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DECLINING CHILD SEX RATIO: PERCEPTION OF ASHA IN REWARI DISTRICT OF HARYANA STATE

Sanjeev Kumar Khichi[*] and T.Bir[**]

ABSTRACT

A research study to ascertain the perception of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) towards decline in child sex ratio (DCSR) was carried out in Rewari district of Haryana state. Data was collected by interviewing 120 ASHAs using semi-structured interview schedule. The major findings of study are: (1) ASHAs are well aware of DCSR, but emphasized the need for more of BCC activities by the Health Department. The factors mainly responsible for DCSR are: son preference and dowry. Mushrooming of USG clinics is also expressed as a major factor by large number of respondents. (2) The various reasons for son preference mentioned by the ASHAs stated that he is a supporter and provider for the parents in their old age; keeps the family name alive and are needed to perform their last rites. Also, by investing on sons' education or business, the wealth remains in the family. (3) The major reasons for not preferring female child are dowry and perception of girls being paraya dhan. Other perceptions are that investing on girls is a waste with no returns and security reasons especially against sexual offences. (4) Majority of ASHAs perceived non-availability of brides as major repercussion of DCSR followed by increased crime against women and polyandry.

Key words: Declining Child Sex Ratio, Perception, Accredited Social Health Activist.

Although CSR showed an improvement in Haryana from 819 in 2001 to 830 in 2011 females per 1000 males, the state still figures at the bottom of the table as compared to other states. Five districts in the state namely Rewari, Mahendragarh, Bhiwani, Jhajjar and Fatehabad present a declining trend[1].

Post 1980s with the advent of ultrasonography (USG) in obstetrics care, CSR deteriorated dramatically[2]. As technology does not act independent of

*MD (CHA)-3rd Year Student, NIHFW, New Delhi-110067 .
**Professor & Head, Department of Social Sciences, NIHFW, New Delhi-110067.

social context, there were other factors which motivated families to use such technologies to prevent birth of girl child by resorting to female feticide (FF) by undergoing sex selective abortions (SSA).

The fact is that Indians across the board, traversing class and caste divides, are deliberately and illegally engaged in sex selection, and thus artificially altering the demographic landscape of the country. There is a wide consensus that a shortage of women has adverse implications not only for gender equality but also for social violence, human development and democracy. For this decline to take place, amid repeated commitments at the highest official levels to gender justice and gender equity is extremely worrying.[3]

Unfortunately the CSR as an important indicator of gender equality and women empowerment has been totally forgotten in United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDG).[4]

Declining child sex ratio is multifactorial and is linked with various social, cultural, economic and religious factors. While reviewing the literature, it has been found that some studies have highlighted the prevalence of prenatal sex determination (SD) and SSA as one of the main causes of DCSR. It has been observed that the technology does not act in isolation; the socio-cultural and other contexts are equally responsible for the misuse of technology. So in order to control the CSR decline, community behaviour and socio-cultural perceptions have to be thoroughly understood.

As the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has focussed on Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) as a central pillar of mission[5] and being from within the community, she will be a very effective agent and tool for behaviour change communication (BCC) activities in the community. There is evidence to suggest the acceptance of ASHA at community level[6], but there is no data available about her perceptions, awareness and involvement on account of DCSR. The present study was a sincere and systematic effort to ascertain perceptions of ASHAs regarding reasons for DCSR.

As Haryana state has lowest CSR and district Rewari is one of those five districts in the state presenting declining trend in CSR as per Census 2011[1], the present study was undertaken to explore the perception of ASHAs about reasons for DCSR in Rewari district of Haryana State.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The present study is descriptive and aims at gathering an in-depth understanding of perception of ASHAs on reasons for DCSR. The data was collected through scheduled interviews of 120 ASHAs. Multistage sampling was done keeping a few things in mind, as:

1. Haryana having lowest CSR amongst the states is selected for present study by purposive sampling.
2. Rewari is randomly selected from amongst the five districts namely Rewari, Mahendergarh, Bhiwani, Jhajjar and Fatehabad showing declining trend in CSR as per provisional data of census 2011.
3. Three Community Health Centers selected randomly from a total of five CHCs in Rewari district.
4. Six PHCs (2 from each CHC chosen) selected randomly.
5. 20 ASHAs from each of selected PHC were taken for present study.

The collected data was computerized and analysed by using appropriate statistical techniques.

RESULTS

Awareness of ASHAs about Declining Child Sex Ratio

For ASHAs to play some role in implementation of various Government Schemes to improve CSR, her awareness on all the facets of this issue is very important. According to outcomes of present study, as shown in Figure 1, 86.6 per cent of ASHAs are aware of DCSR. Source of this information as revealed by this study are as follows; Mass Media (62.5%), Health Department (20.2%), Self Experience (67.3%) and Any Others like Pear Group (57.7%) (Figure 2).

FIGURE 1
AWARENESS OF ASHAS ABOUT DCSR

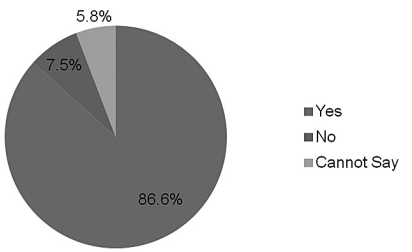
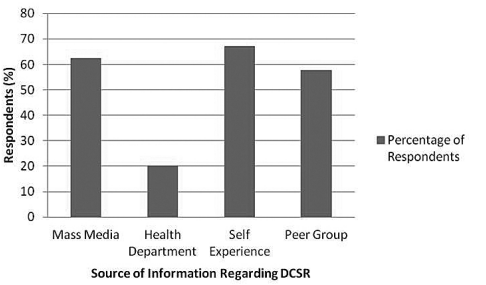


FIGURE 2
SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT DCSR



Factors Responsible for Declining Child Sex Ratio

As pointed out in the review of literature, there are numerous complex and inter-related reasons for DCSR. This is more of a social problem and needs intervention at the community level, like changing the perception of people about girl child. ASHAs can play a very vital role in bringing out this desired change and for it to happen firstly their own perception needs to be changed.

TABLE 1
PERCEPTION OF ASHAS REGARDING REASONS FOR DCSR (n=120)

Reasons for DCSR	Response N (%)			
	Yes	No	Can't Say	Total
Son Preference	106 (88.3)	11 (9.2)	3 (2.5)	120 (100)
Dowry	98 (81.7)	15 (12.5)	7 (5.8)	120 (100)
Poor Implementation of Laws for Preventing Crime Against Women	68 (56.7)	31 (25.8)	21 (17.5)	120 (100)
Mushrooming of Ultrasound Clinics	82 (68.3)	22 (18.4)	16 (13.3)	120 (100)
Poor Female Literacy	62 (51.7)	42 (35.0)	16 (13.3)	120 (100)
Lack of Women Empowerment	64 (53.3)	35 (29.2)	21 (17.5)	120 (100)

As revealed by present study, the reasons for DCSR (Table 1) are: son preference (88.3%), dowry (81.7%), poor implementation of laws for prevention of crime against women (56.7%), mushrooming of USG clinics (68.3%), poor female literacy (51.7%) and lack of empowerment of women (53.3%).

Reasons for Son Preference

Preference for male child exists in society cutting across caste and economic background and couples adopt many ways to beget a son. This cannot be addressed by strict law alone, rather it needs change in the thinking of people, which can be brought out by community influencers, and ASHA can play a vital role if she gets proper support from all sections of society especially from local decision makers.

TABLE 2
PERCEPTION OF ASHAS REGARDING REASONS FOR PREFERRING MALE CHILD (n=120)

Reasons for Son Preference	Response=N (%)		
	Yes	No	Can't Say
Support and Provider in Old Age	81 (67.5)	27 (22.5)	12 (10.0)
Carries Family Name	76 (63.3)	31 (25.9)	13 (10.8)
Performing Last Rites	87 (72.5)	25 (20.8)	8 (6.7)
Wealth Remains in Family	72 (60.0)	23 (19.2)	25 (20.8)

As per perception of ASHAs, the reasons for son preference (Table 2) are: support and provider in old age (67.5%), carries on the family name (63.3%), performing last rites (72.5%) and wealth remains in the family (60%).

Reasons for Not Preferring Female Child

As described earlier, reasons for son preference, non-preference of female child is equally strong as a reason for DCSR. There are various reasons for this, like dowry, security of female child, social security of parents in old age. To address these issues, policy makers need to devise policies to improve status of girl child and take care of her security needs. Moreover, this issue cannot be addressed by policy makers alone, society has a role to play, like inculcating good moral values among male child in the family and make female child feel equally important in all the matters of the family from the very beginning. This will definitely improve status of girl child and increase her acceptance by couples. It has been revealed that, the reasons for not preferring female child as (Table 3) are: *Paraya Dhan* (82.5%), dowry (73.3%), investing in girls is a waste with no returns (52.5%), fear of harming family honour (54.2%) and more responsibility of protecting daughters (50.8%).

TABLE 3
PERCEPTION OF ASHAS REGARDING REASONS FOR NOT PREFERRING FEMALE CHILD (n=120)

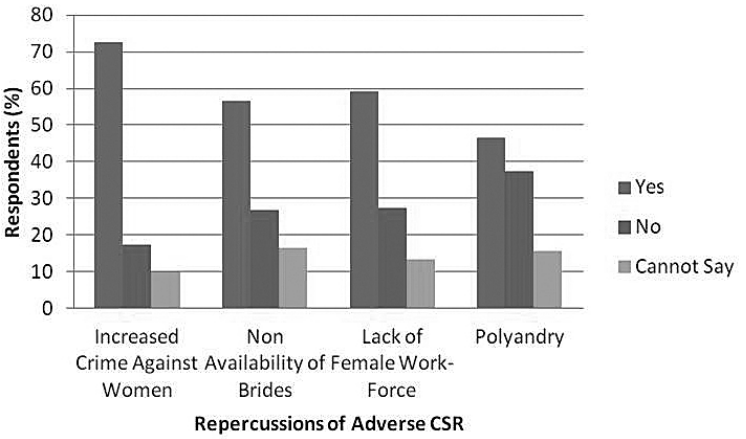
Reasons for not Preferring Female Child	Response N (%)		
	Yes	No	Cannot Say
Paraya Dhan	99 (82.5)	12 (10.0)	9 (7.5)
Dowry System	88 (73.3)	20 (16.7)	12 (10.0)
Investing on Girls is Waste With No Return	63 (52.5)	32 (26.7)	25 (20.8)

Reasons for not Preferring Female Child	Response N (%)		
	Yes	No	Cannot Say
More Responsibility of Protecting Daughters	61 (50.8)	40 (33.3)	19 (15.9)
Fear of Harming Family Honour	65 (54.2)	27 (22.5)	28 (23.3)

Repercussions of Adverse Child Sex Ratio

Adverse CSR can have very serious repercussions like increased crime against women, non-availability of brides which can give rise to trafficking of female child to the areas having deficit of brides. This issue needs to be kept in mind while addressing the problem of DCSR.

