

**WOMEN IN URBAN INFORMAL SECTOR: A STUDY OF
DOMESTIC WORKERS IN AIZAWL**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY**

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**WOMEN IN URBAN INFORMAL SECTOR: A STUDY OF DOMESTIC
WORKERS IN AIZAWL**

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Submitted
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in Sociology of Mizoram University, Aizawl.



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Certificate

This is to certify that **Rosie Vanlalruati Ralte**, a bonafide research scholar having enrolment No: MZU/Ph. D/1183 of 03.10.2018 attached to the Department of Sociology has completed her work for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Sociology under my supervision and guidance on a research topic entitled '**Women in Urban Informal Sector: A Study of Domestic Workers in Aizawl,**' for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology, Mizoram University, Aizawl. The work embodies a record of original investigation and no part of it has been submitted for any other degree in other universities.

On evaluation of all the formalities, I am pleased to forward the thesis for evaluation and further necessary action.

Sincerely

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I **ROSIE VANLALRUATI RALTE**, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that this thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FDWA	Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance
MHIP	Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl
LESDE	Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
MSMHC	Congregation of Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians
NERDWM	North Eastern Regional Domestic Workers' Movement
NERDWT	North Eastern Regional Domestic Workers' Welfare Trust
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organisation
RSBY	Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing
YMA	Young Mizo Association

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Defining Informal Sector

1.3 Women in Informal Sector

1.4 Women in Urban Informal Sector

1.5 Gender and Intersectionality

1.5.1 Informal and Formal Linkages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Economic activity that is not subject to official labour laws or government regulation is referred to as the “informal sector”. Small-scale, unregistered enterprises, self-employment, freelance work, and casual labour are examples of this. These activities usually take place outside of the tax system and frequently do not offer benefits like health insurance or retirement plans. Small family companies, domestic workers, and street vendors are a few examples of the informal sector. In addition to having less stable employment, workers in the informal sector frequently lack the legal protections and job security enjoyed by those in the official sector. Nonetheless, especially in emerging nations, the unorganised sector can contribute significantly to the economy and provide jobs.

Domestic workers, home-based workers, street vendors and market sellers, and rubbish pickers comprise a substantial share of urban informal employment worldwide.

1.2 Defining Informal Sector

The International Labour Organisation (ILO Geneva 1972) in its Kenya Mission Report introduced the concept of informal sector defining informality which characterises a) ease of entry; b) reliance on indigenous resources; c) family ownership; d) small scale operations; e) labour intensive and adaptive technology; f) skills acquired outside of the formal sector; g) unregulated and competitive markets. As the informal and formal economy are symbiotically linked to each other and contributes to the overall growth of an economy, it is therefore important that workers who make up the informal economy receive proper attention and support in order to bring down poverty and inequality. The same is applicable to the poor working women for bringing down the gender inequality.

In India the term “unorganised” is often used to address the millions of workers engaged in agriculture, industry, household and service sectors as either casual or temporary workers. Domestic workers, defined as “persons employed by private households with employed persons” belongs to this category. Even though this unorganised sector has existed for a long time, it was only as recent as in 1970 that it drew the attention of the policy-makers and researchers notably from the point of view of opportunities for participation in and reaping the benefits of development.

The informal sector is defined as economic activities that are neither controlled by the government or subject to regular employment rules. This includes tiny, unregistered firms, freelance labour, casual labour, and self-employment, all of which operate outside of the tax system and frequently lack job benefits such as health insurance and retirement plans. Street vendors, domestic workers, and small family-run companies are some examples of the informal sector. Workers in the informal sector frequently lack the same legal protections and job security as those in the formal sector, and their jobs are less stable. However, especially in developing nations, the informal sector can play an important role in creating jobs and contributing to the economy.

1.3 Women in Informal Sector

The informal sector appears to be highly common and has played a significant role in its expansion and advancement, particularly in the area of job generation. Nearly 90% of jobs in the informal sector are in the agricultural sector, and over 70% are in the non-agricultural sector, according to several research papers released by organizations like the NSSO (2011–12) and the ILO India Labour Market Update (2016). Following globalization, the informal economy—also referred to as the unorganized or residual economy—began to gain traction (Mishra, 2023).

There was a great deal of room for the working population to find sources of income in the unorganized sector due to the Indian economy’s rapid growth and the fact that the majority of people were moving to cities in pursuit of better employment opportunities and a better lifestyle. In his economic model, renowned economists

such as W. Arthur Lewis have also characterized the informal sector as the primary source that contributes to the creation of jobs or means of subsistence, particularly in emerging nations like India. Despite their lack of education and competence, the working class poured into the sector, which fuelled the nation's economic growth. However, because the industry was unregistered, it provided an environment that allowed hazardous employment practices to grow and thrive.

Policymakers also began to view the industry as worrisome since it was linked to poverty and low productivity. Female employees were the most severely affected in the industry. The information currently available on employment in the sector makes it abundantly evident that a substantial portion of women working in developing nations are employed in the unorganized sector. What is depressing, though, is that the sector does not acknowledge the contribution of women workers, which results in their contributions being not only disregarded but also ignored. As a result, women are marginalized in the workforce, which exacerbates their vulnerability and leads to their outright exploitation.

The female employees in this group are susceptible to discriminatory pay, long hours, and various forms of exploitation by their employers (Bhat & Yadav, 2011). These women's are frequently treated by the informal economy as a pool of labour who will be used when necessary and let go when those needs are met. To say that the informal sector is the primary source of women's labour force marginalization, not just in India but globally, is not hyperbolic, but rather a well-documented phenomenon supported by research. (Rodriquez et. al, 2023).

Across the globe, women lag behind men in labour force participation, entrepreneurship, top management positions, and firm productivity. Despite the growing evidence on gender-based gaps and their relevance, a key issue that is largely ignored is how such gaps play out in the informal sectors of developing countries. Understanding gender gaps in the informal sector is crucial because of the large size of the informal sector in developing countries and because large number of women work in the sector (Hyland & Islam, 2023).

The informal sector is characterized by lower entry barriers, lower capital and skills requirements, and greater flexibility of working hours and location. These features can be amenable to those who face discrimination, have lower levels of education and experience, and often combine their work with providing household care, which is the case of many women across the world at a disproportionate level than men.

1.4 Women in Urban Informal Sector

The important place that women occupy in the society can hardly be denied, and this is duly reflected in the studies devoted to the proverbial glass ceiling women faced in the professional field and how a few women had broken through that barrier. However, these studies are mainly concerned with the professional working women in the organised sector and women and their contribution to the economic workforce in unorganised sector is neither recognised nor taken into account. Domestic work is not only one of the oldest voluntary preoccupations of women at the household, but now constitutes one of the “emerging” paid activities. Despite its growing importance, domestic work in most countries remains largely unrecognised, unorganised, generally undervalued, and almost always poorly regulated and prone to exploitation and abuse of the workers.

Urbanization process is itself shaped by gender roles and relations. This refers to the essential understanding of who does what in a resource poor setting, and this is largely gendered and determines the ways in which vulnerability manifests. While such inequalities mar the life of both men and women, it is women who bear the additional and higher brunt of it due to the gendered nature of the challenges of urbanization. The imagination of a worker has predominantly been masculine, and women workers are often viewed as “supplementary” despite working at par or even performing the role of the primary earner. Male workers are usually paid more than women workers and are in a better position to negotiate terms of employment, even though informal. Unrecognized as workers both for their paid and unpaid labour, the lives of women workers are marked with precarity, more so when there is a crisis. Living in cramped urban settlements and in unsensitized conditions, most of them lack access to toilets, menstrual hygiene and proper reproductive healthcare. They

bear multiple burdens of work, and to add to it all, they are also vulnerable to harassment and violence in their homes, at their workplaces and on their commute between home and work. Their workspaces are either home-based, their own or their employers' private space or streets and construction sites, which are defined by similar characteristics as that of their houses, such as lack of sanitary hygiene, forcing many women to use open streets and sites as toilets. It is within these multiple vulnerabilities and compromised well-being that we locate the urban women workers and capture their experiences.

1.5 Gender and Intersectionality

Gender studies pertain to the study and analysis of gender identity and gendered representations covering women's studies, feminist studies, men's studies, queer studies and studies concerning sexuality. Beauvoir, Butler and Lacan have contributed significantly thus revolutionising the studies on gender and sociology of gender.

Women and men are born biologically different. There are varying degrees of differences as to the women's roles or the female roles and that of men's roles or the male roles in every society. The most basic division of labour seems to be firmly grounded on sex or gender. In the contemporary modern world, these arguments between the sexes have been hotly debated, and there have been many arguments in support of each.

Gender roles are shaped by the traditional view on appropriate behaviour for men and women, but this view on gender roles is becoming more relaxed in the recent past. However, "these changes in gender attitudes have not been accompanied by corresponding changes in the allocation of housework" (Chesters, 2012).

Ann Oakley (1974) a British sociologist and supporter of Women's Liberation Movement argues that women's position in the family and in the society is mirrored in the number of women getting employed in various fields in the employment sector. Very often, the jobs that women take up are an extension of their domestic role pertain to caring for, cleaning or tidying up after others, waiting on, serving, etc.

This point is made forcefully by Mary L. Benet in “Secretary: An Enquiry into the Female Ghetto” (1972). She maintains that the secretary ‘also acts as wife, mother, mistress and maid’.

One of the pivotal ways to understand the sociological condition of domestic workers would be the concept of “intersectionality”. Intersectionality is an analytical framework which attempts to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are marginalised in society. Intersectionality considers that various forms of social stratification such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, disability and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are interwoven together. While the theory began as an exploration of the oppression of women of colour within society, today the analysis is potentially applied to all social categories including social identities usually seen as dominant when considered independently.

The theory of “intersectionality” was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw to feminist theory. It was a seminal 1989 paper written by Crenshaw for the University of Chicago Level Forum, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics”. In her work, she discussed Black Feminism, which argues that the experience of being black and of being a woman considered independently, but must include the interactions, which frequently reinforce each other. So, intersectionality refers to a sociological theory that outlines how an individual may face multiple types of overlapping discrimination depending on their race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class or any other characteristics that might place them in a minority class (Kimberle Crenshaw 1989).

Intersectionality is a feminist theory, a methodology for research, and a springboard for social justice. It develops from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and the operations of structures of power.

1.5.1 Informal and Formal Linkage

With a high level of interaction existing between formal and informal work at the lower end of the labour market, at the domestic household level also, access to stable

employment in the formal economy is associated with higher levels of earning in the informal sector. The linkages between informal and formal economy are blurred and indistinguishable. The basic needs of the workers in formal sectors are somehow undeniably met by relatively cheap goods and services produced by informal sector employing low paid workers and unpaid family labourers. Moreover, the subsidy consumption of formal sector workers is the most important role played by informal sector (Portes 1978).

There has been an increased recognition that the informal economy is linked to the formal economy which in turn contributes to the overall economy, and that supporting the working poor in the informal economy is important for reducing poverty and inequality, just as supporting working poor women in the formal sector.

1.5.2 Double Day / Double Burden

Double day or Double burden also known as the Second Shift as in Arlie Hochschild's book of the same name, defines the excess burden or workload of people who, besides their normal paid work, had to do their own domestic work without pay at home. In the case of working couples, it is often the woman who spends more time doing household chores and care-giving to the family. Ultimately, this dual responsibility leaves a woman with less time for other things which could be considered as productive since, economically speaking, domestic work is not considered work as it is unpaid (Hochschild 1989).

With more and more members of a family gaining employment and working away from home, the dependency on domestic workers to take care of domestic work had increased thereby signalling their importance. Aizawl, being the capital and with the largest concentration of workforce, the need to study the domestic workers in Aizawl is thus strongly felt. Females outnumber males in this particular field of occupation in Mizoram. And for this very reason, the interesting topic of domestic workers is taken up for study.

1.6 Defining Domestic Work

When defining the term “domestic worker”, the delegates to the International Labour Conference supported a general formulation that draws on the common feature of domestic workers that they work for private households. The Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), reflects this when it defines “domestic workers” in Article 1:

- a. The term “domestic work” means work performed in or for a household or households;
- b. The term “domestic worker” means any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship; a person who performs domestic work only occasionally or sporadically and not on an occupation basis is not a domestic worker.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has classified domestic workers under the framework of the ILO’s Convention No. 189:

Category	ILO Distinction / Vulnerability Focus
Live-in / Resident Worker	Resides in the employer’s household. Highly vulnerable to isolation, having work and rest blurred, and potential abuse due to lack of privacy and separation between the workplace and home.
Live-out/Non-resident Worker	Lives in their own home and commutes to the employer’s household. Generally has clear boundaries between work and personal life compared to live-in.
Migrant Domestic Worker	A national of one country employed in a different country. Faces additional risks, including exploitation related to migration costs, language barriers, and threats of deportation.
Child Domestic Worker	A child performing domestic work under the legal minimum age or in hazardous conditions. The ILO seeks the abolition of child labour in this sector.
Formal/ Informal Worker	Formal workers have written contracts and social protection; informal workers (the majority) lack these protections, making them highly vulnerable to poor conditions and exploitation.
Excluded (Occasional/Sporadic)	Persons who perform domestic work only occasionally or sporadically and not on an occupational basis (not covered by the full protection of Convention 189).

Source: ILO, C 189

Domestic workers are those who perform a variety of tasks for and in other people's homes like cooking, cleaning the house and looking after children.

At the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2018, the following statistical definition of domestic workers was adopted: “workers of any sex employed for pay or profit, including in-kind payment or households to provide services mainly for consumption by the household. The work may be performed within the household premises or in other locations” (WIEGO, para. 104). This definition is an important step in improving the measurement of domestic workers.

Nearly everyone of working age does some unpaid household work, including cleaning and maintaining the home, cooking meals for the family and household, creating a household budget, taking care of family members, and a range of other duties and of additional duties for their own consumption as well as that of their family members or household members. Friends and neighbours may also conduct unpaid domestic chores as informal direct volunteering or, in a more formal sense, as organization-based volunteering. However, the phrase “domestic worker” is most frequently used to describe employees who conduct household chores for compensation. These employees provide a variety of domestic services in other people's homes for income, including sweeping, cleaning, dishwashing, cooking, shopping, taking care of children, the elderly, the disabled, and/or gardening, driving, and security (WIEGO and the ILO, 2013).

In many nations, especially in the developing world, employed domestic workers make up a sizable fraction of the labour force. In addition to contributing significantly to the global economy, they are crucial in providing care for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Many workers who have family responsibilities are able to participate more completely in the labour market as a result of their work than they otherwise might.

It is often acknowledged that paid domestic workers are more susceptible to exploitation, partly due to the nature of their interactions with clients and employers. They often lack the same social and legal safeguards as other workers and are among

the lowest paid of all employees. Regarding fundamental working conditions like paid yearly leave, working hours, minimum wage coverage, and maternity protection, many are denied access to benefits those other employees take for granted (ILO, 2013).

The structure of the working connection has a direct bearing on what makes domestic workers unique. A private household can have either an employment relationship or a client relationship, where work is done mostly within the householder's home and under their supervision. The statistical definition and measurement of domestic workers was one of the issues addressed in the work to revise ICSE-93 and develop a new set of standards for statistics on work relationships, which are to be considered for adoption as a resolution of the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). This is due to the fact that domestic workers are a category in some countries' national adaptation of ICSE-93.

1.7 International Scenario

Domestic work is the employment of hired workers by private households for the performance of tasks such as housecleaning, cooking, child care, gardening, and personal service. It also includes the performance of similar tasks for hire in public institutions and businesses, including hotels and boarding-houses. In ancient Greece and Rome and various other early civilizations, domestic service was performed almost exclusively by enslaved people. In mediaeval Europe, serfs provided much of the necessary labour force (Luebering, 2020).

Globally, 75.6 million people aged 15 and up work as domestic servants. 81% of the world's domestic workers work informally and have no adequate social or labour protection. Women account for 76% of all domestic workers worldwide. Two regions account for 55% of the world's domestic workers: East and Southeast Asia (36%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (19%). It is estimated that 80 percent of women in domestic employment work as cleaners and helpers. In addition, 1 in 6, or 17%, of the world's 76 million domestic workers are international migrants, and 7.1

million youngsters under the age of 17 work in domestic service (2023-2024 WIEGO Annual Report).

The hidden nature of the work place, non-accordance of the employment as work and the informality of relationship in employment creates plenty of room for exploitation and abuse. The tendency to undervalue work performed by women is accentuated in the case of domestic work by its low social status and the myth that no special skills are required to perform it, based as it is on the perception that it is merely paid work for the routine unpaid household chores done by a woman. This non-recognition and lack of social protection that is characteristic of domestic work is a major obstacle to achieving the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) goal of Decent Work for all men and women.

The need for domestic worker's human and labour rights towards a new international standard has been devised by the ILO (2010) that officially recognises domestic work as work and regulate the rights and duties of household workers and employers. At its 301st session in March 2008, the Governing Body of the ILO responded favourably to the call of the international trade union movement to put the issue of domestic work on the agenda of the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2010. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the convention 189 and Recommendation on "Decent Work for Domestic Workers" on June 16, 2011. And thus, June 16 is observed as "Domestic Workers' Day."

Women make up a disproportionate share of the informal sector's workforce, from street vendors and domestic workers to subsistence farmers and seasonal agricultural workers. Over 80% of women in non-agricultural jobs in South Asia are in informal work, while 74% in Sub-Saharan Africa and 54% in Latin America and the Caribbean are employed. Working in the informal, or grey economy, as it is frequently referred to, often leaves women without labour legal protection, social benefits such as pensions, health insurance, or paid sick leave. They routinely work at lower pay and in hazardous conditions, including the danger of sexual harassment. Women suffer long-term consequences because of a lack of social protections. For instance, more older women are now living in poverty as a result of fewer women

receiving pensions worldwide. The average pension for women is more than 30% lesser than that of men, even in developed nations like France, Germany, Greece, and Italy.

The first flood of the majority of the paid domestic workers (other than the government personal peons) in Mizoram hail from Burma/ Myanmar during the 1990s. These domestic workers from Myanmar came to Mizoram mostly because of the political turmoil and subsequent hardship and poverty in their homeland, crossing the international border. Lately, the domestic workers from Myanmar have shifted their attention to South-east Asian countries like Singapore, Malaysia, as well as the Middle East, etc. as employment destinations where they are rewarded with better salaries and more opportunities for their socio-economic improvement.

Attention must be paid to an aspect that affects this sector in particular to the duration of the work-day beyond the contracting modality (full or partial). Those female domestic workers who state that they work a full day (consisting of 8 hours, the usual norm in other employment spaces) often record longer hours, both daily and weekly. This is especially representative in Greece, Cyprus, and Italy, while in the isolated case of France, indications are that a slightly shorter work-day is common. The situation is striking in the case of part-time shifts, where the hours worked in domestic work is significantly higher than the average for the set of activity sectors. This indicates a potential market for underemployment, possibly as a result of certain forms of partial contracting and the rhythms of work that characterize this sector (Alonso, 2024).

International migration of workers is a dynamic process and women represent around fifty percent of the total population of international migrants. In the case of domestic workers, more than two thirds of all migrant domestic workers are women (ILO estimates). In the case of domestic workers, a distinctive feature has been the nature of domestic workers that remains informal and performed outside the purview of labour and social protection regulations. It remains one of the least protected sectors that are not guaranteed rights under labour laws and are most susceptible to vulnerability at workplace and exploitation. While other categories of workers in

varying degrees are assured basic rights such as decent working and living conditions, paid annual leaves, working time, minimum wage coverage and maternity protection, the same remains elusive for the domestic workers.

Accounting for 2.3 per cent of the total global employment, and 4.5 per cent of female employment worldwide, domestic work is an important source of employment for women. Broadly, a domestic worker is employed to perform different household chores—from housekeeping duties such as cleaning, cooking, and washing to providing care for young and elderly people. In light of aging populations and increasing long-term care needs, the demand for domestic work is expected to grow. Yet, it remains an industry characterised by high rates of informal employment, inadequate legal protections, and racialised gendered expectations that have contributed to its social and economic devaluation (Tan, 2020; Alonso, 2024).

Within Asia, most countries and territories that permit the legal entry of women migrant domestic workers (for example, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Taiwan), have put in place state-mandated ‘live-in’ rules for these workers. This provision has been identified as one of the main employment conditions that contributes to, and sustains, exploitative practices such as excessively long hours of work, exclusion from overtime pay, social isolation, deprivation of privacy, and inadequate food allocation, housing, and resting space. Yet, under international labour standards, where employer-provided housing is linked with or arising out of work, as in the case of live-in domestic labour, the accommodation is considered to be part of the workplace (i.e., world of work), and states have a duty to ensure workers have equitable access to safe housing and decent living conditions. Challenging the mandatory live-in policy has thus been a core part of global advocacy efforts for labour rights, with activists arguing that it blurs the boundaries between work and rest, and reinforces unequal gender hierarchies in which women migrant domestic workers are expected to be ‘proto-mothers’, available 24/7, even when this labour is not fairly compensated. Indeed, Article 9 of the Domestic Workers Convention (no. 189), adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2011, states that domestic workers should be ‘free to reach

agreement with their employer or potential employer on whether to reside in the household’ (Tan, 2020).

In the absence of the live-in rule, women migrant domestic workers are not at risk of exploitation: exclusionary labour and immigration regulations and the gendered norms underpinning waged domestic labour intersect to create an environment where poor working and living conditions are an enduring part of their employment and everyday lives. It is true that employer-provided accommodation may reduce issues of housing affordability and costs of living. However, it also uniquely produces and reinforces a situation that allows employers to have significant control over workers’ bodies and mobilities (i.e., where they are allowed to sleep, how much they can eat, what they can wear, when they can rest, who they can communicate with, and when they are allowed to go out). In this context, safe work is not fundamentally guaranteed or protected by law. Instead, it becomes tied to the arbitrariness of being able to secure a ‘good’ employer or having a good relationship with the employer. Attending to the mandatory live-in policy, which transforms ‘home’ into a site of work and rest, thus offers a platform to understand workers’ experiences of employment, and the everyday implications of border controls and labour regulations for women migrant domestic workers (Tan, 2022). Despite the profession’s growing ranks, millions of domestic workers—80 per cent of whom are women—remain impoverished and exploited. In many countries, in fact, legal norms don’t provide domestic workers with the same rights and protections that other workers already enjoy (Durano, 2019).

1.8 National scenario

In India, in spite of women constituting almost half of the total population, playing a significant role in the sphere of domestic work, they are still not properly represented. They are the most disadvantaged lot, as their workplace happens to be in people’s private homes, away from the sphere of labour inspectors who could monitor their workplace. The women working in the household sectors have a double burden since there is an increasing demand for their skill as care-givers and service workers outside home. However, the women domestic workers work inside

their own homes which is unpaid, signalling the ‘double day syndrome’ (Gangrade & Gathia, 1983).

In an area of work where the employer and the employee are mostly female, the relationship between a domestic worker and the employer is often viewed as being based on domination, dependence and inequality. The labour laws enacted at both the State and National levels to protect their rights still face the uphill task of implementation. Despite these difficulties faced by female domestic workers, it is nevertheless true that domestic workers and their importance is growing in the present society. From the point of view of a working woman, domestic workers are cost efficient, freeing time for these women to relax or pursue personal interests. Domestic workers are also essential to make up for and enhancing the skills a housewife might need in maintaining a home. Domestic service is accepted by modern women as a solution to the burden of meeting the demands of work, family and home.

Over the years a vast majority of Indian domestic workers have travelled to countries in the Gulf region, South East Asia and sporadically even to countries in Europe and North America. As of 2019, the top five sending states for women domestic workers were Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Maharashtra and traditionally the top destination countries have been UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain (MEA estimates). At present the Government of India allows for women with an ECR endorsement (except nurses) of 30 years and above to seek employment in the ECR countries. Further, the recruitment of all female domestic workers having ECR passports for overseas employment, have been mandatory through 9 state run recruitment agencies. An alternate mode of recruitment is also directly through the Foreign Employer (FE) who have registered with the e-migrate system and have to make a security deposit of US \$2500 if he/she recruits the workers directly. To facilitate their mobility, India has also signed Labour and Manpower Cooperation MoUs with six countries of the Gulf region that provide the institutional framework to comprehensively discuss and review labour related issues, including the working conditions of Indian domestic workers.

Despite these institutional frameworks in place, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has left in its wake, serious challenges for labour migration at large including graver vulnerabilities for women domestic workers. These implications hence call for a timely discourse on forming enabling measures for emigrant women domestic workers. New estimates suggest that nearly three-quarters of domestic workers around the world are at a significant risk of losing their jobs and income due to lockdown and lack of effective social security coverage. Therefore, guaranteeing labour protection, recognizing their rights as workers become an important issue. Further, developing additional measures such as establishing training programs for up-skilling and to orient them towards other destination countries are also required. This would also include benchmarking best practices from other sending countries with policies that intervene actively to protect domestic worker rights and upgrade skills of workers. These efforts are crucial for effectively developing standardized channels to formalize domestic work and protect their vulnerabilities in the current and future scenario (Indian Council of World Affairs, 2020).

One of the biggest and least regulated industries in India is domestic employment. The lack of official data on domestic workers at the intermediate level and the existence of inconsistent estimates make this clear. The NSSO data mentioned earlier is controversial given the growing involvement of domestic workers in managing urban families, especially when contrasted with other estimates (Chadha, 2021).

According to Harish Rawat, the then-Minister of State for Labour and Employment, there were more than 15 million domestic workers in India in 2010 (Sinha, 2020), based on an estimate of about 30 million white-collar workers. According to the National Domestic Worker's Movement (NDWM), there are between 4.2 million domestic workers in India, according to official figures, and over 50 million unofficial estimates based on data from non-governmental organizations.

Additionally, it has been reported that 86% of the nation's 12.6 million domestic workers are underage, meaning they are under the age of 18. Furthermore, according to NDWM (2010), 25 per cent of all minor domestic workers are younger than 14. Therefore, it is challenging to develop suitable policy solutions to address their

concerns in the absence of precise data on the number of such workers (Chadha, 2021).

India supported the ILO's Convention 189 in 2011, which aims to defend domestic workers' legal rights and dignity. The convention hasn't been ratified yet, though. Only registered workers are covered by the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), a cashless health insurance program that was made available to domestic workers that same year (Dev & Vijayalakshmi, 2020).

In August 2016, The Domestic Workers' Welfare Bill, 2016, a private member bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha. The bill focused on recognizing a private household as a workplace, rights to migrant workers, an enhanced definition of wages (including travel allowances, insurance, among others) and contract registration (Virk, 2017). In 2019, the government announced that a draft National Policy of Domestic Workers was being formulated (Rajkotwala & Mehta, 2020). However, both the bill and policy draft are still pending. The plight of domestic workers and the precarious nature of their labour is amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been reported that during Covid-19 lockdown with increasing risk of contracting the disease, many domestic workers were compelled to travel to the households of multiple employers, while many others were not paid their salaries. While many domestic workers have lost their jobs due to the belief that only the poor could be 'potential carriers' of the virus, several others have been asked by their employers to present COVID test reports before re-joining their place of work, with little to no accountability by the employers to do the same (Viswanath, 2020; Ganapatye & Rao, 2020). With no formal contracts, ineffective legislation and poor bargaining power, the categorization of domestic workers as 'workers' is merely theoretical. For decades, the usage of terms such as 'maids', 'helps', and 'servants' to address domestic workers has further reinforced the exploitative hierarchy of servitude between employers and workers, reducing the labour of domestic workers into a mere social transaction as opposed to an economic one. Therefore, along with prioritizing a comprehensive national policy, there is a grave need to address the structural issues at a societal level which are actively obstructing the path of

domestic workers from availing their rights as workers and in leading a life of dignity in India.

1.9 Northeast scenario

The study by Ovung & Marwein (2024) has stated that the North Eastern Regional Domestic Workers' Movement (NERDWM) initially known as Domestic Workers' Association was initiated in June 1, 2003 by the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC), Shillong Province in Meghalaya in response to scores of violence and injustice perpetuated on domestic workers. After two years of initiation, the organization worked for its legal recognition from the state government of Meghalaya only to receive it in October 15, 2005 under the banner of North Eastern Regional Domestic Workers' Welfare Trust (NERDWT). Gradually the organization expanded its activities in other parts of North Eastern States including Assam, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura.

The objective of the Movement is empowerment of domestic workers, lobbying with governments both at the state and central level, to regularize domestic work, whereby the workers are treated with dignity, paid just wages and enjoy all welfare measures applicable to all organized workers, to educate domestic working women and children create consciousness towards self-reliance and social justice and to promote integral development through vocational training, literacy and leadership, mobilizing domestic workers, through the process of registration, group formation and experience sharing. Till date more than 5000 domestic workers are registered under the Movement (Ovung & Marwein, 2024). Accordingly, they have been formed into groups for better coordination and facilitation. Today, more than 300 groups have been formed. Group meetings are conducted on a monthly basis at their respective localities.

Lobbying with State government to achieve various goals, and most importantly recognition of domestic workers as labourers and including them in the Labour Code, thereby helping them to have the same rights as other employees, has been a consistent advocacy of the movement. Another advocacy include campaign for

recognition and status through one-to-one discussion with employers, gatherings, pamphlets and flyers, postcards campaigns, signature campaigns for inclusion of domestic workers under the schedule of minimum wage, for ensuring that India supports the adoption of “Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers”, by the ILO at ILC 2011, to ensure that Domestic Workers are included in the protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill, 2010. Academic studies have mostly overlooked Meghalaya’s domestic workers. Both government policy and the media have ignored their predicament. As a result, domestic workers frequently experience unjust treatment and exploitation. The North Eastern Regional Domestic Workers’ Movement (NERDWM) was founded in Meghalaya in 2003 by the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC), Shillong Province, in response to numerous cases of unfair treatment. Currently, 6500 domestic workers in Meghalaya, some of them are over 65, are registered under the auspices of the All-Meghalaya Domestic Workers Union. Many, nevertheless, fall outside the union’s jurisdiction (Ovung, 2024).

1.10 Mizoram scenario

The need for domestic workers */awmpui* or *nula* in the Mizo households is increasing. The employment of paid domestic workers is a fairly recent arrangement in Mizo society. Earlier in traditional Mizo society, all the household chores were done by the women inside their homes. No outside help was employed in their homes. The women worked from dawn to dusk, cooking, cleaning, weaving, collecting water, wood, helping in the fields and jhum cultivation, rearing and taking care of children. The family system was of the joint type, and while the mothers of small babies and children helped out in the cultivating and farming, it was mostly the grandmothers who looked after the children. Young relatives mostly from rural places, boys and girls and young adults, also stayed with their affluent relatives pursuing their education and employment also helped out with the necessary chores around the house. Nowadays with the womenfolk getting employment outside of the homes, mainly with education and development, paid domestic workers are employed in most Mizo households in Aizawl.

