

*Dr. Kamaljeet Kaur Mann*

## **Effect of Corona Pandemic on Condition of Domestic Workers in Chandigarh**

**Dr. Kamaljeet Kaur Mann**

*Associate Professor,*

*Department of Food & Nutrition,*

*Government Girls College, Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan*

*Email: [drkamalmann@gmail.com](mailto:drkamalmann@gmail.com)*

### **Abstract**

*The World Health Organization (WHO) set off their most noteworthy alert on 30th January, 2020 by reporting the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as a public health crisis of global concern. This disease was declared a pandemic by 11th March, 2020. As the director-general of WHO explained: "CO stands for corona, VI for virus, D for disease and 19 for the year the outbreak was first identified". COVID-19 is the infectious disease resulting from the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV -2). The infection can be communicated during close contact between individuals by means of little respiratory droplets delivered when a contaminated individual talks, snuffles, or hacks. Besides, these beads can taint surfaces. Normal side effects incorporate dry hack and fever or mellow indications such as nasal blockage, sore throat, loss of smell or taste just as toes and fingers staining. We can secure ourselves by washing your hands much of the time, abstaining from contacting your face, and dodging close contact ( 1 meter or 3 feet) with individuals who are unwell. The infection can be asymptomatic; it tends to be passed on by people who probably won't see that they have been tainted. At the worldwide level, governments have avoided potential risk measures to "straighten the bend, for example, isolate, lockdown, the disconnection of tainted people, travel limitations, outskirt closures, and social distancing.*

Reference to this paper  
should be made as  
follows:

**Dr. Kamaljeet Kaur  
Mann**

*Effect of Corona  
Pandemic on  
Condition of  
Domestic Workers in  
Chandigarh*

Journal Global Values,  
Vol. XI, No. II  
Article No. 17, pp. 132-143

[https://anubooks.com/  
jgv-vol-xi-no-2-july-  
dec-2020/](https://anubooks.com/jgv-vol-xi-no-2-july-dec-2020/)

[https://doi.org/  
10.31995/  
jgv.2020.v11i02.017](https://doi.org/10.31995/jgv.2020.v11i02.017)

## **Introduction**

### **The Pandemic Background**

The World Health Organization (WHO) set off their most noteworthy alert on 30th January, 2020 by reporting the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as a public health crisis of global concern. This disease was declared a pandemic by 11th March, 2020. As the director-general of WHO explained: “CO stands for corona, VI for virus, D for disease and 19 for the year the outbreak was first identified”. COVID-19 is the infectious disease resulting from the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The infection can be communicated during close contact between individuals by means of little respiratory droplets delivered when a contaminated individual talks, snuffles, or hacks. Besides, these beads can taint surfaces. Normal side effects incorporate dry hack and fever or mellow indications such as nasal blockage, sore throat, loss of smell or taste just as toes and fingers staining. We can secure ourselves by washing your hands much of the time, abstaining from contacting your face, and dodging close contact ( 1 meter or 3 feet) with individuals who are unwell. The infection can be asymptomatic; it tends to be passed on by people who probably won't see that they have been tainted. At the worldwide level, governments have avoided potential risk measures to “straighten the bend, for example, isolate, lockdown, the disconnection of tainted people, travel limitations, outskirts closures, and social distancing.

Notwithstanding, these activities demonstrated to have a detrimental impact on the economy prompting the monetary downturn and emergency. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit all segments of the general public, yet domestic aides, who are generally sought after in metropolitan zones, are among the most noticeably terrible influences with a greater part of them without compensation for the most recent two months.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit all segments of the general public, however, homegrown aides, who are generally popular in metropolitan regions, are among the most noticeably awful influenced with a greater part of them without compensation for the last two months. Though a ton of limitations have been lifted and numerous organizations have restarted tasks, there is no lucidity on the resumption of work by homegrown aides, delaying their misery. The SarvashramicSanghatna, an association of domestic workers in Maharashtra, has said that in the event that they are not permitted to continue work, the public authority should give them a month to month stipend and food supplies. Most of the domestic workers get their March pay rates since they had labored for 25 days. Be that as it may, since April, some have half of