FIGURE 3
PERCEPTION OF ASHAS REGARDING REPERCUSSION OF ADVERSE CSR



As revealed by the present study, repercussion of adverse CSR (Figure 3) are non-availability of brides (56.7%), increased rate of crimes against women especially sexual violence (72.5%), lack of female work force (59.2%) and polyandry (46.7%).

DISCUSSION

Awareness of ASHAs about DCSR

Majority (86.6%) of ASHAs are aware of DCSR and source of this information are; Mass Media (62.5%), Health Department (20.2%), Self-experience (67.3%) and any others like Pear Group (57.7%).

According to a report by National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD)[7], awareness about the missing girls in the country is near universal among the health and ICDS functionaries. Most of the respondents comprising women of Delhi (92.0%) and Haryana (78.7%); men of Delhi (89.3%) and Haryana (100.0%); and mothers-in-law of Delhi (80.7%) and Haryana (99.3%) were aware of the phenomena of the declining CSR throughout the country.

Reasons for Declining Child Sex Ratio

The reasons for DCSR as perceived by ASHAs are: son preference (88.3%), dowry (81.7%), poor implementation of laws for prevention of crime against women (56.7%), mushrooming of USG clinics (68.3%), poor female literacy (51.7%) and lack of empowerment of women (53.3%). Similar findings have also been observed in other studies reviewed.[8]

Reasons for Son Preference

As revealed by present study the reasons for son preference as perceived by ASHAs are: support and provider in old age (67.5%), carries on the family name (63.3%), performing last rites (72.5%) and wealth remains in the family (60%). Similar findings are there in a study by K Ravinder[9] and Garg et al.[10]

Reasons for Not Preferring Female Child

As established by present study the reasons for not preferring female child as perceived by ASHAs are: *paraya dhan* (82.5%), dowry (73.3%), investing in girls is a waste with no returns (52.5%), fear of harming family honour (54.2%) and more responsibility of protecting daughters (50.8%). Similar findings have also been observed in other studies.[11]

Repercussions of Adverse CSR

Repercussion of adverse CSR as perceived by ASHAs are non-availability of brides (56.7%), increased rate of crimes against women especially sexual violence (72.5%), lack of female work force (59.2%), polyandry (46.7%). Similar findings are available in other studies.[8]

CONCLUSION

The factors mainly responsible for DSCR are son preference and dowry. Mushrooming of USG clinics is also stated by large number of respondents as

another major factor. It is again required to be controlled by the health department. The various reasons for son preference mentioned by the ASHAs include that he is support and provider in old age; keeps the family name alive; perform the last rites; and by investing on sons in their education or business the wealth remains intact in their family.

On the other hand, reasons for not preferring female child are dowry and perception of girls being *paraya dhan*. It has also been stated that investing on girls is waste with no returns and security reasons especially sexual offences against girls.

Majority of ASHAs perceived non-availability of brides as major repercussion of DCSR followed by increased crime against women and polyandry. Discrimination between male and female child is very much prevalent in society and starts from the child birth itself.

ASHAs are well aware of DCSR, but the health department needs to intervene more through its BCC activities. As health department is the nodal agency for activities in relation to implementation of Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC&PNDT) Act and Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, these two acts are most important as far as prevention of SD&FF is concerned. ASHAs can be involved to monitor implementation of PC&PNDT Act as they are from within community and they have knowledge of ground reality.

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RAPID ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL HEALTH OF WORKING CHILDREN IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR

A. K. Singh*, Niraj B. Pandit and Diwakar Sharma*****

ABSTRACT

A working child is vulnerable to a range of health risks, inadequate educational opportunities, and stunted physical growth. The health of working children in unorganized sector is less documented, particularly from India. The study was conducted to assess the health status of working children in the unorganized sector in Vadodara district of Gujarat state. A sample of 50 working children in the age group 10-14 years who were not going to school and were working for more than 6 months and not less than 6 hours a day in unorganized sector like a market place, tea-stall or hawkers, construction site, road side etc. were selected for the interview and examined clinically. Almost 78 per cent children were learnt to be working due to the poverty at home and 44 per cent had never attended a school. A large proportion of children had poor personal hygiene (60%), lymphadenopathy (72%), xerosis (36%) and dental caries (22%). Poor physical health among the working children in unorganized sector needs better social security and health services through special government schemes.

Key words: Working children, Physical health, Poverty, Unorganized Sector.

INTRODUCTION

There were over 215 million child labours in the world at the end of 2008[1], most of them from developing countries like India. “No child below the age of 14 shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous

* Resident Doctor, MD (CHA), National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi.
**Professor, Department of Community Medicine, SBKS MI&RC, Sumandeep Vidyapeeth, Piparia, Waghoria, District Vadodara, Gujarat.
***Assistant Professor (Biostat.), SBKS MI&RC, Sumandeep Vidyapeeth, Piparia, Waghoria, District Vadodara, Gujarat.

employment" (Chapter III, Fundamental Rights of – Article 24)[2]. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 also does not permit children to work in unorganized sectors and the goal of the National Population Policy 2000 is to make the school education up to the age of 14 years free and reduce the drop-outs at primary and secondary school levels to below 20 per cent for both boys and girls by 2010[3]. But besides these rights to education and goals in India, children below 14 years age are working in unorganized sector without any legal prohibition or social inhibition/hesitation due to poverty and are prone to exploitation.

India has the largest number of child labour in the world. Child labour contributes about 20 per cent of India's GNP[3]. Forced child labour is present in all regions and all kinds of economy. Surprisingly, there is neither official data on the incidence of forced labour nor a widespread awareness in the society. Children in domestic service are the most invisible child labourers. Their work is performed within individual's homes which remove them from public scrutiny and thus their conditions of life and nature of work are entirely dependent on the whims of their employers. Children exploited in domestic service are generally paid little or nothing, over and above food and lodging. Child labour is rooted to poverty, unemployment and lack of education[3].

Child wage-earner works for almost 12 hours at an average every day[4]. A range of health risk along with inadequate educational and developmental opportunities, and gender inequality are prevalent in working children[5]. The prevalence of child labour is a significant predictor of undernourishment in a population and of the mortality rate for children aged 10 to 14 years (boys and girls), and affects child's health and childhood morbidity which are measured by disability adjusted life years[6].

The effect of work on health depends on type of work[7] and duration of work. In a Japanese study, it was found that there is 4 cm. less height among those who started working before the age of 14 years than to those who started after the age of 18 years[8].

The physical health of working children is less documented in India. Vadodara is a highly growing industrialized district of Gujarat where more working children are employed due to poverty, illiteracy and ignorance. These children are involved in unskilled work in unorganized sectors in order to support their families. They work as ambulatory vendors (selling vegetables, fruits), in construction work and manufacturing/repairing site, etc. They work full time at the cost of their education and health and even at times without payment.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study was conducted in Vadodara district of Gujarat which is highly industrialised and one of the India's cosmopolitan cities. The quantitative and qualitative approaches were followed in the study. A written permission was taken from ethical committee of the Sumandeep Vidhyapeeth to conduct this study. Collection of data was completed within one month (December 2011). For study purpose, operational definition of the working children was the children who were in the age group of 10-14 years and not going to school, and working in an unorganized sector for not less than 6 months of duration and not less than 6 hours a day. A random sample of 50 participants were selected from construction site, streets, market place, bus stop and slum area in Vadodara city by taking 10 from each sites. They were interviewed using pre-structured questionnaire and their height and weight were recorded and physical signs and personal hygiene were also examined with consent from parents. On identifying working children, the parents were contracted with the help of local leader/influential person. These 50 working children belonged to 41 families i.e. 9 (21.95%) families had two working children in age group 10 to 14 years.

The non-working children and the parents/guardians who were not willing to give the consent and also not fulfill the inclusion criteria were excluded from the study. The collected data was compiled in excel software. The data was analysed with proportion, percentage, mean and standard deviation. By using SPSS16.1 version, "Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test", which is a non-parametric test, was applied for each age group of participants for both sexes to compare with normal standard value and with other similar study.

TABLE 1
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WORKING CHILDREN

Characteristics	Number	Percentage (%)
Age (years) (mean ± SD*)	12.12±1.439	-
Sex (n=50)		
Boys	30	60
Girls	20	40
Type of family (n=41)		
Nuclear	29	71
Joint	12	29
Education of working child (n=50)		
Illiterate	22	44
1st to 7th Std.	24	48
8th to 10th	04	08

Characteristics	Number	Percentage (%)
Education of father (n=41)		
Illiterate	36	88
1st to 7th	02	05
8th to 10th	03	07
Education of mother (n=41)		
Illiterate	39	95
8th to 10th	02	04
Occupation of child (n=50)		
House to house work	13	26
Chhutta worker (daily wages)	26	52
Selling of sagbhaji (vegetable)	11	22
Reasons for work (n=50)		
Poverty	39	78
Loss of interest in study	09	18
Family opinion	02	04
Duration of work (in months,n=50)		
6 to 12	27	54
12 to 24	10	20
24 to 36	09	18
Above 36	04	08
Daily working hours (n=50)		
06 to 08 hours	23	46
08 to 10 hours	26	52
10 to 12 hours	01	02

Table 1 shows that mean age of working child was 12.12 years with majority (71%) from joint family and their sex ratio is 3:2 (Boys : Girls). 44 per cent children were illiterate and while in 95 per cent and 88 per cent cases their mother – father were illiterate respectively. 78 per cent children started work due to poverty. Majority of children 52 per cent were engaged in caring their siblings or doing their own house works when their parents were on work. 42 per cent children were engaged in chuttak work (daily wage) or selling sagbhaji (vegetables/fruits) independently or along with their parents. Only 9 per cent children were doing house to house work. In 78 per cent cases poverty was the main reason. Majority of children (54%) started work recently within 6 months. And 52 per cent children worked 8 to 10 hours daily.

Mean height and weight of working children were 134.7 ± 12.6 cm. and 27.42±7.231 Kg. respectively. There was gross difference in height and weight in each age group from standard values. These decrease in height varied from 9 to 15 cm. and in weight from 6 to 11 kg.

In the present study 50 per cent working boys were of moderate to severe grade malnutrition and 13.33 per cent boys were very severe grade malnutrition while 70 per cent working girls were of moderate to severe grade malnutrition and 10 per cent girls were of very severe grade malnutrition. These are shown in the following given tables.

A study by Agarwal DK et al[9] on physical growth pattern of affluent Indian children from 5 to 18 years of age group was used as standard height and weight for comparing with the working children. Also a study of Thakor GH et al[10] on the physical growth of adolescent age group children who were school going and were not working child, was also used to compare with the working children.

