5).

Table 1 Profile of respondents (female domestic workers)

Aggregate profile of female domestic workers	Mean (average) figure (out of 46)	Percentage (%)	Key observations
Education			
- Illiterate ^a	27	59	Amongst the total number of female domestic workers interviewed, we observed a higher literacy level amongst domestic workers in Jaipur (Rajasthan) and Mumbai (Maharashtra)
- Primary schooling (below grade Xth)	12	26	
- Grade Xth pass	4	9	
- Grade XIIth pass	3	6	
Marital status			
- Single (not married)	3	6	In case of two respondents, one was divorced and had a child (in Mumbai), while another respondent was married twice and had two children (Jaipur)
- Married	37	80	
- Widow ^a	5	11	

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Aggregate profile of female domestic workers	Mean (average) figure (out of 46)	Percentage (%)	Key observations
Number of family members (in respondents' own household)			
- Two (respondent and spouse)	4	9	Out of the total sample interviews (46) - 32 (70%) of the total female respondents had a nuclear household set-up, i.e. had one spouse and two or more children - 1 (2%) of the total female respondents had her in-laws (father and mother) staying in the same household as spouse and children - 5 (11%) of the total female respondents were staying with her own parents (in which, three of them being single and one divorced) - 7 (15%) of the total female respondents were staying with their children (in which, five were widows and two ^a had no spouse living in with them)
- Three (respondent, spouse and one child)	9	20	
- Four (respondent, spouse and two children)	9	20	
- Five (respondent, spouse and three children)	8	17	
- More than five (respondent, spouse, more than two children and relatives)	16	35	
Number of respondents' children (living in the household)			
- One	6	13	
- Two	12	26	
- Three	11	24	
- More than three	13	28	
- No children	4	9	

^aIn Mumbai, there are already common portals (with online presence) like *Bai on call*, *BookMyBai*, *Taskbob* and many more that offer help to domestic workers in finding work in different parts of the city and protect them against any form of exploitation (faced at the workplace) by reporting any complaints (raised by domestic workers) to concerned authorities

Table 2 Information on respondents' job profile and income data

Job profile (as domestic worker)	Mean (average) figure	Percentage (%)	Key observations from sampled responses
Number of years of work as a domestic worker (full-time or part-time)			
- Less than 1 year	2	4	
- 1-2 years	2	4	
- 2-4 years	6	13	
- More than 5 years	36	78	
Average number of households (as work)			
- Less than 2	6	13	
- 2-4 households	23	50	
- More than 4 households	17	37	
Nature of services offered as domestic worker			
- Cleaning	40	87	
- Washing	43	93	
- Cooking	20	43	
- Day care	8	17	
- All of the above	5	11	
Number of hours of work (per day) as a domestic worker in each household ^a			
- 2-4 h	33	80	
- 4-6 h	5	12	
- More than 9 h	1	2	

(continued)

Only one respondent (in Mumbai) worked as a full-time-domestic worker in one household. The maximum respondents worked in two to four households each on a daily basis

Most respondents prefer performing two to three services together and are paid accordingly

In case of two respondents in Mumbai, it was observed that they work in more than three households every day with a maximum of one hour at each household

Table 2 (continued)

Job profile (as domestic worker)	Mean (average) figure (in Rs.)	Percentage (%)	Key observations from sampled responses
Charges levied on each of the services offered (in Rs.)			
- Cleaning	600		In Chandigarh (Punjab), rates for each service across most residential, urban spaces were found to be fixed (cleaning: Rs. 500; washing: Rs. 1000; dusting: Rs. 700)
- Washing	900		
- Cooking	1500		
- Day-care	2500		
Total monthly income (average)			
- Rs. 1000	None	None	In Sonapat (Haryana) and Mumbai (Maharashtra), it was observed that all respondents on an average earn more than Rs. 7000 per month as domestic workers
- Rs. 1000-3000	4	9	
- Rs. 3000-5000	8	17	
- Rs. 5000-7000	13	28	
- More than Rs. 7000	21	46	
Mode of payment (monthly)			
- Cash	46	100	All respondents receive their monthly payments in cash mode only (irrespective of city)
- Cheque	None		
- Credited into account (net banking)	None		

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Job profile (as domestic worker)	Mean (average) figure	Percentage (%)	Key observations from sampled responses
Motivation/reason to work as a domestic worker			
- Single source of livelihood	12	26	As observed from the data collected, most respondents work as domestic workers to pool in their income with their husbands to manage household expenditure. In Chennai, it was noted that the husbands of most respondents were addicted to alcohol and contributed nothing towards household expenditure. As a result, most respondents worked as domestic workers and saw it as a single source of livelihood
- Alternative source of income (to pool in with husband's income)	34	74	
Mode of transport taken to work			
- Public mode of transport (bus)	4	9	While most respondents stay near to their place of work (residential colony) and prefer walking, in Chennai, most respondents (staying far) preferred taking the public transport (bus) to work
- Personal mode of transport (cycle)	3	7	
- Walking	31	70	