*Dr. Kamaljeet Kaur Mann*

their wages, while many lack anything, the SarvashramicSanghatna's leader kidayBhat. "The housekeepers are prepared to submit to all security standards with respect to COVID-19. It isn't accurate that on the off chance that they give a clinical authentication of being liberated from Covid, the house cleaners or their managers can't get contaminated at a later stage. "We are requesting that the housekeepers be given the status of the worker so they can profit from the advantages of government-managed retirement plans, fixed wages, and furthermore infringement of rules ought to pull in punitive action. Though a ton of limitations have been lifted and numerous businesses have restarted activities, there is no lucidity on the resumption of work by domestic aides, dragging out their hopelessness.

could-19 has seriously tested the flexibility, adaptability, and durability of supply chains. The impacts of COVID-19 on farming, as in any area, have not been shown in full, while right now a second flood of the infection is affecting numerous nations. Key effects on the food framework up to now incorporate everyone's alarm shopping and warehousing of tough food, including pasta, flour, beans, and rice.

#### **Pandemic Effects on Domestic Sector**

could-19 has affected the horticultural labor force, particularly the pool of seasonal domestic workforce. Most of the time they are migrant workers, normally utilized in the, who utilize profoundly capable and actual abilities.

Lockdowns and limitations in the portability of laborers across the outskirts added to work deficiencies, for the most part in nations that depend just on work. Nonetheless, the capacity of frameworks to misuse laborers that can go between working environments comprises a basic condition for its manageability.

Sadly, crisis travel boycotts impressively diminished the accessible labor force. In addition, no conviction exists that part-timers might want to work in nations that have been contaminated by COVID-19. Moreover, it was noticed that numerous local laborers became sick or dealt with wiped out individuals from the family or youngsters, because of the end of schools, further affecting the accessibility of occasional staff.

#### **The objective of the Study**

- i. To know about the socio-economic background of the domestic workers
- ii. To find out the problems they face during lockdown

#### **Review of Literature**

Their families are dependent on us. Maids take care of our families despite facing hardships. Their families are dependent upon us. The aged and ailing people depend on them as they make their lives worth living. The Administration must allow

maids/domestic workers to work while taking all precautions. Capt. AmarJeet, Mohali  
Doing own work is natural exercise Allowing maids for domestic work has always been a voluntary decision not mandatory. It needs restraint especially with elderly people at home for their safety. People should make a habit to do their own household work. If people can manage by changing their livelihood so can maids. Only lethargic people are in favor of allowing maids at their homes.

Dr. Shailja Beniwal, Chandigarh

Follow the protocol and get back to work Domestic workers should be called back as it will help them earn for their families. They have suffered financially more due to the pandemic lockdown. Side by side precautions can be taken and protocol followed by them for everybody's safety. House cleaners should be asked to properly get sanitized and wear masks. They should be imparted training about the protocol and called back to work.

Abhilasha Gupta, Mohali

A dictatorial attitude will not help RWAs ( Resident Welfare Associations) are proving dictatorial in disallowing maids/domestic workers especially to houses where chores cannot be managed without an extra help as in the case of senior citizens and those with health problems. I strongly believe that poor migrants should be re-engaged all with precaution like the use of face masks by the house owner and the maid, maintaining hygiene, and proper distancing during the time the latter is on the residential premises.

An apathetic government's reaction to the current pandemic and its financial effect is presently introducing a bunch of situations that are probably going to fuel profound established imbalances, in any case, settled in various socio-political, monetary structures.

One specific gathering most exceedingly awful influenced by the financial emergency, especially inside the sloppy or unstable specialist space, has been that of the homegrown laborers. The situation of the homegrown common laborers (generally ladies), working hard in India's rich metropolitan cities, frequently at the danger of higher misuse and resentment by the exclusive class (of higher-pay metropolitan family units), is broadly known and expounded on.

Noted humanist Dipankar Gupta has frequently composed and spoken about the innate disappointment of the tip-top working class living in metropolitan metros to sympathize with the lives of female laborers, both experientially and as far as understanding their material condition, considering it the issue of intersubjectivity.