TABLE 2
HEIGHT OF WORKING BOYS WITH THAT OF STANDARD VALUE AND OTHER STUDY

Age gr.	Mean Height of Study Participant (cm±SD)	Standard[9] Height(cm)	p-value with Standard	Another Study Result[10] (cm)	p-value with another Study
10 (n=3)	118.33±2.52	134.7	0.008**	133.7	0.009**
11(n=5)	132.8±13.10	139.6	0.310	135.4	0.68
12(n=8)	129.63±7.39	144.7	0.001**	139.5	0.007**
13(n=7)	139.29±3.86	150.3	0.0001***	142.8	0.053*
14(n=7)	147.14±8.68	158	0.016*	146.7	0.89

Note * Significant ** Highly significant

Table 2 shows that there was highly significant difference in height of boys of age group of 10, 12 and 13 years old child especially with standard population.

TABLE 3
HEIGHT OF WORKING GIRLS WITH THAT OF STANDARD VALUE AND OTHER STUDY

Age Group	Mean height of study participant (cm±SD)	Standard9 Height(cm)	p-value with Standard	Another Study Result10 (cm)	p-value with Another Study
10 (n=7)	121±8.81	134.8	0.006**	132.8	0.012*
11 (n=2)	127±9.9	141.3	0.290	136.7	0.398
12 (n=4)	129.5±4.65	146.7	0.005**	141.2	0.01*
13 (n=2)	150.5±0.70	151.4	0.323	144.7	0.055*
14 (n=5)	148.6±7.16	153.6	0.194	147.4	0.70

Note * Significant ** Highly Significant

Table 3 shows that there was highly significant difference in height of girls in the age group of 10 and 12 year old child with both groups (standard population and other study group).

TABLE 4
WEIGHT OF WORKING BOYS WITH THAT OF STANDARD VALUE AND OTHER STUDY

Age Group	Mean weight of study participant (Kg±SD)	Standard[9] Weight (Kg)	p-value with standard	Another study result[10] (Kg)	p-value with another study
10 (n=3)	19.33±١,١٥	28.7	0.005**	25.0	0.01*
11 (n=5)	26±٦,٤٢	31.9	0.140	25.9	0.977
12 (n=8)	24.25±٥,١٨	35.4	0.0001**	27.7	0.101
13 (n=7)	29.71±٤,١٥	39.4	0.001**	30.2	0.767
14 (n=7)	35.14±٦,٧٩	44.7	0.010*	31.7	0.228

Note * Significant ** Highly Significant

Table 4 shows that there was highly significant difference in weight amongst the boys of the age group of 10, 12, 13 and 14 years old child with standard population but not significant with other study group except in the age group of 10 years.

TABLE 5
WEIGHT OF WORKING GIRLS WITH THAT OF STANDARD VALUE AND OTHER STUDY

Age Group	Mean weight of study participant(Kg±SD)	Standard[9] Weight (kg)	p-value with standard	Another study result[10] (kg)	p-value with another study
10 (n=7)	21.71±٥,٥٣	29.6	0.009**	26.1	0.081
11 (n=2)	23.00±١,٤١	34.3	0.056	28.4	0.11
12 (n=4)	24.50±٣,٧٠	38.7	0.005**	29.4	0.07
13 (n=2)	33.00±٤,٢٤	42.6	0.193	33.4	0.91
14 (n=5)	34.60±٦,٦٩	45.7	0.021*	35.9	0.68

Note * Significant ** Highly Significant

Table 5 shows that there was highly significant difference in weight of girls in the age group of 10 and 12 with standard population.

TABLE 6
PERSONAL HYGIENE OF WORKING CHILD

Physical signs/problems	Number (N= 50)	Percentage (%)
Hygiene of hair	20	40
Trimming of nails	20	40
Wear of footware	18	36

The personal hygiene was studied in terms of hygiene of hairs, trimming of nails and wearing of footware. Table 6 shows that around 40 per cent children had poor hygiene.

TABLE 7
PHYSICAL HEALTH OF WORKING CHILDREN

Physical signs	Number (N= 50)	Percentage (%)
BCG Scar	33	66
Cervical LN* enlarged	20	40
Submandibular LN* enlarged	16	32
Xerosis	18	36
Dental caries	11	22
Nasal discharge	05	10
Purulent Ear discharge	03	06
Wax in ear	05	10

* LN – Lymphnode

Table 7 shows that 66 per cent working child had no BCG scar, in 72 per cent children had enlarged lymph nodes and in 36 per cent children had xerosis.

A Qualitative Observation

Case Studies

1. During data collection, one study participant was found complete blind with xerophthalmia which is usually due to vitamin A deficiency. This working child had lost his parents and he was selling vegetable on road side with his grandmother. In his family, there was no other family member to support them. The government dispensary was very near to his stall but he and his grandmother were unaware of this to get vitamin A solution and other health care services. He never went to school while government school was near to his house.

2. There were two working children who drop out school and engaged in selling wine pouch illegally. In day hour, they brought these pouches from some other place and in the evening they sold these pouches to unskilled workers who were living around their house and sometime police personnel also come to take these pouch. And his parents were street hawkers and living in a permanent hut.

3. Another working girl child, who had stunted growth with moderate to severe degree malnutrition, was engaged in making kite, papad and other things at her home during along with her other family members. She left school during 3rd standard. She was around 13 years old but her height was upto the height of 7-8 years old girls. She visited government health institution but has no money to get treatment from higher centre.

4. In an another instance, a working child came from a nearby district of Vadodara and was working at the building construction site along with his parents for last 10 months and had developed the habit of chewing guttka and occasionally did smoking.

5. In another example, a working child was engaged in selling vegetable with his step-father and suffering with caries and lymphadenopathy. He dropped out school after 5th class.

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CHILDLESSNESS AMONG WOMEN IN INDIA

Aiswarya P.V.[*] and G. K Moli[**]

ABSTRACT

Worldwide, millions of couples are confronted with the problem of childlessness. Though childlessness profoundly influences the quality of life and the life course of the couples concerned, relatively little attention is given to this problem. This study attempts to understand the prevalence of childlessness in India. An attempt has also been made to identify the demographic characteristics of childless couples as well as the socio-economic factors responsible for childlessness in India. The study utilized the secondary data extracted from the 2007-'08 District Level Household and Facility Survey (DLHS-3) of India. Both bi-variate and multi-variate analyses were done. The findings of the study reveal that the likelihood of childlessness is closely associated with most of the selected background characteristics. The logistic regression analysis demonstrated that potentially strong predictors of the components of childlessness are age at marriage, marital duration, place of residence, religion, work status and wealth index.

This research shows that West Bengal and Bihar top the list of childless women with 14.1 and 12.4 per cent respectively as compared to the national average of 8.2 per cent while Meghalaya has the lowest figure of 2.3 per cent. In almost all the major states, it was observed that around 20 per cent of childless women are in the age group of 25-29 years. But the prevalence of childlessness seems to decrease with an increase in age. Prevalence rate of childlessness among women those who got married at an age less than 20 years is low in Kerala (around 55%). Above 80 per cent of childless women are non-working in almost all the states of India whereas it was more than 95 per cent in Kerala and Punjab. Most of the childless women are found to be in a high level of wealth index except states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh where most of the childless

*Research Scholar, **Population Information Officer; Department of Demography, University of Kerala, Kariavattom Campus, Trivandrum-695581.

women are in a level of low wealth index. Since childlessness is one of the important reasons for marital disturbances and family disruptions, it needs to be dealt with in a professional manner taking into account all the aspects.

Key words: Childlessness, Infertility, Age at marriage, Women, Family, Marital disturbances.

Childlessness is a painful condition for the individuals and couples. However, it is usually seen as a private matter to be resolved; in the medical area or in the case of adoption. This condition has serious demographic, social and health implications. Living as an involuntarily childless is challenging for a woman as well as for her feminity. Norms may be difficult for those who prefer to live according to their own choices, but it is more difficult for those who have no choice.

Childlessness is a particular concern because of the extent of the problem and the social stigma attached to it. Factors influencing this state of women are their socio-cultural background, labour force, etc. Infertility is not the fault of the women but still in the eyes of the society, an infertile woman is considered as inferior and evil[1]. Several studies also show that in the younger age groups, a large percentage of women are childless but the percentage drops rapidly and stabilizes at a lower level above the age of 35 years[2]. Anyway, this phenomenon has become an increasingly important public health concern.

The fertility levels of any population are very much influenced by the level of childlessness (both voluntary and involuntary) in the population and it plays an important role in determining the levels and differentials of fertility[3]. In many parts of the world, childless couples are socially isolated and thus, they are emotionally very vulnerable. In a developing country, childlessness is a huge but badly recognized problem. As modernization continues, childlessness becomes more and more voluntary and fertility begins to decline. In India, as in much of the rest of Asia, childless women are socially stigmatized and face grave personal and social consequences[4] including economic deprivation, violence and marital disruption. The social status of a woman is enhanced when she delivers a child. A childless-woman has to face physical, mental and psychological torture in India, particularly in rural areas. Because of urbanization, emergence of nuclear family, employment of women and increase in women's education; some women may be opting for not to have a baby for a specific period. The population scientists all over the world have paid more emphasis on trying to understand the dynamics of fertility and somehow ignored the important issues of childlessness to a greater extent, and the Indian demographic community is no exception to this.

The problem of childlessness has been largely overlooked in favour of research and promotion of family planning. As a result, very little work has been carried out in the past on this important aspect. Thus, there is a need to study this rarely explored phenomenon.

Childlessness amongst women, a growing trend in India has become a major concern. Based on the District Level Household and Facility survey 2007-'08[5], about 8 per cent of the currently married women aged 15-49 years have the problem of childlessness in India. Among the States of India, West Bengal has the highest percentage of women with the problem of childlessness (14.1 per cent) whereas Meghalaya has the lowest with 2.3 per cent. Recent studies show that India observes a double burden of fertility-childlessness along with high fertility[6]. This paper has made an attempt to study the prevalence of childlessness in India and the major states; and to identify the demographic and socio-economic factors behind childlessness in the country.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized the District Level Household and Facility Survey (DLHS-3) data of India[5] though DLHS-III does not have a direct question on infertility and childlessness.

With the help of certain control variables, childlessness rates have been calculated. The control variables, however, do not bring out the fact that childlessness is the result of a woman's or her husband's fault. The way terms have been defined as per the availability of variables in the data, it is better to address the phenomena from the perspective of women. For the purpose of analysis, a sample of currently married women with more than two years of marriage duration, who are currently not pregnant and those who never used any contraceptive methods (both modern and traditional methods) are taken into consideration.

Percentage distribution was used to explain the relationship between background characteristics and childlessness. To find out the determinants of childlessness, logistic regression analysis was done.

Definition of Childlessness and Covariates Taken for Analysis

There is no universal definition of infertility. A couple is generally considered clinically infertile when pregnancy has not occurred after at least twelve months of regular unprotected sexual activity[7]. Inability to conceive within two years of exposure to pregnancy is the epidemiological definition recommended by the

World Health Organization[8-9] for childlessness. In the current study, a sample of currently married women with more than two years of marital duration was taken for analysis.