Nowadays, domestic workers of Aizawl come from rural pockets of the state of Mizoram, and from neighbouring states like Manipur, Tripura and, Assam, etc. Domestic workers occupy an integral place in the society. However, in spite of their importance, there still has not been any reliable agency or rules and regulation with regards to their employment or hiring of domestic workers in the state of Mizoram. It is difficult to tell the exact number of domestic workers or the population since they are unregulated and largely informal. Therefore, the study of the domestic workers in Aizawl looks into sociological study of their background, profile, nature of work, the relations with their employers, their dreams and aspirations, push and pull factors and their growing importance is rightfully taken up for study.

Part-time domestic workers (*Lang*) / Full-time domestic workers (*Riak*)

Domestic workers have become increasingly important and necessary in the Mizo households since a lot of the menfolk and womenfolk work outside of their homes. Domestic workers or *awmpui* or *nula* in Mizoram are mainly of two types: live-in or *riak* and live-out or daily/ *lang* in the local language. Live-in or *riak* reside with their employers in their homes and are mostly treated as one of the family members. Adversely, live-out or daily/ *lang* commute to their place of work from their own homes and do not reside with their employers and as a rule are generally residents of the city/town/village. There are a few who work for multiple employers but this is not a common practice in Mizoram.

Female /Male Domestic Workers

There are female as well as male domestic workers in Mizoram. However, the female domestic workers outnumber the male domestic workers in the case of Mizoram. As domestic work is viewed as more of a woman's work than that of men and as women are perceived to be more docile, submissive and non-threatening than men, women in general are preferred over men in respect of this particular occupation.

1.11 Need of the study

The present study on paid domestic workers in Aizawl is relevant and important as it brings to light sections of the society who have been marginalised, voiceless and who have been largely invisible in the society. The domestic workers make it possible for many working men and women to pursue their varied interests outside of their homes. Their importance is growing in the society. The domestic workers are the most vulnerable sections of workers because they work in private household where they are susceptible to all kinds of treatment and exploitation.

Domestic workers have become an integral part of the modern contemporary society. The need for domestic workers is felt more so in the urban middle class and in the more affluent Mizo households in Aizawl, Mizoram. In Aizawl, women form the majority of domestic workers and clearly outnumber male domestic workers. There is a pressing need for implementing laws regarding the employment rules and regulation of the domestic workers with no security for both parties, the employer and employee. There have been innumerable cases of domestic workers running away without the prior knowledge of their employers on the one hand, and also cases of the domestic workers being fired by their employers with no prior intimation or a golden handshake. Domestic workers do not receive enough focus in the field of academia and their inclusion in academic study is negligible. There has been very little research and coverage on domestic workers in Mizoram thus far. Thus, the research is essential to comprehending Mizo society and highlights a key yet underappreciated segment of the Mizo household that many families in Aizawl depend on for support. It is with this view in mind that this study will contribute in enriching the sociological understanding of domestic workers in Aizawl.

This section of introduction of the study of domestic workers deals with the presentation of domestic workers in Mizoram, the background of the study for domestic workers in Aizawl, Mizoram. It ends with the statement of the need for the study. The next chapter focuses on the review of literature concerning the study of domestic workers as an informal sector.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a general outline of the problem at hand and its relevance in general. For any social research, it is important to take into account the various studies that have already been conducted in order to develop clarity over the state-of-the-art literature and to identify the gaps for further research. With this in mind, the current chapter on literature review has been attempted under three main heads such as theoretical, thematic, methodological. The section ends with finding out the research gap in order to present the rationale for the current research study.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Theories explain and give meaning to concepts, definitions and propositions and make us understand events, behaviours and situations. As for the study of the domestic workers, their situations and their problems, the various theories and sub themes on domestic workers have been incorporated in the present review for better understanding. The theoretical review for the present study on domestic workers has been sub-divided into the following perspectives: Gender and intersectionality; Informal and formal linkage; Double day or double burden.

2.2.1 Gender and Intersectionality

Women and men are born biologically different. There are varying degrees of differences as to the women's roles or the female roles and that of men's roles or the male roles in every society. The most basic division of labour seems to be firmly grounded on sex or gender. In the contemporary modern world, these arguments between the sexes have been hotly debated, and there have been many arguments in support of each. Gender roles are shaped by the traditional view on appropriate behaviour for men and women, but this view on gender roles is becoming more relaxed in the recent past. However, "these changes in gender attitudes have not been accompanied by corresponding changes in the allocation of housework" (Chesters,

2012). Feminism and its different schools of thought during the 60s and 70s were particularly interested in women's emancipation and the dynamism of gender roles. The feminists in western academia took equal interest in the ramifications of the domestic labour debate.

Gender studies pertain to the study and analysis of gender identity and gendered representations covering women's studies, feminist studies, men's studies, queer studies and studies concerning sexuality. Beauvoir (1949), Butler (1990) and Lacan have contributed significantly thus revolutionising the studies on gender and sociology of gender.

Intersectionality is a branch of feminism that proclaims that all notions of identities like class, race, gender, sexuality, disability, etc. overlap or intersect. Intersectionality is a blanket term for all intersecting identities and applies to women for getting equal pay and equal job opportunities.

Domestic work is one of the oldest and most important informal occupations for thousands of women across the world. There is an easy entry for women without education, poor economic background and lack of other opportunities in the domain of domestic work, therefore making it a gender-based under-evaluation of domestic work. These domestic workers also perform the traditional role of care and household task which is unpaid within their own households. Studies on gender and intersectionality addresses women domestic workers with intersections of race, gender, class and regional background.

The theory of "intersectionality" was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw to feminist theory. In her paper written in 1989 Crenshaw for the University of Chicago Level Forum, "Demarginalising the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics", she discussed Black Feminism, and puts across the fact and the experience of being black and of being a woman, which are considered independently, but which include the interactions frequently at play with each other. So intersectionality refers to a sociological theory that outlines how an individual may face multiple types of overlapping discrimination depending on their race,

gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class or any other characteristics that might place them in a minority class (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality is a feminist theory, a methodology for research, and a springboard for social justice. It develops from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and how soon enough operations of structures of power come into being.

One of the pivotal ways to understand the sociological condition of domestic workers would be the concept of “intersectionality”. Intersectionality is an analytical framework in order to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are marginalised in society. Intersectionality considers that various forms of social stratification such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, disability and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are interwoven together. While the theory began as an exploration of the oppression of women of colour within society, today the analysis is potentially applied to all social categories including social identities usually seen as dominant when considered independently (Butler, 1990).

Savita (1993) in her thesis ‘Sociological Study of Maidservants in Kolhapur City’ has studied the maidservants on the lines of the following objectives: i) to study the socio-economic condition of maid servants in Kolhapur city, ii) to find out the working and living conditions, iii) to examine the educational status and health condition of maid servants in Kolhapur city. A sample of 200 maid servants and 50 employers were selected as respondents for the study by using first quota sampling. Most of these maidservants are the sole breadwinners, however some children also work as part-time basis. Majority of the female heads of the employer family are dissatisfied with the domestic workers because these domestic workers are not punctual, they are irregular, and also not hygienic. They gossip a lot and are unreliable, according to the employers.

Brites (2013) presents that in the case of paid domestic workers, there is existence of inequality of gender, class, race, ethnicity and geographical background. The article touches upon such factors as women’s entry into the labour market and studies about domestic workers across Brazil and Latin America on matters regarding their

recruitment, unionisation, lack of legal protection, their transformations and processes, and migrations and global care chains.

Bernardino-Costa (2014) and Leda M. Perez and Pedro M. Llanos (2017) highlight the role of migrant Indonesian domestic workers who are women working in a patriarchal society serving to deepen their social exclusion. This feeds into a politics of intersectionality where their role as outsiders in the public domain is cemented by their status as poor, as migrants, and as women, whereas their role as insiders in the private domain excludes them from acting as political subjects (Bernardino-Costa, 2014; Perez & Llanos, 2017). “The abuse and disrespect that some of the country’s 1.2 million domestic workers endure goes largely unchecked and unreported, mainly because it happens behind the closed doors of their employer’s private property”.

Oakley (1974) a British sociologist and supporter of Women’s liberation Movement (women’s lib) argues that the position that women hold in the family and in the society is mirrored in the number of women getting employed in various fields in the employment sector. Very often, the jobs that women take up are an extension of their domestic role pertain to caring for, cleaning or tidying up after others, waiting on, serving, etc. This point is made forcefully by Mary L. Benet in “Secretary: An Enquiry into the Female Ghetto” (1972). She maintains that the secretary ‘also acts as wife, mother, mistress and maid’.

Pedrazza (1991) in “Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender” brings to light the factors affecting the process of migration of women on a large scale. It tries to perceive the themes of interaction of ethnicity, class and gender in the process of migration. Hondagneu-Sotelo Pierette, in 1994 *Gendered Transitions; Mexican Experiences of Immigration* documents immigration of Mexican women to United States, how these migrant women find work and resettle in new lands along with the subsequent transformation of new ideals and lifestyles. It is thematic in nature with concerns of gender and migration, largely contributing to the study of Sociology of Immigration.

An interesting point made by Pedraza (1991) finds that for the domestic workers, gender is not the only part of the decision to immigrate, more so, it is also reluctance to return to the native country or hometown becoming very hard for women to consider leaving “the gains that migration and employment have brought for them”.

Ofreneo (2000) viewed that profit is made by minimising labour costs, particularly that of women. The labour market segmentation, which means women being concentrated heavily on certain segments associated to societal norms and patriarchal ideology, which propagates that woman, are suited to such low paid jobs. These activities in conventional economic reckoning do not constitute value production.

The International Labour Organization (2009) observes that domestic workers represent considerable portions of the labour force and are predominantly women. According to UNWOMEN Newsletter report of March 12, 2013, domestic workers number between 52.6 and 100 million worldwide. And 83 per cent are women. ILO (2012) also notes that what distinguishes domestic workers from many other workers, however is that they work in private households, their remuneration tends to be among the lowest in the labour market, and they tend to be informally engaged.

2.2.2 Informal and Formal Linkages

The informal sector refers to those workers who are self-employed or who work for those who are self-employed. Many informal workers do their businesses in unprotected and unsecured places. While the formal sector is marked by activities which are taxed and monitored by the government, the activities involved are included in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The ILO records 67 million domestic workers worldwide, aged 15 years and older. Fifty million of these domestic workers are in the informal jobs, which is about to rise with the aging population, constantly increasing female participation rates and the preference for home care for the elderly and the chronically ill, with families increasingly turning to domestic workers. With this in mind there is a growing need to formalize the work of domestic labour, along with the adoption of some 50 countries adopting of the Domestic Workers Convention No. 189 and

Recommendation No. 201 in June 2011, and the aims of extending labour and social protections to domestic workers and improving working conditions.

With a high degree of interaction existing between formal and informal work at the lower end of the labour market, and also at the domestic household level, the linkages between informal and formal economy are blurred and indistinguishable. The basic needs of the workers in formal sectors are somehow undeniably met by relatively cheap goods and services produced by informal sector employing low paid workers and unpaid family labourers. The work of domestic maids can easily fall under this category.

Moreover, the subsidy consumption of formal sector workers is the most important role played by informal sector (Portes, 1978). High informality in India is undertaken by Kaur (2006) who studied domestic work in its very organisation. The study points out the susceptibilities of the domestic workers forming the underprivileged, ignorant sections of the society and noted that women from disparaged backgrounds consists of a large chunk of domestic workers.

There has been a deep linkage between the formal and informal economy, which thereby contributes to the overall economy, and that supporting the working poor in the informal economy is important for reducing poverty and inequality, just as supporting working women in the formal sector. The domestic workers make it possible for many working men and women to pursue their varied jobs and careers outside of their homes. The informal formal linkage contextualizes domestic workers and the linkage is such that influence flows both ways.

2.2.3 Double Day / Double Burden

Many people even today still believe that household work is to be performed only by women. The unpaid domestic labour is dominated almost entirely by women as the responsibility eventually fall on women themselves even though the women work outside of their homes as much as the men. Thus, this shouldering of work by women both of the paid work outside the home and the unpaid housework inside of the home is what is known as double day syndrome.

Double day or Double burden also known as the Second Shift as in Arlie Hochschild's book called *Second Shift* (1989), defines the excess burden or workload of people who, besides their normal paid work, had to do their own domestic work without pay at home. In the case of working couples, it is often the woman who spends more time doing household chores and care-giving to the family. Ultimately, this dual responsibility leaves a woman with less time for other things which could be considered as productive since, economically speaking, domestic work is not considered work as it is unpaid (Hochschild, 1989).

Romero (1992) in 'Maid in the USA' analyses the relationships between Latina immigrants and the upper-class white women who work as cleaners or domestic workers in their homes. While examining the power struggle existing not only between men and women, and that between women of different races and class backgrounds, Romero brings out the issue of 'double days'. The term 'double day' refers to the idea that women work full days at a job outside of the home, then come home and maintain the household, making sure things are clean, and food is made, and the members of the family are clean and taken care of. The issue of flexibility of working hours is heralded as one of the advantages of paid domestic work for the Latina maids.

Many feminists (Ferri & Smith, 1996) argue that in spite of women working, there is little evidence of a 'new man' who does an equal share of household chore or domestic work. They argue that women have simply acquired dual burden of paid and unpaid housework. In this view, family remains patriarchal: men benefit both from women's earnings and from their domestic labour.

2.2.4 Overview of Theoretical Perspectives

This section on theoretical perspectives begins with gender studies and intersectionality reiterating the fact that women and men are born biologically different. This has resulted in the division of labour even at the home front regarding women's roles and men's roles which has been hotly debated amongst various academicians. The study of intersectionality introduced by Crenshaw (1989) best

represents the domestic workers themselves, their working conditions, nature of their work, their background, gender, age, ethnicity, social class, or any other feature for them to be placed as a minority class. Intersectionality brings to light the power relations between domestic workers and their employers, which is a highly personal relationship. The fact that they work in private households makes it difficult to monitor their work and formalize their union.

Informal economy and its rise and growth can be seen as a crucial factor for the wide participation of workers in the economy, particularly domestic workers. A vast number of women get employed outside of their homes and, ultimately, they need someone to fill in their shoes at home, so most often they rely on the services of the domestic workers to get their work done at home, so they can accomplish their work outside of their homes.

On the other hand, even though women work outside of their homes, as much as the men, they still shoulder the burden of the household chores themselves, more so than the men. This is known as the double burden or double day or the second shift, put forth by Hochschild (1989). Feminist writers find little evidence of a 'new man' who contribute equally in domestic chores and household chores. According to them, men gain from women's earnings and their domestic labour.

2.3 Thematic Literature

This part of the exercise shall relate to reviews of thematic areas or subject dimensions or substantive domains covered by the studies. This has been divided into:

- a) Women, work, working conditions and informal sector
- b) Wages
- c) Migration
- d) Rights Issues
- e) Health conditions and domestic violence/ harassment

2.3.1 Women, Work, Working Conditions and Informal Sector

Several factors lead women to enter domestic work. Women in poor, disadvantaged communities often have few employment opportunities, and may face discrimination based on gender, caste or class, race or ethnicity. Cooking, cleaning, and caring for children and the elderly are almost regarded as women's work, so in this job market men rarely compete. Low education qualifications and few marketable skills play a role as well.

According to ILO (2009), there are 1 in 25 women domestic workers in the world. British anthropologist Keith Hart coined the term "informal sector" while studying the economic activities of rural migrants in Accra, Ghana in 1971. He concluded that most migrants busied themselves in informal activities that had "autonomous capacity for generating incomes" in spite of outside limitations and capitalist domination. Hart in 1973 in his writing "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana" credits Weber's theory of rationalization while promoting the growth for bureaucratic organization and measures for rewards in western economic institutions. According to him, Weber sees the emergence of capitalism backed by the irregularity and unpredictability of the economically backward populations of the Third world economies (Hart, 1973).

Lewis (1954) first highlighted the importance of unorganised or informal sector in the development process using it in the socio-anthropological studies during the 1950s. The ILO and World Bank sponsored studies provide the early literatures relating to the concepts. It may be noted that the word informal sector rather than unorganised sector is used by the ILO most often in the context of third world countries (2009).

According to Women in the Informal Economy Globalising and Organising (2013), the informal sector accounts for more than half the urban population in Asia and the Pacific and consists of women in family based small enterprises using simple labour-intensive techniques of production, involving repetitious monotonous work which are outside of regulations and marked by dependence on subcontracting. (ILO-

WIEGO, 2013).

Studies conducted by Gangrade and Gathia (1983) in the organised sector examined the work and employment structure of this sector with emphasis on women and children. Working women were classified on the basis of socio-economic terms. The informal sector comprises of agricultural workers from the rural areas and are engaged in traditional menial tasks whereas in the urban areas they constitute workers/labourers, migrant workers, domestic workers and other self-employed women. Blue collar workers in offices and professional constitutes the better educated women with greater economic security. The greatest problem is faced by the women in the informal sector in the form of low wages, long hours of work, job insecurity and sexual harassment.

While conducting a study of the country, Deshpande (1996) points toward the awful conditions of women workers in the informal sector. She mentions the vulgarity and crudeness of working condition with sex discrimination in wage structures, lack of guarantee of minimum wages/ comprehensive legislation/ minimum facilities; migration and disintegration of families, bondage and alienation etc. as some characteristics of employment of women in this sector.

Dietrich (1995) is of the opinion that the employment of women in the informal sector is characterised by its lack of security and safety. Because of the irregular nature of their work, many of these women are classified as marginal workers and do not enjoy such social security benefits like pensions, maternity benefits and in the absence of work records in most cases, there is no work security. Ghosh (2001) looks into the micro trends of urban women workers in the 1990s with unemployment and underemployment coupled with the unacknowledged work done at home in the background.

Ray and Qayum (2009) in the “Cultures of Servitude, Modernity, Domesticity and Class in India have mentioned the fact that the complex relationship between the employer and employee is one which is viewed as that of domination, dependency and inequality.

Pandya & Sarika (2010), in their book, 'Women in the Unorganised Sector of India' argues that women workers with particular emphasis on those working in the unorganised sector deserves special attention regarding their marginalised position within the class of workers. The book mentioned the double burden of work which separates women from men in that, besides their normal employment, women are obliged to devote a considerable share of their time in doing "socially productive and reproductive labour" (2010).

Smith (2011) highlights the features of domestic work saying that individual or family (not a firm or enterprise) employ domestic workers in their homes. She mentions the relationship between the employers and employees which is on a personal level. However, it is extremely unequal thereby giving chances to verbal, physical or sexual abuse. Racial, class and citizenship differences aggravate the inequality and vulnerability between the employers and employees. Domestic work is seen as more of a women's work rather than that of men's, and low in status and value. Just because their physical workspace is inside the private household, the domestic workers are invisible and isolated as workers, coupled with low wages, fewer benefits and less legal or social protection when compared to other wage earners. Lastly, there is a growing fear that domestic workers are exposed to exploitation and unhealthy and precarious working situation. Smith (2011). 'Pitfalls of home: Protecting the health and safety of paid domestics in the United States, presents challenges to the policy makers and legislatures the safety of domestic workers at their workplace particularly in the United States. It examines the close relation domestic work has with women's unpaid work in the home and the condition of performing the work behind closed doors making the workers vulnerable for exploitation.

To promote improved and equal working conditions for domestic workers, the International Labour Organization (2015) carries out policy advisory services for national constituents, technical assistance projects at country-level, research and knowledge development, policy advocacy campaigns. Critical areas addressed include policies and programs regarding working time of domestic workers that

safeguards their health and safety, work-family balance and adequate rest; wage protection including minimum wage, and employment practices that shape terms and conditions of employment of domestic workers.

Augustine and Singh (2016) studied the “condition and problems of female domestic workers with special reference to L.D.A. Colony in Lucknow City in India and describes the socio-economic background of the female domestic workers of L.D.A. Colony Kanpur Road, Lucknow City. They used the method of structured interview schedule to study the female domestic workers, and have examined the roles of the Govt and NGOs regarding their protection and social security.

Women domestic workers have steadily seen a significant increase across the world and in India in the recent times. According to Chandramouli and Kodandarama (2018) domestic service is now accepted as a pivotal category of livelihood, however domestic work has remained unorganized, unrecognized and unrewarding for the domestic workers themselves. They are denied of minimum wages, healthy work period, safe working conditions and other benefits because there is absence of state interventions and trade unions. The domestic workers encounter and experience exploitative situations and verbal and physical abuses at the hands of their employers who often take advantage of their helpless conditions.

Jain and Mishra (2018) have analyzed the demands for domestic workers in the urban areas and conducted their study in the National Capital Region highlighting the existence of a particular class of employers who engage these domestic workers for their household and are solely dependent on them. According to the authors of the paper on “Demand for Domestic Workers in India: Its Characteristics and Correlates”, there are, besides the demand for domestic workers, other important factors and features like the employment of women and the life-cycle of a household which also contribute to the demand for a domestic worker. The domestic workers are broadly categorized based on the nature of their employment as live-out/ day work or live-in work, and these are mostly observed to be influenced by economic class and household specific needs.

Sachdeva and Arora (2018) in their article titled “Working and living conditions of domestic workers: Indispensable yet unprotected”, examines the working and living conditions in Kolkata studying the demographic profile of the domestic workers and to investigate the problems in living and working conditions among male and female domestic workers. In conclusion to their study, Sachdeva and Arora have found out that compared to their male counterparts, the female domestic workers were economically underprivileged. While the males enjoyed better living and working conditions than the female workers, the work done by female workers were undervalued and unrecognized (2018).

2.3.2 Wage

Wage refers to quantum of return or payment received for the labour rendered.

One of the most-lowly paid employees, the domestic workers most often do not enjoy the minimum wage protection and benefit. Because of the discrimination faced by the workers at their workplace the domestic workers are frequently excluded do not have a voice for demanding the minimum wage coverage. ILO (2011) Convention, Article 11 rightly ensures minimum wage coverage and remuneration without discrimination based on sex for the domestic workers. The working time and prevalence of live-in and live-out domestic workers hourly and monthly wage rates are to be taken into account while employing the workers.

Anker (1997) who studied the existence of female occupations in the study of 41 countries, pointed out the principal reason for women’s wages being less than that of men. This implies lesser opportunities for upward mobility and greater financial pressure to survive.

Women’s jobs are poorly paid, precarious status with poor working conditions, inadequate social coverage and limited scope for promotion and upward mobility according to Rubery, Smith and Fagan (1996) of the European Union. Fawcett (1918) and Edgeworth (1922) argue that discrimination is manifested not as unequal pay for equal work but rather as unequal job assignments. The overcrowding model explains why women concentrate in certain jobs due to cultural or conspiratorial

factors and the reasons for the low wage rate. It is also identified that they compete among themselves for the relatively few positions and which in turn push down their wages.

Caplow (1954) has talked about the unique wage system of domestic service, in that it is a system which is being carried on for use, not for profit, and the settlement of wages remains an individual bargain between employer and employee.

Micro level studies on specific sectors and specific industries has shown that women's employment has increased mainly in the unorganised and informal activities and that they are concentrated in the lower rungs of employment (Nirmala Banerjee; 1985).

Hensman (2001) and Kalpagam (2001) both mention the impact that globalisation has on the working women - growing informalisation and fragmentation of work on the one hand and expansion of opportunities on the other, and of the feminisation of agriculture. The Government policy can play a major role in securing and supporting the rights and livelihood of all citizens. The women's movement creates a nominal commitment on the part of the Government to women's participation in organisational decision making in State recognised organisations.

ILO (2003), put forth significant changes in the world economy such as rapid globalisation, fast paced technological progress and growing informalisation of work altering women's labour market status. Besides the bias against women, it affects the young, the old and the less skilled. Also, they are being disproportionately engaged in non-standard forms of work such as temporary casual employment and part time jobs. Low wages with no benefits, existence of no formal organisation differing in methods of recruitment, payment, rates- daily or weekly, ease of entry, nature of supervision are some disadvantages for men and women in informal sector. On top of all these disadvantages women are encumbered with the additional burden of gender hierarchy and inferiority in the society.

A socio-economic survey of domestic servants in Thrissur Corporation focussing on the socio-economic profile, occupational and wage structure, the social problems

faced, and utilisation of income of the domestic women servants was conducted by Vimala (2010). From the study it was found that since the women domestic workers belonged to the economically disadvantaged group, they were compelled to do this job because of lower education or poor financial background.

Poonam (2016) has noted the denial of decent pay for the domestic workers who are not regarded as professionals due to lack of avenues for skill development and capacity enhancement in the country. There is a very slim chance for providing the domestic workers with a proposed minimum monthly salary of Rs.9000 along with benefits of social security and enjoying day off and time off from their hectic workload, which is still waiting for approval in the Parliament.

2.3.3 Migration

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily at a new location.

Domestic workers usually migrate to more developed places and countries looking for a better life for themselves and their families. Migration is a crucial phenomenon as it provides growing demands of households for domestic services across the national and international level.

Sotelo (1994), Uchitelle (1999), Zahniser (1999), and Portillo (1999), all mention that women domestic workers are less demanding when it comes to accepting employment, seeing it more of a blessing and depend on the migration network patterns. Newly arrived migrants rely on established family and friends to help them get settled and support each other. Some are also members of the same church and social networking groups and members of the same neighbourhood groups.

The issue of migration is discussed by Leela (1997) of female domestic workers of Delhi and finds out that among the marginalized domestic workers migration is sought as a 'coping strategy' for the survival of the families. The paper highlights the mental trauma faced by migrant women in their social, economic and psychological aspect of the problem in a detailed and effective manner.

Keefe (2002) makes a point saying ‘women’s work is never done’ when she studied and explored the Latina immigrants working as maids, domestics and nannies in the United States. The jobs and roles that women have are very closely linked to the intersection of class, race and gender, thereby making women’s labour a very complex issue. Several domestic workers who were interviewed claim the high value of their work because it is paid which is quite different from what the earlier literatures tell us regarding domestics and their employers. The nature of their work ranges from vacuuming, making beds, cleaning, dusting, washing clothes and dishes, ironing clothes, babysitting, etc. Some enjoy their work because they get paid for their already existing skills, like babysitting, childcare and taking care of homes.

Kalayaan (2006), Lutz (2008, 2011), Kumbetoglu (2005), Samal (2006) have examined the migration pattern of domestic workers across nations and within the state of India. Globalization of domestic work is an increasing worldwide phenomenon, not only for the uneducated, but for the young professionals and graduates, working as ‘au pair’ in mostly European countries.

Sharma (2009) has written an article on ‘Domestic Workers in India no better than Slaves’ where she mentions that in India the domestic workers are treated no better than slaves. This is particularly true for those who work full time in their employer’s homes. They are on call 24 hours of the day, 365 days in the year with no leave whatsoever. And they can never dream of freeing themselves from such bondage.

ILO (2010) states that in India, of the total domestic workers in the country in 2009-10 more than two thirds lived in urban India and 57 per cent of them were women. This is a lower rate of female involvement in this type of employment than in many other countries, and reflects the combination of several forces: the long history in India of the affluent employing domestic servants, which created aspirations of such hiring patterns also among the newly affluent; increased supply of domestic workers changing the income pattern who can afford to hire domestic workers. This leads to feminization of this activity and placing more importance to this kind of employment which contributes to the total share of women employment (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh 2012).

Mehrotra et al., (2010) in their study in 'Jagori' regarded the erstwhile practice of domestic servants in India. Observing the large-scale migration over the last two decades of girls from tribal areas of Assam, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, to Delhi, they detect the increasing flow of migration of tribal girls coming with other girls from the village, through private agents, or other organisations to be employed as 'Maids' in urban households. The girls are often trafficked for domestic work by agents and abused physically, psychologically and sexually by employers and agents. These girls are forced to put in long hours of work, confined at home with restricted access to the outside, increasing their dependencies on their employers.

Prakasam (2012) has come up with a book titled 'Domestic Woman Workers in India' which tells us about the growing activity of domestic workers in all societies, not only in the developing countries, but also in industrialized world. These ethnic minority domestic workers are migrants from rural backgrounds and smaller communities who have come to urban centers in search of jobs. The working conditions of these domestic workers are disgusting with long working hours, minimal pay and no social security whatsoever. Prakasam (2012) discusses their working and living conditions, problems and prospects of the live-in and live-out domestic workers.

2.3.4 Rights Issues

Being an essential part of the labour force, the domestic workers are also entitled to certain rights and privileges enjoyed by the working community. This section brings to light some of the various literatures on the rights, social security and protection and equality issues of domestic workers.

Hensman (2001) in *Workers, Unions and Global Capitalism: Lessons from India* studies labour movements, the struggles for workers' rights and unionism in Bombay in the 1950s. The study rests upon themes such as "employees' unionism", doing away with informal labour and reduction in military spending instead promoting funds to achieving a definitive welfare state and social security systems.

Ganesh (2006) in their paper 'Behind Every Happy Middle-Class family is a Caring Domestic Worker' assert that the National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM) intent to empower and establish the women and child domestic workers and actively campaign for their rights as workers, and improve their status with the needed legal facilitation.

Mantouvalou (2006) teaches Human Rights and Labour Law has worked on the exploitation of domestic workers and their rights. Mantouvalou (2006) stresses domestic workers have suffered from low self-esteem as a result of the miserable living and working conditions. They are denied the opportunity of raising their voice and the means of redressing the abuse and maltreatment they received from their employers, while at the same time having to juggle paid work with maternal role and long hours of unpaid work. She mentions the new attention of what scholars and organisations today call a modern form of slavery which is 'domestic slavery'. The sensitive issues and problems encountered by migrant domestic workers are discussed and addressed upon with international labour law and international human rights law.

Shashibala (2010) studied domestic workers in four metro cities in India – Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. The study found that the major cluster of domestic help was found in the age group of 15 – 35, largely illiterate and the most common push factor of entering this job was to improve the economic conditions of the family for all the four cities. Caste structure, family structure, educational attainments and migration issues of the domestic workers however, differed across cities. The study makes out that the domestic workers lack access to a saving account in a bank due to non-availability of documents. The study recommends framing a suitable legislation, raising awareness of the domestic workers about the legal recourse available to them, organising as a major tool of positive intervention, regulation of placement agencies and effective protection for migrant domestic workers.

Shamim (2011) has studied the 'Socio-Economic Situation of Domestic Workers in Pune City'. A detailed survey forms filled up by these domestic workers at the time of registration concludes on certain aspects on the important socio-economic

features. After analysis, it was concluded the domestic work remained unpaid, invisible and thankless work, done exclusively by the 'housewives'. Being considered one with low status, it is lowly paid and remains outside the purview of the Labour Laws like the Minimum Wages Act and lack of organisation.