Table 3 Data on *spending allocation preference*

Questions	Mean (average) figure	Percentage (%)	Key observations
What is your overall total monthly expenditure for your family? (in Rs.)			
- Less than 1000	1	2	
- 1000–3000	4	9	
- 3000–5000	9	20	
- 5000–7000	10	22	
- 7000–10,000	18	40	
- More than 10,000	4	9	
How do you allocate your overall monthly personal income? (%)			
- % towards saving		10–20	Irrespective of the city, the overall percentage allocation towards each identified component of household expenditure (for each respondent) was similar
- % towards food expenditure		35–40	
- % towards rent		15	
- % towards debt payments (loans, etc.)		20	
- % towards children's education		20	
- % towards medical/miscellaneous expenses		15–20	

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Questions	Mean (average) figure	Percentage (%)	Key observations
Do you receive any cash or subsidies (in kind) from the government (state funded or centrally funded)?			Two of the respondents in Haryana received subsidies for cooking gas (LPG) while three others (in Chennai and Mumbai) received subsidy in form of ration and food grains (as part of the public distribution system)
- Yes	5	11	
- No	41	89	
What is the proportion of your monthly expense (in %) towards your household food expenditure?			Some of the other components for household expenditure (not mentioned in the questionnaire), included eggs (10%), health and hygiene productions (5%)
- Vegetables		20	There was a strong resistance seen in receiving information on this component of the questionnaire from most respondents
- Wheat and rice		40	
- Pulses		15	
- Salt and sugar		15	
- Cooking gas		10	
What is the proportion of your monthly expense (in %) on your children?			In the study, most respondents had children over 20 years old. In other cases, (where children were going to school), the respondent contributed more towards their children's education
- Education (tuition fees and others)		40	
- Medical		30	
- Others		10	
Do you and your spouse pool in your income to spend collectively on identified overheads of household expenditure?			One of the main reason for respondents (with spouses) not being able to pool in included the presence of alcoholic spouses (in Chennai and parts of Haryana), where respondents managed most of the household expenditure on their own
- Yes	26	58	
- No	19	42	

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Questions	Mean (average) figure	Percentage (%)	Key observations
Is there annual revision in your personal income as domestic worker?			
- Yes	26	57	On average, respondents bargained for an annual income revision of 10% of their existing income. Factors like having a union of domestic workers in residential places (in Chandigarh and Mumbai) helps in ensuring such a revision
- No	20	43	
In allocation of household expenditure, who has more say on the spending of your household budget?			
- Respondent	20	48	All respondents interviewed in Chennai and Mumbai were found to be solely responsible for taking all household decisions on expenditure allocation. In Chandigarh, the spouses (husbands) of respondents had greater say in household expenditure allocation (irrespective of who contributed more money in the household budget)
- Husband (spouse)	16	38	
- Other family members	3	7	
- Joint decision (respondent + husband)	3	7	

Table 4 Information on *fertility preference*^a

Questions	Mean (average) number	Percentage (%)	Key observations
Did/do you have a say or preference in the decision of having children?			
- Yes	27	64	In Chandigarh, there was more of a collective mutual decision-making process (including the respondent and her spouse) in having a child. In Sonapat and Delhi, the spouse had a greater say in having a child (as against the respondent). In Chennai, however, the respondents demonstrated a greater say in having a child (fertility preference, as against their spouse).
- No	15	36	
Who tends to have a greater say in the decision of having children?			
- Respondent	7	17	In parts of Sonapat (Haryana) and Delhi, the respondents indicated the prevalence of preferring a male child (due to her spouse and family members). In Chennai and parts of Mumbai, however, the interviewed respondents indicated no gender preference amongst the respondents' household members (spouse or/and family members included) on having a female or male child.
- Spouse	20	48	
- Collective mutual decision (respondent + spouse)	15	36	
Is there a household gender preference in having a child (between a female or a male child)?			
- Yes	17	40	In parts of Sonapat (Haryana) and Delhi, the respondents indicated the prevalence of preferring a male child (due to her spouse and family members). In Chennai and parts of Mumbai, however, the interviewed respondents indicated no gender preference amongst the respondents' household members (spouse or/and family members included) on having a female or male child.
- No	25	60	

Table 5 Information on respondents' preference in her children's education^a and children's marriage^a

Questions	Mean (average) number	percentage (%)	Key observations
Is your child studying?			
- Yes	26	63	
- No	15	37	
If your child is studying, which institution is your child currently enrolled in?			
- Government school/institution		80	
- Private school/institution		18	
- Other		2	
In the decision on educating your child, which institution do you prefer?			
- Government school/institution	11	27	It was only in Chennai that respondents preferred their children to study in government schools/institutions
- Private school/institution	29	73	
- Other			
If your child is over 20 years old (and is willing to marry), who in your household, tends to have a greater say in her/his decision to marry?			
- Child's own decision	6	19	In most cases in Chennai and Mumbai, the decision on a children's marriage was seen to be dependent more on the collective decision (i.e. of the respondent and the spouse) Only in 6 out of 33 cases saw children being able to decide by themselves on their decision to marry. (which includes 2 cases from Delhi, 1 from Jaipur and 3 from Chandigarh) In case of Sonapat, Delhi constituting for 22% of the overall responses here, the respondents seem to have a limited say (on their own) in their children's decision to marry. The decision here is made by either spouses or the joint family members
- Respondent's decision	3	10	
- Spouse's decision	5	16	
- Collective decision (respondent + spouse)	15	48	
- Joint family decision (collective + extended family)	2	6	

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