Such worries around intersubjectivity', as a feature of the grieved present-

day connection between the tip top and the (lower) common laborers, existed well before the pandemic, and now it appears, the gap has just been additionally heightened. As per an ILO Report of April (2020)

gauges show that the financial emergency emerging from COVID-19 and the public authority 's reaction to it is probably going to further push very nearly 40 crores casual (unstable) laborers into outright neediness. This gauge incorporates in excess of 200 million ladies utilized as homegrown specialists. The genuine numbers might be far more awful because of (prior) worries in factual bookkeeping of unpaid, care laborers.

Every day wage laborers and individuals associated with modest positions like stonework, driving, or cleaning are left harried because of time limit limitations in Chandigarh.

The most noticeably terrible hits are the ones who fill in as homegrown assistance. A large portion of these ladies live in ghetto regions of Chandigarh. These ladies think that it's difficult to get their hands on staple goods and other fundamental things since they are currently out of cash.

One 60-year-old widow Bala, who filled in as a homegrown assistance before the check-in time was forced, has a group of four. Bala needs to go out to get some food which individuals give on occasions such as these. She didn't need to prior when she was procuring as she had the option to take care of her family with her pay, regardless of whether it was a small whole.

When Bala was out to get some food, she was unable to get enough for her family.

A detached government's reaction to the current pandemic and its monetary effect is presently introducing a bunch of situations that are probably going to intensify profound - established disparities, in any case, settled in various socio-political, financial structures.

One specific gathering most noticeably awful influenced by the monetary emergency, especially inside the chaotic or unstable specialist space, has been that of the homegrown laborers. The predicament of the homegrown common laborers (generally ladies), working hard in India's rich metropolitan cities, regularly at the danger of higher abuse and anger by the exclusive class (of higher-pay metropolitan family units), is broadly known and expounded on. Noted humanist Dipankar Gupta has frequently composed and spoken about the intrinsic disappointment of the tip-top working-class dwelling in metropolitan metros to sympathies with the lives of female specialists, both experientially and as far as understanding their material condition,

considering it the issue of intersubjectivity.

Such worries around intersubjectivity’, as a component of the disturbing present-day connection between the tip top and the (lower) common laborers, existed well before the pandemic, and now it appears, the gap has just been additionally strengthened.

As per an ILO report of April (2020), gauges show that the financial emergency emerging from COVID-19 and the public authority’s reaction to it is probably going to additional push just about 40 crores casual (unstable) laborers into total neediness. This gauge incorporates in excess of 200 million ladies utilized as homegrown laborers. The genuine numbers might be far more terrible because of (pre-existing) worries in factual bookkeeping of unpaid, care laborers.

### Research Methodology

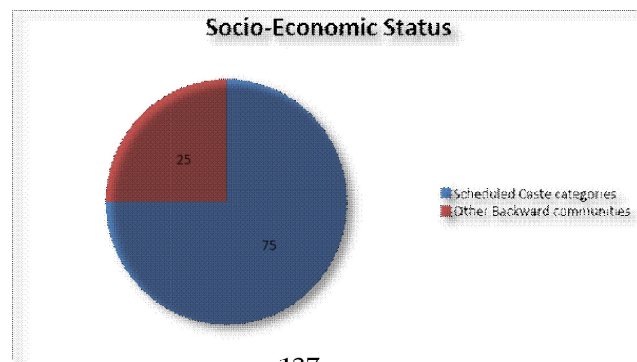
This piece of study is a descriptive one and responses were collected through a structured interview schedule. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the purpose. Chandigarh was selected for the study which is a commercial point. The sample size constituted of 100 respondents from different sectors of the city. As the lockdown restricted mobility, I(researcher ) tried to collect telephone numbers of the respondents and the data were elicited through telephonic conversation.

### Result

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their Socio-Economic Status n= 100**

Sr. No.	Economic Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	SC	25	25%
2.	OBC	75	75%

**Fig 1: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their Socio-Economic Status**



*Dr. Kamaljeet Kaur Mann*

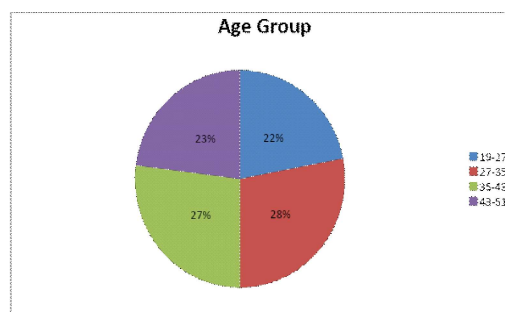
š+ Socio-Economic Status of the studied Female Domestic Workers Information collected on the caste composition of the female domestic workers shows that 75 percent of the respondents are belonging to the Scheduled Caste categories whereas the rest 25 percent are from Other Backward communities.