Ghosh (2013), ILO (2015) calls upon the effective implementation of laws and acts to support the welfare and protection of the rights of domestic workers by the Central and State Governments as well as civil society.

2.3.5 Health Conditions and Domestic Violence/ Harassment

Domestic workers across the globe are vulnerable to all kinds of health issues since they have extra-long working hours and are often without the basic healthcare benefits. They are also an easy target for, exploitation, sexual harassment and violence in their workplace as they work behind closed doors in mostly private homes.

Rani et.al. (1989) 'High Prevalence of Gynaecological Diseases in Rural Indian Women' a quantitative study totalling 650 women of gynaecological and sexual diseases of cross-sectional rural women in two Indian villages. The study examines the primary health concerns of women in rural developing countries. Studies by Rani et. al., (1989) point out that more than 50% of women are suffering from illnesses which they have learnt to ignore because of various social factors thus worsening their health conditions.

Datta & Murthy (2011) Working and Living Conditions of Domestic Workers: Evidences from Mumbai is an exploratory data collection of 1510 domestic workers in Mumbai so as to create basic entitlement to certain section of the women workforce. It discusses themes such as work profile, demography, nature of services, social security, consumption patterns, healthcare awareness, household assets, domestic violence, gender attitudes regarding domestic workers.

Kasturi's (1997) 'Domestic Servant in Urban Delhi' is a qualitative study discussing the plight of migrant female domestic servants in Delhi, who are faced with a couple

of psychological and socio-economic problems and explains further the mental strain and trauma faced by the female domestic workers at their workplace.

The abuses against domestic workers are committed by the employers and labour agents, resulting in physical, psychological and sexual abuse; forced confinement in the workplace; non-payment of wages; excessively long working hours with no rest days. Women and girls have been trafficked and forced into domestic work in conditions similar to what is called modern day slavery (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

2.3.6 Overview of Thematic Perspectives

From the above thematic perspectives on women, work, working conditions and informal sector, we come to know that domestic work is mostly carried out by women who work in precarious and pitiful work conditions, often being exploited by employers. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (2009) highlight the informality of employment for these domestic workers; Wages- women's jobs are poorly paid and they are solely dependent on their employers. Therefore, domestic work is one of the lowliest paying jobs.

Migration is a crucial factor for the domestic workers. Migration of the domestic workers usually takes place from rural to urban areas; Rights issues- laws and rights for the domestic workers have not been properly implemented so far, and this has to come from the state and central governments; and health conditions – domestic workers suffer from all kinds of health problems, physical as well as psychological problems; and domestic violence, different thinkers highlight the health issues faced by the domestic workers who work under hazardous conditions for long hours without proper rest and proper nutrition and are therefore susceptible to all kinds of illnesses and diseases without seeking medical benefits.

2.4 Domestic Workers in Mizoram

The domestic worker's unit in Mizoram called the National Domestic Worker's Movement Welfare Trust (NDWMWT) allege that a lot of the domestic workers, mostly migrants from Myanmar in Mizoram are put through harrowing ordeals of physical, verbal and sexual abuse. Educating them about their rights and safety and protection is a major concern of the NDWMWT. However, due to lack of social skills and awareness on the part of the domestic workers, the message was not able to reach across to those in need. Although workshops were conducted on Sundays, their only day-off, these migrant domestic workers failed to turn up to attend the workshop. The reason being fear of deportation and being identified as Burmese migrants or foreigners (Mizoram's domestic workers vulnerable to abuse 2008).

Mukhim (2011) gives guidance to the North East Region Domestic Workers Movement, a worker's body, to set up a complaint cell for the welfare of its members. Speaking at the International Domestic Worker's Day on 9th January 2011 at the Don Bosco Youth Centre in Shillong, Mukhim, backed the domestic workers and pushed them to put a united front fighting for their rights and making their grievances and voices heard by setting up a complaint cell. "The large emerging middle class in India built their prosperity walking with the aid of crutches provided by the most unorganised, unprotected and vulnerable sections of our workforce, i.e., the domestic workers. It is in the interest of the country and the middle class who employ them to protect and ensure their well-being" (The Telegraph, 2011).

Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance (FDWA) Aizawl city coordinator Mary Lalparliani mentioned that domestic workers or '*awmpui*' (maid servant in Mizo) faced the most hardships amongst all workers. Talking to the press journalists on the 18th June 2018, at Aizawl Press Club, Mary Lalparliani, FDWA Aizawl City Coordinator and a few of the office bearers including their Advisor, Aizawl Theological College Professor, Vanlaltlani (2018) highlighted the urgent need for setting up a proper agency for hiring these maid servants or domestic workers in Aizawl (The Zozam Times, 2018).

Vanlaltlani (2019) a professor of Aizawl Theological College and Adviser to Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance, Aizawl City have come up with certain guidelines to be followed when hiring a domestic worker. In her article on “Awmpui Rawih Chungchang” published in the local newspaper Vanglaini, June 15 2019, she has earnestly invited the government and the concerned departments to come up with laws and regulation in the employment and hiring of domestic workers in the state.

2.5 Methodological Review of Literature

Below are the methodological reviews of literature divided into the following sub-heads for better understanding of the topic of research: Descriptive and Qualitative studies; Sampling procedures; Quantitative studies; and Government reports.

2.5.1 Descriptive and Qualitative Studies

Anderson (2000) “Doing the dirty work? The global politics of domestic labour” is descriptive in nature and explores the lives and work of women migrant domestic workers who face domestic oppression based on race and class aspects.

Benet (1972), Oakley (1974), Higgs (1983), Hochschild (1989), Pandhya and Patel (2010) all descriptive studies of working women at home and at their workplace, juggling various roles of the wife, mother, secretary, domestic maids, etc. From their study we know that throughout history, women and domestic service go hand in hand, and this gets more demanding when women take up jobs outside of her household where she again has a double burden and is made to act like an office wife.

Bennet (1972) wrote a book called ‘Secretary: An Inquiry into the Female Ghetto’ which is a qualitative descriptive study of women in the U.S. with about 7 million working women in low paying jobs with low status, stuck in a congested working space, i.e. their office.

Bernadin-Costa’s (2014) *Intersectionality and female domestic workers’ union in Brazil* is a qualitative study conducted in 2006 in Brazil where the researcher collected materials based on interviewing unionized domestic workers. One of the

important methodologies used was ‘ethical listening’, i.e., to taking into consideration the victims who are voiceless and oppressed with the use of the concept of intersectionality.

Bino, Datta and Murthy (2011) and Chandramouli (2018) give an analysis on the working and living conditions of domestic workers in Mumbai is an exploratory study of 1510 domestic workers enabling basic entitlement to a certain section of the women workforce, their bargaining power and lack of security.

Brites (2013) “Domestic Work: issues, literature and policies” is mainly thematic in nature and the article draws insights from Brazil and Latin America and gives numerous features intersecting while referring to the plight of the domestic workers. The variety of themes pointed out are recruitment, unionisation, lack of legal protection, and migrations.

Caplow’s (1954) book ‘The Sociology of Work’ is a basic qualitative study of occupational sociology describing social structure, effects of working conditions, occupational groupings and segregation, specialization, status attached to occupations, aspects of mobility, individual career patterns, women’s occupations and channels of improvement within the working conditions.

Dave (2012) ‘Women Workers in Unorganised Sector’ is a qualitative study of women engaged in the unorganised sector as construction workers, domestic helpers and agriculture labourers to comprehend the nature of their work, working conditions, their socio-economic conditions, wage pattern, wage discrimination and various others problems faced by them. The tool used was multistage stratified random sampling technique which was collected from 350 women labourers of three districts of Haryana i.e., Panipat, Kaithal and Kurukshetra. It was found that the women workers were exploited because of their poverty, illiteracy and indebtedness. The migrant women were mostly engaged as helpers, coolies’ labourers, all unskilled and low paying jobs.

Higgs (1983) “Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England” is a historical study of women and domestic service. The study examines the reasons

behind the ‘fall of the Victorian servant’ which can be linked to the declining middle-class demand when the Great Depression took place in England. Detailed interviews were conducted by Hochschild (1989) among 50 working couples and their homes observed in the study.

Jain and Mishra (2018) “Demand for Domestic Workers in India: Its Characteristics and Correlates” paper pertaining to urban households’ demand for domestic workers. Information from National Sample Survey Organisation on unemployment, employment, and consumption pattern across Indian states were taken.

Kasturi (1997) ‘Domestic Servant in Urban Delhi’ is a qualitative study discussing the plight of female domestic servants in Delhi, who are mostly migrants faced with a couple of psychological and socio-economic problems. The paper explains further the mental strain and trauma faced by the female domestic workers at their workplace.

Kaur (2006) ‘Migrating for work: Rewriting gender relations’ explores and analyses the concept of migration dealing with the experience of poor female migrant domestic workers settling in Delhi, India. NSS data have been used to analyse the rising number of female domestic workers in the metropolitan city of the capital.

Keefe (2002) ‘A Woman’s Work is Never Done: An Analysis of Domestic Work, Race, Class and Gender’ is an analytical and theoretical study of Latina women domestic workers hailing from Latin America and the United States. The focus of attention in this study rests on such themes as “double day”, intersectionality, migration, immigration/emigration, working conditions, mobility and household management. Interviews were conducted with the migrant workers using the interview guide to probe questions and also did participant observation at weekly meetings with the domestic workers.

Lutz’s (2008) *Migration and Domestic Work: A European Perspective on a Global Theme* is a theoretical collection of work by contributors discussing different theoretical and methodological perspectives which are interdisciplinary in nature. There is an ongoing feminization of migration who perform cleaning, caring and

cooking- the three Cs- slowly becoming a global phenomenon.

Lutz (2011) *The New Maids: Transnational Women and the Care Economy* is a descriptive and conceptual study documenting maids through the ages, the transnational female migrants and their employers, of the change and continuities and intersectionality regarding the old maids and the new-age globalized household maids of today in the care services.

Mantouvalou (2006) “Servitude and Forced Labour in the 21st Century: The Human Rights of Domestic Workers” describes the problems and vulnerability of migrant domestic workers examining the relationship between international laws pertaining to human rights and labour laws. The paper is an analytical and conceptual in nature bringing into light modern form of slavery called ‘domestic slavery’.

Oakley (1974) *Housewife* is a theoretical analysis of women juggling the role of wife, mother and housekeeper. Oakley undertakes four case studies in order to trace the evolution of the role of housewife with the effects of industrialization and the position that women have come to occupy recently.

Pandya and Patel (2010) *Women in the Unorganised Sector of India* examine the issues that women face in the unorganised sector of India and tackles the theme of ‘double burden of work’ which indicates the dual time consumption of fulfilling socially productive labour and reproductive labour. Government programmes and policies are taken into account. The study incorporates a case study of women engaged in embroidery industry of Surat City in Gujarat.

Perez and Pedro (2017) “Vulnerable Women in a Thriving Country: An Analysis of Twenty-First Century Domestic Workers in Peru and recommendations for future Research” is qualitative research that analyses concepts and theories like gender intersectionality, ethnicity and migration status, rights of domestic workers and class that is equally crucial to the understanding of paid domestic workers.

Ray and Qayum (2009) *Cultures of Servitude, Modernity, Domesticity and Class in India* is a theoretical and an ethnographical presentation of domestic life and

servitude in modern day Kolkata with comparisons of New York city. The study focusses on interactions of servants and employers, men and women consisting of many generations and cutting across class barriers in a globalized economy.

Romero (1992) *Maid in the U.S.A.* conducts her theoretical and qualitative research based on the study of Chicanas, i.e., women of Mexican descent born and raised in the United States working as domestic maids, with non-structured free flowing, and open-ended interviews. The interviews mostly took place in the women's homes, 25 open-ended interviews were conducted.

2.5.2 Sampling Procedures

Augustine and Singh (2016) while studying female domestic workers, their conditions and problems in Lucknow City used purposive sampling to collect data from 100 respondents. Structured interview schedule was used during the year May 2015 April to May. Sachdeva and Arora (2018) also used purposive and convenient sampling technique totalling 220 respondents to conduct a study of domestic workers, both full time and part time in Kolkata. A survey questionnaire and self-prepared questionnaire with four case studies was conducted for the study.

Augustine and Singh (2016) "Condition & Problems of Female Domestic Workers (With Special Reference to L.D.A. Colony in Lucknow City, India)" is a descriptive study of women domestic of L.D.A Colony, Kanpur Road, Lucknow City workers describing their problems and conditions. Purposive Sampling was used to collect data from 100 respondents using structured interview schedule during the year 2015 April to May.

Sachdeva and Arora (2018) "Working & Living Conditions of Domestic Workers: Indispensable Yet Unprotected" is a demographic study to investigate the working and living conditions of domestic workers in Kolkata with the use of purposive and convenient sampling technique totalling 220 respondents, both full-time and part-time domestic workers.

2.5.3 Qualitative and Quantitative Studies

Banerjee and Knight (1985) Caste Discrimination in the Urban Labour Market undertake the quantitative method to study caste in Indian urban labour market shedding light in a caste ridden society various government policy and discrimination theory. A survey was conducted in Delhi to ascertain the wage-earning differences between scheduled and non-scheduled castes. Chesters (2012) “Gender Attitudes and Housework: Trends over Time in Australia” conducts quantitative study based on data collected during 1986, 1993 and 2005 by three cross-sectional survey to determine gender roles and attitudes and the compares the contribution of men to undertake household task at different levels.

Mehrotra (2010) ‘Jagori’ “Domestic Worker Condition, Rights and Responsibilities”, A study of part-time domestic work in Delhi, a quantitative study using interview and quantitative data collection along with focus group discussions. The study is based on survey, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions between the period of November 2008 and October 2009. It conducted interviews with employers and part-time domestic workers of Madanpur Khadar. Moreover, in-depth interviews were held with 50 domestic workers to know the reasons for entry into the business, family history and related issues on domestic work.

Vimala (2010) ‘Socio economic status of domestic servants- a case study of Therissur Corporation to Kerala Research Programme’ on local level development, Thiruvananthapuram is a quantitative study of domestic servants conducted with data collected through direct interview by means of a schedule prepared selecting 50 respondents by purposive sampling method. Zahniser (1999) One Border, Two Nations: Mexican Migration to the United States uses quantitative type of method to study migration patterns on the Mexico-to-U.S. and the U.S.-to-Mexico transitions since migration tend to be a persistent phenomenon year after year.

2.5.4 Reports

This section gathers information from ILO Reports, WIEGO Reports, Human Rights Watch Reports and Government Reports.

ILO (International Labour Organization) reports and ILO-WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing) reports 1972, 2003, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2018, 2019, etc. were consulted for the study on domestic workers, informal economy, employment of the domestic workers and their working conditions. ILO-WIEGO primarily focuses attention on securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women in the informal economy, giving them recognition, rights and opportunities.

The concept of Decent Work is a core agenda prioritised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). It becomes an essential foundation for assessing working conditions and promoting decent work as “productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.” Decent Work is supported by four interconnected pillars: Employment Creations, Social Protection, Workplace Rights and Social Dialogue.

For domestic work, the concept is especially powerful because this sector is often characterised by **informality, isolation, and a lack of legal protection**, making the workers extremely vulnerable to exploitation.

UNDP Human Development Report 2000 stresses upon the attainment of human rights as the true realization of human development. In its 2019 report the UNDP addresses the issue of inequalities and suggests measures of improving human development by prescribing quality education at all ages along with restructuring already existing policy goals, which had been earlier reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2.5.5 Overview of Methodological Review

An overview of the methodological review consists of four sub-heads, namely descriptive and qualitative research, sampling procedures, quantitative research and reports. Majority of the literature reviewed used qualitative research and information from ILO, WIEGO, Human Rights Watch and Government Reports have been incorporated in this section. The most commonly used sampling procedure is the purposive and convenient sampling technique, along with a questionnaire and interview method and a few case studies were conducted.

2.6 Overview of Literature Reviewed

This section relates to an overview of literature reviewed in this chapter so as to locate the research gap and rationale for the present study. The types of literature reviewed are systematically presented in the form of the following table.

Table 2.1
Types of Literature Classified

Sl.No	LITERATURE	No.	PROMINENT AUTHORS
1.	Theoretical	63	Hoschild, Hart, Higgs, Oakley, Keefe, Lutz, Ray and Qayum, Romero, Bennet, Anderson, Brites, Mantouvalou, Butler, Sharma, Acker, Goffman, Zelizer,
2.	Thematic	56	Smith, Anderson, Pedraza, Bernadin-Costa, Bino, Datta & Venkatesha, Caplow, Hensman, Chandramouli, Jain & Mishra, Kasturi, Chandramouli, Brites, Chesters, Caplow, Kaur, Pandya and Patel, Romero, Parennas
3.	Methodological	38	Mehrotra, Sachdeva & Arora, Vimala, Dave, Jain and Mishra, Augustine and Singh, Banerjee and Knight, Chesters, Bang et. al., Vimala, Zahniser
4.	Reports	20	ILO Reports, ILO-WIEGO, UNDP, Human Rights Watch, Jagori

2.7 Research Gap and Rationale of the Study

From the above review of literature on domestic workers it was felt that domestic workers are mostly women from poorer sections of the society, migrants, who are subjected to various kinds of exploitation, where employment is of the informal type with ease of entry, lowly paid, and unregulated in terms of laws and legislation. However, some topics not adequately covered are the topics of push and pull factors, financial freedom, their networking skills, gains of migration, and the empowerment on the part of the domestic workers. These sub themes were also taken up as mentioned in the objectives and covered while studying the domestic workers in the present study.

Hardly any work has been covered and studied so far on the topic of domestic workers in the state of Mizoram. Therefore, the study is crucial for understanding Mizo society and gives importance to an extremely vital but neglected section of the Mizo household without whose help it is difficult to get by for many families in Aizawl.

From the above analysis of the review exercise, majority of the study and research done on domestic workers come under the theoretical and thematic types of research, however, a good number of works has also been done using the quantitative analysis and reports and studies of governments and non-government organizations are available while studying the transformation in the field of domestic work and domestic labour. The themes are seen to be largely of western origin though the literature under thematic heads is covering the countries across the globe including India. Methodologically, the studies are found to be largely qualitative and analytical in nature as the best viable option. The names included under the list of prominent authors may not be inclusive or exhaustive. There has been no deliberate omission. The next chapter deals with the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Introduction**
- 3.2 Objectives of the study**
- 3.3 Research design**
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CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research is essentially a search for knowledge that entails a process of seeking for relevant information on a specific subject using a scientific and systematic approach (Naidoo, 2011). Research finds answers to unanswered questions. The researcher attempts to uncover, develop, and validate knowledge. Research technique describes a researcher's desired path of action in their research. Thus, research technique refers to a researcher's whole approach to a study in order to produce valid and trustworthy results that fulfil the problem's objectives and goals. Methodology includes taking into account the conceptual framework that guides the selection of particular techniques. A thorough plan of the research problem from start to finish and produce results that are supported by science is outlined in research methodology. Research technique is a systematic strategy to solving the research challenge. It could be viewed as a science that studies scientific research methods. It discusses the various methods a researcher usually uses to analyse his research challenge and the justifications for each. In addition to research methodologies and procedures, the researcher must have a solid understanding of methodology (Sreekumar, 2023).

This chapter describes the necessary procedures, methods, and methodology used from the outset to achieve the desired outcome of the current research project. In this regard, it is critical to highlight the key research procedures used as methodological processes to complete the current work. The research aims and methodology, which include the justification of the research design, sampling process, data sources, data collection methodologies, data processing and analysis, and research ethics, are presented.

3.2 Objectives of the study

The foundation of each research endeavour is its research goals. They provide a defined objective and direction for the research. A research objective helps the investigator stay focused and on course during the investigation. A research aim is a list of specific, measurable, and reachable goals that a researcher hopes to accomplish within a specific time frame. They break down the objectives of the research into smaller, easier-to-manage components and explicitly define the goals and how to get them.

The main objectives of the current study are to explore and assess domestic workers in Aizawl, their working circumstances, and the different challenges that arise as the domestic workers have become a vital part of modern society. The research's precise objectives include the following:

1. to find out the socio-economic profile and the migration pattern of the domestic workers
2. to locate the nature of their work and working conditions
3. to delve into the gender relations and relations of power between employer and employee
4. to examine the role of NGOs, GOs towards the welfare of the domestic workers
5. to study the problem dimensions and to recommend solutions to such problems

3.3 Research Design

A research design is a methodical, logical approach that guides a study. Design research entails converting a broad scientific paradigm into a variety of studies (Sreekumar, 2023). Time, energy, and financial resources must all be taken into consideration when designing. Additionally, the degree to which individuals or social groups that are able to provide data can be forced to do so depends on the availability of data. A research design is a carefully thought-out setup of parameters for data

collecting and analysis that seeks to balance economic method with relevance to the study goal.

The study uses an exploratory design and it incorporates both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

Qualitative approaches assist in providing a thorough description of complicated events, grasp unique events or unexpected occurrences which allows researchers to have a deeper grasp of the situation. Qualitative approach can provide valuable insights about the exact conditions and social reality of the domestic workers who are under-represented and voiceless in the larger society.

Qualitative data are those that are presented orally or through narratives. Qualitative data is collected through direct encounters with people, such as one-on-one or group interviews. A variety of sampling methods are used. For this study, an interview schedule is used to collect data.

Quantitative study involves numerically representing and manipulating observations to explain their underlying processes. It is utilised in various natural and social sciences, such as physics, biology, psychology, sociology, and geology.

The quantitative technique collects and analyses numerical data to answer scientific research questions. One can average, uncover trends, forecast, summarise, investigate causal linkages, and generalize results to broader populations by employing a quantitative method. Quantitative inquiry is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It can be used for phenomena that can be expressed quantitatively. Researchers use quantitative data to quantify an issue or to answer the “what” or “how many” parts of a research inquiry. In other words, quantifiable numerical data that can be counted or compared. The most often utilised research framework in the social sciences is the quantitative approach. It outlines a number of techniques, strategies, and assumptions that are applied to analyse numerical patterns in order to look at social, psychological, and economic events. For quantitative research, a range of numerical data are collected. The most often utilised research framework in the social sciences is the quantitative approach. It outlines a number of

techniques, strategies, and assumptions that analyse numerical patterns in order to look at social, psychological, and economic events.

3.4 Universe and Sampling

Universe refers to the whole of people or things in a certain spatial or social area in statistical terminology. The whole collection of units under investigation is represented by the universe.

The study is conducted in Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram. Aizawl since being the capital of Mizoram, attracts migrants from various parts of the state and also from neighbouring states of Assam, Tripura, and from Myanmar, and Bangladesh as well. The affluence of the middle classes, coupled with education and employment of women has opened doors for domestic workers generating employment for the women of the poor sections from rural places, natives as well as migrants from other states and across the international border. Therefore, the growing city of Aizawl serves as an appropriate place of study because there has been a steady rise in population domestic workers. It is in this context that the present study had been conducted.

The universe of the survey includes the following groups of respondents:

1. Domestic Workers, both *Riak* /Full Time and *Lang*/ Part-time indifferent localities within Aizawl city.
2. Agencies like Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance (FDWA), Peace Home in Durtlang, Mizoram Maid Agencies,
3. Government Personnel of Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneur (LESDE) under Government of Mizoram as Key Informants
4. Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) a non-government organisation working for the issues and upliftment of women as Key Informant.

The Ferrando Domestic Workers' Alliance (FDWA) is a non-government organization that focuses on working for the welfare of domestic workers. In the state of Mizoram, the domestic workers movement is said to have begun with Sr. Rose Hainuangte Paite, founder of the Ferrando Integrated Women Development

Centre in Aizawl. Working with migrant workers, school dropouts, and the mobility of domestic workers are its main concerns. The FDWA has joined together with other groups to commemorate occasions like Domestic Workers' Day and Northeast Domestic Workers' Week. Their goal is to uphold and advance the rights, dignity, and unity of domestic workers in north-eastern India.

One of the biggest non-governmental organisations in Mizoram is the Mizo Women's Organisation, also known as Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) was founded on July 6, 1974, and registered under the Society Act 1860 (Act XXI of 1960) Registration No. 5 of 1977. The capital city of Mizoram, Aizawl, is home to its headquarters. One community-based voluntary organisation with particular goals centred on charitable social service is MHIP. As an NGO, MHIP seeks to improve the lives of the underprivileged, with a particular focus on Mizo women and children.

The MHIP is one of the largest voluntary organisations in Mizoram. The work area extends across the entire state of Mizoram. The organisation is divided into seven (7) sub-headquarters, each named after a district headquarters in Mizoram. Membership is open to all women over the age of 14. Since MHIP is a women's organisation, the majority of its activities focus on the empowerment of women and children. Some of the numerous activities include campaigning against crimes against women, defending the issues of destitute women, and serving as family counsellors for women who experience battering, domestic abuse, and violence at the hands of their spouses at home.

Sample design

A sample is a subset of the population under study; it serves as a representation of the greater population and is used to make conclusions about it. Two sampling methods are commonly employed by sociologists: probability-based and non-probability-based methods. With these methods, they can produce many types of samples.

To comprehend the position and reality of domestic women workers in Aizawl, we need a solid definition and technique for specifying their working conditions. In this case, we have collected data about domestic workers using proper approaches. To acquire the data, we are employing a qualitative technique. Qualitative methods are an exploratory method of inquiry that often entails researching an unfamiliar subject matter, sensitive themes, or difficult-to-access populations. It is a strategy, not a specific set of techniques. This study focuses on the qualitative approaches that were used to analyse the methodology in order to capture the situations and daily realities of domestic workers in Aizawl city. This study's qualitative approach provides insight by concentrating on new themes and patterns that emerged throughout time.

With the non-probability sampling, samples are collected in a method that does not provide every member of a population with an equal chance of being chosen. There are numerous circumstances in which selecting a non-probability sampling technique is the best option for the specific research question or stage of the study, even though doing so may lead to biased data or a limited capacity to draw broad conclusions from the results.

Even if this sample technique has limitations, it can be helpful if the researcher wishes to examine the traits of those employed in private residences at a specific moment, particularly if doing so would not be achievable otherwise.

Since official statistics is unavailable, sample is convenient and purposive in nature. Adequate number of samples were collected to cover both *Riak* or Full-time and *Lang* or Part-time domestic workers. Samples also include stakeholders from Govt. Officials, Civil Society, Alliances of domestic workers and related forums.

1. A sample of 226 domestic workers were selected as of 2019 who were chosen through convenient sampling method. In 2019, out of the 226 domestic workers, 112 are selected from live-in /full-time/*riak* workers consisting 57 native Mizo domestic workers and 55 non-native full-time domestic workers. Another 114 domestic workers were selected from live-out/ part-time/ *lang* consisting 60 part-time domestic workers native to Mizoram and 54 from the part-time domestic

workers, from outside the state of Mizoram.

2. Using the same sampling technique, 226 samples were gathered from 42 distinct neighbourhoods in the city under the Aizawl Municipal Corporation in Mizoram that were listed in the domestic worker's alliance. Interviews were also conducted with officials, representatives of various domestic worker organisations, and volunteers for the Domestic Workers Alliance.
3. The overall sample size to represent domestic workers in Aizawl is 226, with the goal of shedding light on the study's first objective, which is to determine the socio-economic profile and migration patterns of domestic workers in Aizawl, Mizoram.

3.5 Principle of Inclusion and Exclusion

The sociological viewpoint of domestic workers in Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, is the main focus of the current study. The socio-economic background of the domestic workers, their migration patterns, their jobs and working conditions, the problems and concerns they encounter, and any solutions offered to them in Aizawl are the main topics of the study. The study takes into account how domestic workers are becoming more and more valued in Mizo households' social structures.

Due to time constraints, the survey did not include domestic workers from other districts, either urban or rural. Male domestic workers were excluded from the study because there are very few of them in Mizoram. Hence, this study included only women domestic workers that are currently residing in Aizawl district.

3.6 Sources of data

This study employs an exploratory design using both qualitative and quantitative, with a stronger emphasis on qualitative analysis, incorporating data gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Interview schedules, non-participant observation, case studies, and key informant interviews are used to gather primary data. The respondents were interviewed face-to-face using an interview schedule that was designed with their convenience in mind. Prior consent was obtained from the respondents throughout the fieldwork, and every effort was made to conduct the

interviews at their convenience. Field observation is an important component of field work, and a case study was completed during the fieldwork. Key informant interviews were conducted to get pertinent information from NGOs and government representatives.

The study uses secondary sources that offer pertinent information about the research topic, such as the body of existing literature on domestic workers, including books, journals, newspaper clippings, published and unpublished theses, research articles, Reports of Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneur Department, Government of Mizoram.

3.7 Pilot Study

Pilot research, which is a special pre-testing of the schedule prior to a full-scale investigation, was carried out after the interview questions were constructed. The purpose of this pilot study was to evaluate the applicability of the structured and unstructured research questions as well as the completion and success of the interview schedule for the primary stakeholders, who are the domestic workers, full-time *riak*, and part-time *lang*. A deeper comprehension of the subject matter was made possible by the pilot study. Engaging with respondents who were more knowledgeable about the challenges faced by domestic workers provided greater understanding of the study's goals.

Pilot study was conducted for a period of 5 months in the year 2018. During pilot study, 10 women domestic workers were interviewed and interacted with. These 10 women were selected from localities who are easily accessible by the researcher and they are Mission Veng, Tuikhuahtlang, Kulikawn, Sikulpuikawn, Ramhlun Veng, Tuikual South, Khatla, Nursery Veng, Bungkawn and Maubawk. One-woman domestic worker was selected from each locality in Aizawl city. The researcher ventured into the field from August 2018 which went on until December 2018. Each woman was being interviewed for a period of 3 days each, as they could allocate only around 1 hour or the interview due to the nature of their hectic work schedule.

During the pilot study, it was found that most of the domestic workers work in a household with large income and are mostly working in a well-to-do family. The head of the families were mainly absent during the interview process as they all had to attend office work. The women all had a positive relationship with the families that they work with, and they had reported that they never experience assault and mistreatment from the families that they worked for. 15 questions had to be scrap off from the original interview schedule with topics regarding assault and maltreatment. However, from the process of the pilot study, domestic workers were divided into two categories which are *lang and riak*, which means women who reside in the houses of the families that they worked for and those women who came to work only during the day. From this point, questions were added with regard to the differences in terms of experiences between the two types of women domestic workers. After editing the interview schedule from the outcome of the pilot study, final interview schedule was then prepared.