The covariates taken for the present study were demographic variables and reproductive health variables. Demographic variables included such as age of the women and husband, the social factors such as age at marriage, marital duration, place of residence, religion, educational status of the woman and husband, the economic variables such as work status of the women and wealth index. The reproductive health variables included spontaneous abortion, menstrual problem, vaginal discharge and colour discharge.

FINDINGS

Spatial Variation in the Prevalence of Childlessness among Women in India and Major States

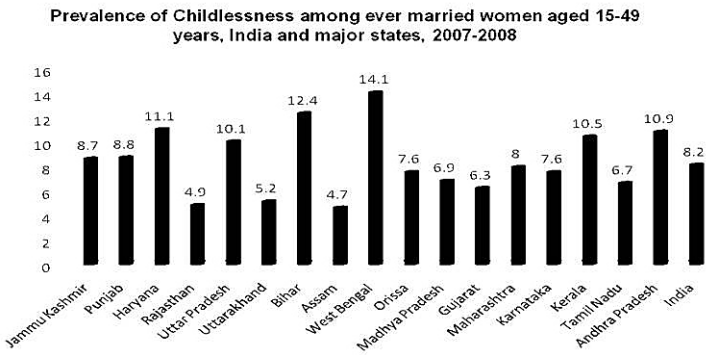
The prevalence of childlessness in India varies widely between the states. The data presented in Table 1 and Figure 1 show the percentage of married women in the reproductive age group who ever had childlessness problem in India and major states during 2007-'08. From the findings, it can be seen that the overall level of infertility in India is 8.2 per cent. Out of the 17 major states, eight states have higher levels of childlessness than the national average. Among these eight states, West Bengal has the highest percentage of women facing the problem of childlessness with 14.1 per cent followed by Bihar with 12.4 per cent and Haryana (11.1%). In contrast, Assam and Rajasthan have relatively lower levels of childlessness (about 4%). States like Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu reported a moderate level (6%) of childless women (Figure.1).

TABLE 1
PREVALENCE OF CHILDLESSNESS AMONG EVER MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15-49 YEARS IN SOME MAJOR STATES OF INDIA DURING 2007-'08 IN DESCENDING ORDER

Major States	% of Childlessness
West Bengal	14.1
Bihar	12.4
Haryana	11.1
Andhra Pradesh	10.9
Kerala	10.5

Major States	% of Childlessness
Uttar Pradesh	10.1
Punjab	8.8
Jammu and Kashmir	8.7
India	**8.2**
Maharashtra	8.0
Odisha	7.6
Karnataka	7.6
Madhya Pradesh	6.9
Tamil Nadu	6.7
Gujarat	6.3
Uttarakhand	5.2
Rajasthan	4.9
Assam	4.7

FIGURE 1
PREVALENCE OF CHILDLESSNESS AMONG WOMEN IN INDIA AND MAJOR STATES



Effect of Demographic, Social and Economic Factors on Childlessness

Childlessness among women may be influenced by demographic and socio-economic factors such as age of woman, husband's age, age at marriage, marital duration, residing place, religion, women's education, husband's education, work status, wealth index and reproductive morbidity.

Findings in Table 2 show the percentage distribution of childlessness in major states by the age-groups of women and their husbands. In India, the highest

percentage of childlessness among women is found in the age group of 25-29 years (21.7%), while the lowest is found in the age group of 15-19 years (3.6%). About 18 per cent of childless women are in the age groups of 20-24 years and 30-34 years each. Among the major, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh show that above 30 per cent of childless women are in the age group of 20-24 years. In almost all the major states, around 20 per cent of childless women are in the age group of 25-29 years. The prevalence of childlessness seems to decrease with the increase in age.

Prevalence of childlessness is about 18 per cent among women whose husbands are in the age group of 30-34 and 35-39 years. The lowest percentage of childless women (2.9%) in India was found whose husbands are in the age groups of 50-59 and 60+ years. High prevalence of childlessness has shown by women whose husbands were in the age-group of 25-49 years. In the states of Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, above 25 per cent of the childless women have husbands belonging to the age group of 25-29 years.

TABLE 2
STATE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDLESS COUPLES BY THEIR AGE IN 2007-'08

Age Group	India	J&K	Punjab	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
Respondent									
15-19	3.6	1.1	0.7	2.8	3.2	4.0	1.7	6.6	2.5
20-24	18.7	10.0	13.9	22.7	18.2	19.9	20.0	23.0	14.2
25-29	21.7	21.5	24.4	23.0	21.8	21.6	27.5	20.8	19.3
30-34	18.4	21.1	19.9	16.5	19.0	17.8	15.6	16.4	16.2
35-39	15.8	16.8	14.8	14.0	16.8	15.3	14.4	13.9	17.3
40-44	12.2	16.8	14.1	11.0	11.9	12.2	13.1	10.6	16
45-49	9.6	12.6	12.2	9.9	9.1	9.2	7.8	8.7	14.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Husband									
<25	5.3	2.7	4.6	8.9	8.2	6.9	3.9	7.1	2.6
25-29	16.1	9.2	16.0	19.1	17.6	19.0	19.9	19.1	10
30-34	18.3	17.8	22.0	19.8	17.3	18.2	21.1	18.2	13.4
35-39	18.8	18.6	16.6	16.9	19.3	17.7	14.4	15.5	17.1
40-44	14.3	16.0	14.6	12.9	16.1	13.7	14.7	13.1	14.1
45-49	13.1	13.8	13.8	10.8	10.5	13.2	15.8	10.7	17.8
50-54	8.4	9.2	8.7	7.7	8.1	7.9	6.4	8.2	13.3

Age Group	India	J&K	Punjab	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
55-59	2.9	3.4	2.7	2.2	2.1	1.6	2.5	1.7	6.9
60+	2.9	9.3	1.0	1.6	.7	1.8	1.4	6.5	4.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Age Group	West Bengal	Odi-sha	Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat	Maha-rashtra	Karna-taka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh
Respondent									
15-19	8.8	3.5	6.7	3.5	8.4	9.9	1	1.9	7.6
20-24	22.9	19.9	30	25.4	32.4	27.6	17.4	18.5	34.5
25-29	16.9	24	22	23.5	20.9	21	24	22.8	24.7
30-34	10.6	17.7	12.3	16.5	13.1	12.9	17.7	15.2	10.5
35-39	10.1	14.7	10.8	11.5	9.7	11.4	16.2	15.1	8.6
40-44	14	11.1	9.1	11.4	9	9.5	12.6	14.6	7.2
45-49	16.7	9	9.1	8.2	6.5	7.7	11	11.9	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Husband									
<25	7.2	4.2	14	11.2	7	4.7	0.6	2.4	8.3
25-29	16.3	15.9	25.1	22.6	23.7	18.6	8.9	14.2	27.8
30-34	14.7	20.2	17.5	19.4	22.5	21.4	21.9	18.7	22.4
35-39	13.4	19.3	12.8	15.5	14.5	16.8	21.6	18.5	14.4
40-44	9.5	14.6	9.5	10.6	9.9	10.7	16.1	14	8
45-49	10.6	12.1	9.6	11.2	8.7	11.3	13.3	14.6	8
50-54	13.4	8.2	7.3	6.5	7	8.3	10.3	9.9	6.3
55-59	8.2	3.5	2	1.2	3.3	4.9	5.6	5.4	2.7
60+	6.5	2	2.3	1.8	3.4	3.4	1.6	2.2	2.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Influence of Social Factors on Childlessness

Data given in Table.3 show the impact of social background on the prevalence of childlessness among Indian women. Analysis of the figures show that those getting married at the age less than 20 years prove a higher percentage of childlessness (81.8%) and those getting married after 30 years of age shows the lowest percentage of childlessness (1.8%) in India. In most of the major states, the same trend is seen. About 11.2 and 5.2 per cent of childless women were married

while they were in the age groups of 20 - 24 and 25 - 29 years respectively. Among the major states, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh show that 90 per cent of childless women were married before the age of 20 years. The prevalence rate of childlessness among women those who got married at an age less than 20 years is low in Kerala (around 55%). While considering the duration of marriage, about 46.6 per cent of childless women had marriage duration of more than 14 years and the lowest percentage (16.6%) of childless women had 10-13 years of marriage duration. Around 40 per cent of childless women had a marital duration of above 14 years in almost all major states.

The level of childlessness varies considerably across rural and urban areas in all the selected states. While considering the place of residence, in India, rural women have higher percentage of childlessness (69.9%) when compared with urban women (30.1%). Above 80 per cent of childless women in rural areas are residing in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, Assam and Odisha. When religion is taken into consideration, the highest percentages of childless women are Hindus (78%) and the lowest is among Christians. Among the childless women, in Jammu and Kashmir 74 per cent belongs to Muslim religion. As far as women's education is concerned, 51.7 per cent of childless women have a secondary level education and a very low percentage is illiterate. Similar result is also obtained when considering the husband's education in almost all the major states.

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDLESSNESS WOMEN IN INDIA BY VARIOUS SOCIAL FACTORS in 2007-'08

Variables	India	J&K	Punjab	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
Age at Marriage									
<20	81.8	71.8	60.3	86	94.3	94.7	79.1	96.9	69.9
21-24	11.2	19.3	31.1	11.2	4.7	4.3	17.8	2.4	19.7
25-29	5.2	7.6	8	2.7	0.8	0.9	2.6	0.6	8.4
>30	1.8	1.3	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Marital Duration									
2-5	19.0	20	23.8	27.3	23.9	17.1	27	19.7	19
6-9	17.8	17.6	17.1	17.4	18.7	15.1	21.2	17.5	17.5
10-13	16.6	12.5	10.7	11.8	14	13.6	13.8	14.5	14.1
14+	46.6	49.9	48.4	43.6	43.4	54.3	38	48.4	49.4

Variables	India	J&K	Punjab	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Place of Residence									
Rural	69.9	83.9	62.1	64.3	74	76.1	79.8	85.2	83.3
Urban	30.1	16.1	37.9	35.7	26	23.9	20.2	14.8	16.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Religion									
Hindus	78.0	21.9	35.7	81.1	87.2	78.2	86.7	82.8	68.4
Muslims	12.9	74.3	2.3	13.4	11.3	21.3	11.8	16.9	27
Christians	3.9	0.1	0.6	0.1	0	0.1	0.2	0.1	4.1
Others	5.2	3.8	61.5	5.4	1.4	0.4	1.3	0.1	0.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Respondents Education									
Illiterate	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.8	1.7	2.6	0.2
Primary	15.1	11.6	4.4	7.3	12.2	11.3	4.4	22.8	23
Second-ary	51.7	21.4	26.9	29.4	37.6	29.8	26.1	29.7	20.1
High school and above	32.7	66.6	68.3	63	50.1	58.2	69.4	44.9	56.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Husband's Education									
Illiterate	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	1.1	0.7	0.3
Primary	11.6	5.9	3.5	5.2	6.4	7.1	3.7	14.5	23.2
Second-ary	45.1	15.2	19.4	21.9	26.5	21.1	15.6	21.4	17.9
High school and above	43.0	78.7	77	72.7	67	71.5	79.6	63.4	58.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Variables	West Bengal	Odi-sha	Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat	Maha-rashtra	Karna-taka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh
Age at Marriage									
<20	86.5	82.4	92.4	84	84	79.6	55.8	64.7	86.3
21-24	8.7	13.8	5.8	12.5	11.8	13.8	27.2	24.7	9.9