š+ All the respondents are Hindu by religion and are married. The family size of the respondents varies from 5 to 8 but the average family size is 7.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their age group= 100**

Sr. No.	Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	19-27	22	22%
2.	27-35	28	28%
3.	35-43	27	27%
4.	43-51	23	23%

**Fig 2: Distribution of Respondents on the basis to their age group**

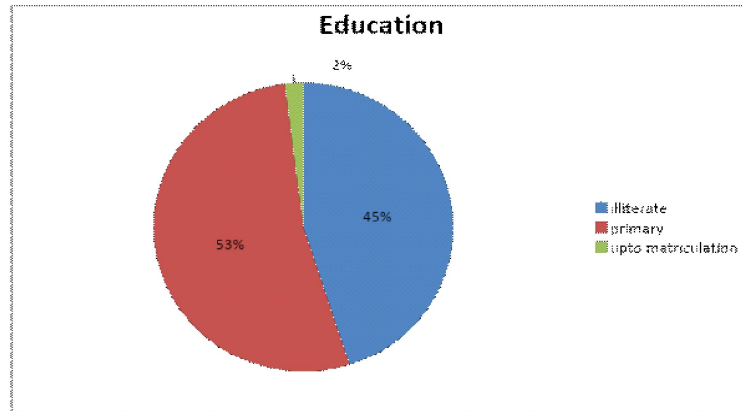


š+ The respondents belong to the age group of 20 years to 50 years.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their education= 100**

Sr. No.	Education	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	45	45%
2.	Primary	53	53%
3.	Up to matriculation	2	2%

**Fig 3: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their Education**



§+ When they are probed about their education it is found that 45 percent of the respondents are illiterate when only 2 respondents (2%) are educated up to matriculation and the rest 53 percent respondents are educated up to primary level.

Besides due to financial problems they are also not exposed to any skilled activities or have not undergone any training.

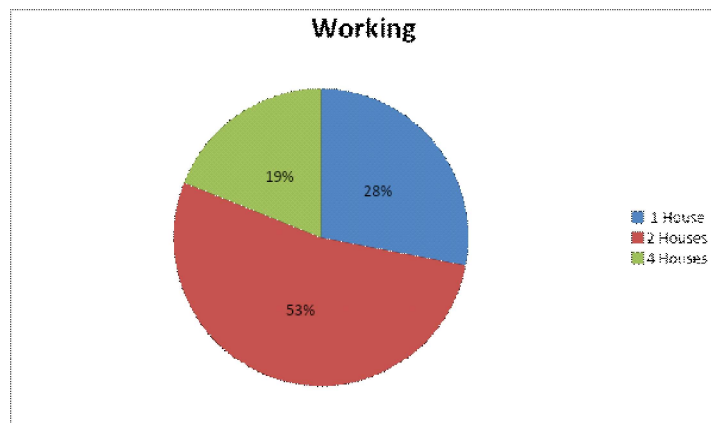
**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their working= 100**

Sr. No.	Working	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	1 House	28	28%
2.	2 Houses	53	53%
3.	4 Houses	19	19%

§+ Most of the respondents are working on a part-time basis and covering an average of 2 houses in a day. Data reveals that only 5 (5%) respondents are working as a full-time domestic workers who need to perform all types of household chores like cleaning the house, washing utensils and clothes, caring for small children, cooking, etc.