3.8 Interview Schedule

An interview schedule is a device composed of a series of questions that are asked and completed by an interviewer in a face-to-face setting with the interviewee. Because it is conducted directly, the researcher has an opportunity to create rapport with the respondents. After performing a pilot survey, the interview schedule for the current study's primary stakeholders was finalised and ready to be utilised for field study of the domestic workers in Aizawl.

Initially, a list of many significant issues on which enquiries would be raised was created. A search of relevant literature on the subject provided insights into the questions. The next stage was to draft an actual set of questions for the schedule. The number of questions to be asked about an element, the language used, the order of the questions, and the structure of the responses were all taken into consideration. After the pilot survey was finished, inconsistencies and contradictions in the structure of the prepared questions and response alternatives were identified. As a result, corrections were made by adding relevant questions and removing irrelevant ones, some unclear questions were improved, more options were added to the

response category where necessary, and the interview schedule for *riak* or full-time and *lang* or part-time domestic workers was restructured and finalised for field work.

The current study necessitated the data of interviews for the respondents, of both full-time/*riak* and part-time/*lang* domestic workers, as well as government personnel. Furthermore, an interview for non-governmental groups dealing with domestic workers in Aizawl was scheduled. Points for conducting interviews were noted down for Key Informants, including government officials from the Labour, Employment, Skill Development, and Entrepreneurial Department, the Government of Mizoram, and leaders of the Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) and Ferrando Domestic Workers' Alliance and were also prepared. Questions were also developed for seven case studies of domestic workers in Aizawl.

The interview schedule for the study of domestic workers in Aizawl includes 107 questions, 90 of which are structured and 18 of which are open-ended, as well as two tables on family/household characteristics, item heads, and expenditure. Structured questions are intended to elicit one of the predefined sets of answer possibilities tailored to the questions. The interview schedule consists primarily of scripted questions designed for easy transfer to a computer. The structured questions were separated into five key headings: (1) Personal information and socioeconomic profile (2) socioeconomic profile and migration pattern of domestic workers (4) employment and working conditions of domestic workers (5) gender relations and power relationships between employer and employee. Under the aforementioned subject headings, every question has been grouped in serial sequence. Additionally, open-ended enquiries have been made to elicit thoughts and perspectives on the research problem.

The interactions with Key Informants were informal, with questions regarding personal information about the *riak* and *lang* domestic workers, their views in general about the plight of domestic workers in Aizawl. The interaction with Key Informants mostly consisted of enquiries about domestic workers, their working history, issues they have encountered, their pay, and their prospects for the future.

3.9 Operationalisation of the Key Concepts

Informal Sector: Informal Sector is a term coined by Keith Hart, a British anthropologist in 1972 while studying economic activities of rural migrants in engaged in informal activities having autonomous capacity for generating incomes in Accra, Ghana. Informal economy corresponds with low levels of organisation, small-scale production, and casual employment, lack of protection without any job security or health insurance. The most vulnerable sections of the society comprising of women, children, minorities, and illegal immigrants are prime targets of this exploitation. The informal sector organisations do not seek to overturn the class system, but represent a challenge to hierarchical class relations.

Urban Informal Sector: International Labour Organization ILO (2021) defines the informal sector as all economic activities by workers and economic units that are in law or practice—either not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements, unlike the formal counterparts. In developing countries, the informal sector accounts for up to half of the economic activity. It provides a livelihood for billions of people. Nevertheless, its role in economic development remains controversial. The controversial issues of the role played by the informal sector in absorbing urban unemployed youth have attracted great interest in the economic development literature.

Domestic Worker: When defining the term “domestic worker”, the delegates to the International Labour Conference supported a general formulation that draws on the common feature of domestic workers that they work for private households. The Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), reflects this when it defines “domestic workers” in Article 1:

- c. The term “domestic work” means work performed in or for a household or households;
- d. The term “domestic worker” means any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship; a person who performs domestic work only occasionally or sporadically and not on an occupation basis is not a domestic worker.

Domestic workers are those who perform a variety of tasks for and in other people's homes like cooking, cleaning the house and looking after children.

Gender: It refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender identity is not confined to a binary (girl/woman, boy/man) nor is it static; it exists along a continuum and can change over time. There is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender through the roles they take on, the expectations placed on them, relations with others and the complex ways that gender is institutionalized in society.

3.10 Research experience

There is only a small body of research literature on domestic workers in Mizoram, which posed a significant challenge in starting the research for a review of the literature and subsequent preparation for the technique for collecting data for the current study. Due to the scarcity of study work on domestic workers in Mizoram, conducting research on domestic workers in Mizoram became even more difficult for the researcher. Aside from the limited research papers on domestic workers in Mizoram, data collection, classification, and consolidation of literatures on domestic workers enabled the writing of the study's rationale, the preparation of an interview schedule, the conduct of a pilot survey, and the finalisation of data collection tools. Fieldwork on domestic workers and other respondents began in December 2021 and continued until December 2022, with interviews for key informants and NGOs completing in July 2023.

Before approaching the potential respondents, informed consent was taken. Contacting unknown employers of domestic workers requesting them for an interview was not fruitful many times. Being busy with their household chores, some employers and employees were cautious and reluctant to be interviewed and many declined the researcher's request for interview. Some agreed but could not be contacted again and so were not approachable for interview. The researcher had to

convince them about the purpose of the interview and some reluctantly agreed and were approached. In such cases, interviewees answered open-ended questions briefly and since the schedule had 150 questions, expression of irritation and impatience could be detected, and their answers were cautiously given afraid of revealing too much.

Prior consent from the domestic workers as well as their employers if the interview was conducted during working hours, had to be taken before the interview of the respondents. Many of the potential respondents of domestic workers declined the chance to be interviewed for fear of revealing their identity and their opinion being disclosed. Moreover, the most challenging part was that since the domestic workers, both full time and part-time had employers who controlled much of their employee's working environment, the employer's consent was necessary and the researcher also had to have a good rapport with the employers of the domestic workers. Furthermore, it was necessary to select a secure area of the house for the interview in order to ensure that the respondent provided truthful answers to the questions and was not distracted by the employers who hovered around the area where the interviewer and interviewee were present. The domestic workers interviewed exhibit reluctance and impatience in responding to the questions posed to them because they had to complete nearly 100 questions, including about 20 open-ended questions, for the interview schedule, which took up about 45 minutes of their valuable time to complete the housework that their employers had assigned them.

However, several interviewees were quite eager to share their experiences of their daily activities and favourite domestic chores, and they were also very interested and passionate about the research. Both the domestic workers, *riak* and *lang*, gave detailed accounts of their work schedules and the types of tasks they were given. The domestic workers' accounts of how well their employers treated them were among the most important experiences they shared. Typically, domestic workers were excited to tell their stories about how their employers made them feel so welcome and at home that they felt like one of the members of the family.

As the interview was taking place at their place of employment, some of the interviewees were preoccupied with their everyday tasks, which include cleaning the house (sweeping, mopping, dusting, babysitting and gardening), cooking, cleaning clothes, cleaning dishes, and more. Prior to the interview, the majority of the domestic workers' work had to be temporarily halted, which took up their time and occasionally caused inconvenience for both their employers and the workers. Even yet, many of them were able to carry on working while responding to the questions posed to them. This was more practical for the part-time domestic workers because it did not interfere with their time performing the household tasks that were given to them to finish that day.

Nonetheless, the interview environment got uncomfortable and embarrassing when the respondents' families or their employers were in the vicinity of the spot. The employers of the domestic workers frequently gave the researcher unpleasant looks and made impatient glances and gestures. The researcher assured the respondent that the data would be kept confidential and utilised exclusively for intellectual and educational purposes. The researcher conducted a limited number of telephone interviews with the respondents since they were unable to commit the time required for a full in-person interview.

The majority of the time, fieldwork on employers was difficult. Because it was inconvenient for both the employer and the employee to have the interview on the same day from the same household, different dates and times, as well as other households and persons, had to be selected for the interview, making it an incredibly time-consuming and different process required. Aside from their hectic schedule, the interview was not always the best time due to domestic conflicts and problems experienced by the domestic workers. There were several occasions when previously scheduled interview dates were missed. It was necessary to set up another convenient time for a successful interview, which further delayed the field study and increased the amount of time and money spent on the research. However, the second time around, both the interviewer and the respondent found such field research and interviews to be enlightening, entertaining, and educational. This made the interview

lot more relaxed and made it easier to engage with each other because they had already spoken to each other.

Key informant interviews included government officials, social workers, leaders of NGOs like the Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP). The NGO leaders were supportive of the research and provided engaging and educational interactions.

Although integrating the interview that was set up with the employers and agents of domestic workers as key informants was not a simple undertaking, the interactions with them were particularly enriching. Because they were also working alongside the with domestic workers, the leaders and officials of the Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance (FDWA) had limited time for interviews due to their busy schedules. The researcher feels thankful and honoured to have had the chance to talk to them in spite of their tight schedules.

The entire field work experience was amazing and educational. Generally speaking, the respondents were helpful and kind, and establishing a connection was easy. The respondents greatly aided the study by contributing pertinent information and essential inputs. The researcher was able to obtain pertinent inputs for data analysis and interpretation by recording the narratives of the respondents and key informants. asking them about their normal workday, including the hours they put in, the activities they completed, the subtleties of their relationships with their employers, the conflicts and abuse they experienced, and their knowledge of their legal, healthcare, and security benefits. The researcher kept a research journal in which the experiences are documented from everyday field work.

3.11 Analysis of data

Data processing began with the completion of fieldwork using an interview schedule and interview recording that completed data collecting. Included in the data are case study notes, feedback from key informants, and the completed interview schedule that the researcher utilised during the field survey when gathering information from the informants. The information obtained from the completed interview schedule was carefully reviewed and edited to ensure that it was complete and readable and to find

any errors or omissions. In order to facilitate coding and tabulation, minor errors were corrected and incomplete responses were filled in.

It was necessary to organise and present the obtained data, also known as the raw data, in a clear and understandable manner in order to enable additional statistical analysis. It was crucial that the researcher reduce the amount of data into a format that was easier to understand and absorb. The dual procedures of data tabulation and classification were so required. Developing a comprehensive classification scheme was the initial stage of data processing. The term “classification of data” refers to the arrangement of the raw data into several groups or classes having similar features. Data classification is the process of grouping data into groups based on shared traits to derive meaningful correlations which is essential to all forms of analytical investigations and assessments.

After gathering all the data, the investigator carefully reviewed and double-checked each completed interview schedule. In order to convert the responses into numerical values or allocate numbers to the different categories of a variable for use in data analysis, the necessary coding was completed. Five categories were used to separate the data: 1) Their socio-economic background; 2) The nature of work and working conditions; 3) The power dynamics between employers and employees; 4) The role of NGOs and GOs in promoting the welfare of domestic workers; and 5) The problem dimensions and solutions to such problems faced by the domestic workers.

All the questions were carefully classified and placed into the categories mentioned in the above points. They are then divided into separate chapters based on their classifications.

Tabulation was the next stage after editing and classification, during which the facts were arranged and displayed in tables and figures. The goal of tabulation was to provide the data in an organised manner so that the results could be seen more simply overall. In a table, data has been methodically organised into rows and columns. It also makes it easier to read, comprehend, and compare the data. In total, there are a total of 90 tables and each chapter had 30 tables accordingly. After

tabulating the findings, the researcher then analysed and interpret the data under each table. After the interpretation and analysis, contextualisation with the existing body of literature and theories were then made and the entire interpretations were then overviewed by the researcher.

Data analysis is the process of breaking down data into its component elements to find answers to research questions. The process of turning the collected raw data into thoughts and facts that make sense and can be comprehended either subjectively or statistically is known as data analysis. It entails examining the tabulated data to uncover hidden meanings or truths. It involves breaking down existing complex elements into smaller, easier-to-manage sections and rearranging them to make interpretation easier.

With an emphasis on qualitative data as its analytical framework, the current study employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This is to make it easier for the gathered data to be used comprehensively and cooperatively throughout data analysis. Codification was done on the raw data so that it could be analysed quantitatively. Every response was input into the computer, and each question was given its own code. Coding refers to the practice of assigning a number or other symbol to responses so that they can be categorised into a limited number of classes or categories.

For statistical or quantitative analysis, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) has been utilised. Analysis of open-ended questions was done separately. Inferences have been made from the analysis and calculations of the percentages of replies.

The present study has chosen to analyse its qualitative data using the “lived experiences” method. A discipline with philosophical roots, phenomenology provides a way to document people’s actual experiences. Actually, by using this paradigm, it is feasible to discover phenomena from the perspective of how people interpret and provide meaning to their lives. One way to describe a lived experience is as a distinct, ongoing process that originates “from within.” Phenomenological

study is primarily concerned with lived experiences, but its goal is not to understand people's lived experiences as facts, but rather to determine the meaningful relevance of these experiences. Additionally, lived experience is recollective, which means that rather than reflecting on an event as it occurs, a particular experience is reflected upon after it has been lived. In order to comprehend the meanings that the research participants attach to their everyday actions in their entrepreneurial endeavours, the current study focusses on the experiences that they have had.

The narrative analysis method is also used in the qualitative data analysis of the research to better comprehend the domestic workers' narratives of their stories. The basic purpose of narrative analysis is to comprehend human experiences and motives in order to find meanings and themes. This involves an in-depth assessment of the stories that individuals tell in a given situation. Narratives allow for direct access to people's inner life. By diving into people's tales, narrative analysis allows researchers to better comprehend the specific meanings, reasons, and interpretations that shape their lives.

In addition, an exhaustive analysis of five individual cases was conducted to supplement the qualitative data from the research on domestic workers. Case studies have been conducted to get in-depth information both inside and outside of their workplaces using unstructured interview schedules. The phenomena investigated in the case studies were described in their real-world setting. The main informant's interviews were done using interview schedules that included structured and unstructured questions, and a summary of each interview was created.

3.12 Research ethics followed

In sociology, research ethics are the principles that dictate how researchers should conduct their work in order to protect participants and ensure the validity of their findings. The primary goal of research ethics is to protect the rights and well-being of those participating in the study. As a result, the study made a point of protecting the rights and interests of the current study's participants. The following research guidelines were properly followed when performing social science study.

1. Research ethics requires researchers to accept responsibility for their actions and be held accountable for misbehaviour.
2. Prior to the interview, the participants were told about the research, their rights and privacy were completely respected, and they consented to provide the researcher with their information.
3. It is the interviewer's responsibility to make sure the interview is conducted in a private setting. The interviewer either had to change the topic or end the interview if another adult walked into the room.
4. The study guaranteed the research's validity, which includes its authenticity and error-free status.
5. The study requires a great deal of credibility in order to build and serve the interests of people and society without harming anyone.
6. The respondent informed that their participation is entirely voluntary and that their information is kept private. The interviewer clarified that the topic of discussion was kept secret from other members of the home. Partners, family, and community members were asked by the interviewer to respect the respondents' confidentiality.
7. The study maintains respondents' anonymity in order that the data provided by them will not be possible to be linked to them.
8. The interviewer devised safe means and times for contact and also consulted with participants to ensure the safety of each contact choice.
9. The participants were also made aware that they are free to decline to answer any question and that they could stop taking part in the study at any moment.

3.13 Limitations of the study

Knowledge of the exact numbers of domestic workers is impossible. Since no research has been undertaken so far on the issue of domestic workers, it is a challenge to find out the conditions of the domestic workers in Aizawl and their working environment.

1. The study of domestic workers is not possible throughout the state of Mizoram covering all the eight districts.
2. Time, resources and manpower constraints prevented covering total population of domestic workers working in Aizawl city.
3. Adequate literature could not be found in the context of the North eastern states to contextualise the study of domestic workers in Aizawl.
4. As only a few male domestic workers are found in Mizoram, they will not be included in the study.

The next chapter presents the socio-economic profile of women domestic workers who are currently working in Aizawl district.

CHAPTER – IV

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Gender

4.3 Age

4.4 Marital status

4.5 Religion

4.6 Family

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CHAPTER – IV

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter pertains to the socio-economic profile of the domestic workers. The first objective of this study sets forth to find out the socio-economic profile of the domestic workers concerning their gender, age, marital status, migration pattern, place of residence, education, family and household, family income, wage, which are presented under a different table each which are followed by analysis and interpretation of the data. Three case studies are presented towards the end of this chapter and the chapter concludes with an overview of the findings.

4.2 Gender

Gender is a socially constructed characteristics of women, men, girls and boys. Domestic work is one of the oldest voluntary pre-occupations of women at the household, but it has now emerged as one of the emerging paid activities of women as well as for men. There are female as well as male domestic workers. As domestic work is viewed as more of a woman's work than that of a man's, women in general are preferred over men particularly for this kind of work. Women and men are born biologically different, with varying differences as to the women's roles or female roles and men's roles or male roles. Gender roles are shaped by the traditional view on appropriate behavior for men and women, however, gender roles are becoming more relaxed in recent times. Also, a pivotal way to understand the sociological condition of domestic workers would be through the concept of 'intersectionality'. Intersectionality views that various forms of social stratification like class, background, age gender are all interwoven together and is therefore applicable to all social categories and social identities.

Since only a handful of male domestic workers are found in Mizoram, the study includes only female domestic workers. The male domestic workers are not included in the study. One of the employers has said,

“I preferred women instead of men in the field of domestic work because women are more mature and reliable in terms of household. You know the work is feminine and women know the job better. Besides, they are naturally gifted to take care of babies. Is it not?” Pi Lalhmangaihi, employer of Laltansangi, Bungkawng Vengthar.

4.3 Age

The concept of age describes how old a person is at a particular point in time. Age determines the exact year of a person, knowing the specific age of our respondent is important as it helps the researcher in categorizing the different age groups of the individual respondent easily. By incorporating age ranges in the study, we can gain a lot of insight as to the age demography of the domestic workers. The age-group of the domestic workers have been sub-divided into domestic workers below 18 years, 19 – 25 years, 26 – 35 years, 36 – 45 years, 46 – 60 years, and lastly, above 60 years.

Table 1: Age of the respondents

Domestic Worker	Age of the domestic workers					Total
	below 18	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-60	
Live In/ Riak	14 (12.5%)	74 (66.1%)	21 (18.8%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	2 (1.8%)	77 (67.5%)	17 (14.9%)	15 (13.2%)	3 (2.6%)	114
Total	16 (7.08%)	151 (66.81%)	38(16.81%)	17 (7.52%)	4 (1.77%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The total number of samples collected from different localities in Aizawl city is 112, which means that 112 Full-time/Live-in/Riak domestic workers are selected for this study. The study reveals that majority of the Live-in/ Riak domestic workers are in the age -group of 18-25 years totaling 66.1 percent of the total number of live-in domestic workers under study. 18.8 percent of the live-in domestic workers, i.e. 26-35 years.

The study also shows that 12.5 percent of the total number of live-in/ riak domestic workers are from the age group of below 18 years. This further indicates that the girls in Mizo society work from an early age to support themselves financially and even provide for the family. Girls shoulder more responsibility in their household and in the family from an early age, making them both mentally and physically matured enough to meet the challenges outside of their homes. In fact, in Mizo households, girls are better trained and equipped with the skill to survive in the society. The live-in domestic workers between the age group 18-25 are more preferable to the employers when compared to older domestic maids. This is because the girls are innocent and do not interfere in matters of the household while working in their employer's household. They are obedient and hardworking and are therefore the most preferred age group amongst all the various age-groups. One of the respondents have said,

“I don't mind working as a domestic worker at such a young age. I am not very educated and besides, I have no other skills and so, working as a domestic worker at such an early age gives me an opportunity to earn income for me and my families. When I get older, I won't have the same energy and strength as I do now and so, I have to start working early at this age.” Lalmangaihi, 20 years old. Kulikawn.

Another interesting area which the study brings to light is that, the age 46-60 years comprises only 1 live-in domestic worker under the study. This further reveal that only 0.9 percent of the total number of live-in domestic workers are in the age group of 46-60 years. Further, only 2 live-in domestic workers are found in the age group of 36-45 years indicating that 1.8 percent of the total live-in domestic workers come from the same age group. Most of the families in Aizawl city are not choosing the aged woman engaged as a domestic worker in their household. One of the main reasons the study reveals is that, they are likely to interfere in family-related matters and poke their noses in the employers' family administration unnecessarily much to the dismay of their employers.

The study covers 114 domestic workers who are live-outs or lang, and do not reside in their employers' homes. Like the live-in/riak domestic workers, majority of the live-out/lang domestic workers come from the age group of 18-25 years. This means that they are 77 in numbers out of the total 114 live-out /riak domestic workers from which samples were collected. This further indicates that most of the families are more comfortable with employing young girls as domestic maids in their homes. Since the young girls are not likely to be involved in their employer's family affairs, they are more preferred to do the household tasks for them.

The second majority of the live-out domestic workers are found with the age group of 26-35 years. They are 17 in numbers comprising 14.9 percent of the total 114 live-out/riak domestic workers chosen under the study. The study also shows that the higher the age group of the live-out/ riak domestic workers, the lesser the chances are to be employed as domestic workers in most of the families in Aizawl city. One of the employers had said,

“It is better to employ women of younger age for domestic work because they are more energetic and doesn't have much health complications. They are more active and ready to learn many new things which make them more employable than older women.” Pi Ramthansangi, Maubawk.

One of the plausible reasons that the researcher finds out is that, most of the aged women do have one or two complicated health issues, personal and familial problems, etc. leading them to be reluctant to find the job in the domestic field.

The least percentage i.e. 1.8 percent out of the total live-out/riak domestic works are below 18 years of age. The main factor for this is that the young aged girls are freer from their family responsibilities which make them more eligible to be employed and engaged as live-in/ riak. Moreover, the employers in most cases choose the domestic workers who can stay with them full time i.e. 24/7 with their family to do the household chores.

4.4 Marital Status

Marital status is the legally defined marital state. The union of two persons sanctioned by society and the congregation is known as marriage. Marriage is the joining of two people in a bond that putatively lasts until death, however, in practice is often cut short by separation or divorce. Knowing the marital status of a person helps us to know whether the person is married to another person, or not. In this study the marital status of the domestic workers is taken into account to ascertain whether there are more married or unmarried or divorced or separated categories of domestic workers. The domestic workers are asked to answer a question about their marital status, whether they are married, unmarried, widow, separated or divorced.

Table 2: Marital status of domestic workers

Marital status						
Domestic Worker	Married	Unmarried	Widow	Separated	Divorced	Total
Live In/ Riak	--	108 (96.4%)	1 (0.9%)	--	3 (2.7%)	112
Live- out/Lang	19 (16.7%)	82 (71.9%)	3 (2.6%)	6 (5.3%)	4 (3.5%)	114
Total	19 (8.41%)	190 (84.07%)	4 (1.77%)	6 (2.65%)	7 (3.10%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Data incorporated in Table 2 implies that 96.4 of the total live-in domestic workers are unmarried. This further indicates that unmarried girls are more employable in their particular field as they can devote more time towards the household chores. At the same time, the unmarried girls are offering better services as they are not disturbed by any other social disabilities such as responsibility in the family, financial problem or mental health issues.

Among the live-in domestic workers, only 2.7 percent are divorced which shows that women with personal issues are not likely to be chosen by the employers. At the

same time, the divorced women themselves are not comfortable to be engaged in other's household works and would rather try to find other jobs to support themselves in other economic activities.

“As a married woman, I found it rather difficult to work in someone else's house as I have my own families and home to care for. I can only work in the day shift and even during my working hours, I think about my children a lot and how there are lots of other engagements and business to take care of at home which makes it difficult to focus entirely on my domestic work. I even had a conversation with my husband to quit my job entirely and focus solely on looking after my own children and families at home. From my own experience, it is very difficult to work as a domestic worker while being a mother of four beautiful school-going children.” Lalsangzuali, 38 years old. Ramhlun South.

Meanwhile, widows who are live-in domestic workers comprises only 0.9 percent of the total number of live-in domestic workers which means that the salary offered out of the household works are not enough to support themselves and their children who depend upon them. So, they prefer to work elsewhere in other daily engagements works such as vegetable street vendors, house-to-house vegetable sellers, etc.

A very interesting finding the researcher can point out here is that, married and separated women are not as much engaged as live-in domestic workers in Aizawl city. Some of the determining factors for this are, married women are compelled to support themselves and their own families mentally and physically in 24/7 hours. Though they need to earn extra pay to support themselves, it is a huge challenge and cannot manage time to be engaged as live-in domestic workers.

Meanwhile, no separated women are chosen as live-in/riak domestic workers under the study. The main reason is that most separated women are struggling with psychological issues with regards to their personal affairs that makes them

uncomfortable to be able to reside with their employers and be immersed in the employers' family administration. Having to face hardship and personal break down from their past life experiences, they have not completely regained confidence with themselves and most of the separated domestic workers are not willing to resume in any economic activities.

As shown in the above table, 71.9 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers are unmarried. This clearly indicates that unmarried girls are the most preferred to be employed in domestic works. As unmarried girls are free and available to help and render their services to others, they are more compatible to be chosen to do the household chores in the homes of their employers.

“Our lady worker is a young and vibrant woman who is in her 20s. We had previously employed married woman but if I were to choose, I prefer unmarried women as a domestic worker because they are dependent on us and can give full attention and focus to us as they are less burdened by the need to carry the struggles of their own family issues. They have their own parents who can take care of things in their home and so, they are more unbothered by family problems which make them more reliable and desirable than married women in the field of domestic work.” Pi Rochansangi, Tuikual.

Contrary to the findings of live-in/riak domestic workers (where no married women are chosen for domestic works), 16.7 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers are married. This further implies that married women are extremely in need to find part-time jobs to financially support themselves and their families. The study also reveals that married women resolve many financial issues and expenditure of the families such as, children's school fees, house rent, household daily needs, medical, water, electricity bills, etc. out of their personal pockets earned by engaging themselves as live-out/lang domestic work.

Interestingly, widows, separated and divorced women are on the look-out for jobs with easy entry and are engaged as live-out domestic workers. The study shows that there are 2.6 percent widows who are live-outs/lang, while 5.3 percent and 3.5 percent are found with respect to separated and divorced women.

4.5 Religion

Religion is the belief in the supernatural entity and the worship of god or gods. Religion shapes our faith and belief system thereby influencing our work ethics. In this study, the domestic workers are asked whether they are Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhist, or any other religion. Further, the respondents were asked which denominations of Christianity they belonged to, whether Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, Salvation Army, United Pentecostal Church, Seventh Day Adventist, or any other religion.

Table 3: Religion of Domestic workers

Religion of domestic workers			
Domestic workers	Religion of domestic workers		
	Christian	Hindu	Total
Live-in/ Riak	111 (91.1%)	1 (0.9%)	112 (100%)
Live-out/ Lang	112 (98.2%)	2 (1.8%)	114 (100%)
Total	223 (98.6 %)	3 (1.4%)	226 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork

Among the respondents, 111 (91.1%) women from live-in domestic work belong to Christianity while only 1 (0.9%) woman belong to Hinduism. There is one Hindu woman among them who is a Nepali. She has lived in Mizoram since her ancestors and is familiar with Mizo customs and traditions. She has said,

“The family that I worked for are like my own family. I did not feel like an outsider and work alongside them just like I would have worked in my own house. They treat me like their own daughter but the only difference is my religion and they have never told me to convert to

Christianity as well. I did my job sincerely and that's all that matters to them.” Nandini Chhetri, 24, Lawipu.

In terms of the number of women domestic workers from live-out sections, as many as 112 (98.2%) of them belonged to Christianity while 2 (1.8%) women are from Hindu religion. These 2 women are Nepali and are well-versed with Mizo traditions right from birth as they have stayed in Mizoram since their forefathers. The findings show that most of the domestic workers belong to Christianity and this reflect the census of India 2011 data which shows that most of the population in Mizoram belong to Christian religion.

Table 4: Denominations of women domestic workers

Denominations	Live-in	Live-out	Total
Presbyterian	47 (42%)	52 (45.6%)	99
Baptist	27 (24.1%)	26 (22.8%)	53
ICI	2 (1.8%)	0	2
Evangelical Free Church of India	2 (1.8%)	0	2
Revival Baptist	1 (0.9%)	0	1
Salvation Army	4 (3.6%)	5 (4.4%)	9
Assembly of God	2 (1.8%)		2
Independent Church of India	3 (2.7%)		3
Evangelical Baptist Convention	1 (0.9%)		1
United Pentecostal Church	13 (11.6%)	22 (19.3%)	35
Lairam Isua Krista Kohhran	1 (0.9%)		1
Fundamental Baptist	1 (0.9%)		1
Believer Church	1 (0.9%)		1
UPC North East	1 (0.9%)		1
Seventh Day Adventist	1 (0.9%)	3 (2.6%)	4
Roman Catholic	1 (0.9%)	3 (2.6%)	4
Methodist		1 (0.9%)	1
IKK	2 (1.8%)		2
Rinna Kohhran		1 (0.9%)	1
Total	110(49.33%)	113(50.67%)	223

Source : Fieldwork

In terms of denominations, there are 47 (42%) Presbyterian among the live-in domestic workers while 27 (24.1%) of them belong to Baptist denominations. There are 13 live-in domestic workers who belong to the United Pentecostal Church, while 2 (1.8%) women belong to ICI denomination. Another 2 (1.8%) women belong to Evangelical Free Church of India. From the Independent Church of India there are 3 domestic workers who are followers of the denomination. Among the domestic workers there are 2 followers respectively from Assembly of God and Isua Krista Kohhran. There is only one (0.9%) domestic worker each belonging to Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, UPC North East, Believer Church, Fundamental Baptist, Lairam Isua Krista Kohhran, Evangelical Baptist Convention and Revival Baptist, .

Among the live-out domestic workers, there are as many as 52 (45.6%) women who belong to Presbyterian while another 26 (22.8%) women belong to Baptist. There are 22 (19.3%) women who are United Pentecostal Church denomination followers. Five of the domestic workers from live-out belong to followers of Salvation Army. Moreover, only 3 (2.6%) women belong to both Seventh-Day Adventist and Roman Catholic denomination respectively. Among live-out workers there is only one of them from Methodist Church and Rinna Kohhran respectively.

The findings show that majority of the domestic workers are from Presbyterian denomination, along with the followers of Baptist denomination coming next in terms of followers in numbers, i.e. 99 and 53 respectively.

4.6 Family

A family is a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together; all such related persons are considered as members of one family. For instance, if an older married couple, their daughter and her husband and two children, and the older couple's nephew all lived in the same house or apartment; they would all be considered members of a single family. The following table shows the family size and structure of women domestic workers.