Variables	West Bengal	Odi-sha	Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat	Maha-rashtra	Karna-taka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh
25-29	3.4	3.4	1.6	3.1	3.5	5.3	13.3	9.3	3.2
>30	1.5	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.3	3.7	1.3	0.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Marital Duration									
2-5	26.6	24	26.9	26.8	36.2	32.8	28.1	28.4	38.4
6-9	16.6	18.8	19.2	20.2	21.1	19.6	19.3	16.8	20.2
10-13	10.7	15.5	14	14.4	11.5	13.5	15.7	12.1	12.3
14+	46.2	41.8	39.9	38.6	31.1	34.2	36.9	42.7	29.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Place of Residence									
Rural	76	86.3	71.1	69.8	65.6	61.4	58.3	50.2	58.7
Urban	24	13.7	28.9	30.2	34.4	38.6	41.7	49.8	41.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Religion									
Hindus	67.4	95.2	93.7	89.7	79.7	81.5	45.6	85.8	82.3
Muslims	30.6	1.1	5.5	8.6	11.7	16.1	42.0	9.3	10.3
Chris-tians	0.5	3.4	0.1	1.1	0.7	1.6	12.4	4.8	7.1
Others	1.5	0.3	0.7	0.6	7.9	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Respondents Education									
Illiterate	1.1	0.7	0.2	1.1	0.1	1.0	0	0	0.1
Primary	29.5	25.2	13.6	15.1	14.2	12.3	5.3	10.1	8.9
Second-ary	27	31.4	34.8	31.7	27.5	27.9	12.4	25.2	34.4
High school and above	42.5	42.7	51.4	52.1	58.2	57.8	82.3	64.6	56.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Husband's Education									
Illiterate	0.9	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0	0	0
Primary	25.8	23.4	9.5	13.2	12.7	14.0	6.9	9.1	7.8
Second-ary	21.4	28	26.5	23.7	17.4	21.6	16	23.3	27.6

Variables	West Bengal	Odi-sha	Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat	Maha-rashtra	Karna-taka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh
High school and above	51.9	48.3	63.8	62.9	69.8	64.3	77.1	67.7	64.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Relation between Wealth and Working-status of Women with Childlessness

Though income plays an important role in the level of happiness in a family but perhaps, it doesn't have much impact on fertility. The findings of Table 4 indicate that about 86.5 per cent of childless women are non-working in India. The percentage for working women is only 13.5 per cent. high level with respect to wealth index. Above 80 per cent of childless women are non-working in almost all the states of India. In Kerala and Punjab, above 95 per cent of the childless women are non-working. Most of the childless women are found to be in a high level of wealth index. In the state of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh; most of the childless women are in a level of low wealth index.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDLESS WOMEN IN INDIA BY THEIR

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND IN 2007-'08

Variables	India	J&K	Punjab	Hary-ana	Rajas-than	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
Work Status									
Working	13.5	17.4	3.9	11.4	15.9	9.3	9.6	16.2	3.2
Non-Working	86.5	82.6	96.1	88.6	84.1	90.7	90.4	83.8	96.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Wealth Index									
Low	37.7	18.5	1.9	9.8	42.7	42.5	17.3	68.7	40.4
Medium	18.6	31	7.6	19.9	21.9	20	23.7	16.7	26.8
High	43.7	50.6	90.4	70.4	35.4	37.6	59	14.5	32.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Variables	West Bengal	Odi-sha	Madhya Pradesh	Guja-rat	Maha-rashtra	Karna-taka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh
Work Status									
Working	8.6	13.9	14.8	8.7	23.3	13	2.1	7.2	12.9
Non-Working	91.4	86.1	85.2	91.3	76.7	87	97.9	92.8	87.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Wealth Index									
Low	49.9	68.3	54.1	26.5	28.3	32.3	2.1	15.6	20.5
Medium	17.3	12.7	16.7	20.8	20.7	23.7	5.6	25.4	27.2
High	32.8	19	29.2	52.6	51	44	92.3	59	52.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Reproductive Morbidity and Childlessness

Analysis of sample women with respect to reproductive morbidity shows that among the childless women, 18.7 per cent had experienced spontaneous abortion. About 34.2 per cent of childless women reported the problem of menstruation also while around 15 per cent of childless women stated vaginal discharge problem. About 95 per cent of childless women reported that they had colour discharge.

TABLE 5
DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDLESSNESS WOMEN IN INDIA BY THEIR REPRODUCTIVE MORBIDITY IN 2007-'08

Variables	India	J&K	Punjab	Haryana	Rajas-than	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
Spontaneous Abortion									
Yes	18.7	13.1	12.2	19.1	8.3	16.5	8.1	12.4	9.7
No	81.3	86.9	87.8	80.9	91.7	83.5	91.9	87.6	90.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Menstruation Problem									
Yes	34.2	30.6	18.6	19.6	16.4	20.4	16.7	24.2	22.8
No	65.8	69.4	81.4	80.4	83.6	79.6	83.3	75.8	77.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Vaginal Discharge									
Yes	15.8	21.7	5.3	13.8	14.3	18.6	12.1	16.6	12.8
No	84.2	78.3	94.7	86.2	85.7	81.4	87.9	83.4	87.2

Variables	India	J&K	Punjab	Haryana	Rajas-than	Uttar Pradesh	Uttara-khand	Bihar	Assam
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Color Discharge									
Yes	95.2	96.2	99.6	96.4	95.6	97	97.4	94.8	93.3
No	4.8	3.8	0.4	3.6	4.4	3	2.6	5.2	6.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Variables	West Bengal	Odisha	Madhya Pradesh	Guja-rat	Maha-rashtra	Karna-taka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh
Spontaneous Abortion									
Yes	12.2	11	8.9	10.2	11.1	14.1	18	14.3	11.6
No	87.8	89	91.1	89.8	88.9	85.9	82	85.7	88.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Menstruation Problem									
Yes	41.6	15.9	25	19.7	24.4	15.9	22.8	16.1	22.5
No	58.4	84.1	75	80.3	75.6	84.1	77.2	83.9	77.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Vaginal Discharge									
Yes	19.7	3.1	20.7	9.1	7.5	9.4	7.9	4	6.3
No	80.3	96.9	79.3	90.9	92.5	90.6	92.1	96	93.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Color Discharge									
Yes	96.3	94.6	94.1	91.1	97.2	96.6	89.1	89.1	97
No	3.7	5.4	5.9	8.9	2.8	3.4	10.9	10.9	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Determinants of Childlessness among Women in India

From the above analysis the variables showing significant relation with childlessness are age group, husband's age, age at marriage, marital duration, place of residence, religion, women's education, work status and wealth index. They are taken for regression analysis to identify the prime determinants of childlessness in India.

It is found that women in the age group of 45-49 years have 8 per cent more chance of having childlessness as compared to women in the age group of 15-19 years. The other age groups have lesser chance of having childlessness. Considering the

husband's age, wives belonging to all other age groups of men have less chance of having childlessness as compared to that of men with less than 20 years of age.

Women who got married after 30 years had 67.1 per cent lesser chance of having childlessness when compared to women who married at an age lesser than 20 years. While considering the duration of marriage, women with more than 14 years of marriage duration have 14.1 per cent less chance of childlessness compared to those with only 2-5 years of duration. The least chance of childlessness is among the women having the marital duration of 10-13 years.

Considering the place of residence, urban women have only 9.4 per cent less chance of having childlessness than that of rural women. While considering women's education, educated women have higher chance of having childlessness than illiterate women. Non-working women have shown higher chance of childlessness as compared to working women. Chances of childlessness are less among women with high level of wealth index.

TABLE 6
LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF CHILDLESSNESS WOMEN

Variables	**Exp** β	**Sig**
Age group 15-19 ®		
20-24	0.904	.042
25-29	0.883	.030
30-34	0.797	.001
35-39	0.792	.002
40-44	0.902	.228
45-49	1.082	.416
Husbands age <25 ®		
25-29	0.884	.003
30-34	0.889	.011
35-39	0.865	.004
40-44	0.922	.153
45-49	0.938	.303
50-54	0.936	.366
55-59	0.927	.415
60+	0.943	.494

Variables	Exp β	Sig
Age at marriage <20 ®		
21-24	.976	.349
25-29	.694	.000
>30	.329	.000
Marital duration 2-5 ®		
6-9	.820	.000
10-13	.669	.000
14+	.859	.003
Place of residence Rural ®		
Urban	.906	.000
Religion Hindus ®		
Muslims	1.348	.000
Christians	1.651	.000
Others	.822	.000
Women's Education Illiterate ®		
Primary	1.070	.630
Secondary	1.140	.350
High school and above	1.493	.004
Work Status Working ®		
Non-Working	1.093	.007
Wealth Index Low ®		
Medium	.976	.442
High	.812	.000

DISCUSSION

This study is an attempt to find out the prevalence of childlessness in India and analyse the demographic and socio-economic factors behind it. The prevalence of childlessness in India and major states was found out from a secondary source i.e. DLHS-3, 2007-'08. The prevalence of childlessness by demographic variables such as age of the respondent and husband, social variables including age at marriage of the respondent, marital duration, place of residence, religion, respondents and husbands education; economic variables include work status and the wealth index of the respondents. Similarly, the reproductive morbidity variables such as spontaneous abortion, menstrual problem, vaginal and colour discharge

are analysed. For further analysis, variables of reproductive morbidity such as spontaneous abortion, menstrual problem, vaginal and colour discharge are not used because of the low prevalence rates of childlessness for these variables.

In the analysis of childlessness, it is observed that about 8.2 per cent of women in India are childless. The census of India[10] shows that there are 6 per cent of women who were childless in 2001.[11] Another study also reports a similar figure matching the census of India. West Bengal shows the highest per cent of childlessness followed by Bihar, Haryana and the rates are above the national average. On the other hand, states like Assam and Rajasthan have low per cent of childless women which is lower than the national average.