**Fig 4: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their working**



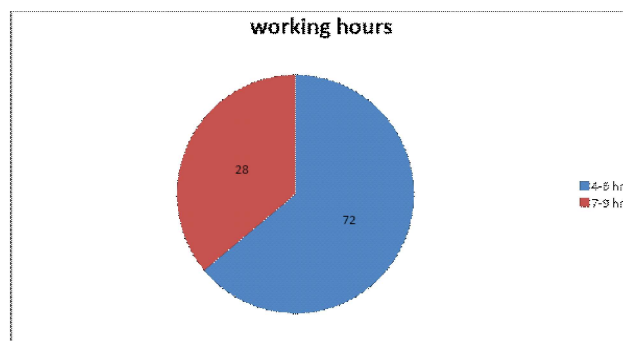
It is also revealed that 82% of the respondents are working in two houses whereas only 8% respondents are working in three to four houses daily and 10% respondents are working in one house only who, are basically performing works like cleaning the house, washing utensils and clothes.

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their working**

**n= 100**

Sr. No.	Economic Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	4-6 hr	72	72%
2.	7-9 hr	28	28%

**Fig 3: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their working hours**



When the respondents were asked about their working hours and duration of work, it is found that usually part-time female domestic workers are working for

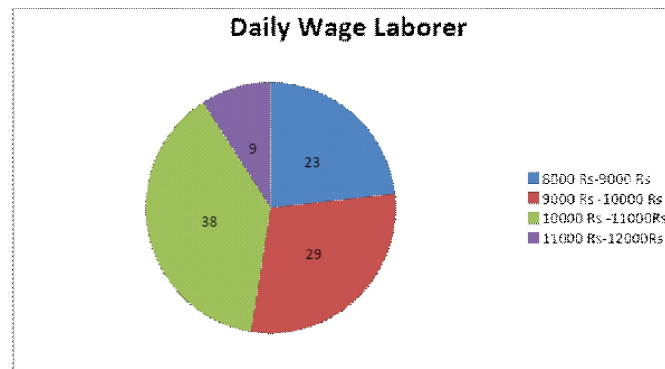
4 to 6 hours per day whereas the full-time female domestic workers are working for 7 to 9 hours daily.

**Table 6: Distribution of Respondents on the basis of their wages**

**n= 100**

Sr. No.	Wages	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Rs.8000 - Rs.9000	23	23%
2.	Rs.9000 - Rs.10,000	29	29%
3.	Rs.10,000 - Rs.11,000	38	38%
4.	Rs.11,000 - Rs.12,000	09	9%

**Fig 4: Distribution of Respondents on the basis to their daily wage laborer**



š+ Their engagement is purely based on personal contact or through their Mobile numbers. As stated earlier the respondents belong to a poor economic class and residing in different sectors of Chandigarh city. Their male counterparts are working as a daily wage laborer. The monthly income of the family varies from Rs. 8,000/- to Rs. 12,000/-.

š+ Data reveals that the female domestic workers are contributing a lion's share to their family economy.

**Conclusion**

During the third phase of the lockdown almost all-female domestic workers reported in their work (excluding dismissed cases). It is a fact that because of COVID-19 additional workload is also falling on them to ensure cleanliness in the employer's house. It has increased the burden of unpaid care work on them. Usually, they are not taking any protective measures for COVID-19 as mostly they are involved in

works like cleaning and washing of dishes, clothes, and houses. As shared by the respondents those who are taking care of children and other elderly family members, cooking, etc., the employers are providing sanitizer to them to clean their hand and are using mask, before doing any work. This indicates about the drastic impact of the imposed lockdown to control the spreading of the Covid-19 Coronavirus on the livelihood of the families of a large segment of the society but without any attention from the policymakers or others. The domestic workers who are playing a very crucial role in the economic life of the women in today's competitive market are striving hard to arrange two square meals during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Domestic workers are belonging to the economically disadvantaged group and most of them lived in slum areas or Scheduled Caste colonies. Without any uniformity in their wage structure, they work in the unorganized sector with a very low paid wage. Still, they are compelled to do this job because of illiteracy as well as poor financial condition. Their silent contribution remained invisible for a long. During the pandemic COVID-19, they have faced double marginalization. As they are engaged in informal reproductive work in the unorganized sector they are not recorded as wage labor and deprived of getting any benefit. This is high time to consider their contribution to society and enroll them as wage labor. A suitable policy may be framed by bringing them to the mainstream, so that in the future if such a situation like a lockdown due to COVID-19 Corona Virus will arise they will not fight with hunger and anxiety.