Table 5: Size of family

Number of family members									
	0-3		4-6		7--9		10 and above		
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Total
Live In/Riak	22 (19.6%)	90 (80.4%)	60 (53.6%)	52 (46.4%)	24 (21.4%)	88 (78.6%)	4 (3.6%)	108 (96.4%)	112
Live-out/Lang	31 (27.2%)	83 (72.8%)	64 (56.1%)	50 (43.9%)	17 (14.9%)	97 (85.1%)	6 (5.3%)	108 (94.7%)	114
Total	53 (23.45%)	173 (76.55%)	124 (54.87%)	102 (45.13%)	41 (18.14%)	185 (81.86%)	10 (4.42%)	216 (95.58%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The size of the family of both the live-in and live-out domestic workers are shown in the above table. Among the live-in domestic workers, there are 22 (19.6%) women who have a family between 0-3 family sizes and there are 60 (53.6%) women who belong to a family size between 4-6 members. There are 24 (21.4%) women who belong to a family size between 7-9 members and there are only 4 (3.6%) women who belong to more than 10 family members.

“To be in a family member of more than 6 is rather difficult for our parents. We are not well to do and so, instead of focusing on my academic journey, I instead chose to work as a domestic worker from a young age and contribute to my family savings and spending. Though I earn less, I am able to help my parents in maintaining and sustaining the daily needs of my family and also the education of my younger siblings.”

Lalmuanchhungi, 21, Upper Kanan.

Among the live-out domestic workers, there are as many as 31 (27.2%) women who belong to a family member between 0-3 members and 64 (56.1%) women belong to 4-6 family members. There are 17 (14.9%) women who belong to family member of

between 7-9 members while the rest of the 6 (5.3%) women belong to a family size comprising more than 10 members.

In both cases, there are more women who belong to a family member between 4-6 family members and a smaller number of women are found in the size range of more than 10 family members. The findings also show that most women decided to pursue the job of domestic work as a way to sustain their family and contribute to the income of the family.

Table 6: Size of employers' family

Size of employers' family				
Domestic Worker	1—3	4--6	7--9	Total
Live In/ Riak	112 (100%)	-	-	112
Live-out/Lang	103 (90.4%)	10 (8.8%)	1 (0.9%)	114
Total	215 (95.1%)	10 (4.42%)	1 (0.44%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Despite belonging to a large family, the findings show that women domestic workers work in a family who have small family sizes. The above data clarifies that among the live-in women, there are 112 (100%) women who worked in an employer's family consisting of only 1-3 members. All the women have worked for small family numbers.

“The perks of working as a domestic worker is the small family sizes of my employers. It is rather peaceful for a girl who is coming from a large family size and work is not much in my employers' house due to the small nature of their family.” Lalzarliani, 30, Durtlang.

While among the live-out women domestic workers, there are 103 (90.4%) women domestic workers who work for family members between 1-3 members and another 10 (8.8%) women who worked for employers with family sizes between 4-6 members. There is only 1 (0.9%) woman who work for an employer with 7-9 family sizes.

4.7 Place of Domicile

The place of domicile or residence is the place where people live, a dwelling or home used as a main residence, either originally or currently. To have a permanent place of residence is to have a sense of identity or belongingness automatically protecting us from unwanted harm and burden. This question is important for the respondents as they are asked about their native place of residence, and whether they hail from within Mizoram or are from outside the state, or are from the rural, urban or semi-urban locality.

Table 7: Domicile of the respondents

Place of domicile (nativity)			
Domestic Worker	Native	No	Total
	No (%)	No (%)	
Live In/ Riak	98 (87.5)	14(12.5)	112
Live-out/Lang	95(83.3)	19(16.7)	114
Total	193(85.4)	33(14.6)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Majority of the live-in/ riak domestic workers are natives of Mizoram. This is 87.5 percent of the total number of domestic workers under study totaling 98 of the 112 full time domestic workers. Only 12.5 percent of them are from outside the state of Mizoram.

On the other hand, among the live-out/lang domestic workers, 83.3 percent of them are from the state of Mizoram. This is a total of 95 of 114 in numbers live-out/lang domestic workers taken up for study. And it is revealed that 16.7 percent of the total number of live-out/lang domestic workers are from outside the state of Mizoram.

“I am aware that women domestic workers from other parts of the country earn huge income as compared to women domestic workers in Mizoram. My friend work in Singapore as a maid and earned enough to support not only herself but her whole families. It really is a dream to work abroad but the perks of working in Mizoram, even against the low income is that the state is peaceful and even though I stayed in someone else’s house, my families still live close by and I work abroad. Besides, as a Christian state, the families that I worked for are kind and compassionate, treating me like their own daughter. So, I felt safe working in Mizoram even though the income is less as compared to other countries.”
Siammawii Ralte, 26, Nursery Veng.

In conclusion, there is a clear indication that the domestic workers both live-in and live-out are from within the state of Mizoram.

4.8 Educational status

Education can be thought of as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. In this sense, it is equivalent to what social scientists’ term socialization or enculturation. Education is designed to guide people in learning a culture, melding their behaviour in the ways of adulthood, and directing them toward their eventual role in society. In the most primitive cultures, there is often little formal learning—little of what one would ordinarily call school or classes or teachers. Instead, the entire environment and all activities are frequently viewed as school and classes, and many or all adults act as teachers. As societies grow more

complex, however, the quantity of knowledge to be passed on from one generation to the next becomes more than any one person can know, and, hence, there must evolve more selective and efficient means of cultural transmission. The outcome is formal education—the school and the specialist called the teacher.

Table 8: Educational qualifications of women domestic workers

Educational Qualification							
Domestic Worker	Primary	Upper Primary	Middle School	High School	Pre University/10 +2	Graduate	Total
Live In/ Riak	14 (12.5%)	44 (39.29 %)	2 (1.79 %)	33 (29.46%)	19 (16.96 %)	--	112
Live-out/Lang	12 (10.53 %)	--	69 (60.53 %)	19 (16.67%)	12 (10.53 %)	2 (1.75 %)	114
Total	26 (11.50 %)	44 (19.47 %)	71 (31.42 %)	52 (23.01 %)	31 (13.72 %)	2 (0.88 %)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Domestic work does not require any special or high educational qualification which showcases one of the attributing characteristics of informal sector i.e. ease of entry into the field of domestic work with no particular skill. The above table indicates that

Majority of the domestic workers under study who consist of 39.3 percent of live-in/riak domestic workers were educated till upper primary standard. This category consists of 44 live-in/riak domestic workers out of the total 112 under study. This is followed by 29.5 percent high schoolers, after which come pre-university educated domestic workers who are 17 percent of the total number of live-in domestic workers under study. Next are those categories of 12.5 percent studying till primary schools who are 14 in numbers out of the total 112 live-in/riak domestic workers under study. In the last category are those girls studying till their middle school level and are 1.9 percent numbering just 2 out of the total 112 live-in domestic maids.

“I would not be a maid if I studied higher than high school! I have no educational qualifications nor other skills to survive in today’s world which make me choose

domestic work. I am not an intelligent woman and I hardly passed my middle school. Education is difficult for me which leaves me no choice but to work in this sector.” Ramnunpari, 20, Tlangnuam.

From the study conducted, more than half of the total live-out/lang domestic workers studied up to primary and middle standards of school which made up 60.5 percent. This is 69 in numbers out of the total of 114 live-out domestic workers taken up for study. After them were those workers studying till high school which made up 16.7 percent with a total number of 19 live-out domestic workers from this particular category. This is followed by 12 girls studying till their primary, and pre-university standards who both make up 10.5 percent of the total live-out/lang domestic workers. Interestingly, there are 2 graduates who make up 1.8 percent graduates among the live-out/lang domestic workers.

“I did not study beyond middle school because of low economic status of my family. I have many siblings which makes it difficult for my parents to feed all of us. Besides, I did not want to be a burden for my parents and I wanted to help them sustain my family which makes me choose this profession. Even though I did not study higher in schools, I felt obligated and motivated to let my other siblings’ study.” Lalliankimi, 19, Edenthur.

There are considerable variations when it comes to the educational qualifications of domestic workers ranging from primary level to graduates. However, another significant observation was that graduates found only among the live-out/lang domestic workers and are not found among the live-in/riak domestic workers in the study. This indicates that there are very few graduates or girls with high educational qualification, since the job description does not demand any such skill or expertise in any field whatsoever.

4.9 Wage Salary

Wage determines a fixed payment earned for work or services, typically paid on a daily basis or weekly basis. It refers to a payment made by an employer to an employee for work done in a specific period of time. The main difference between salary and wage is that salaries are a fixed upon payment agreed to by both the employer and employee, and wages, on the other hand, may vary depending on hours worked and performance. The questions asked pertaining to wages were, how much is your salary, do you get your wage regularly, Is the wage fixed by you or employer, when do you get your wage?

Table 9: Wage of the respondents

Domestic Worker	Salary Per Month in Rupees								Total
	Below 4000	Rs 4000 - Below 5000	Rs 5000 - Below 6000	Rs 6000 - Below 7000	Rs 7000 - Below 8000	Rs 8000 - Below 9000	Rs 9000 - Below 10000	Above 10000	
Live In/ Riak	-- --	32 (29%)	28 (25%)	28 (25%)	17 (15%)	4 (3.6%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	4 (3.5%) 3.5	22 (19%)	52 (45.6%)	21 (18%)	4 (3.5%)	3 (2.6%)	3 (2.6%)	5 (4.4%)	114
Total	4 (1.77%)	54 (24%)	80 (35.4%)	49 (22%)	21 (9%)	7 (3.1%)	4 (1.8%)	7 (3%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Out of 112 live-in/*riak* domestic workers under study, it was found that 28.6 per cent i.e. 32 girls receive Rs. 4000-below 5000/- as monthly salary. 25 per cent of the live-in/*riak* domestic workers receive a monthly salary of Rs 5000-below 6000/-. There are 15.2 per cent of the girls who receive monthly wages between 7000-below 8000/- who are 17 in numbers from the total 112 live-in/*riak* domestic workers. Another 3.6 percent who total 4 domestic workers earn wages between 8000- below 9000 per month. There are 2 domestic workers out of the total 112 live-in/*riak* domestic workers who were paid a monthly salary above Rs. 10000/- accounting for 1.8

percent. Lastly, only one domestic workers from the total 112 girls receive a monthly salary between 9000 and below 10000, making up 0.9 per cent.

The study points out that 52 girls i.e., 45.6 per cent of the live-out/lang domestic workers earn a monthly salary of Rs.5000 and below 6000. There are 21 girls who receive a monthly salary of Rs.6000- below 7000, totaling 18.4 per cent out of 114 live-out/lang domestic workers in the study. There are 5 domestic workers who total 4.4 per cent of the total 114 live-out domestic workers who receive a salary of above 10000/-. Then, there are 4 live-out/lang domestic workers each who make receive 3000–below 4000/- per month and 7000- below 8000/- per month both totaling 3.5 per cent out of the total 114 live-out/lang domestic workers. Then there are 3 girls for both categories who earn 8000- below 9000 and 9000 – below 10000 totaling 2.6 per cent in both cases.

“It is true that the income of domestic workers is low. Even I earned only Rs. 5000 per month living in other families’ house. However, there is nothing much to say with regard to this as food and lodging are provided to me freely and I still managed to send the income to my families who are living in rural area. For us, 5000 is less but it is enough to sustain ourselves as there is nothing much required by people in rural areas. However, the amount may be a bit low for women belonging to urban areas.” Laltlankimi, 27, Tanhril.

Another interesting point to note is that there are no domestic workers earning 3000 – below 4000 among the live-in/riak domestic workers. On the other hand, there are 4 live-out/lang domestic workers earning 3000 – below 4000 totaling 3.5 per cent out of the total 114 part-time domestic workers. Among the live-in/riak domestic works those receiving Rs. 4000 – below 5000 are in majority, and there are those who receive monthly salary of Rs. 5000 – below 6000 are in majority among live-out/lang domestic workers.

Table 10: Regularity of receiving wage

Regularity in receiving monthly salary					
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Sometimes	Hardly Received	Total
Live In/ Riak	106 (94.6%)	2 (1.8%)	2 (1.8%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	112 (98.2%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	--	114
Total	218 (96.5%)	3 (1.32%)	3 (1.32%)	2 (0.88%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Live-in/riak and live-out/lang domestic workers responded ‘yes’ to the question whether they get their wage regularly. 94. 2 per cent of the live-in/riak domestic workers and 98.2 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers get their wages on time and on a regular basis. The live-in/riak domestic workers who reside along with their employers get their wages mostly on a monthly basis, however, the live-out/lang domestic workers receive their wages sometimes on a weekly basis. There are 1.8 percent among live-in/riak and 0.9 per cent live-out/lang domestic workers who responded negatively saying they do not get their wages regularly.

“I had no problem in receiving my salary on a timely basis. I usually received my income on the last day of the working day. The families that I worked for are very fair and they never delay my salary. Once I received my salary, I send them to my families through online payment mode and only keep a small handful to myself. The timely and regular basis of receiving income makes up for the low amount of the salary.” C. Lalremruati, 21. Luangmual.

Another significant aspect worth taking note was the question whether they get their wages on time. Responding to that particular question, 2 live-in/riak domestic

workers totaling 1.8 per cent responded they hardly received thereby indicating irregularity in receiving their wages regularly and on time. This particular question was ignored and not answered by the live-out/lang or the part-time domestic workers. The response ‘sometimes’ was answered by 2 full-time domestic workers which is 1.8 per cent out of total 112 live-in/riak and only 1 person from live-out/lang domestic worker, which is 0.9 per cent out of total 114 live-out/lang domestic workers.

4.10 Assets owned

An asset is a resource that is expected to provide a future benefit to its owner. An asset may generate cash flow, reduce expenses, or improve sales, and it may be either tangible (like a piece of machinery) or intangible, like a copyright. The table below shows the number of assets owned by women domestic workers in their houses. The assets asked for the purpose of this study included television, refrigerator, washing machine and LPG connection as these assets are the basic assets owned by most households.

Table 11: Assets owned by women domestic workers

Household Assets owned												
Television				Refrigerator			Washing Machine			LPG Connection		
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Live In/Riak	1 (0.9%)	111 (99.1%)	112	--	112 (100%)	112	--	112 (100%)	112	--	112 (100%)	112
Live-out/Lang	41 (35.3%)	73 (64.7%)	114	82 (70.7%)	32 (29.3%)	114	30 (25.9%)	84 (74.1%)	114	95 (81.9%)	19 (18.1%)	114
Total	42 (18.34%)	184 (81.66%)	226	82 (35.81%)	144 (64.19%)	226	30 (13.10%)	196 (86.90%)	226	95 (41.48%)	131 (58.52%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Among the live-in domestic workers, the above data has shown that 111 (99.1%) women did not own any television and only 1 woman (0.9%) has owned a television. There are 112 (100%) women who did not own any refrigerator and this shows that all the women did not have any refrigerator. All the women did not have washing machine and LPG connection among the live-in domestic workers. This shows that most women did not own any household assets like television, refrigerator, washing machines and LPG connections.

Among the live-out domestic workers, 41 (35.3%) women owned television while another 73 (64.7%) women did not own any television. There are 82 (70.7%) women who own refrigerators while another 32 (29.3%) women did not own any refrigerators. 30 (25.9%) women have their own washing machines while another 84 (74.1%) women did not own it. As many as 95 (81.9%) women have owned LPG connection while another 19 (18.1%) women did not own any connections of LPG.

“It is impossible for us to own television and other basic assets for a family of 5 who all work low-paying jobs. We are still saving money to buy these items and hopefully, will do so soon in the coming future.” Thlamuani, 27, Republic Veng.

From the findings, it is shown that most of the women domestic workers did not own many household assets and the rate is higher among the live-in domestic workers. The situations show that live-out domestic workers are better-off economically in terms of household assets owned.

Table 12: House owned by women domestic workers

House owned by domestic workers				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	N/A	Total
Live In/ Riak	3 (2.7%)	101 (90%)	8 (7.1%)	112
Live-out/Lang	100 (87.7%)	14 (12%)	--	114
Total	103 (45.6%)	115 (51%)	8 (3.54%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

When the women domestic workers are enquired about whether their families lived in a rented house or their own house, the data shows that among the live-in domestic workers, as many as 101 (90%) women have said that they live in rented houses and did not own houses on their own.

“For a family like us, it is difficult to own a house as we have low income. Besides, how do you expect us to have houses on our own when we cannot even afford basic household assets like television, washing machines and the like.” Laltlanchhungi, 24, Kanan Veng.

There are 3 (2.7%) women who live and own their own houses. Among the live-out women, as many as 100 (87.7%) women have said that they own their own houses while the remaining 14 (12%) women have said that they live in a rented house and did not own houses on their own.

4.11 Migration patterns

The act of people moving from their regular place of residence to a new location, either within a state or across an international boundary, is known as migration. Although there isn't a single, widely accepted definition of “migration” or “migrant,” there are a number of them that have been produced in various contexts. A person who has been living outside of their country of origin for a minimum of 12 months is considered a long-term migrant, according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Migration can be classified as either internal or international for demographic purposes. Crossing state borders to reside in another nation for a set period of time is known as international migration. Moving within the same nation is known as internal migration. People that relocate specifically from rural to urban areas within the same nation are said to be engaging in rural-urban migration.

Table 13: Reason for migration

Domestic Worker	Reasons for migration								Total
	Family member	Parents	Friends	Financial Problem	Can't say	Indebtedness	N/A	Military Coup	
Live In/Riak	17 (15.2%)	6 (5.4%)	4 (3.6%)	70 (62.5%)	9 (8%)	--	5 (4.5%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	25 (21.9%)	8 (7%)	6 (5.3%)	57 (50%)	11 (9.6%)	7 (6.1%)	--	--	114
Total	42 (18.6%)	14 (6.2%)	10 (4.4%)	127 (56.2%)	20 (8.8%)	7 (3.1%)	5 (2.2%)	1 (0.4%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The table indicates that among the live-in domestic workers, as many as 15 (15.2%) women migrated to the urban areas due to the pressure from family members and the influence of family members while 6 (5.4%) women have stated that they migrated due to the request from their parents. 4 (3.6%) women have migrated due to the influence from their friends and 9 (8%) women cannot directly stated the reason for their migration. 1 (0.9%) woman has migrated due to the military coup faced in their region. There are no women who migrated due to issues of indebtedness and 5 (4.5%) women have migrated due to no reasons. Among the women, as many as 70 (62.5%) of them have migrated due to financial problems faced by them which make them work as domestic workers.

“I am originally from Bawktlang village. I have 6 siblings and my parents are mere farmers and it is very difficult for them to sustain the entire family from their low earnings. Since I am the second eldest among my siblings, I decided to stop my education and migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid. The sole reason was financial hardships. I am still saving money and hope to pursue

my education when the timing is right and I had saved enough money.” Saizampuii, 29, Bawktlang.

Among the women who are engaged in live-out work, 25 (21.9%) women have migrated due to the influence from their family members while 8 (7%) women have migrated due to their parental advice. Another 6 (5.3%) women migrated due to the influence of their friends and another 11 (9.6%) women cannot say the exact reason for their migration. As many as 57 (50%) women have migrated due to the financial problem faced by them and another 7 (6.1%) women are engaged in the act of migration due to them facing indebtedness.

So, overall, most of the domestic workers migrated due to the issue of financial problems and indebtedness faced by them and only a handful of them had migrated due to the influence exerted upon them by their family members and friends.

Table 14: Migration for maid

Migration to work as a maid				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Can't say	Total
Live In/ Riak	74 (66.1%)	28 (25%)	10 (8.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	64 (56.1%)	48 (42.1%)	2 (1.8%)	114
Total	138 (61.06%)	76 (33.63%)	12 (5.30 %)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Among the live-in domestic workers, the table has shown that as many as 74 (66.1%) women have migrated for the sole purpose of working as a maid while another 28 (25%) women have said that they migrated firstly due to other reasons which after being introduced to domestic work, worked as a maid.

Among the live-out domestic workers, there are 64 (56.1%) women who have stated that they migrated solely to work as a maid while another 48 (42.1%) women have stated that they did not migrate solely to work as a maid. There are, in total, 12 (5.3%) women who cannot directly state the reason for their migration. The

respondents not willing to open up fully and unable to share their responses due to certain reasons and issues like because of their shyness and lack of interest in the interview or preoccupation with some other thing during the session gave cannot say responses.

4.12 Some case studies

In this section, 3 case studies are presented. These 3 case studies substantiate the socio-economic profile of women domestic workers through careful analysis and in-depth analysis. The first case study describes the life of an unmarried lady who migrated to Aizawl from Rianglei village to work as a maid. The second case study is about a young woman who worked hard to support her son and the third case study is about a woman who had no other family but her employers.

CASE STUDY NUMBER 4.1

A 19-year-old teenager who migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid

Name: Lalhlimpuii

Gender: Female

Age: 19 years old

Marital Status: Unmarried

Religion: Christian

Work Status: Live-in

Place of Residence: Sikulpuikawn, Aizawl

Lalhlimpuii is a young woman who migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid. She regularly sends her income back to her families and she supported her parents through her income.

Profile of family members

1. Lalawmpuia. A 59-year-old man who is the father of Lalhlimpuii. He is a graduate and is currently engaged in business. He received monthly salary of Rs. 20,000 and is the main income earner of the family.
2. Lalliani. A 58-year-old mother of Lalhlimpuii. She is a housewife and looks after the family and occasionally helps in her husband's business.
3. Lalhlimpuii, a 19-year-old teenager who supports her family through her earnings from domestic work.
4. Lalthanpuui. She is 10 years old and is currently attending school.
5. Lalmangaiha. An 8-year-old boy and is a brother of Lalhlimpuii who is also currently attending school.

Lalhlimpuii and her family have a small plot of land and they live in Riangtlei village. She currently resides in the house of Pu Chalhna at Sikulpuikawn, Aizawl by working as their maid. Her father and the family that she works for had a close connection and besides working as a maid, she also currently studies class 12 through an open school system. Her education fees had been paid by the family that she works for and also receives a monthly income of Rs. 5000. She had expressed that she regularly wakes up at around 5 a.m. and started attending morning open school for 2 hours. After studying, she assisted her employers in preparing meal. She said that she did not have much time in the morning to do house chores due to her education. After the employers had left for their office work and school, she started cleaning the house and does laundry every day. She said that she did not have any burden in her work and her employers treat her like their own family member.

“The main reason why I migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid is because I wanted to assist my parents in income and support my siblings as much as I can. I am not very good in education but I wanted my siblings to study as high as they can. By working here, I am able to study freely while working from home and my employers had never give me burden and extra load. They supported my education and make sure that my health and well-beings are top tier. I am content with my work but however, I am not planning to be a maid for the rest of my life and hope to someday start my own business like my father and start a family on my own.”

She studied every day for 4 hours and work for approximately around 7 hours. She did not have any extra load being given to her by her employers and only had to engage in the regular household chores and laundry.

“I could have stayed in my house and helped my father in his work but I rather move out and work any job that I can to provide for myself. I am not shy of working as a maid as I know that no one will come to my defence once I am in need

of help. So, I work every day with positive hope and affirmations to keep me going.”

The case of Lalhlimpuii presented a story of resilience and strength. Her story does not end in being a maid but rather has plans to start her own business someday by saving all her earnings.

CASE STUDY NUMBER 4.2

A 28-year-old woman who supports her son through her work

Name: Rosangzuali

Gender: Female

Age: 28 years old

Marital Status: Divorce

Religion: Christian

Work Status: Live-in

Place of Residence: Chaltlang, Aizawl

Rosangzuali is a young woman who was divorced from her husband and is currently working as a maid to care for her son. She lived in her employer's house and earned a monthly income of Rs. 6000. She supported both her mother and son through her meagre income.

Profile of family members

1. Lalmangaihi. A 60-year-old woman who is the mother of Rosangzuali who lived in Tachhip village. She is a farmer and worked every day in her farm. She took care of her grandson in the process. Her husband had passed away 10 years back and had to take care of their family farm by herself.
2. Rosangzuali. A 28 years old woman who migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid as she needed an income to care for her young son. She divorced from her husband.
3. Lalremruata is a 12 years old boy who is currently studying in government school. He is the son of Rosangzuali.

Rosangzuali is a young woman who separated and is divorced from her husband due to various issues. She married at a young age against her parents' wishes but had to

move back to her mother's house after her divorce. Since she did not have high educational qualification and did not possess much skills, she decided to work as a maid in Aizawl as she also needed to support the academic journeys of her son.

She did not have any problem in relocating to the city as she felt this move is the best for her son. She sends all her earnings to her mother who used it for the household and her son's education. She works every day for a period of around 10 hours without many breaks in between. She had her own room and sometimes, she receives a bonus in her income. She regularly deposited her income in the nearest bank and does not use anything for herself but only sends it to her mother. She also saves a small portion of her income for some emergency needs. She had no complications in her health.

“I am fortunate to find a loyal and honest employer. They treated me like I am their own daughter and I also wanted to remain loyal to them. The 10-hour work schedule is not an issue for me. I had a time off for the remaining other 12 hours and I am never forced to work beyond the 10-work schedule. When I needed to visit the doctors, the employers paid for all the fees and they never charged me extra for it. They are a loving Christian family and the only issue I have is the homesickness and the longing to be with my son. I want to give him the best education and I don't want him to end up like me and so, I tried my best to work hard and save enough for him to receive the best education so that he can have a stable job and care for me in the future when I am no longer able to work.”

This case study shows the love of a mother in working as a maid to provide for both her mother and her son so that her son could grow up to be a mature and responsible person with a stable job.

CASE STUDY NUMBER 4.3

A 30-year-old woman who had no other family but her employers

Name:	Lallawmzuali
Gender:	Female
Age:	30 years old
Marital Status:	Unmarried
Religion:	Christian
Work Status:	Live-in
Place of Residence:	Bawngkawn, Aizawl

Lallawmzuali is a 30-year-old woman who had worked with her current employer for the past 12 years already. She did not seek any other job nor is she in a position to do so with the absence of higher educational qualifications and no skills. She no longer has a family on her own as she lost all her family members in an accident when she was young. She was in no position to reject the offer to stay in her employer's house as a maid. However, she expressed that she did not have any issues and conflict with her employers who loved her just as they would have loved their own daughter.

She studied till class 12 and decided not to study further as her academic capabilities did not permit her to pursue higher education. Instead, she chose to concentrate fully on her work as a maid and saved her income regularly. She cannot say anything about her future as she is currently content with the family she stays with. However, through her savings, she plans to someday relocate to her village and spend the remainder of her days there.

“I am very happy the way I am today. My employers are my only family and even though I have a house in a tiny village, I decided not to move back there as I have no family members

there and my employers are the only family that I have. I saved money and when I become old and no longer capable of working, I wish to relocate to my village and even laid my body there to rest alongside my families. The only problem I have as a maid is that I am being looked down by many people and people assumed me to be dumb, which is entirely not true with me. I read books and updated my knowledge as best as I can even though I am a maid.”

4.13 An Overview

This section presents the overview of the entire chapter. The section has been divided into conceptual categories such as gender, age, marital status, religion, place of domicile and educational status, wage salary, migration patterns, some case studies with field data fitted thereto and finally concluded with an overview.

Gender: Gender, in this study, included only women domestic workers and excluded the men due to the difficulty in locating male domestic workers. In Mizoram, there are otherwise more women domestic workers than men. The researcher could not locate many men domestic workers and so, due to the difficulty in locating the men, this study has included only the women domestic workers.

Age: This study shows that in terms of age, most women domestic workers comprise of a young age who are below 25 years of age and this is followed by women who are between the ages of 25-35 years. This shows that youth and energy have active role to play as young women are still active both physically and mentally which leave them in a position to work and also, they are more deem fit to be employed by their employers due to this nature. Older women do not possess as much strength and stamina as compared to the younger women which make the employers reluctant to hire them and besides, older women also do not typically like to engage in economic activities like strength-demanding jobs such as domestic

jobs as their capabilities do not longer permit them. This is the reason why women of younger age are found in abundance in informal sector work like domestic work.

Marital status: Similarly, with age, employers often hire women who are not married and this study has also reflected this. Majority of the women domestic workers are unmarried and this shows that employers are more enthusiast to hire women who are unmarried and besides, unmarried women, unburdened by family issues are more active and willing to work, especially to stay in their employer's house and work as a maid. They are not much burdened by responsibilities in their houses and families which give them much freedom and space to concentrate on their work as a domestic worker. In the case of married women, they have many responsibilities at home and have to care for their children and husbands which did not permit them enough space to concentrate fully in their job. This is the main reason why unmarried women are more engaged in the job of domestic work in Mizoram as against women who are married and are already having their own families.

Religion: In terms of religion, the findings of this study reflect the current scenario of Mizoram wherein majority of the population belong to Christian religion. Most of the women respondents of this study also belong to Christianity and are also mostly Presbyterian followed by Baptist and United Pentecostal Church. However, the study also finds that there are few women domestic workers who are from Hinduism religion. These women are all Nepali women who have stayed in Mizoram since their forefathers and have all adopted Mizo traditions and lifestyles in many ways. They all belong to Young Mizo Association and actively participate in their own community as well. Their religion does not draw any discriminatory practices from their employers and their employers all treated them like their own family members. This also shows the compassionate nature of the Mizos towards other communities.

Family: The study shows that among the women domestic workers, there are a greater number of women who belong to a family member between the size of 4-6

sizes. Contrary to this, most of the women domestic workers worked for employers who had only between 1-3 family members.

Place of domicile: The study shows that most of the women domestic workers belong to Mizoram and are natives of the state. However, there are few women who are not natives of the state. These women migrated to Mizoram due to conflicts and war in their region which forced them to migrate to Mizoram from places like Manipur and Myanmar and work as a domestic worker due to absence in skills. All in all, most women domestic workers are natives to Mizoram and are mostly Mizo community with few exceptions of women who hailed from a Nepali background.

Educational status: Among the women domestic workers in this study, most of them had only attained the educational qualifications of upper primary level and it is followed by high school degree, which is in turn, followed closely by primary level of education. Most of the women have low educational qualifications as their family financial conditions did not permit them to study higher and also because most of the women are not academically strong to pursue further education. These women engaged in the field of domestic work as these kinds of jobs did not require high educational qualifications and it could be worked by people from all backgrounds and educational qualifications. Hence, this is the main reason why women from this study have low educational qualifications.

Wage: In terms of wage salary, the highest number of women earn between Rs. 5000-6000 per month and this is followed closely by women who earn an income between Rs. 4000-5000 per month. Only a minute number of women earn an income which is more than Rs. 10,000 per month. The average earnings of the women are low and the findings show that the government and agencies should revised the income of these women as inflation had occurred in recent times and their current average earnings might not help them to acquire their daily needs in the long-run.

In terms of regularity in receiving wages, almost all the women have expressed that they regularly receive their monthly income without fail from their employers.