The study clearly brought out the various dimensions of childlessness in India. The findings of the study revealed that the likelihood of childlessness is closely associated with most of the selected background characteristics. The childlessness level varies among different socio-economic sub-groups of women[11] which are endorsed in an earlier study. A high prevalence rate of childlessness among Indian women was found in the age group 25-29 years and the rate was decreasing with the women who are above the age of 30 years. Another study also reported that the prevalence rate of childlessness decreases as the age increases[12]. While taking into account the husbands' age, the childlessness rate was highest among the women whose husbands were in the age group of 30-39 years. In India, it has been observed that only 9.6 per cent of women remain childless at the end of their reproductive period (age group of 45-49 years). It shows a decreasing trend when husband's age is above 40 years. While taking the age at marriage of the respondents, the childlessness rate was high (above 80%) among the women who married when they were less than 20 years and the trend is decreasing as the age at marriage increases. This is also supported by the findings obtained in the present study that the prevalence of childlessness is high among women with long marital duration.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of childlessness is found to be higher among the rural women and it is as double as the rate of urban women in national and state level. It is also observed that, Hindu women face higher level of childlessness as compared to other religious women and this result is consistent with previous findings[6]. The childlessness problem is found as high among the educated women[6] and the women whose husbands have higher education and least among illiterates. An earlier study has also revealed such findings and according to the researchers, this may be due to the fact that with aspirations for attaining higher educational level,

marriage is delayed; which could be a reason for childlessness rate being high among this sub-group of population[6,12]. It is also argued that women reduced their preferences for children as they proceed with their education[13] and thus, a higher rate of childlessness was seen among more educated women, which partly can be attributed to their longer-duration in education. Many studies[14-17] have found that prolonged education may, therefore, lead to a postponement of childbearing to a later age, when biological factors may make it more difficult to conceive. Another study conducted earlier also opined that the desire for having children is likely to decline when women have greater range of options[18]. Analysis of the present data also point out that childlessness is high among women with higher wealth index. This finding has similarities with the findings of some previous studies in India[19-20]. With regard to the work status of the respondents, the result obtained is that childlessness rate is high among the non-working women. Above 95 per cent of the women who have colour discharge also found to have childlessness problem. The study concluded that religion, work status and women's education are found to be strong predictors to the increasing rate of childlessness in India.

A strong and consistent link between these predictors of the components and childlessness has important implications in the family welfare programmes. One of the important consequences of childlessness is family disruptions. So, the study highlights the need for a greater attention from policy makers, planners and researchers to take up the issue in various programmes and research activities.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE OF DOMESTIC CHILD LABOURERS IN DELHI

Shalini*

ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken to find out the socio-economic life of domestic child labourers in the cosmopolitan city of Delhi. Since Delhi is the power center for all the development policies and programmes, the outcome of the study reflects the state of engaging children as labourers in the country. The study is conducted on the basis of qualitative data of 17 case studies in the area of domestic sector. The qualitative information has been analyzed with the supplementary information collected from the secondary sources to know the reasons of child labour. Domestic child labour has been analyzed with SPSS keeping its consistency, continuity and comprehensiveness.

Key words: Socio-economy, Domestic, Child labour.

Severe punishment and scolding by the employers on child labourers is common and rampant. Domestic violence includes slapping, shaking, beating with sticks, strangulation, burning, kicking, threatening with knife, sexual abuse, unwanted sexual act; psychological acts include isolation, excessive jealousy, verbal aggression, threat of violence and constant humiliation. The findings suggest the need for a comprehensive, integrated, effective, feasible and sustainable package for the welfare of child labourers. Social security of the child labourers may be developed in consultation with the human rights activists, NGOs, child-labour employers, child-labour service providers and takers, policymakers, planners, and stakeholders of child labour to ensure educational opportunities, appropriate wages, job security, reasonable working hours, rest facilities, steps to curb health hazards, provision for recreation and personal development of the child-labourers. According to the available information, it has been seen that despite a number of protective measures taken by the government, nothing concrete has been done to prevent the prevailing situation of child labour. Though there are about 15 legislations to prevent child labour, there is not even a single legislation for regulating child labour[1].

*Senior Consultant (Gender), Ministry of Minority Affairs, Lodhi Road, NewDelhi-110003.

Some of the immediate effects of repeated domestic violence include:

- Experiencing sleeping difficulties such as nightmares,
- Becoming anxious or fearful,
- Regression to an earlier stage of development such as thumb sucking and bedwetting,
- Displaying aggressive and destructive behavior,
- Self-withdrawal from people and events or not becoming social,
- Experiencing stress such as headache,
- Displaying speech difficulties, and
- Drugs and alcohol abuse

OBJECTIVES

The current qualitative study was conducted among social-economic life of domestic child labour in cosmopolitan city of Delhi with the following objectives:

1. To understand the magnitude of problem faced by domestic child labour, particularly female.
2. Circumstances under which children are forced to work as domestic child labour.
3. Household environment in which children work and the exploitation faced.
4. How the existing laws/Acts are by-passed to employ children in domestic work..
5. Make recommendation to ensure implementation of laws to ban or at least minimize the domestic child labour.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

The present endeavour is a descriptive attempt based on qualitative data of case studies. Each case of domestic child labour is different from the other in nature. Therefore, each has been defined separately.

Type of Study

As this study is descriptive in nature, the present endeavour is based on qualitative information by analyzing case studies and quantitative data on child labour.

Techniques of Data Collection

The study was conducted in Delhi. A random sample of 118 household was conducted to understand the magnitude of problem, number of children deployed as domestic labour, their deployment pattern (part-time/full time) and their profile of employment procedure. Since it was difficult to interview domestic help in the houses in which they are working, a sample of them was interviewed in market places. In depth interview was also done with the domestic child labour to analyze the problem. Thus, a comprehensive methodology was employed to study domestic child labour.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data on domestic child labour in Delhi collected from different sources was scrutinized, classified, coded and referred to the corresponding tables according to its nature and content. The data was analyzed on SPSS, keeping its consistency, continuity and comprehensiveness in mind.

FINDINGS

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILD LABOUR

	Frequency	Percentage
Table 1-A: Age		
6-8 yrs.	4	3.4
9-11 yrs	50	42.4
12-14 yrs	64	54.2
Total	118	100.0
TABLE-1B: Sex		
Male	39	33.1
Female	79	66.9
Total	118	100.0
TABLE-1C: Permanent Address		
Jharkhand	14	11.9
Uttar Pradesh	46	39
Bihar	32	27.1
Other States	26	22

	Frequency	Percentage
Total	118	100
TABLE-1D: Caste		
Schedule caste	57	48.3
Schedule tribe	39	33.1
Other backward class	13	11.0
Other caste	1	.8
Do not know	8	6.8
Total	118	100.0
TABLE-1E: Religion		
Hindu	107	92.4
Muslim	7	5.9
Sikh	9	1.7
Total	118	100
TABLE-1F: Literacy Level		
Illiterate	70	59.3
Literate	1	.8
Primary	46	39.0
Middle	1	.8
TABLE-1G: Housing Condition at Permanent Residence		
Kuccha	52	44.1
Pucca	34	28.8
Cemented	21	17.8
Asbestos	11	9.3
Total	118	100.0
TABLE-1H: Type of Family		
Nuclear	72	61.0
Joint	46	39.0
Total	118	100.0

Table 1A: This table shows out of three categories, a maximum 54.2 per cent of the children in the age group of (12-14 yrs.) were involved in domestic work.

Table 1B: This table shows that 66.9 per cent of the female were involved in child labour domestic chores as compared to males.

Table 1C: This table shows that 39 per cent of the children are from Uttar Pradesh

who were involved in domestic child labour.

Table 1D: This table shows 57 per cent of the SC category worked as domestic child labour.

Table 1E: This table shows 92.4 per cent are Hindus, as compared to Muslims and Sikhs.

Table 1F: This table shows the educational background, where the statistics shows that 59.3 per cent of the child labours is illiterate and 39 per cent have undergone schooling up to primary level. Housing condition of the respondents at their permanent residence speak about their poverty.

Table 1G: Mostly the children work in Delhi because of poverty and to earn their livelihood. 44.1 per cent of the total sample lives in the *kuccha* houses while 28.8 per cent live in *pucca* houses followed by 17.8 per cent who live in cemented houses and 9.3 per cent lives in the houses with asbestos sheet of the total sample of the study. Different respondents have different reasons to earn their livelihood and different living styles with different monthly income of their families which varies from one family to another family.

Table 1H: This table shows 61 per cent of the domestic child labours live in the joint family followed by 39 per cent of the respondents who live in nuclear families. Mostly the respondents are living in nuclear families with meager income to support their families. 39 per cent of the respondents live in joint families where the father, mother, uncle, paternal father are illiterate, ill or unskilled labour.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS PER THEIR FAMILY BACKGROUND

Characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
Education Background of Parents		
Both literate	1	.8
Both illiterate	109	92.4
Father literate	7	5.9
Mother literate	1	.8
Total	118	100.0
Father's Occupation		
Farmer	68	57.6

Characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
Unskilled labour	26	22.0
Skilled labour	1	.8
Petty business	19	16.1
Others	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0
Mother's Occupation		
Farming	44	37.3
Housewife	58	49.2
Unskilled labour	14	11.9
Others	2	1.7
Family Annual Income in Rs.		
Below 5,000	111	94.1
5000-10,000	5	4.2
10,000-12,000	1	.8
NA	1	.8
Total	118	100.0

This table shows the educational background of parents of the respondents. Mostly the parents are illiterate unskilled labour or farmer with meager income to earn their livelihood. Their mindset shows "more hand, more work and more income". So these people send their children to other states to earn their livelihood and support their families. 92.4 per cent constitutes both illiterate parents of the respondents of the total sample of the study. Whereas 5.9 per cent of the fathers are literate, the data shows 8 per cent of both the father and mother are literate.

This table shows the occupation of the father or the various respondents working in the domestic sector. The occupation of father was categorized into 4 categories as farming, unskilled labour, skilled labour and petty business. 57.6 per cent of the domestic child labours' fathers are involved in farming whereas 22 per cent were doing unskilled work followed by 16.1 per cent of the total sample involved in petty business as they are doing farming on rented lands with very little income to support their families. These people are sending their children to the domestic sector to support their families.

Mothers Occupation- Farmer, Skilled, Unskilled Labour, Housewife: This table shows the occupation of the mother of the various respondents working in the domestic sector. There are 4 categories of the mother occupation of the various

respondents defined as farming, housewives, unskilled labour, and others. 49.3 per cent of the domestic child labours' mothers are housewives whereas 37.3 were doing farming followed by 11.9 per cent of the total sample involved in unskilled labour as they are doing farming on rented lands with very little income to support their families. These people are sending their children to the domestic sector to support their families.

Family annual income in Rs: This table shows the annual family income of the respondents working in the domestic sector. This table is divided into four categories where the family income of the respondent is less than Rs. 5000/-. 94.1 per cent of the total sample have family income below 5000/- followed by 4.2 per cent having family income up to 10000 i.e. poverty is the main factor which is drowning these children of school going age to the child labour market.

Family Composition

There are two categories define as less than three male members in the family and more than three male members in the family. 83.1 per cent constitutes less than 3 male members in the families of the respondents where as 16.9 per cent constitute more than 3 male members in the families structure of the respondents. This table shows how many male members are involved in earning the income for their families. 83.1 per cent constitutes less than 3 female members in the families of the respondents where as 16.1 per cent constitute more than 3 female members in the families structure of the respondents. This table shows how many female members are involved in household work or in farming to earn their livelihood for their families.