### **References**

1. Q&A on Coronaviruses (COVID-19). Available online: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses> (accessed on 3 August 2020).
2. WHO Situation Report-44. Available online: [situation-reports/20200304-sitrep-44-covid-19](https://www.who.int/situation-reports/20200304-sitrep-44-covid-19).(accessed on 3 August 2020).
3. Coronavirus: Travel Restrictions, Border Shutdowns by Country | Coronavirus Pandemic News | Al Jazeera. Available online: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/coronavirus-travel-restrictions-border-shutdowns-country-200318091505922.html> (accessed on 3 August 2020).
4. Nicola, M.; Alsafi, Z.; Sohrabi, C.; Kerwan, A.; Al-Jabir, A.; Iosifidis, C.; Agha, M.; Agha, R. The socio-economic implications of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19): A review. *Int. J. Surg.* 2020, 78, 185–193. [CrossRef] [PubMed].
5. Augustine, Rufina & Singh, Dr. Rupesh Kumar (2016), Condition and problems of female domestic workers (with special reference to L.D.A.
6. Colony in Lucknow city, India), *Journal of Sociology and Social Work*, Vol-4, No-2 pp-110-117 Chandramouli & Kodandarama (2018),
7. Women Domestic Workers in India: An Analysis, *International Journal of Innovative*

- Technology and Exploring Engineering (IJITEE) Volume-8 Issue-1, November 2018
8. Deepika, K.C. (2020), COVID-19 has domestic workers stuck between a rock and a hard place, The Hindu, Bangalore, 28th March, 2020 District Statistical Hand Book, Cuttack, 2011, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Odisha, Bhubaneswar Ghosh, Jayanti (2013)
  9. The Plight of Domestic Workers in India, The Frontline, Volume 30 (2), Jan-26-Feb.08, 2013 Electronic copy available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3628346>
  10. Gothoskar, Sujata (2013) The Plight of Domestic Workers: Confluence of Gender, Class and Caste Hierarchies, Economic and Political Weekly Vol. 48 (22), pp. 63-75.
  11. Gothoskar, Sujata (2013) The Plight of Domestic Workers: Confluence of Gender, Class and Caste Hierarchies, Economic and Political Weekly Vol. 48 (22), pp. 63-75 Prakasam, Seepana (2011)
  12. Employment and living conditions of female domestic workers: A case study of Chandigarh, Man, and Development: 41-54. Rani, Ekta&Saluja, Rajni (2017).
  13. A study on Domestic Help Workers and Factors Affecting Realisation of their Rights in the State of Punjab, Journal of General Management Research, Vol-4, Issue-2, pp-16-26 Tewari,
  14. Meenakshi (2018), Why is the condition of domestic workers seldom discussed in India ?, Business Standard, 8th June 2018 Vemuri,
  15. Sravya (2018), From Helpers to Workers: Status of Domestic Workers in India, Youngbharatiya, 21st Sept 2018 [http://www.macrosan.org/cur/jan13/pdf/Domestic\\_Workers.pdf](http://www.macrosan.org/cur/jan13/pdf/Domestic_Workers.pdf)
  16. [http://www.macrosan.org/cur/jan13/pdf/Domestic\\_Workers.pdf](http://www.macrosan.org/cur/jan13/pdf/Domestic_Workers.pdf)
  17. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/coronavirus-no-work-from-home-option-forhouse-helpers-in-india>.
  18. <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/opinion/domestic-workers-in-the-times-of-covid-19-lockdown>.
  19. <https://www.ijponline.com/article.asp?issn=02537613;year=2020;volume=52;issue=2;spage=117;epage=129;aulast=Mahalmani>.
  20. [www.openhouse@tribunemail.com](http://www.openhouse@tribunemail.com)
  21. <https://thewire.in/labor/lockdown-female-domestic-workers-covid-19-lockdown>
  22. <https://www.IndiaToday.in/india/story/coronavirus-lockdown-chandigarh-daily-wage-workers-food-condition-1662638-2020-04-02>.
  23. <https://zeenews.india.com/india/no-work-no-wages-domestic-helpers-remain-worst-affected-in-maharashtra-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-2290229.html>.
  24. <https://thewire.in/labour/lockdown-female-domestic-workers-covid-19-lockdown>.