Assets owned: This study has shown that most of the women domestic workers did not own basic household assets such as television, washing machines, refrigerators and LPG connections. The situations are worse among the live-in women in which majority of the women did not own any of these assets when compared with the live-out women. In terms of houses, most of the women did not own houses but when comparisons are made between the live-out and the live-in, more women in live-out categories' own houses while most women in live-in did not own any houses and live-in rented houses.

Migration patterns: The migration patterns of this study have shown that most of the women domestic workers have migrated due to financial problems faced by them which is followed by the influence and pressure exerted upon them by their family members and their friends. The women from this study, though lacking educational qualifications and vocational skills, had resorted to domestic work and migrated to urban areas solely for the purpose of this work. There are a greater number of women who have migrated solely to work as a maid while only lesser number of women have migrated for other purposes other than working as a maid.

Some case studies: The chapter ends with the presentation of 3 case studies of different women from domestic work. The first case study points straight to the story of a young woman who pursued the job of domestic work due to the need of supporting her large family. She solely migrated to urban area in Mizoram to work as a maid so that she could support her siblings in their academic journeys. She had regularly sent her income to her parents who then use it for the education of her siblings. The second woman shows the resilience of a woman who had migrated to the city area in Mizoram to work as a maid so that she could support her only son and mother through her job. Though she earns less, she sent whatever earnings she had to her mother who live in a village who then used that income for the continuation of her son's education. The third case study points straight to a woman who had no other families but that of her employers. She had worked and stayed with them for the past few years and they even treated her like a family member. All the women from these case studies had a similar story in which they have all

work as a maid for a purpose and that is to support their family members and they have all said that they saved their income, even though it may be less so that they can use it to sustain themselves in the future.

In the following chapter, the work and working conditions of the women domestic workers in Mizoram are presented.

CHAPTER V
WORK AND WORKING CONDITIONS

- 5.1 Introduction**
- 5.2 Work routine**
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CHAPTER V

INTRODUCTION

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter on ‘work and working conditions of the domestic workers’ encompass a wide range of themes and issues, from working hours, work schedules, and rest intervals to remuneration, as well as the physical and mental demands of the workplace. Working circumstances covers both the physical and socio-cultural environment, as well as the terms and conditions of employment.

The ILO’s Decent Work Agenda is a global framework that establishes standards for quality labour based on human dignity, freedom, security, and equity. It is especially significant for addressing the structural unstable nature of domestic employment, which is frequently characterised by informality and poor regulation. The agenda is based on four interdependent pillars: labour rights, job creation, social protection, and social dialogue. Finally, the framework acts as a global model for campaigning for formal legal inclusion of domestic workers.

The domestic workers were asked questions relating to the time of work, nature of work, workplace conditions, wage, day off, concepts like double day burden, their connection to domestic workers’ agencies, health problems and health concerns, whether they were on any medications, work specific problems, the kind of treatment and abuse faced at workplace, periods of rest and relaxation, quitting work, running away from employers house and job satisfaction were looked into in this particular chapter.

5.2 Work routine

The starting time of work refers to the designated or agreed-upon time at which an individual was expected to begin their work duties or responsibilities. It marks the commencement of the work shift for an employee or worker. The starting time of work for domestic workers varies depending on factors such as the specific duties assigned, household requirements, and individual agreements between the worker

and employees. It may also depend on the preferences and schedules of both parties involved. Thus, starting time of work occupies an important role for the overall work done for the day

Table 1: Starting time of work

Domestic	Time of starting work											Total
	5:00 AM	5:30 AM	6:00A M	6:30A M	7:00A M	7:30A M	8:00A M	8:30A M	9:00A M	9:30A M	After 10:00 AM	
Live In/	6 (5.4%)	9 (8%)	48 (42.9%)	33 (29.5%)	13 (11.6%)	2 (1.8%)	--	--	1 (0.9%)	--	--	112
Live-out/L	2 (1.8%)	--	16 (14%)	3 (2.6%)	6 (5.3%)	4 (3.5%)	4 (3.5%)	2 (1.8%)	18 (15.8%)	47 (41.2%)	12 (10.5%)	114
Total	8 (3.54%)	9 (4%)	64 (28.3%)	36 (16%)	19 (8.4%)	6 (2.65%)	4 (1.77%)	2 (0.9%)	19 (8.4%)	47 (20.8%)	12 (5.31%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The data above were collected from 226 domestic workers with 112 being live-in/ *riak* and 114 being live-out/ *lang* respectively from all over Aizawl District. From the given data, among the 112 live-in workers, 48 individuals or 42.9% of the total population began their job at 6:00-6:30 in the morning which occupies the highest percentage among all. Those working from 6:00-7:00 am and 7:00 am - 7:30 am comes next with a percentage of 29.5% and 11.6% respectively. 2 workers (with a percentage of 1.8%) began their work starting from 7:30 – 8:00 am while there was one worker who begins her work only starting from 9:00 am onwards.

This confirmed that the live-in workers usually began their work early in the morning right after waking up to do chores assigned by their employers.

“I started my work rather early. I started from 6 am and ended at around 7 pm at night. It is a long working hour but then, heavy labor demanding work is absent. My employers expected me to work in full swing during

these hours but they are very kind to me.” Lalliankimi,
Tuikual ‘S’, 24 years old.

Contrary to the live-in workers, among the live-out domestic workers, those working from 9:30 – 10:00 am exhibits the highest population with 47 individuals or 41.2% per cent within this category. They were followed by those working from 9:00–9:30 am with a data of 15.8% or 18 girls. The timing of 6:00 – 6:30 am was also common among the workers with 16 girls beginning their work during this timeframe. Next were those workers who began working from 6:30 till 9:00 am. (6:30 – 7:00, 7:00 – 7:30, 7:30 – 8:00, 8:30 – 9:00) They add up to 16.7 % of the total data collected. There were two individuals who began working from early in the morning i.e. 5:00 – 5:30 am.

The above data illustrates the diverse nature of the employer’s household and the differing schedules of live-in and live-out domestic workers, with live-in workers typically starting earlier to accommodate their living arrangements, while live-out workers tend to have later starting times, potentially influenced by transportation and other factors.

The time when work was finished refers to the designated or agreed-upon time at which an individual completes their work duties or responsibilities for the day. It marks the end of the workday or work shift for workers. It was an essential aspect of work scheduling and ensuring that tasks were completed within a specified timeframe and allowing individuals to transition out of work mode and attend to personal activities or responsibilities.

Table 2: Time when work was finished

Domestic Worker	Time of finishing work									Total
	04:00 PM	05:00 PM	06:00 PM	07:00 PM	08:00 PM	09:00 PM	10:00 PM	11:00 PM	After 11:00 PM	
Live In/ Riak	2 (1.8%)	3 (2.7%)	4 (3.6%)	38 (33.9%)	32 (28.6%)	26 (23.2%)	5 (4.5%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	58 (50.9%)	29 (25.4%)	16 (14%)	5 (4.4%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.9%)	3 (2.6%)	--	--	114
Total	60 (26.5%)	32 (14.2%)	20 (8.85%)	43 (19%)	34 (15%)	27 (11.9%)	8 (3.54%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The data collected exhibit a sharp contrast between the live- in and live- out workers regarding their finishing time of work. Leading the categories among the live- in workers were those who finish their work at 7:00 pm with a total number of 38 girls adding up to 33.9% of the entire data collected. 32 girls finished their work at 8:00 pm, coming into the second place among the 112 workers interviewed. The third most common answer received were those who complete their work at 9:00 pm with 26 individuals or 23.2% picking this category. Hence, these three categories can be considered as the average time when the workers finished their domestic works. Other than these categories, 2 and 3 workers finished their work at 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm respectively which may be considered too early for a live-in worker to finish their work. The data further revealed that 5 individuals complete their work at 10:00 pm. Interestingly, the data also showed that there was 1 worker who completed her work at 11:00 pm and another person who continued her work till 11:00 at night.

The data of live-out workers present how, in contrast to the live- in workers who completed their work at night time, the workers often completed their tasks in the afternoon. This statement can be seen in the following data. 50 workers completed their work at 4:00 in the afternoon occupying the highest among the live- out workers with 50.9% of the total population. This means that half of the live out workers, as their name *lang*, suggested, went home before sunset. 29 out of 144 workers or 25.4% of the total data collected wrapped up their work by 5:00pm and 16 girls by 6:00 pm. Sharp differences which can be witnessed from following data

was that, unlike the live- in workers in which 8:00 pm onwards remains a high time for their completion of work, the number of the live- out workers began to decline with a total percentage of 9.7% on all four categories i.e.- between 7:00 pm till 10:00pm (4.4%, 1.8%, 0.9%, 2.6% and 4.4% respectively). Notably, there were no workers who worked pass 10:00 pm which highlighted the true nature of live-out workers.

Extra work beyond contract refers to tasks, duties, or responsibilities undertaken by an individual that extend beyond the terms and conditions outlined in their employment contract or agreement. This additional work may include activities not originally specified in the contract, such as overtime hours or addressing unexpected demands or emergencies in the workplace.

Table 3: Extra work beyond contract

Extra work beyond contract				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	18 (16.1%)	88 (78.6%)	6 (5.4%)	112
Live-out/Lang	16 (14%)	98 (86%)	--	114
Total	34 (15%)	186 (82.3%)	6 (2.65%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The research unveils a striking similarity between the live-in and live-out workers on the topic of whether extra work was given to the workers beyond the contract. Here, majority of the live-in and live-out workers (78.6% and 86% respectively) agreed that no extra work was given to them. While 34 individuals of both live-in and live-out workers (18 and 16 girls) argued that extra works were indeed given to them which was not mentioned during the negotiation period. There were also 6 workers who opted for the category of ‘not applicable’ adding up to 5.4%.

“In terms of extra work after normal working hours, I am ordered to work for two more hours, which used to make me very tired at night. However, I like to look

on the positive aspect of life and comfort myself by saying that the extra work made me sleep really well at night. Sleeping early at night and waking up early in the morning makes me healthy and gives me the required energy for the day.” Hmangaihsangi, 25, Khatla.

Extra wage for working overtime refers to the additional compensation provided to employees for the hours worked beyond their regular or contractual work schedule. When employees exceed the standard working hours established in their employment contracts, they may be entitled to receive overtime pay as a form of financial recognition for their extended efforts.

Table 4: Extra work for working overtime

Provision of extra wage for working overtime						
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not Applicable	No Payment	In Kind	Total
Live In/ Riak	17 (15.2%)	5 (4.5%)	87 (77.7%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	14 (12.3%)	--	100 (87.7%)	--	--	114
Total	31 (13.7%)	5 (2.21%)	187 (82.7%)	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.9%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

When questions were asked on whether extra wages were given for extra work load, 17 individuals or 15.2% among the live-in workers and 14 individuals or 12.3% among the live-out workers gave a positive response while 4.5% (5 workers) confirmed that no extra wages were given to them for their extra workload. Interestingly, the category of ‘not applicable’ occupies the highest data with 87 individuals from live-in workers and 100 individuals from live-out workers opting for this category. They add up to a whopping majority of 82.7% of the entire data collected. One person gave a response that no payment was given to her despite the extra workload while 2 workers were given rewards in the form of kind (things). These three individuals belong to the live-in/ *riak* worker category.

“I never expected extra wage to be given to me as my employers are rather a miser. Even though they pay me regularly on a monthly period, they never paid any extra wage to me and besides, I am never expected to work extra hour beyond my working hours and so, extra wages are not given to me.” Laldusangi, 23 years old, Saikhamakawn.

5.3 Nature of work

The nature of work refers to the characteristics, requirements, and conditions associated with a particular job or occupation. It encompasses various aspects such as the tasks performed, skills and qualifications required, working environment, level of autonomy, responsibilities, and potential challenges or hazards. The nature of work can vary significantly across different professions, industries, and roles, reflecting the diverse range of job functions and employment opportunities available in the workforce.

Table 5: Nature of work

Nature of work												
	Cooking			Cleaning			Washing			Ironing		
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Live In/ Riak	104 (92.9%)	8 (7.1%)	112	106 (94.6%)	6 (5.4%)	112	105(93.8%)	7 (6.3%)	112	66 (58.9%)	46 (41.1%)	112
Live- out/Lang	76 (66.7%)	38 (33.3%)	114	110 (96.5%)	4 (3.5%)	114	106 (93%)	8 (7%)	114	81 (71.1%)	33 (28.9%)	114
Total	180 (79.65%)	46 (20.35%)	226	216 (95.58%)	10 (4.42%)	226	211 (93.36%)	15 (6.64%)	226	147 (65.04%)	79 (34.96%)	226
	Gardening			Babysitting and dropping and picking up kids from school			Grocery Shopping for the family			Others		
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Live In/ Riak	33 (29.5%)	79 (70.5%)	112	42 (37.5%)	70 (62.5%)	112	40 (35.7%)	72 (64.3%)	112	33 (29.5%)	79 (70.5%)	112
Live- out/Lang	46 (40.4%)	68 (59.6%)	114	34 (29.8%)	80 (70.2%)	114	24 (21.1%)	90 (78.9%)	114	46 (40.45%)	68 (59.6%)	114
Total	79 (34.96%)	147 (65.04%)	226	76 (33.63%)	150 (66.37%)	226	64 (28.32%)	162 (71.68%)	226	79 (34.96%)	147 (65.04%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Upon close examination of the above table, it can be said that household chores such as cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing were the common work done by the live-in workers with a data of 92.9% on cooking, 94.6% on cleaning, 93.8% on washing the clothes and 58.9% on ironing clothes. These data clearly proved that such activities were usually assigned to the live-in workers. However, there were also some minority instances where live-in workers do not engage in these activities. Specifically, 7.1% did not engaged in cooking, 5.4% from cleaning the house, 6.3% were exempted from washing the clothes and 41.1% from ironing the clothes. While these percentages represent a smaller proportion as compared to those engaged in these tasks, they highlighted that not all live-in domestic workers perform what was traditionally considered the central roles of their position. Data from the live-out workers also exhibit similarity with that of the live-in workers. Through their responses, it was revealed that 66.7% were engaged in cooking, 96.5% in cleaning, 93% in washing the clothes and 71.1% also ironed their employer's clothes. At the same time, 33.3% did not cook for their employer's family, 3.5% and 7% of the live-out domestic workers were not assigned to clean the house and wash the clothes and lastly, 28.9% do not take up ironing as part of their work.

“For people outside the work of domestic job, the job seems easy. However, we hardly have enough time to sit and relax during our working hours. The house of my employers is huge and I am the only maid here, so, I have to work all day without proper rest. I have clothes to wash which are many, and cleaning the huge house also require much time. My employers also demanded that I ironed all of their formal clothes after washing day. It is a really tough and labour-demanding job which requires me to be healthy at all times.” Saimawii Sailo, 22, Zemabawk.

Other outdoor chore such as gardening, babysitting and picking and dropping the kids to school and grocery shopping were also done by both the live-in and live-out workers. However, the data reveals that the workers do not much engage themselves in these activities as compared to the indoor activities. Among the live-on workers, while 33 individuals or 29.5% engage in gardening activity, 79 or 70.5% do not take up gardening as part of their work. The act of babysitting and dropping and picking up of kids was done by 37.5% of the workers while 70 workers or 62.5% did not look after the kids. Similarly, in the case of grocery shopping, while the majority of the workers (64.3% of the total population) did not buy grocery from the market, only a fraction of the population (35.7%) grocery shopped for the family. Live-out workers also gave a similar response with only 40.4% engaged in gardening, 29.8% in child rearing and 21.1% only in grocery shopping while majority of the workers did not take up the following activities, with a data of 59.6%, 70.2% and 78.9% of the population on the respective works.

5.4 Child-care provisions at work

Child-care provisions while at work refers to the arrangements made by employers to support employees in balancing their work responsibilities with their parental duties by offering childcare services or facilities at the workplace. These provisions aim to alleviate the challenges faced by working parents in finding reliable and affordable childcare arrangements while they were at work, enabling them to focus on their job duties with peace of mind.

Table 6: Provided with any child-care provisions while at work

Provision of child-care at work				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	0 (0%)	1 (0.9%)	111 (99.1%)	112
Live-out/Lang	1 (0.9%)	24 (21.1%)	89 (78.1%)	114
Total	1 (0.44%)	25 (11.1%)	200 (88.5%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Data collected from the table showed that the concept of providing child-care support, an uncommon practice within the Mizo society. Out of all the 226 responses, there is only 1 worker who stated that she was provided with child support while at work. 24 of the live-out workers and 1 worker from the live-in category comment that no support was given to them in regards to their child. The choice of 'not applicable' was opted by 99.1% of the live-in and 78.1% of the live-out workers adding up to as many as 200 out of the 226 workers interviewed.

"It is a Mizo custom to care and nurture someone who works under us. However, my employers only give me my monthly income and do not give me any benefits for child-care provisions while at work." Lalthai

5.5 Household chores at home after working

Household chores refer to the routine tasks and responsibilities involved in maintaining a clean, organized, and functional home environment. These tasks encompass a wide range of activities necessary for daily living and household upkeep, including cleaning, cooking, laundry, tidying, and maintenance. Sharing the responsibilities of household chores promotes a sense of ownership and pride in the home, fosters cooperation and teamwork among family members, and contributes to a harmonious and well-functioning household environment.

Table 7: Household chores at home after work

Types of household chores after work									
Domestic Worker	Self	Family Members	Children	Self, family member	self, friend	Self, Children	Self, family member, children	Not applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	112 (100%)	112
Live-out/Lang	59 (51.8%)	20 (17.5%)	1 (0.9%)	17 (14.9%)	3 (2.6%)	3 (2.6%)	1 (0.9%)	10 (8.8%)	114
Total	59 (26.11%)	20 (8.85%)	1 (0.44%)	17 (7.525)	3 (1.33%)	3 (1.33%)	1 (0.44%)	122 (53.98%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Since all the live-in domestic workers reside in their employer's house, the above survey was impractical to them, therefore 100% of the live-in workers choose that it was not applicable with their current situation. Contrary to the former, the live-out workers gave a variety of responses. Out of the 144 workers, 59 individuals or 51.8% continued doing household chores even at home. 20 of them have their family performed the chores without their intervention. Similarly, 1 worker also let her children carried out household activities by themselves. Among 17 live-out workers got help from their family members, making up 14.9 per cent. Both 3 workers were assisted by their friends and children adding up to 2.6% each. There was one worker who was helped by both her family members and children. 10 workers (8.8%) responded that it was not applicable for them.

“I am usually very tired at home after work because I worked for around 6 to 7 hours at my employers’ house. There is no one else to help me in my chores at home, so, it is like working non-stop for many hours a day. Women in Mizo society are tough and

strong and we hardly complain about the struggles that we faced.” Lalthazuali, 31, Hlimen.

In addition to their formal employment duties, domestic workers may also be expected to fulfil familial roles and responsibilities within their own households as mothers, sisters or a daughter. While there were similarities between the tasks performed at home and at the workplace, such as cooking and cleaning, the context and scope of the work may differ significantly. Domestic workers often navigate these differences by adapting their skills and expertise to meet the specific needs and expectations of both their own families and their employers.

Table 8: Difference of work done at work place and at home

Differences in work and household chores				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	--	--	112 (100%)	112
Live-out/Lang	14 (12.3%)	100 (87.7%)	--	114
Total	14 (6.19%)	100 (44.2%)	112 (49.6%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

From the above data, the following analysis can be done in the following. All of the live-in workers again expressed that it was not applicable to them since they particularly reside in their employer’s house. Majority of the live-out workers with a percentage of 87.7% said that there was no difference in the work done at home and at their employer’s house. Another 14 workers mentioned that some of the work done at home were different from the works they did at home.

5.6 Health Problems

Health was a state of physical, mental, and social well-being in which an individual was free from illness, injury, or disease. Achieving and maintaining good health requires a holistic approach that addresses physical, mental and social aspects of well-being.

Table 9: Health Problems

Health-related problems				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not sure	Total
Live In/ Riak	29 (25.9%)	82 (73.2%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	19 (16.7%)	90 (78.9%)	5 (4.4%)	114
Total	48 (21.2%)	172 (76.1%)	6 (2.65%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Among the live-in workers, majority of them do not have any health problems. They add up to 73.2% with a population of 82 workers. Meanwhile, 29 workers i.e. 25.9% of them agreed that they indeed suffer from some kind of disease leading to deterioration of their health while one (1) worker expressed how she was not sure whether she was having any health problems. Similarly, a total data of 78.9% or 90 workers expressed how no health problems was there to weigh them down, constituting a majority data among the live-out workers. At the same time, 19 workers or 16.7% stated that they did suffer from health problems which sometimes became a hinderance in caring out their job as a domestic worker. Also, there were five (5) workers who opted for the ‘not sure’ category meaning that they do not wish to reveal their health history.

Consulting a doctor for illness was a fundamental step in maintaining and restoring health. When individuals experience symptoms of illness or discomfort, seeking medical advice from a qualified healthcare professional such as a doctor was essential.

Table 10: Consulting doctor for illness

Consultation of doctors for illness				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	29 (25.9%)	52 (46.4%)	31 (27.7%)	112
Live-out/Lang	18 (15.8%)	83 (72.8%)	13 (11.4%)	114
Total	47 (20.8%)	135 (59.7%)	44 (19.5%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Regarding consultation of doctors for their illness, the workers, both live-in and live-out both gave a similar response saying that they rarely or never went to the doctors and consult their advises for their illness. The above data showed that both occupied a majority in their respective category with a total of 46.4% and 72.8% which adds up to 59.7% of the entire data. 29 workers from live-in and 18 workers from live-out said that they did consult doctors for their illness with a total data of 20.8%. At the same time, there were also some workers who expressed how option such as consultation of doctors were not mainly applicable to them due to the fact that they were healthy and was not in need of any consultation. They add up to 19.5% of the total population with 27.2% from the live-in and 11.4% from the live-out respectively.

“It is difficult to consult a doctor because I usually wait for my pain to subside and once my stomach pain is over, I don’t find it necessary to consult doctors. I had a constant stomach ache the reasons of which are unclear. My employers’ usually give me painkiller medicine and they had advised me to seek a doctor, but, as a working Mizo woman, I cannot find the time to consult one. It is not my employers’ fault but my own in this regard.”
Hmangaihkimi, 29, Zarkawt.

Accompaniment to doctor’s appointments can enhance the healthcare experience for individuals by providing emotional support, information gathering, decision-making assistance, transportation assistance, comfort, security, etc. Having a supportive companion by their side can help individuals feel more empowered and confident in managing their health and well-being.

Table 11: Accompaniment to doctor's appointment

Company while visiting doctors							
Domestic Worker	Alone	Friend	Family member	Employer	Employer's family	No visit to doctor	Total
Live In/ Riak	14 (12.5%)	3 (2.7%)	4 (3.6%)	2 (1.8%)	9 (8%)	80 (71.4%)	112
Live-out/Lang	11 (9.6%)		10 (8.8%)		1 (0.9%)	92 (80.7%)	114
Total	25 (11.1%)	3 (1.33%)	14 (6.19%)	2 (0.9%)	10 (4.4%)	172 (76.1%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above table put a focus on who accompanied the workers during their doctor's appointments. The majority of responses, both from live-in and live-out did not visit any medical doctor and stated that the poll was not applicable for their current circumstances, which constituted 71.4% and 80.7% of both the data respectively. The second place was held by those going to the doctor's appointment by themselves with a data of 12.5% among the live-in and 9.6% among the live-out workers. Dependence of the employer and their family can be witnessed among the live-in workers where 2 workers were accompanied by their employer and the other 9 by their employer's family. Friends (2.7%) and families (3.6%) of the live -in workers also tag along to the doctor's appointment. Among the live-out workers, 11 of them with a percentage of 9.6% go solo for doctor's appointment while 10 workers or 8.8% were accompanied by their family members. Unlike the former category, only 1 individual from 114 live-out workers were accompanied by her employer's family while consulting medic.

5.7 Bad treatment and abuse at work place

Experiencing bad treatment and abuse in the workplace can have serious consequences for individuals' physical and mental well-being, as well as their overall quality of life. It can lead to feelings of distress, anxiety, and depression, as well as physical health problems. Addressing bad treatment and abuse in the workplace was essential for promoting a safe and supportive work environment, protecting employees' rights and dignity, and fostering a culture of respect and professionalism.

Table 12: Work place abuse

Work place abuse					
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Did not bother	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	11 (9.8%)	73 (65.2%)	4 (3.6%)	24 (21%)	112
Live-out/Lang	17 (14.9%)	94 (82.5%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.8%)	114
Total	28 (12.4%)	167 (73.9%)	5 (2.2%)	26 (12%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above table highlighted the present conditions of domestic workers in the field of abuse. Here, 73 live-in workers with a data of 65.2% confirmed that no abuse or violation of personal rights has taken place within the household while 11 of them expressed how they were indeed a subject to violence during their stay with their employer's family. 4 workers did not wish to reveal their present condition and 24 workers stated that the concept was not applicable to them. Among the live-out workers, a majority of 82.5% exclaimed that they never received any kind of abuse or ill treatment from their employer and their family at the same time, some 14.9% expressed that they were treated badly and even became subject to abuse. There was also one (1) worker who was not bothered to answer to her current condition and another two who stated that the topic was not applicable to their situation.

“I don't think many women will want to speak out about this issue to strangers. Even I did not face any abuse from my employers but what I can say is that, my work schedule is very hectic and I am made to work around 10 hours a day without much break in between. My employers are kind to me but the hectic work load almost always made me quit my job. They did not raise my salary and so, I might quit my job in the coming future if salary is not increased or workload is not decreased.”
Lalrinawmi, 28, Dawrpui.

Abuse can have devastating effects on individuals' physical and mental well-being, as well as their professional and personal lives. The method for abuse may vary. Depending on the situation, it can be in the form of verbal, physical, emotional, sexual, discrimination, intimidation and many more. The act of abuse especially in workplace was strictly condemned by the law as it was a clear violation of the basic fundamental rights of an individual.

Table 13: Type of abuse faced at work place

Types of abuse faced					
Domestic Worker	Verbal abuse	Others (specify)	No mention about abuse	No Abuse	Total
Live In/ Riak	12 (10.7%)	--	43 (38.4%)	57 (51%)	112
Live-out/Lang	16 (14%)	1 (0.9%)	96 (84.2%)	1 (0.9%)	114
Total	28 (12.4%)	1 (0.44%)	139 (61.5%)	58 (26%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The kind of abuse typically faced by the workers as shown in Table 29 was that of verbal abuse with a total of 28 workers or 12.4% (10.7% and 14% respectively) facing such act both among the live-in and live-out workers. Alarmingly, there were 43 workers among the live -in with 38.4% data and a whopping 84.2% or 96 out of the 114 live-out workers who tend to hide and rather not mention the kind of abuse they received in their employer's house. This was both alarming and concerning at the same time. Additionally, 57 live-in workers and one among the live-out workers stated that it was not applicable to them as they faced no such abuse.

An abuser was an individual who engages in harmful or abusive behaviour towards others, whether in a personal or professional context. Abusers may exhibit patterns of manipulation, intimidation, and coercion to maintain dominance and inflict harm on them. It was important to recognize that abuse can occur in different forms and contexts and identifying and addressing abusive behaviour was crucial for promoting safety, well-being, and justice for those affected by abuse.

Table 14: Abuser at work place

Abusers at work place							
Domestic Worker	Employer	Employer's daughter	Employer's wife	Family member of the employer	Can't say	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	3 (2.7%)		7 (6.3%)	1 (0.9%)	4 (3.6%)	97 (86.6%)	112
Live-out/Lang		1 (0.9%)	13 (11.4%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.9%)	97 (85.1%)	114
Total	3 (1.33%)	1 (0.44%)	20 (8.85%)	3 (1.3%)	5 (2.21%)	194 (85.8%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above statistics showed the persons who were accountable for abusing their workers. Since it was not an easy question for the respondents to answer, hesitation can be witnessed when analysing their answers. Thus, out of the 112 live-in workers, 3 persons shared that they were abused by their employers while 7 of them by their employer's wife. There was also one worker who was abused by the other family members. 4 girls did not wish to disclose on the identity of their abuser while 97 of them said that the question was not relevant to them. Among the live-out workers, the most abuse came from the employer's wife as 13 workers became a victim of their abuse. There was also one worker abused by the employer's daughter in particular and 2 individuals abused by the other family members. One girl did not wish to disclose her abuser and chose the 'can't say' option. Interestingly, the same amount of response (as that of the live-in) was received on the 'not applicable' section with a total of 97 workers opting this category.

“My employers’ are not rude but not kind to me as well. They treated me like a second-class citizen. They looked down upon me and did not invite me to any of their special occasions and gatherings. They did not verbally or physically abuse me, but this silent treatment is enough to hurt my feelings. It is as if they

are treating me like a slave and expected me to act like one.” Zarzozuali, 27, Chanmari.

5.8 Specific Work-site problems

Aside from the abuse and mistreatment they received from their employer and family, there arise certain other personal problems faced by the domestic workers themselves which may or may not be the same for one another. the following data focused on the varies problems faced by the domestic workers on their work place.

Table 15: Specific Work-site problems faced

Specific work-site problems				
Total	Live-out/Lang	Live In/Riak	Domestic Worker	
9,290 (35.3%)	6 (5.3%)	15 (13.4%)	Long working hours & lack of holiday	
30 (13.3%)	21 (18.4%)	9 (8%)	Low wages & lack of security	
19 (8.41%)	2 (1.8%)	17 (15.2%)	Lack of freedom	
2,212 (2.21%)	2 (1.8%)	3 (2.7%)	Ill Health	
6,999 (26.99%)	23 (20.2%)	38 (33.9%)	Can't say, I live with it	
6 (2.65%)		6 (5.4%)	Not Applicable	
12 (5.31%)	10 (8.8%)	2 (1.8%)	and lack of holiday, low wages and lack of security, Lack of	
30 (13.27%)	15 (13.2%)	15 (13.4%)	and lack of holiday, low wages and lack of security, harassment and sexual	
4 (1.77%)	3 (2.6%)	1 (0.9%)	of security, Lack of	
1 (0.44%)		1 (0.9%)	Long working hours & lack of holiday, Lack of freedom, ill health	
2 (0.88%)		3 (2.7%)	Low wages and lack of security, Lack of	
1 (0.44%)		2 (1.8%)	and lack of holiday, low wages and lack of security, Lack of	
2 (0.88%)	28 (24.6%)		Low wages and lack of security, Lack of	
1 (0.44%)	1 (0.9%)		and lack of holiday, low wages and lack of security, Lack of	
3 (1.33%)	3 (2.6%)		Low wages and lack of security, Lack of freedom, ill health	
226	114	112	Total	

Source: Fieldwork

15 workers from the live-in and 6 workers from the live-out stated that the long working hours and lack of holidays creates great problem to them, adding up to a percentage of 9.29% out of the total 226 data collected. There were 2 workers (1.8%) from the live-in and 10 workers (8.8%) from the live-out who expressed how low wages and lack of security became a problem to them in addition with the former problems. Another 15 each worker both from the live-in and live-out category added that lack of freedom as their problem faced along with the former 4 problems thus, making up 13.27% of the total population while 3 workers from the live-in added lack of freedom while subtracting the problems of low wages and lack of security. There was also one girl (0.9%) from the live-in and 3 girls (2.6%) from the live-out who expressed how they received all the previous problems mentioned with the addition of harassment along with sexual exploitation while one worker from the live-out category said that she faced problems in regards to long working hours and lack of holidays, low wages and lack of security along with lack of freedom and ill health, as indicated in table 15. Problems such as low wage and lack of security were faced by 10 workers (8.2%) from the live-in and 21 workers (18.4%) from the live-out categories. in addition to these problems, lack of freedom was added by 28 live-out workers (24.6%) while both lack of freedom and ill health was added by 3 workers (2.6%) again from the live-out category. Lack of freedom alone was faced by 17 live-in workers and 2 workers from the live-out and the problem of ill health alone was faced by 3 and 2 workers both from the live-in and live-out categories. At the same time, both the problems were continuously faced by two girls from the live-in category. Furthermore, there were 38 live-in workers with a total of 33.9% and 23 live-out workers with a total of 20.2% who said that they rather not stated the problems as they already live with it which was sad and alarming at the same time. The 'not applicable' option was also chosen by 6 live-in workers.