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS PER THEIR FAMILY COMPOSITION

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Adult Male in Family		
Less than three	98	83.1
More than three	20	16.9
Total	118	100.0
Adult Female		
Less than three	98	83.1
More than three	19	16.1
NA	1	.8
Total	118	100.0

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Child Male		
Less than three	86	72.9
More than three	29	24.6
NA	3	2.5
Total	118	100.0
Child Female		
Less than three	85	72.0
More than three	29	24.6
NA	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0

This table shows the number of male child in their family composition. There are two categories defined as less than three male child members in the family and more than three male child members in the family. 72.9 per cent constitutes less than 3 male child members in the families of the respondents where as 24.6 per cent constitute more than 3 male child members in the families structure of the respondents. This table shows how many male children are there in family structure of the respondents. This table shows the number of female child in their family composition. There are two categories defined as less than three female child members in the family and more than three female child members in the family. 72.0 per cent constitutes less than 3 female child members in the families of the respondents where as 24.6 per cent constitute more than 3 female child members in the families structure of the respondents. This table shows how many female children are there in family structure of the respondent.

Migration and Associated Factors

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Whether Resident of Delhi		
Yes	2	1.7
No	115	97.5
NA	1	.8
Total	118	100.0

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Place of Permanent Residence		
Jharkhand	14	11.9
Uttar Pradesh	46	39.0
Bihar	32	27.1
Other States	26	22.0
Total	118	100.0
Years of Migration		
Below ten months	37	31.4
Ten months and above	79	66.9
NA	2	1.7
Total	118	100.0
Reasons of Migration		
Poverty	80	67.8
Independent living	11	9.3
In search of job	15	12.7
Living in houses of better of families	10	8.5
NA	2	1.7
Total	118	100.0

This table shows that most of the children (97.5%) were from other states working in Delhi. Further, 66.9 per cent of the child population is working in Delhi for the one year and above.

Housing Arrangements

TABLE 5
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS PER THEIR HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS AT NATIVE PLACEACCORDING TO MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Whether Own/Rented House		
Own	103	87.3
Rented	15	12.7
Total	118	100.0

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Approximate Rent		
Rs. 100-300	1	.8
Rs. 301-500	3	2.5
More than Rs. 500	10	8.5
NA	104	88.1
Total	118	100.0

This table shows the two categories of the respondents living in own/rented houses. Most of the respondents are migrated from other states in search of work to earn their livelihood, so they are accommodating in own/rented/neighbor/ relatives house. This Table shows that 87.3 per cent of the respondents constitute their own house out of the total sample. For example many of the respondents are living either their relatives/neighbor houses. So they are not paying the rent in Delhi. Table also shows the approximate rent the respondents giving to their landlords. There are four categories in this table, out of which 88.1 per cent constitute the not applicable category i.e. these domestic child labour are living in their relatives houses or through the placements agencies living in their employer's house, thus they are not giving the rent. Mostly the domestic child labours are through placements agencies or through known to relatives working for their employers and living with them. So 88.1 per cent constitute the not applicable category out of the total sample.

JOB PROFILE OF CHILD LABOUR

TABLE 6
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR JOB PROFILE

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Through Placement agency		
Yes	7	5.9
No	31	26.3
NA	80	67.8
Total	118	100.0
Source of Placement		
Placement agency	37	31.4
Relatives	78	66.1

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Friends	2	1.7
NA	1	.8
Total	118	100.0
Length of Job		
3-10 months	21	17.8
10 months-1 year	42	35.6
1year-3year	55	46.6
Total	118	100.0
Factors that forced him/her to DCL market		
To live in the houses of better off families	10	8.5
Sold off	3	2.5
To live an independent life	17	14.4
Run away from his/her family to earn his livelihood	9	7.6
Poverty	79	66.9
Total	118	100.0

This table shows the source of placements of the domestic child labour in the house of the employers this table is divided into 4 categories where 66.1 per cent of the total samples are living in the houses of the relatives. As Delhi is the power center of all the activities more and more people are migrating in search of jobs through relatives/friends or placements agencies.

If through Placement Agency Whether Police Verification Done?: This tables shows whether the police verification is done by the employer before entering into the domestic sector as the crime rate is increasing day by day so police verification is mandatory for the employers to keep a check on the personal record of the domestic child labour: 67.8 per cent of the total sample of domestic child labour are in not applicable categories i.e. they do not know anything about the police verification and 26.3 per cent of the domestic child labour enter into the houses of the employers without any verification followed by 5.9 per cent of the total sample having police verification done by the employer placement agencies.

Length of Service in Present Job Previous, if any: This table shows the respondents length of job in the present sector. Their experience shows that mostly come from the placements agencies and their tenure changes from one employer to

another**.** 46.6 per cent of the respondents are working in the domestic sectors for more than 3 years whereas 35.6 per cent of the child labors are working for only one year. Their length of service of job changes from one employer to another.

Factors that force him/her to Domestic Child Labour (DCL) Market: This table shows the Factors that forced him her to DCL market that there are many factors which force the children from poor families to enter into the domestic sector. This table is divided into five categories or factors which drag these school going children of tender age to work in the houses of other families to earn their income. About 66.9 per cent of the total sample work for their employers because of poverty. As these children are living in the States with lack of facilities of source of income, these children from adjacent States are migrating to Delhi in search of work, 14.4 per cent of the total sample run from their native place to live an independent life, whereas 8.5 per cent of the total sample run from their home to live in the houses of better of families to get the basic necessities and 3 meals a day.

Employment status: This table shows the employment status of the domestic child labour. This table is divided into three categories some children work for full time and live in the home of the employer whereas some work for part time and live in the houses of their relatives. About 75.4 per cent of the total sample is fulltime maid servant whereas 23.7 per cent of the total sample is part time maid servant. Full time domestic child labour either come from the placement agencies or through relatives.

TABLE 7
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Employment Status		
Full time	89	75.4
Part time	28	23.7
Casual	1	.8
Total	118	100.0
Work Perform		
Cleaning and washing	2	1.7
Mopping and dusting	29	24.6
All work	87	73.7
Total	118	100.0

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Normal Hours of Work		
Eight hours	23	19.5
Less than eight hours	15	12.7
More than eight hours	80	67.8
Total	118	100.0
Rest Interval		
Half an hour	42	35.6
One hour	72	61.0
No rest at all	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0
Weekly Offs other type of Leave		
Yes	26	22.0
No	92	78.0
Total	118	100.0
Other type of leave such as annual leave		
Yes	92	78.0
NA	26	22.0
Total	118	100.0

Description of work performed: This table shows the type of work performed by the domestic child labour. This table is divided into 3 categories where the child labour use to do cleaning, washing mopping dusty and all type of work with their tender hands. About 73.7 per cent of the total samples perform all work from 6A.M to 11P.M washing, cleaning, fetching milk mopping, dusting, cleaning cooking etc whereas 24.65 of the total sample do mopping and dusting and 1.7 per cent of the total sample use to cleaning and washing.

This table shows the normal hours of work of domestic child labour. This table is divided into 3 categories here children use to do work for eight hours, less than 8hours, More than hours. About 67.8 per cent of the total sample performs their duties for more than 8 hours whereas 9.5 per cent of the total sample work for eight hours followed 12.7 per cent of the total sample who work for less than eight hours. This table shows 3 categories of Rest interval where the domestic child labour perform their duties day to night without any rest. Their day start from 5 A.M and last till 11P.M. About 61 per cent of the total sample constitute one hour rest interval whereas 35.6 per cent of the total sample constitute half an hour rest interval followed by 3.4 per cent .

This table shows 3 categories of the type of leave, that children are availing home lives in the native place and some lives in the neighborhood areas. About 78 per cent of the total sample don't avail leaves whereas 22 per cent avail leaves. Some employees give leave easily whereas some employers do not give leave to the children. This table shows 3 categories of the type of other leave such as annual leave, that children are availing home lives in the native place and some lives in the neighborhood areas.

Wage and Related Information

TABLE 8
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR WAGE AND RELATED INFORMATION

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Wage Period		
First week	12	10.2
Second week	83	70.3
Third week	19	16.1
Uncertain	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0
To Whom Wages are Paid		
Self	23	19.5
Relatives	84	71.2
Other person	11	9.3
Total	118	100.0
Earning of Previous Employment		
Yes	19	16.1
No	91	77.1
Dont know	4	3.4
NA	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0
Other Monetary Gains		
Yes	11	9.3
No	107	90.7
Total	118	100.0

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Fringe Benefits		
Beddings	18	15.3
Free clothing	43	36.4
Medical facilities	13	11.0
All	44	37.3
Total	118	100.0
Earnings Spent		
Parent	72	61.0
Relatives	43	36.4
Self	2	1.7
Other person	1	.8
Total	118	100.0
What Food do you Eat?		
Morning tea with two meals	53	44.9
Three meals	37	31.4
Normal	3	2.5
NA	25	21.2
Total	118	100.0

Wage period: This table shows the salary which is paid to domestic child labour in which period. This table is divided into 4 categories where the childen were given salary by the employers**.** 70.3 per cent of the total sample of the Domestic Child labour were given salary in the second week whereas 16.1 per cent of the total sample were given salary in the third week followed by 10.25 of the total sample were given salary in first week of the month. This table shows the wages or salary was given to either agent, self relatives, other person which is sent to either their parents or relatives. Rest salary was kept by them to earn their livelihood. 71.2 per cent of the total sample constitute that child salary is given to the relative whereas 19.5 per cent of the total sample constitutes that salary is given to self whereas 9.3 per cent of the total sample constitute the salary given to some other person**.** This table shows the earning of previous wage period. This table is divided into four categories, these domestic child labour working in the houses of employers have previous earning or not. 77.1 per cent of the total sample constitutes no earning of previous whereas 16.1 per cent of the total sample constitutes that these children have pervious earning with them followed by 3.4 per cent who do not about the previous learning. Other monetary gains: this table shows about other monetary gains in terms of cash or kind given by the employers. This table is divided into 2 categories whether they have other monetary gain or not.

90.7 per cent of the total sample of Domestic child labour constitutes that they don't have other monetary gain form the employers. They were only given salary whereas 9.3 per cent of the sample constitutes that they have other monetary gains including their salary from the employers.

Fringe benefits: This table show about the fringe benefits along with the salary in terms of bedding, clothing, medical facilities by the employers. 37.3 per cent of the total sample constitute all fringe benefits to the domestic child labour by their employers whereas 36.4 per cent of the total sample constitutes free clothing given by the employers followed by 15.3 per cent of the total sample constitute bedding from the employers and 11 per cent of the total sample are getting medical facilities at the place they work.

Earnings spent: This table shows how earning earn by the domestic child labour are spent. This table is divided in 4 categories where the earning is given to parent, relatives, self and other person.

61 per cent of the total sample constitute that Domestic child labour are given their salaries to their parents whereas 36.45 per cent of the total simple are giving their salaries to the relatives and 1.7 per cent of the total sample constitute self i.e. salaries are spent on themselves.