Quitting work without prior notice was a complex decision that domestic workers may make for various reasons, including dissatisfaction with employment conditions,

personal circumstances, lack of communication channels, immediate job opportunities, emotional factors and impact on employers and household dynamics.

Table 16: Quitting work without prior notice

Quitting work without employers' notice				
Domestic Worker	Yes %	No %	Don't bother %	Total
Live In/ Riak	43 (38.4%)	67 (59.8%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	40 (35.1%)	71 (62.3%)	3 (2.6%)	114
Total	83 (36.7%)	138 (61.1%)	5 (2.21%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above data collected showed that 43 workers from the live-in category with 38.4% and 40 workers from the live-out category with a percentage of 35.1% have at least once in their career quit their job without prior notice while majority of the workers both from the live-in and live-out with a total population of 67 and 71, and a percentage of 59.8% and 62.3% respectively claimed that they never once quit their current job without prior notification as they considered it immature as well as unfair for their employers. There were also 2 workers from the live-in as well as 3 workers from the live-out who did not want to give any answers regarding this particular question and which add up 2.21% of the entire population.

Quitting work without receiving wages was a significant decision that domestic workers may contemplate under challenging circumstances. It was a complex decision shaped by financial hardship, exploitative employment practices, lack of legal recourse, deteriorating work conditions, and broader socio-economic factors.

Table 17: Quitting work without receiving wage

Quitting work before receiving wage				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Don't bother	Total
Live In/ Riak	14 (12.5%)	96 (85.7%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	17 (14.9%)	94 (82.5%)	3 (2.6%)	114
Total	31 (13.7%)	190 (84.1%)	5 (2.21%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Interestingly, most of the domestic workers did not quit jobs before receiving their monthly wages which clearly denoted the importance of money in their life. Here, 96 workers from the live -in as well as 94 workers from the live-out gave a statement that they never quit their job, let alone considered until and unless they received their monthly wages. They add up to a percentage of 84.1% of the entire data collected. However, there were also some who have considered, at least once or twice or have left their jobs without receiving the wages they earned. They add up to a total population of 13.7% with a data of 14 workers or 12.5% from the live-in and 17 workers or 14.9% from the live – out categories respectively. The data also showed some 1.8% and 2.6% from both the categories who cannot give a definite answer, maybe due to lack of confidence and consciousness about their vulnerability.

Job satisfaction refers to the level of contentment or fulfilment an individual experiences in their work role. It encompasses various aspects, including the fulfilment of job expectations, positive work environment, opportunities for growth and development, recognition and rewards, and alignment of personal values with their employer's goals.

Table 18: Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction with job				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Don't bother	Total
Live In/ Riak	78 (69.6%)	29 (25.9%)	5 (4.5%)	112
Live-out/Lang	69 (60.5%)	37 (32.5%)	8 (7%)	114
Total	147 (65%)	66 (29.2%)	13 (5.75%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

As shown in the above table, out of the 112 domestic workers, majority of them with a total population of 78 workers or 69.9% were satisfied with the current job they were engaging in while 29 workers with a percentage of 25.9% did not find satisfaction and wish to achieve more than their current status. Apart from the live-in workers, majority of the live-out with a data of 69 workers or 60.5%, similar to the former, were quite satisfied with their job as a domestic worker while some with a data of 37 workers or 32.5% wish to attain more than just their current situation. Furthermore, there were also a total of 13 workers (5 workers from live-in and 8 workers from live-out) who did not bother giving any definite answer to whether they were satisfied or not with their current job. They add up to 5.75% of the entire data collected. Some of them were saying “yes” but not very loud about their yeses. They just said yes for the sake of saying it.

“To be honest, no one will be satisfied with their job as a housemaid. Every one of us work as we had no other option. Even in my case, I would have never work as a maid had I been better educated and had other skills.” Ramnunpari, 30, Edenthari.

“You know, I have never bothered about the job satisfaction. I manage and believe in working to earn my living.” Lalrinsangi, 22, Zemabaw.

5.9 Daily rest periods

Daily rest periods indicate the time of rests of the domestic worker during the course of the day and if the domestic worker has been working non-stop for more than 6-7 hours of continuous work at the workplace. The time of daily rest periods tries to find out the time of rest and relaxation the domestic worker is able to enjoy during the course of the day at the workplace.

Table 19: Time of rest periods

Time of rest and relaxation											
Domestic Worker	Morning	Noon	Evening	Night	Noon and Night	Evening and night	Morning and Night	Morning, Evening & Night	Morning, Noon & Night	N/A	Total
Live In/ Riak	1 (0.9%)	26 (23.2%)	6 (5.4%)	55 (49.1%)	13 (11.6%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.8%)	--	7 (6.3%)	112
Live-out/Lang	2 (1.8%)	18 (15.8%)	3 (2.6%)	73 (64%)	7 (6.1%)	4 (3.5%)	5 (4.4%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	--	114
Total	3 (1.33%)	44 (19.47%)	9 (3.98%)	128 (56.64%)	20 (8.85%)	5 (2.21%)	6 (2.65%)	3 (1.33%)	1 (0.44%)	7 (3.10%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Among the live-in workers, those resting at night occupies the highest with a total percentage of 49.1%. It means that out of the 112 domestic workers, 55 of them rest when the day comes to an end. The second place goes to those resting during noon with a total of 23.2% or 26 individuals. 13 workers also claimed that they got a chance to rest both at noon and night adding up to 11.6% of the data collected. There were 6 workers who rest by evening while one worker each who rest during morning and both morning and night. In addition to this, there were also two individuals who had a chance to relax on morning, noon and night and 7 workers (6.3%) stating that it was not applicable to them. The live-out workers also gave a diverse response; the workers who rest by night constitute the highest with a total percentage of 64% or 73

out of 114 workers. Those resting at noon comes next with a data of 15.8% or 18 workers. 7 girls (6.1%) rest during noon and night time while other 4(3.5%) rest during evening and night and 5 workers (4.4%) during morning and night. There were 2 individuals (1.8) who rest during morning and three girls by evening. Additionally, one worker each both rest during morning, noon, evening, and night.

The time allocated for watching television plays a multiple role in the lives of domestic workers, encompassing aspects of relaxation, entertainment, cultural enrichment, stress relief, time management, and technological access. Watching television remains an important relaxation activity which helps domestic workers in utilizing their leisure hours and enjoy their freedom despite their hectic timeframe.

Table 20: Time for Recreation

Recreation				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	86 (76.8%)	20 (17.9%)	6 (5.4%)	112
Live-out/Lang	28 (24.6%)	86 (75.4%)		114
Total	114 (50.44%)	106 (46.9%)	6 (2.65%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above table exhibit a sharp difference on grounds of whether the workers got time to watch television during their leisure hours between the live-in and live-out domestic workers. 86 out of the 112 live-in workers confirmed that there was indeed time for them for recreation despite their tight schedule. they constitute 76.8% of the total population. on the other hand, 20 workers with a percentage of 17.9% stated that they did not have any spare time even to watch television due to their hectic work time while the other remaining 6 or 5.4% of them said that such question was not applicable to them. The latter data showed quiet opposite response as compared to the former data, where, among the live-out those who did not have any spare time to watch television rules majority with a total data of 75.4% or 86 workers while only 28 workers with a percentage of 24.6% claimed that they were able to find time to watch television and enjoyed their leisure time.

“Of course, I had time to watch television and I usually watch it alongside my employers at night. I don’t have time to watch it at working hours but I usually play music while working. My employers had no issue with me watching television but they demanded that I do not do so during working hours.” Rinnungi Ralte, 28, Mission Veng.

Running away from an employer’s house was a complex and consequential decision that domestic workers may consider in response to various challenges and hardships they face in the workplace. It reflects the intersection of factors such as safety concerns, exploitative working conditions, contract violations, lack of support systems, emotional impact, mental, physical and emotional abuse, sexual harassment, etc. Additionally, they may encounter social stigma, discrimination, or retaliation from employers or community members, further complicating their situation.

Table 21: Running away from employer’s house

Run away without prior notice				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Can't say	Total
Live In/ Riak	7 (6.3%)	103 (92%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	7 (6.1%)	107 (93.9%)	-	114
Total	14 (6.19%)	210 (92.9%)	2 (0.88%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Out of the 112 live-in workers, 7 of them (6.3%) claimed that they ran away from their employer’s house without prior information while the other 103 remaining stated that such act was never done by them even though the situation, they were in may be dire, adding up to a majority of 92%.

“I had to run away from my employers’ house because I can no longer bare their verbal abuse. They shout at me

and were very rude to me. They acted very uncivilized and did not behave in a Christian-like manner. I did not even bother about my belongings and wage and just run out then and there. However, my present employers are very kind and treated me like their own daughter.”
Lalhlimehchani, 25, Durtlang.

There were also 2 workers who did not wish to disclose the information as they considered it private which might affect their work. Similarly, 7 of the live-out workers confirmed that they did have a history of running away from their employer’s house due to various reasons while the other 107 out of 114 workers claimed that the concept of running away have never dawned to them or they considered it immature to run away in spite of all the hardship they faced so far.

5.10 Opinion on income

The term “income” refers to any type of compensation or benefit received in exchange for work performed or for capital invested. Income can come in the form of the money you receive from your employer or the payments you receive on your investments. Income can be divided into several categories, including gross versus net income and earned versus unearned income. The women domestic workers were asked about their satisfaction on the income provided by their employers and the results have been displayed in the following table.

Table 22: Opinion on the satisfaction of their income

Income satisfaction				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	I don’t know	Total
Live In/ Riak	46 (41.1%)	34 (30.4%)	32 (28.6%)	112
Live-out/Lang	47 (41.2%)	29 (25.4%)	38 (33.3%)	114
Total	93 (41.2%)	63 (27.9%)	70 (31%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The data can be analysed as follows. Among the 226 domestic workers, 46 (41.1%) workers from the live-in and 47 (41.2%) workers from the live-out workers have said that they were all satisfied with the income provided to them by their employers and they had no issue with the received amount thus adding up to 41.2% of the entire data collected. At the same time, 63 (27.9%) of the entire domestic workers responded that they are not satisfied with the income that they received and said that it could have increased with a data of 34 (30.4%) and 29 (25.4%) workers both from live-in and live-out respectively.

On the other hand, there are as many as 70 (31%) women domestic workers who have said that they did not know whether they are satisfied or not and they said that they could not give proper responses with this regard, wherein 32 (28.6%) women from the live-in and another 38 (33.3%) women from live-out women have opted for the ‘I don’t know’ answer. Most of the respondents were hesitant to tell the answers.

“I came from a village and I hardly interact with people outside of my employers’ home and so, I did not even know whether the income I receive is enough or not. I send all my income to my families in the village anyway and even they never talk about whether my income is enough or not. I live in my employers’ house with free food and lodging and to me that is enough.” – Laltlanchhungi, Muanna Veng.

5.11 Choosing of work at workplace

The person in charge of choosing the work for domestic workers typically varies depending on the specific context and arrangement of employment. In many cases, it was the employer who determines the tasks and responsibilities assigned to domestic workers based on their household needs and preferences. However, there were several factors and dynamics to consider when discussing the individual responsible for selecting the work for domestic workers.

Table 23: Choosing of work at work place

Chosen of work at workplaces										
Domestic Worker	Self	Employer (Female)	Employer (Male)	Employer's wife	Employer's Husband	No one in particular	Others (Specify)	Employers' daughter in law	Agent	Total
Live In/Riak	17 (15.2%)	62 (55.4%)	3 (2.7%)	19 (17%)	--	9 (8%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	--	112
Live-out/Lan g	14 (12.3%)	82 (71.9%)	10 (8.8%)	5 (4.4%)	2 (1.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.95)	114
Total	31 (13.7%)	144 (63.7%)	13 (5.75%)	24 (11%)	2 (0.9%)	9 (3.98%)	1 (0.44%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The table exhibits a wide range on who exactly decides on what work to perform by the domestic workers. Out of all the 112 live-in household, the employer who were female, usually determines most of the work with a majority data of 55.4% of the entire household. This means that 62 female employers were responsible for the work performed by the workers. Next comes the employer's wife with a total data of 17%. The works were also determined by the workers themselves, with 17 of them or 15.2% of the data being in-charge for their own work. 9 workers have expressed that no one in particular decide their work. The male employer also sometimes directed their work occupying only 2.7% among the data collected. Interestingly, there was one worker who said that her work was decide by the daughter in law of the employer.

Similar to the live-in situation, the works performed by the live-out workers were mostly directed by the female employers with a majority of 82 out of the 114 household. They constituted as many as 71.9% of the total data. Unexpectedly, 14 live-out workers decide the work which they were to perform for the day. 10 male employers with a data of 8.8% also determine the work of the girls which surprisingly was more than that of the live-in male employers. At the same time, the data highlights how only a fraction of the employers' spouses dictate the work for the

live out workers with 4.4% and 1.8% from both the employer's wife and husband respectively. There was also one agent who determines the work for the worker.

These findings show that women domestic workers have little say in the work that they perform and should be given more freedom to choose the work that they do and provide opinion to the type of work that they should engage in as well.

5.12 Some case studies

In this section, 4 case studies are presented. These 4 case studies substantiate the work and working conditions of women domestic workers through careful analysis and in-depth analysis. The first case study describes the life of an unmarried lady who migrated to Aizawl from Maubuang village to work as a maid. The second case study is about a young woman who worked hard to support her ailing mother and the third case study is about a woman who had no other family but her employers. The fourth case study is about a young single woman who works as a live-in domestic worker.

CASE STUDY NUMBER 5.1

A 20-year-old lady who migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid

Name: Lallianpuii

Gender: Female

Age: 20 years old

Marital Status: Unmarried

Religion: Christian

Work Status: Live-in

Place of Residence: Nursery Veng, Aizawl

Lallianpuii is a young woman who migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid. She regularly sends her income back to her families and she supported her parents through her income. Her work ethics is rather hectic and often does not have much resting period in her daily work.

Profile of family members

6. Lalmuansanga. A 58-year-old man who is the father Lallianpuii. He is a high school graduate and is currently engaged in farming. He received monthly salary of Rs. 10,000.
7. Lallianpuii, a 20-year-old woman who supports her family through her earnings from domestic work.
8. Lalhlimpuii. She is 10 years old and is currently attending school.
9. Lalhmahruaia. An 8-year-old boy and is a brother of Lallianpuii who is also currently attending school.

Lallianpuii and her family have a small plot of land and they live in Maubuang village. She currently resides in the house of Pu Hmuakliana at Nursery Veng, Aizawl by working as their maid. Her mother had passed away when she was a

young girl and had not much of an option but to work as a maid and migrated to Aizawl after receiving an offer from a close friend. She had no hesitation in working as a maid because she felt it as a duty to support her father financially as she had young siblings to care for. Her mother's early demise let her take the role of a caregiver in family which makes her want to migrate to Aizawl and work as a maid. Her education level is not high and does not possess much skill which does not leave her much option but to work as a maid as that work does not require much skill and specialization. She had described her work ethic as hectic and does not take rest much. She had worked in maximum to around 10 hours every day and does not have many leisure hours. She attended Sunday service regularly but besides that, she doesn't have time for any religious or social functions. She usually receives low income which is around Rs. 6000 per month

“I was very young when I decided to work as a maid as I had no many options. The main reason for it was to aid my father who is a farmer and does not earn much. I saw him struggle without my mother since I was young and I wanted to work early so that I can contribute to our family earnings. My siblings are still too young and I want them to grow up with better back up than I am. So, I try my best to support their academic journey as best as I can and even though my work schedule is hectic, I do not mind because I know that one day, my siblings will grow up to be the person they always dreamt of and I will be one of the reasons for that.”
Lalneihpuii, Maubuang.

She said that even though she did not receive any form of abuse from her employers, her hectic work schedules make it seem like she endure abuse most of the time. She even felt like running away from them but since she had no back up option and no one to turn to in the city area, she refrains from such thoughts and keep working delightfully with each passing day.

“Just the thought of quitting my work makes me weak in my knees. I had no other option right now and could not even argue and complain about the long working hours to my employers. They are very strict but they had never yelled at me nor beat me up. But, their demand of work is very hectic and I cannot keep it up sometimes.”

The case of Lallianpuii presented a story of resilience and dedication and her story does not end in being a maid but rather a story of work to support her ailing father and her siblings to give them a chance to acquire their dreams.

CASE STUDY NUMBER 5.2

A 28-year-old woman who supports her son through her work

Name: Lalhlimchhani

Gender: Female

Age: 25 years old

Marital Status: Unmarried

Religion: Christian

Work Status: Live-in

Place of Residence: Durtlang, Aizawl

Lalhlimchhani is a young woman who had run away from her previous employers and is currently working as a maid in Durtlang. She lived in her employer's house and earned a monthly income of Rs. 5000. She supported both her mother and brother through her meagre income.

Profile of family members

1. Lawmsangkimii, a 64-year-old woman who is the mother of Lalhlimchhani who lived in Keifang village. She is a farmer and worked every day in her farm. She took care of her grandson in the process. Her husband had passed away 15 years back and had to take care of their family farm by herself.
2. Rosangzuali, a 28 years old woman who migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid as she needed an income to care for her young son. She divorced from her husband.
3. Ramdinmawia is a 15 years old boy who is currently studying in government school. He is the brother of Lalhlimchhani.

Lalhlimchhani is a young woman who had migrated to Aizawl to work as a maid. She had studied till class 12 and did not study further due to the conditions of her

low-income family. She is skilled in tailoring which she had learnt from her mother. She occasionally tailored clothes for her employers and their neighbours. She hopes to become a successful tailor one day. At present, she is working as a maid in Durtlang and works in a sincere manner. She had stated that by saving enough income, she hopes to open her own designing store one day and work in the field of fashion.

“I am really fortunate to work for my current employers as they believe in my dreams. Amidst my hectic work schedule, they give me time to tailor clothes and they very much share my passion. Their love and affection made me forget about my rough upbringings and also made me forget the hectic schedule of working a 8 hour shift straight in household chores. There is really no working time but I have said 8 hours is my working time because I calculated it tentatively. As long as I am awake, there is work to do. However, that did not bother me at all as I am also given enough time to pursue my fashion interest. I also make clothes for my employers and they are always very supportive of me.”

This case shows that when treat with love and care, women domestic workers also view their employers just like their family and made them empathetic with the hardships and problems faced by their employers.

CASE STUDY NUMBER 5.3

A 30-year-old woman who had no other family but her employers

Name:	Lallawmzuali
Gender:	Female
Age:	30 years old
Marital Status:	Unmarried
Religion:	Christian
Work Status:	Live-in
Place of Residence:	Bawngkawn, Aizawl

Lallawmzuali is a 30-year-old woman who had worked with her current employer for the past 12 years already. She did not seek any other job nor is she in a position to do so with the absence of higher educational qualifications and no skills. She no longer has a family on her own as she lost all her family members to an accident when she was young. She was in no position to reject the offer to stay in her employer's house as a maid. However, she expressed that she did not have any issues and conflict with her employers who loved her just as they would have loved their own daughter.

She studied till class 12 and decided not to study further as her academic capabilities did not permit her to study further. Instead, she chose to concentrate fully on her work as a maid and saved her income regularly. She cannot say anything about her future as she is currently content with the family she stays with. However, through her savings, she plans to someday relocate to her village and live her old age there only.

“I am very happy the way I am today. My employers are my only family and even though I have a house in a tiny village, I decided not to move back there as I had no family members

there and my employers are the only family that I have. I saved money and when I become old and no longer capable of working, I wish to relocate to my village and even laid my body there to rest alongside my families. The only problem I have as a maid is that I am being looked down by many people and people assumed me to be dumb, which is entirely not true with me. I read books and updated my knowledge as best as I can even though I am a maid.”

CASE STUDY NUMBER 5.4

A 22-year-old woman who supports her son through her work

Name: Lalfakpuii

Gender: Female

Age: 22 years old

Marital Status: Unmarried

Religion: Christian

Work Status: Live-in

Place of Residence: Zemabawk, Aizawl

Lalfakpuii currently works as a live-in domestic worker in Zemabawk, Aizawl. She is a young woman who lives in Tawipui village and currently resides in Aizawl due to her work. She belongs to a family of seven in her village and due to the determination to support herself and her family, she decided to relocate in Aizawl for work purposes.

Profile of family members

1. Lalmangaihsanga. A 57-year-old man who is the father of Lalfakpuii. He works as a farmer in their family land and cultivate crops and engage in agricultural fields to support his family.
2. Rosangzuali. A 55-year-old woman who is the wife of Pu Lalmangaihsanga. She also extends her support to her family agricultural work. She takes care of her families and did most of the household chores and cooking.
3. Lalremsanga is a 34-year-old man who is the eldest son of Pu Lalmangaihsanga. He also works in their family farm and did agricultural work. He mainly takes care of the farm and took major responsibility since his father started to become weak.

4. Lalawmpuii. She is a 25-year-old wife of Lalremsanga and is the daughter-in-law of Pu Lalmangaihsanga. She stays in the house and look after the house and household chores. She occasionally helps in the agricultural work of the family.
5. Lalfakpuii. She is a 22-year-old woman who is the only daughter of Pu Lalmangaihsanga. She currently relocates to Aizawl to support herself and her families financially.
6. Laldampuia. He is a 5-year-old son of Lalremsanga who currently attends primary school in their village. He is the grandson of Pu Lalmangaihsanga.
7. Laltleipuii. She is a 1-year-old daughter of Lalremsanga.

Lalfakpuii has studied till her matriculation in her village. She did not further continue her studies as she felt that studying is not her strong point. She initially helped her families in their agricultural work and helped out in the household work. However, since her brother married and have kids of his own, their families expanded and she felt that she needed to relocate herself to other places and work other jobs, besides their agricultural work and supports herself financially. Her current employers were introduced to her by her cousins who also worked as a domestic worker in Aizawl.

“My cousin sister told me that my current employers were in search of a domestic worker and hence, introduced me to them. I worked with them for 2 years now and they have never given me any problems but rather, they treated me like their own daughter since day one.”

In terms of work ethics, she said that she regularly works for around 9 hours every day with a short resting period between her working set. She has a saying in the nature of work and also suggests work to be done to her employers instead of solely relying on the orders given to her. She casually went out with her friends on her day-offs and also occasionally went out for dinner with her employers. She only went out under the approval of her employers and never did anything behind their back.

However, she expressed that she had never heard of the association for domestic workers in Mizoram despite working in the field for 2 years now.

“I really wish domestic workers association are more vocal in Mizoram. I have never even heard of them until you said so. Had their presence been more vocal, we might have fixed income and many issues faced by us may be resolved easily. Besides, working hours are needed to be fixed because many workers are made to work beyond working hours and are paid very less. I am fortunate to work for open-minded and loving employers but this is not the case for many women. So, proper registration systems and awareness are needed in terms of association for women domestic workers in Mizoram.”

This case shows that proper functioning of domestic workers association in Mizoram is highly needed and also, once awareness is extended, many women will register and the association can also take many steps to solve the issues faced by women domestic workers in Mizoram state.

5.13 An overview

This section looks at the brief overview of all the different headings and sub-headings related to work and working conditions of women domestic workers from this study.

Work routine: From the chapter on work and working conditions we come to know about the work routine of the women domestic workers that among the live-in workers, begin their job at 6:00-6:30 am in the morning. This confirmed that the live-in workers usually began their work early in the morning right after waking up to do chores assigned by their employers. Contrary to the live-in workers, among the live-out domestic workers, those working from 9:30-10:00 am exhibits the highest population with 47 individuals or 41.2% per cent. The above data illustrates the diverse nature of the employer’s household and the differing schedules of live-in and

live-out domestic workers, with live-in workers typically starting earlier to accommodate their living arrangements, while live-out workers tend to have later starting times, potentially influenced by transportation and other factors.

The live- in workers finish their work at 7:00 pm with a total number of 38 girls adding up to 33.9% of the entire data collected. 32 girls finished their work at 8:00 pm, coming into the second place among the 112 workers interviewed. The third most common answer received were those who complete their work at 9:00 pm with 26 individuals or 23.2% picking this category. 50 workers completed their work at 4:00 in the afternoon occupying the highest among the live- out workers with 50.9% of the total population. This means that half of the live out workers, as their name *lang*, suggested, went home before sunset. Sharp differences which can be witnessed from following data was that, unlike the live- in workers in which 8:00 pm onwards remains a high time for their completion of work, the number of the live- out workers began to decline with a total percentage of 9.7% on all four categories i.e.- between 7:00 pm till 10:00pm (4.4%, 1.8%, 0.9%, 2.6% and 4.4% respectively). Notably, there were no workers who worked pass 10:00 pm which highlighted the true nature of live-out workers.

The most common time period of waking up among both the live- in and live- out workers was 6:00 in the morning, with a whooping majority of 73.2% and 61.4% of the entire data collected. The data thus, showed that live-out workers have more autonomy over their timing and can adjust according to their work schedule, while the live-in workers have little to no autonomy over their time period and must adhere to the timing set by to their employers which was usually early in the morning. The data collected among both live-in and live-out domestic workers, reveals that majority of the domestic workers sleep around 10:00 at night.

Nature of work: The household chores performed by the domestic workers were work such as cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing were the common work done by both the live-in and live-out workers. Other outdoor chore such as gardening, babysitting and picking and drooping the kids to school and grocery shopping were also done by both the live-in and live-out workers.

Out of the 112 and 114 houses of live-in and live-out workers, owning two living rooms was the highest number among the employers of the domestic workers. Majority of the live-in and live-out workers (78.6% and 86% respectively) agreed that no extra work was given to them by their employers while at work. The study confirmed that no extra wages were given to them for their extra workload. Interestingly, the category of 'not applicable' occupies the highest data with 87 individuals from live-in workers and 100 individuals from live-out workers opting for this category. There were also 97 individuals each who did not receive rewards through cash and in kind. At the same time, a whopping 87.7% or 100 workers and 94.7% or 108 workers among the live-out exclaimed how they did not receive any rewards, be it in cash or kind for their extra work.

The employer who was female, usually determines most of the work to be done for the live-in as well as the live-out domestic workers. At the same time, the data highlights how only a fraction of the employers' spouses dictate the work for the live-in and live out workers. 23 workers arrived home by 6:00 pm and constitute the highest percentage among the live-out domestic workers. Data revealed that half of the live-out workers just lock the house while they were at work, which is followed by their neighbors look after the houses for them. The live-out domestic workers confirmed that no one took care of their children while they were at work, which was both alarming and depressing at the same time because the children had no one to look after themselves without adult supervision, while their mothers were away trying to earn a decent livelihood for the family.

Child-care provision at work: The concept of providing child-care support is an uncommon practice within the Mizo society. Out of all the 226 responses, there is only 1 worker who stated that she was provided with child support while at work. Child-care provision is not common among the women domestic workers as most of them have not receive any.

Household chores at home: At the same time, a whooping majority of 70.2% or 80 out of 114 live-out workers said that the work done on both their house their employer's household were exactly the same as the work they do at their work place.

The live-out domestic workers had mostly said that they had no other family members to help them in their household chores and they themselves have to do the same chores in their houses after their work from their employers' house is over.

80 individuals have enjoyed day-off for them to carry out their private life, who constitute as many as 71.4% of the data. Among the live-in workers, 80 of them exclaimed how Sundays were the only day-off or break given to them throughout the whole week while 31 out of 112 said that it was not applicable since no day-off was given to them throughout the whole week. expressed how no exemption were given to them throughout the year. For some of them however, no such day off were not applicable to them. Most of the live-out workers were allowed to take a break from their duties of household work, which is as many as 98.2% while there were 2 individuals who were not given any vacation or break from their employers.

Health problems: Many of the domestic workers were unable to say whether they had any health issues at all, and therefore doctor visitations were rare and not applicable amongst the domestic workers. They did not take medications for their illness even though they need the treatment for their health.

Bad treatment and abuse at work place: Any bad treatment faced by the domestic workers were not disclosed by them and the majority of them felt the question was not applicable to them to answer. Alarming, there were 43 workers among the live-in workers and 96 out of the 114 live-out workers who tend to hide and rather not mention the kind of abuse they received in their employer's house. This was both alarming and concerning at the same time. Additionally, 57 live-in workers and one among the live-out workers stated that it was not applicable to them as they faced no such abuse. Regarding who is accountable for abusing their workers, since it was not an easy question for the respondents to answer, hesitation can be witnessed when analysing their answers. Most of the responses of the respondents were that they 'did not bother' about it. The children of the household generally were good to them, but a few were also not so good to the domestic workers. The abuse they faced made them angry and resentful and hurt. Lack of freedom and lack of security were mostly

cited for the work-related problems and issues raised. Some wished not to share their problems and would rather live with it than relate the issues faced by them.

Daily rest periods: Most of the domestic workers were able to rest during the day while at work, some rested during the afternoon and some in the night. Watching television was another form of relaxation which could be enjoyed by the live-in domestic workers, but not so much for the live-out domestic workers. A good number of the domestic workers did not feel the need or compulsion to run away from work, especially without giving prior information to their employers, although rare cases do suggest it did take place among a few live-in domestic workers. Quitting without giving prior notice or before receiving wages is not considered a suitable option among domestic workers. This points out the importance of receiving money for the minimal wage earners like the domestic workers who depend on their salary and wages for survival.