What food do you eat: This table shows how the employers are treated the domestic child labour in terms of meals. Whether they are getting no meals, 2 meals or 3 meals they leave their workplace early so they are not getting the meals at their work place 44.9 per cent of the total sample constitute that these Domestic Child Labour are getting Morning tea with 2 meals whereas 31.4 per cent of the total sample Domestic Child Labour are getting 3 meals by their employers followed by 21.2 per cent who are not getting meals at their work place.

Quality of Life

TABLE 9

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
How Did Family Members of Employer Treat You?		
Normal	22	18.6
Abnormal	9	7.6
Good	7	5.9

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Average	55	46.6
NA	25	21.2
Total	118	100.0
How Do You Spend Your Leisure Time		
Watching television	32	27.1
Indoor games	23	19.5
Sleeping	27	22.9
Outdoor games	11	9.3
NA	25	21.2
Total	118	100.0
Is There Any Restriction On Dress Pattern?		
No	93	78.8
NA	25	21.2
Total	118	100.0
Do You Meet Your Family Members?		
Yes	110	93.2
No	8	6.8
Total	118	100.0
If Yes, Frequency of Meetings With Your Family Members		
Everyday	11	9.3
Once a week	2	1.7
Every six month	42	35.6
Every year	58	49.2
NA	5	4.2
Total	118	100.0
Place of Meeting With Parents		
Working place	24	20.3
Home town	89	75.4
NA	5	4.2
Total	118	100.0
Does Your Employers Stop You To Meet Your Family Members?		
Yes	15	12.7
No	99	83.9

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
NA	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0

Behavior of family members of employer -This table shows how the employers treat the Domestic Child Labour at their work place. This table is divided into 5 categories where as some children were treated good, some abnormal, some average and some do not know the behavior of their employers. The employer plays a very important role in the life of Domestic Child Workers. Some feels good; some feel hell at their place. 46.6 per cent of the total sample constitute average behaviour of the employers at their work place whereas 21 per cent of the total sample do not know the behavior of the employers followed by 18.6 per cent of the total sample constitute normal behavior of the employers.

How do you spend your leisure time: This table shows how the Domestic Child Labour spend their leisure time at their work place . This table is divided into 5 categories whereas some children were some children involved in watching television, playing indoor games, sleeping, outdoors games or non-applicable categories. 27.1 per cent of the total sample constitutes watching television whereas 22.9 per cent of the total sample constitute feel like sleeping followed by 21.2 per cent of the total sample constitute not applicable categories where children do not get time to relax. Their day start from 6 AM and end at 11 PM**.**

Any restriction on dress pattern: This table shows whether they have any dress pattern at their work place. This table is divided into 2 categories. 78.8 per cent of the total sample constitute no dress pattern is required whereas 21.25 per cent of the total sample constitutes not applicable categories. This shows which type of dress is provided to Domestic child labour at their work place. It is not applicable at the entire sample. 100 per cent of the total sample not applicable category where no dress code is required at their workplace.

Meeting your family members: This table shows that whether these children meet their family members at their native place. This table is divided into 2 categories. Table shows 93.2 per cent of the total sample constitutes their meet their family members at their work place or native place whereas 6.8 per cent of the total samples were not allowed by their employers to meet their family members. **If yes, frequency of meetings with your family members every day.** This table shows the frequency of meeting with family members of the domestic child labour. This table is divided into 5 categories where the part time Domestic Child labour meet their parents everyday at their work place or once in a week or

every six month or every year. About 49.2 per cent of the total sample constitute that they use to visit their native place every year whereas 35.65 per cent of the total sample constitute visit their native place at every six month followed by 9.3 per cent of the total sample were part time Domestic Child Labour use to meet their parents at their home or at work place.

Place of meeting parents: This table shows that these Domestic Child Labour meet their parents whether these children meet at working place , home town or they do not going to meet their parents. This table is divided into 3 categories. About 75.4 per cent of the total sample constitutes the Domestic Child Laborer who use to meet their parents and relative at their home town whereas 20.3 per cent of the total sample meet their parents or relatives at their place of work (i.e. part time or casual domestic child labour). This table shows whether the employers stop these children to meet their family members. This table divided into 3 categories some employers allow them to meet their family members at their native place whereas some employers do not allow them to meet with their family members. 83.9 per cent of the respondents were not allowed to meet their family member whereas 12.7 per cent of the total samples were not allowed to go to their native place to meet their families' members and 3.45 per cent were not interested to go their native place.

Award and Abuse of Child Labour

TABLE 10
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO AWARD AND ABUSE SUBJECTED TO THEM

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Attitude Towards Work Satisfactory/Non-satisfactory		
Satisfactory	59	50.0
Not satisfactory	59	50.0
Total	118	100.0
Does Your Employer Appreciate Your Work? Y/N		
Yes	34	28.8
No	84	71.2
Total	118	100.0
If Yes, in What Way Cash/Kind/Both/NA		
Cash	6	5.1
Kind	22	18.6

Characteristics	Frequency	Per Cent
Both	4	3.4
NA	6	5.1
No	80	67.8
Total	118	100.0
Does Employer Punish or Abuse you?		
Yes	114	96.6
No	4	3.4
Total	118	100.0
If Yes, Means of Punishment Isolation/Locked/Verbal Abuse/Beating		
Isolation	9	7.6
Locked	20	16.9
Verbal abuse	57	48.3
Beatings	30	25.4
NA	2	1.7
Total	118	100.0

Attitude Towards Work Satisfactory/Non-satisfactory

This table shows the attitude of the employer towards the Domestic Child Labour. This table is divided into 2 categories where the employer is satisfied with the work of the child labour on the other hand the employer is not satisfied with the work of the child labour. About 50 per cent of the total sample is satisfied with the work of child labour and 50 per cent of the total sample is not satisfied with the work of child labour.

This table shows about the appreciation of the work of the Domestic Child Labour by their employers at their work place. Some employers appreciate the work performed by the domestic Child Labour whereas some employers do not appreciate the work of the domestic child labour. These children were appreciated either verbally or in cash/kind. 71.2 per cent of the total sample constitute that the employers do not give appreciation to these children to work in the home of them whereas 28.85 per cent of the total sample constitute that these children were appreciated in cask, kind by their employers at their work place. This table also shows the incentive given by the employers to their maid servant in terms of cash/kind or both. Some employers appreciate the work of these children and award them with some cash, cloths, sweets to increase their moral whereas some employers do not bother about the work perform by the Domestic Child Labour instead they verbally abuse them for the work they perform at their work place.

About 67.8 per cent of the total sample do not give incentives in forms of cash/ kind to the Domestic Child Labour whereas 18.6 per cent of the total sample give incentive in the forms of cash/kind followed by 3.4 per cent of the total sample where both cash/kind. Mostly these tender children were not given rewards by their employers moreover they were beaten and verbally abused for their small mistakes.

The table shows whether the employers punish or abuse the Domestic Child Labour at their place of work. This punishment can be beatings, verbal abuses or mental torture. This table is divided into 2 categories (Yes/No). About 96.6 per cent of the total sample these children are abused or punished by their employers followed by 3.4 per cent of the total sample who are not abused or punished by their employers. These children work in the family of their employer to earn their livelihood but some employers on minute mistakes hurt them physically or mentally even these children were locked in the room and they were not given the food for the whole day. If yes means of punishment/Isolation/locked/verbal abuse/beating- This table shows the means of punishment given to Domestic Child Labour by their employers. This table is divided into 5 categories where some children were isolated whereas some were locked, abused and beaten by their employers. These children of school going age have to under go many sufferings at their work place physically and mentally. About 48.3 per cent of the total sample constitute verbal abuses from their employer whereas 25.4 per cent of the total sample constitute beatings by their employers at their work place followed by 16.9 per cent of the total sample were locked by their employers on small issues. Some were treated normally by their employers at their work place. This table shows the type of punishment which is given to these children by their employers. This table is divided into 5 categories with mental torture, no communication with outsiders, other reasons etc. About 62.7 per cent of the total sample constitute mental torture by their employers whereas 21.2 per cent of the total sample were not allowed to communicate with outsiders followed by 8.5 per cent of the total sample were not given any medical facilities by their employers and there are some other reasons of punishment in some other form given to the child labour by their employers. On a whole these children have to undergo many sufferings at this tender age where they do not have any relative or friend to share their sorrows.

DISCUSSION

The contribution of Domestic Child Labour is hidden, uncounted, underpaid and unseen. The work of children in domestic service, though illegal is hidden behind the closed doors and abuses thereby and large protected by the sanctity, privacy

and lack of access. Because it is illegal, underpaid and insignificant burdensome work done by them, the work of Domestic Child Labour is rarely counted in the National Census.

Poverty and low status of girls is a vicious cycle where these children are cut from their families in an unknown surroundings without a language to communicate and their exploitation starts between their employers and the placement agencies. Further the social and psychological conditioning of these children makes them 'lesser' components of a society. The overall development of these children is hampered and they are sentence to lifelong service or servitude as only option opened to them.

The most common infringement of the law is the failure to notify the local authority when the child is employed. Domestic Child Labour is a major issue for our country as these children are the most exploited. Their main deprivation seems to be lack of educational of opportunities. Lack of access to the school structure due to re-occupation with work leads to differentiation of child activity between schooling and labour. The working children, therefore, face differentiation and segmentation in job access, which is, associated with differential access to the schooling system itself. Therefore, child labour is highly inimical to the educational, intellectual and potential economic development of these children. The skill development of children as child labour is no substitute or the access to social mobility, which is possible through access to formal educational system. {Weine, Myron (1991)- The child and the state in India- Child labour and the Education Policy in comparative perspective, Princeton University, Press, Princeton}

According to the rights of children to free and compulsory education Act, 2009, there is a provision of free and compulsory education to all the children of the age of six to fourteen years.

Finally, in this discussion, it may be stated that since poverty, as a social phenomenon exists in the reality, the Domestic Child Labour that is a breeding phenomenon from poverty and lack of government initiatives for this domestic sector is virtually inevitable.

CONCLUSION

Delhi, being capital of India is an attraction to all segments of population. In search of job and income opportunities people have been migrating from different parts of the country especially from rural areas where poverty is highly prevalent.

As per observation on the findings the DCL are mostly in the age group (12-14) years Table 1A shows 54.2 per cent of the children involved in DCL are in the age group 12-14 years.

Table-IB shows that 66.9 per cent were females as compared to males. Besides this the main factor which leads to DCL is poverty.

From the description of 17 case studies and the analyses of other studies reviewed, it appears that the main causes of the DCL in Delhi are associated with Multiple factors of social and economic development of the society. Poverty and illiteracy of the parents in the principal factor of DCL. Social unequal distribution of National resources and lack of social and economic security measures of the Government are contributing to push people and children to become poorer and child labour. In human opportunities and profit makers are the devils of social and economic forces that are facing due advantages of the society.

Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that DCL are victims of so many things. Looking at the government policies and initiatives the implementation of RTI Act, 2009 where each and every child up to the age of 14 years have to attend the school compulsory. Finally in conclusion it may state poverty, illiteracy and unemployment of parents are the main factors.

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