Some case studies: The study concludes with four different case studies which were presented at the end of the chapter. The first case is about a young woman who had migrated to Aizawl to work solely as a maid after being informed by her friends. She had stated about the hectic work schedule but she did not dare to complain against anyone as she had families to feed. The next case study is about a young mother who supported her son through her work as a maid and despite stating the hectic work schedule, she perseveres through it all. The third case study also detailed a young woman who did not have any other family members to turn to but her employers. She sincerely works in their house to care for them and stated that they love her like their own family member and work is not at all hectic. The fourth case study is about a young woman who works as a live-in worker and she relocates to Aizawl to support herself financially.

Opinion on income: The women domestic workers were asked about their opinion on the income received by them on a monthly basis and the answers to the questions were almost all equal. Even though many women have agreed that their income was enough, many other women on an almost equal basis have also said that they were not satisfied with the income that they received. At the same time, there were also

many women who did not even know whether they are satisfied or not with the monthly income that they received. The income that they received were diverse and there is no fixation of income among women domestic workers in Mizoram. This shows that there is a dire need from the association to fix a regular income for all women domestic workers and also, the income fix should be based on the categories of the work that they engaged in and in this sense, the size of the families and size of the house may play an important role.

Choosing of work at workplace: The findings under this category show that women employers were mostly in-charge of the work for women domestic workers and the workers themselves have little to no say in their daily chores and work. Women domestic workers should have more say in the work that they engage and should also contribute their opinions on choosing the kind of work that they do on a daily basis. This will build a closer connection between both the employers and the workers and will improve the working environment between the two as well.

The structural vulnerability in domestic labour is addressed through the use of the ILO's Decent Work framework. The main focus is on the Rights at Workplace, which promotes the official legal inclusion of domestic workers. ILO Convention 189 (C189), which requires ratifying governments to guarantee domestic workers have safeguards comparable to those of the broader workforce. These safeguards include ensuring freedom of association, outlawing forced labour, establishing minimum age standards, and controlling hours and rest. In the end, the framework emphasises how the private family functions as a legal "grey zone" i.e. an ambiguous space that frequently suspends rights and encourages abuses to go unpunished. Freedom of Association and collective bargaining for domestic workers are mandated by C189, as stated in the Rights at Work pillar of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.

The next chapter will focus on the employers and employees' relationships.



Celebration of International Domestic Workers Day 2022 & Signature Campaign on “I Support Decent Work and Dignified Life for Domestic Workers Beyond Covid-19” at Herhse Picnic Spot, Phunchawng, Aizawl. 16th June, 2022.



North East Domestic Workers' Week 2023, Theme: Recognise Decent Work for Domestic Workers for their Social Protection and Sustainable Development, organized by FDWA, Aizawl City. 10th-16th June 2023.

CHAPTER – VI

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES' RELATIONSHIPS

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CHAPTER – VI

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES' RELATIONSHIPS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to find out the gender relations and the relations between the employers and employees. It is particularly concerned with how the employers treat the domestic workers, whether there is problem with the employer or with employer's wife or husband, to whom does the domestic worker confide to if faced with any problem, to whom does the domestic workers confide to when problems arise, the kinds of gifts or rewards received and if they have been fired from work by their employers. The main topic covered in this chapter include the treatment of employers towards their employees, problems faced with employers, problems faced with employers' wives, problems faced with employers' husbands, problems shared with others, building closest relationships, employers' husbands' treatment of domestic workers, scolding by employers, relationship with other members of family, gifts or rewards received from employer, items or variety of gifts received, termination from work.

6.2 Worksite relationships

Domestic worker's relationships at work are frequently complicated and influenced by the dynamics of power in the home. The employer's strategy and the social and legal framework surrounding domestic employment are crucial factors in determining whether these interactions are professional and courteous or abusive and exploitative. Power imbalance, lack of official recognition, susceptibility to abuse, and the necessity to meet the emotional needs of family members—who are frequently demanding and unpaid—as well as the demands of the employers are all problems. In the worksite relationship, their problem shared with others, the building of closest relationship, their relationship with other members of family, and gifts or rewards received from employers were taken into account.

6.2.1 Problem shared with others

The importance of sharing problems with others cannot be overstated. More it is shared, more is the solace towards relief. Whether seeking emotional support, gaining new perspectives, strengthening relationships, finding solutions, or alleviating stress, sharing problems can have profound benefits for the overall well-being of the individual.

Table 1: Problem shared with others

Problems shared with others								
Domestic Worker	Employer	Employer's wife	Employer's husband	Employer's Daughter	Co-maid	As Convenient	Not Sharing	Total
Live In/Riak	7 (6.3%)	49 (43.8%)	2 (1.8%)	18 (16.1%)	11 (9.8%)	16 (14.3%)	9 (7.1%)	112
Live-out/Lang	7 (6.1%)	22 (19.3%)		6 (5.3%)	9 (7.9%)	53 (46.5%)	17(8.8%)	114
Total	14 (6.19%)	71 (31.4%)	2 (0.88%)	24 (10.6%)	20 (8.85%)	69 (30.5%)	26 (7.9%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above table exhibits the different kinds of people whom the workers have confined themselves with when facing certain kinds of grievances and problems which may be both works based or personal life. Among the 112 live -in domestic workers, 49 of them with a total of 43.8% confined their problems to their employer's wife adding up to the highest among all categories which indicates that the employer's wife is often seen as a trusted confidant and source of support for domestic workers in navigating various challenges.

“I have full trust in my employers. They are very kind and my boss is also a busy woman yet reliable and well-read. Whenever I have problem of any issue, she listens carefully to what I have to say and then tried her best to help me always. Even when she is busy, she always makes sure that she allots time for me. I like

working for them as they treated me like family.” K. Remsangpuii, Chawlhmun.

Following closely behind were the employer’s daughters with a total number of 18 workers or 16.1%. Interestingly, some 9.8% shared their problems and grievances towards other domestic workers who either reside with them or in neighboring houses. Only a fraction of them totaling 6.3% and 1.8% of the data collected, confined their problems to their employer as well as their employer’s husbands. There are also 16 live-in domestic workers who shared their problems with whoever is convenient to them. Additionally, 9 live-in workers did not share with anybody and 17 live-out workers also refused to disclose any personal problem to others. They said that those situations were not applicable to them and that they did not wish to discuss or disclose their private life. Contrary to the live – in workers, the live – out category witnessed a number of workers who did not wish to confide with any other human being about the problems and challenges that they endured and rather hid it to themselves, which suggests that live-out workers may be more independent and rather not seek support from others as compared to their live-in counterparts. These workers added up to 46.5% of the total data, thus, maintaining the highest response among the live – out workers. Similar to the former, employer’s wives with a percentage of 19.3%, again played a crucial role in helping the workers to cope their situation, thus coming into second place. Other people include co – maid (7.9%), employer themselves (6.1%) and employer’s daughters (5.3%). Unlike the live -in, no live – out workers shared their grievances to their employer’s husbands. Thus, from the above data, it can be understood that whether seeking support from employers’ family members, fellow domestic workers, or choosing to deal with problems independently, each approach reflects the unique dynamics and coping mechanisms employed by domestic workers in managing their circumstances.

6.2.2 Building Closest Relationship

Building close relationships with others is essential for our overall well-being and personal development. By fostering meaningful connections with our surroundings, we create a support network that benefits our lives, provides emotional assistance,

and facilitates personal growth. As social beings, our ability to form close relationships is not only fundamental to our happiness and fulfilment but also essential for creating a more connected and compassionate society.

Table 2: Building closest relationship

Closest relationship							
Domestic Worker	Employer's wife	Employer's husband	Employer's son	Employer's Daughter	Co-maid	No one in particular	Total
Live In/ Riak	54 (48.2%)	4 (3.6%)	3 (2.7%)	23 (20.5%)	6 (5.4%)	8 (7.2%)	112
Live-out/Lang	28 (24.6%)	--	--	11 (9.6%)	8 (7%)	67 (58.8%)	114
Total	82 (36.3%)	4 (1.77%)	3 (1.33%)	34 (15%)	14 (6.19%)	89 (39.33%)	226

Source:Fieldwork

Based on the above data, it is evident that among domestic workers, the majority felt closest to employer's wife, regardless of whether they were live-in or live-out workers. Among live-in domestic workers, 48.2% shared a deeper bond towards the employer's wife, while among live-out workers, this percentage was slightly lower at 24.6%. Following the employer's wife, live-in domestic workers were also close to employer's daughters (20.5%) and co-maids (5.4%).

“I share many of my secrets with my master's wife. She is my secret keeper. Besides, women understand other women's issues best and so, I confided in her whenever I felt a sense of trouble and also, I mostly turn to her for cooking advice.”
Ramthianghlimi, Selesih.

On the other hand, live-out workers felt a sense of closeness to their fellow co-maids (46.5%) to a much greater extent compared to other categories. It is noteworthy that a significant proportion of live-out workers (46.5%) did not build or have close relationship to anyone in particular, which might indicate a lack of close relationships or support networks in their work environment. In contrast, very few

live- in domestic workers feel close to employer's husband (3.6%) and employer's son (2.7%), indicating a stronger bond with female members of the employer's family or co-workers. Overall, the data suggests that the employer's wife plays a significant role in establishing a sense of closeness with domestic workers, particularly among live-in workers, while co-maids also serve as important sources of companionship and support, especially for live-out workers. A fair chunk of the domestic workers, which is 89 out of 226 workers, did not build a close relationship with any one in particular according to the study.

6.2.3 Relationship with other members of family

The relationship between domestic workers and other members of the employer's family can vary significantly depending on various factors such as the household dynamics, cultural background, and individual personalities involved. Effective communication, mutual respect, and clear boundaries are essential for fostering positive relationships and resolving conflicts or misunderstandings that may arise in the household.

Table 3: Good Relationships with other members of the family

Good relationship with other members of the family				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	No Scope	Total
Live In/ Riak	100 (89.3%)	10(9.0%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	101 (88.6%)	10 (8.7%)	3 (2.6%)	114
Total	201 (88.9%)	20 (8.85%)	5 (2.21%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above data shows that the present relationship between the domestic workers and other members of the family. Similar to the preceding cases, the above data also witnessed that majority of the answers were positive, which means most of them have a good relationship with the other family members of their employers. From 112 live-in 100 workers and from 114 live-out workers, 101 live-out domestic workers responded they have a good relationship with others in the family, exclaiming the existence of civil and friendly relationship. It not only showed the

level of understanding between the workers and the family, but also depict the existence of co-operation and interdependence within the household.

“I have a close bond with all the family members of my employees. They have many works to do in their house and they rely heavily on me and so, they treat me with great respect and kindness. I hardly have free time especially during the day and so, they make sure that I have enough rest time at night and also occasionally let me hang out with my friends.”

Ramtharzeli, Zuangtui.

However, there were a few of them both 10 domestic workers respectively, from live-in and live-out workers were found unable to strike up a good rapport with family members of their employers. Two out of 112 live-in and 3 out of 114 live-out domestic workers found it difficult and almost impossible to get along with the family members. The reason for this may be caused by various reasons including discrimination against the workers, low level of tolerance from both sides, disagreement or misunderstanding on certain matters between the workers and the family members and many more.

6.2.4 Gifts or rewards received from employers

Gifts or rewards from employers might vary greatly depending on the employer's generosity and the nature of the employer-domestic worker relationship. Employers can build a healthy and supportive working relationship with domestic workers by displaying appreciation and respect for the valuable work they do.

Table 4: Gifts or rewards from employers

Gifts or rewards from employers				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Never received	Total
Live In/ Riak	102 (91.1%)	8 (7.1%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	88 (77.2%)	19 (16.7%)	7 (5.12%)	114
Total	190 (84.1%)	27 (11.9%)	9 (3.98)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Among the 112 live- in workers, majority of them with a data of 91.1% confirmed that they did receive some kind of gifts or rewards from their employers apart from their monthly salary. Similar cases were also seen among the live – out workers where again, majority of them with a data of 77.2% confirmed how they were given gifts by their employers as an expression of gratitude. On the other hand, there were also some employers who never hand out any gifts or rewards, be it in kind or cash to their workers. Here, 8 live – in workers and 19 live – out workers stated that they were in such category thus totaling 11.9% of the entire data.

“I always receive birthday gifts from my employer’s wife and also, their children occasionally gave me gifts on special occasions. There were times where they requested me not to go home for winter vacation and during those times, they increased my income and rewarded me with certain gift hampers. Gifts during Christmas seasons are also a regular occasion for me.”
Lalhlimpuii Sailo, Tuithiang.

2 out of 112 live-in and 7 out of live-out domestic workers did not receive any kind of gifts from their employers. Differences can be seen between the live – in and live – out workers in terms of receiving gifts and rewards, whereby the live – in employers tend to favor and shower more gifts and rewards as compared to the live – out workers. The reason for this may lie entirely on the companionship that exist between the employer and domestic worker which was forged from being long term

acquaintance leading to the existence of compassion and sympathy. On the other hand, the relationship between the live out – workers and their employers seemed to be on a surface level due to the short amount of acquaintance as the nature of their agreement were usually for a limited timeframe.

6.3 Problem faced with employers

Domestic workers confront numerous important problems in their job interactions. These concerns are frequently based in the informal and uncontrolled nature of their employment, which takes place in the privacy of the home, away from public scrutiny.

The employers' treatment, the problems faced by employers on the one hand and the problems faced with the employer's wife and employer's husband and their treatment of the domestic worker on the other hand were considered in this sub-heading.

6.3.1 Employers' treatment

Employers' treatment refers to the behaviour, actions, and attitudes exhibited by employers towards their employees. It encompasses various aspects such as how employers interact with their workers, the level of respect and fairness shown towards them, the provision of appropriate working conditions, including physical and emotional safety. It includes both positive and negative behaviours, ranging from supportive and respectful treatment to discriminatory practices, harassment, or exploitation.

Table 5: Employers' treatment

Positive Treatment by employers				
Domestic Worker	Positive	No	Don't Mind	Total
Live In/ <i>Riak</i>	105 (93.8%)	5 (4.5%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/ <i>Lang</i>	97 (85.1%)	13 (11.4%)	4 (3.5%)	114
Total	202 (89.4%)	18 (7.96%)	6 (2.65%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above data gave an insight on the treatment of the employers towards domestic workers. Among the 226 domestic workers, 105 of the live – in with a percentage of 93.8% confirmed that they were treated with respect and fairness and were never abused or exploited by their employer. Majority of the live – out workers with a percentage of 85.1% also gave the same answer saying that they were indeed treated with genuine care by their employer as well as their family.

“I have worked in Dubai earning lakhs annually, but I received inhumane treatment always and I am not even treated as a human being. Working in Mizoram may provide us less income but the love and care we receive from our employers made up for the low income. They occasionally bought clothes for me, and they even gave me gifts for me and my parents. They also scold me when my work is not up to their expectations but they do it out of love and not pure hatred. This is why I love to work in Mizoram even though the income is very low.”
Laltleipuii, 23, Ramrikawn.

On the other hand, a small number of live – in with 4.5% and live – out with 11.4% argued that they did not receive the support and understanding that they ought to receive and were poorly treated by their employer. A negligible 2.65% (1.8% from

the live – in and 3.5% from the live – out) rather remain silent than gave an answer as they did not see any benefits in revealing their relationship with their employers.

“My employers are always busy with their work and they do not have much time to care for their children. They don’t know many things that happen in their houses. My employer’s wife has a bad mood and always find even the slightest things to be mad at and she ventured out her anger on me whenever she is at home. I only stayed in their house because their children love me and I had a close bond and connection with them.”

Lalmuanpuii Fanai, 29, Zotlang.

It is concerning to note that a small but notable number of workers, particularly among the live-out category, reported experiencing poor treatment or a lack of support from their employers which suggests that there may be instances where employers fail to provide adequate conditions or exhibit behaviours that negatively impact their workers’ well-being as they are considered to be temporary and stay for a short amount, unlike the live – in workers who reside with them for a longer period of time.

6.3.2 Problems faced with employers

Problems or issues against employers refer to challenges, grievances, or negative experiences that domestic workers encounter in their interactions with their employers. These problems are caused by various factor, including mistreatment, exploitation, unfair treatment, lack of support, and violations of individual rights. Addressing these issues is essential to promote a healthy and respectful working environment for all parties involved.

Table 6: Problems faced with employers

Problems or issues faced with employers				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Did not bother	Total
Live In/ Riak	10 (8.9%)	100 (89.3%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	8 (7%)	103 (90.4%)	3 (2.6%)	114
Total	18 (7.96%)	203 (89.8%)	5 (2.21%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The table exhibits information on whether issues or problems were faced by the domestic workers against their employer. Here, a whopping 89.3% from the live – in as well as 90.4% from the live – out affirmed that there were no problems or grievances that arise between their relationship and therefore maintain a civil and friendly relation. However, a small percentage from the live – in with 8.9 % and 7% from the live – out exclaimed that they did have issues and challenges against their employers due to ill treatment, exploitation and abuse among many other reasons. They add up to 7.96% of the entire data collected. Although relatively small, these percentages highlight the presence of some problematic situations that need attention or resolution. Again, some 2.21% did not bother to reply and wish to disclose their relationship with their employers suggesting a potential reluctance to openly address issues or concerns, which could indicate underlying challenges in the working relationship that may require further investigation or support.

“Do you think I am in a position to speak ill of my employers? I came from a humble and modest family background and dare not speak up or talk back even when my employers scolded me as I will not be able to find other jobs.” Lalhlunmawii, Vaivakawn.

6.3.3 Problem faced with employer's wife

While the notion of women supporting and uplifting each other, particularly those in disadvantaged positions, is often regarded as a universal, the reality paints a more complex picture. Ironically, it is not uncommon to find instances where women themselves, exhibit discrimination and abuse against their fellow women who occupy lower social or economic statuses. Despite the shared experiences of womanhood, factors such as class, race, and socio-economic status can create divisions and hierarchies among women themselves.

Table 7: Problem faced with employer's wife

Problem faced with employer's wife					
Domestic Worker	Good	Not so good	Did not bother	Not applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	101 (90.2%)	1 (0.9%)	--	10 (8.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	105 (92.1%)	4 (3.5%)	1 (0.9%)	4 (3.5%)	114
Total	206 (91.2%)	5 (2.21%)	1 (0.44%)	14 (6.19%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The data above showed that most of the employer's wives have fairly treated their workers. With a data of 101 live – in workers or 90.2% and 105 live – out workers or 92.1%, thus, adding up to 92.1% of the entire data, those 206 domestic workers responded positively to how their employer's wives treated them. Unfortunately, some 5 domestic workers (1 from the live – in and 4 from the live – out) confirmed that they were not entirely treated in a fair or just manner and one live – out worker did not wish to disclose the situation. The data also showed that 14 workers totaling 6.19% of the entire data considered that such question was not relevant to their current situation. This sub-group cited the absence of an employer's wives as the reason for this response. These findings highlight the existence of disparities in treatment within the households, indicating that while many domestic workers have positive experiences, there are instances where issues of fairness and justice arise.

6.3.4 Problem faced with employer's husband

It refers to challenges, difficulties, or negative experiences encountered by domestic workers in their interactions or relationships with their employers' husbands. These problems could include various forms of mistreatment, unfair treatment, exploitation, abuse, harassment, or lack of respect from the male head of the household where the domestic worker is employed.

Table 8: Problem faced with employer's husband

Problem faced with employer's husband				
Domestic Worker	Good	Not so good	No problem faced	Total
Live In/ Riak	99 (88.4%)	2 (1.8%)	11 (9.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	106 (93%)	0 (0%)	8 (7%)	114
Total	205 (90.7%)	2 (0.88%)	19 (8.4%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The response given by domestic workers on accounts of the employer's husbands were again, mainly positive in nature. Out of the 226 domestic workers, 99 live- in workers with 88.4% and 106 live – out workers with 93% affirmed that the husbands of their employers treated them with respect and kindness. There were only two workers from the live – in category who said that their employer's husband mistreated them while none of the live – out workers gave such response.

“My employers are kind to me. Even my master is very kind. He treats me like his own daughter and only scolded me when I work lazily. He also scolds his children when they are lazy and disobey him. So, I find no fault in being scolded when I deserve as the act is out of love and care. They treat me with respect.”
Lalsangkimi, Phunchawng.

However, one live – out worker did not wish to reveal her current relationship with the husband of the house, which in some way, is alarming as well as concerning at the same time. The data also showed that 11 out of 112 live-in domestic workers i.e. 9.8% of them did not face any kind of problems from their employers. Eight out of 114 live-out workers also were free from any such kind of problems arising out of the employer’s husband, at least according to them. 19 workers totaling 8.4% of the entire data considered that such question was not relevant to their current situation due to the absence of an employer’s husbands within the household.

6.3.5 Employer’s husbands’ treatment of domestic worker

The treatment of domestic workers by their employer’s husbands can vary widely depending on various factors such as cultural norms, socio-economic status, and individual personalities. In many cases, the employer’s husband may have limited interaction with domestic workers due to work commitments or social dynamics within the household. However, when interactions do occur, the treatment can range from respectful and equitable to disrespectful and discriminatory.

Table 9: Employer’s husband treatment of domestic worker

Treatment by employers’ husbands						
Domestic Worker	Very Good	Sometimes good	Not so good	Not bother to answer	Never	Total
Live In/ Riak	83 (74.1%)	13 (11.6%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.9%)	13 (11.6%0	112
Live-out/Lang	95 (83.3%)	9 (7.9%)	0 (0%)	--	10 (8.8%)	114
Total	178 (78.8%)	22 (9.73%)	2 (0.88%)	1 (0.44%)	23 (10.18%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Out of the 114 live – in domestic workers, majority of them with a total data of 74.1% have respond that they were treated in the best way possible by their employer’s husbands. They expressed how abuse of power or discrimination was never shown to them. 11.6% or 13 workers responded that they were sometimes

treated fairly which means that there were times when the situation was not always good. Negative responses were also received where 2 workers said that they have rather bad experience against their employer's husbands and were not treated in a right manner as they were supposed to be treated. Additionally, there was one individual who did not wish to disclose her present condition and another 13 workers with 11.6% who stated that such question was not applicable to them as they said they never faced such issues themselves.

“My boss is a true gentleman. He does not speak much and he does not complain much about anything. He is ready to solve his family members' problems and he never scolded me nor abused me but rather, treated me kindly even though he speaks very little in the house. He is a reliable man and I love working for them.” Ramhlunmawii, Kanan Veng.

The live-out workers also gave a similar response as the former. Out of the 114 live-out domestic workers, 95 workers with a percentage of 83.3% stated that they have a close and honest relationship with their employer's husband and were treated respectfully. A fraction of them with a total of 7.9% responded that they were sometimes treated in a good manner which suggest that there were times when the employer's husbands did not treat in a way as the workers have expected. Unlike the former, there were no workers who negatively reported against their employer's husbands or who rather kept their current condition a secret to the researcher. Thus, it can be said that the opinions of the live – out workers against their employer's spouse were fairly that of a positive one and that the husbands also treated them in a polite and civil manner. The reason for difference in response between the live – in and live – out workers may be due to the fact that since the live – out workers come and go daily and did not reside at the employer's house, the husband of the house may treat them in a respectful and equitable manner during those short period of time without actually revealing their true nature while those workers residing by their

employer's side have a chance to truly understand the nature and characters of their employer's spouse.

6.4 Worksite Harassment

Due to the fragile and remote nature of their jobs, workplace harassment of domestic workers is a widespread and severe problem that frequently goes undetected. Domestic workers are especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse because many of them are women from under-represented groups. Verbal abuse, physical abuse, scolding, and even termination from work are important in understanding the relationship and the power dynamics between the employers and employees.

6.4.1 Scolding by employers

When employers and domestic workers live together under the same roof, it's inevitable that occasional arguments and misunderstandings may arise. The dynamic living situation can create tensions due to differences in lifestyle, expectations, and communication styles.

Table 10: Scolded by the employers

Scolding received by employee					
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not bothered to answer	Not applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	86 (76.8%)	24 (21.4%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	93 (81.6%)	21 (18.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	114
Total	179 (79.2%)	45 (19.9%)	1 (0.44%)	1 (0.44%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above data deals with the question on whether they were scolded by their employers or not. Among the live – in workers, 86 of them or 78.8% confirmed that they were indeed scolded by their employers at least once, if not more during their employment. Similar responses were also given by 93 live – out workers with a

percentage of 81.6%. However, the workers exclaimed that they did not take the scolding to their heart and mostly accepted that the scolding were conveyed not because of hatred but for the betterment and improvement of their works and skills as a domestic worker.

“Of course, I received scoldings every now and then! But I did not take it in a negative way. I make mistakes and have to be corrected and learn from them. Otherwise, I would never learn anything in life. My employers scolded me out of love and pure love alone.”

Rinsangkimi, Luangmual.

Ironically, 24 workers from the live – in and 21 workers from the live – out stated that they were never scolded by their employers during their entire employment to them. This revealed the kind hearted and good nature of their respective employers. There was again one individual from the live – in category who wish to remain silent and not bother answering, while there was another who claimed that such situation was not applicable to her.

6.4.2 Termination from work

Termination of work is a significant event that can have various implications for individuals and their livelihoods. The reasons behind termination could vary and may include factors such as job performance, conflicts with employers, or changes in household circumstances. The process of termination typically involves notifying the employee of the decision as well as outlining the reasons for dismissal.

Table 11: Termination from work

Termination from work				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	4 (3.6%)	107 (95.5%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	6 (5.3%)	108 (94.7%)	0 (0%)	114
Total	10 (4.42%)	215 (95.13%)	1 (0.44%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Among the 112 live – in workers, most of them with a data of 95.5% responded that they were never fired by their employers during their career as a domestic worker while negligible 4 workers adding to a total of 3.6% gave an honest response by stating that they indeed have had a history of being fired from their workplace by their employer. Similar results were also received from the live – in workers where 108 out of the 114 workers exclaimed that they were never dismissed from their work while some 5.3% stated that they have faced termination at least once during their career.

“No, I have never even thought of getting fired from my job. It would be very shameful not only for me but for my entire families. Besides, I am skill-less and have low educational qualifications and so I dared not be lazy and disobedient to my employers.” Rinmuani Renthlei, Ratu.

While termination from employment is a challenging experience for individuals, the data suggests that it is relatively uncommon among domestic workers surveyed, indicating a level of job stability and positive working relationships. This underscores the importance of maintaining clear communication, mutual respect, and fair treatment in the employer-employee relationship to foster a positive working environment and minimize the likelihood of termination.

6.4.3 Day-off issues

A day off refers to a designated period of time during which an individual was not required to work or attend to their regular job duties. It was a scheduled break from work that allows individuals to rest, relax, pursue leisure activities, and attend to personal responsibilities without the constraints of their employment obligations. Day offs may be scheduled on specific days of the week, such as weekends (e.g., Saturday and Sunday) or on designated holidays. and provide opportunities for individuals to rest, recharge, and enjoy meaningful activities outside of their work responsibilities.

Table 12: The need for day off

Need for day off				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Partly	I don't know
Live In/ Riak	80 (71.4%)	26 (23.2%)	1 (0.9%)	5 (4.5%)
Live- out/Lang	112 (98.2%)	2 (1.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	192 (84.96%)	28 (12.39%)	1 (0.44%)	5 (2.21%)

Source: Fieldwork

Through the data collected, it can be seen that out of the 112 (98.2%) live-in domestic workers, 80 individuals have enjoyed day-off for them to carry out their private life. They constituted as many as 71.4% of the data. At the same time, 26 of them with a percentage of 23.2% expressed how no exemptions were given to them throughout the year. There were also 5 (4.5%) women who said that they do not know whether such day off were not applicable to them or not while 1 (0.9%) woman chose the 'partly' option, as the woman has said that she thinks there is both a need and no need for day-off.

Among the live-out workers, most of them were allowed to take a break from their duties of household work. With a total of 112 out of 114 domestic workers, they add up to as many as 98.2% while there were 2 (1.8%) women from live-out category who said that there is no need to take a day-off and these women are earning more than their peers due to increased family members and increased work in their employers' house.

“A day-off is a must! Employers should definitely give us at least one day to refresh ourselves and not engage in any work. Constant work is unhealthy and do not benefit anyone. So, a day-off should definitely be given strictly to all workers, not only the women domestic workers but all labourers in Mizoram.” – Hmangaihpuui, Hlilmen.

Day-off day makes it a point to determine which day of the week is the day-off for the domestic workers. Usually, the domestic workers, both live-in and live-out, have a day-off on Sundays. Moreover, the live-out domestic workers are not expected to turn up for work on Sunday, since attending church is necessary for these workers on Sunday. However, this may not be the case for some of the domestic workers who live with their employers and work from their homes.

Table 13: Day of “day-off”

Domestic Worker	Day of the day-off								Total
	Sunday	Saturday, Sunday	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday	Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday	Wednesday, Sunday	Not Applicable	No	
Live In/Riak	80 (71.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31 (27.7%)	1 (0.9%)	112
Live-out/Lang	65 (57%)	45 (39.5%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	114
Total	145 (64.2%)	45 (19.9%)	1 (0.44%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.44%)	31 (13.7%)	1 (0.4%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

Through the data from the above table, it is evident that among the 226 domestic workers, 192 individuals have the privilege of having a break or day-off during their work. Therefore, the table focused on which days the workers were given a break from their work. Among the live-in workers, 80 (71.4%) of them exclaimed how

Sundays were the only day-off or break given to them throughout the whole week while 31 (27.7%) out of 112 said that it was not applicable since no day-off was given to them throughout the whole week.

Data given by live-out workers, on the other hand, gave a wide range of diversity since they were more or less contractual workers having a pre-laid out routine during the time of negotiation. 65 individuals or 57% of the workers do not perform their duties on Sunday while 45 (39.5%) workers have a break during the weekend i.e., on Saturday and Sunday. There were two workers who have the privilege of having 4 days break in a week. Also, one worker responded that Wednesday and Sunday were her day off. Thus, it can be concluded that all of the live-out workers perform their jobs according to the convenience of the both the employer and worker.

6.5 Role of GOs, NGOs and Association activities

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government organisations (GOs) are both essential to enhancing the safety and well-being of female domestic workers. NGOs offer direct assistance, lobbying, and awareness-raising, whereas GOs concentrate on the application of laws and policies. They frequently work together to guarantee this workforce's complete protection and empowerment.

A solid collaboration between NGOs and GOs is necessary to effectively improve the safety and well-being of female domestic workers. While NGOs can offer vital direct services and advocacy, governments must establish complementary legislative frameworks and enforcement measures. This cooperative strategy guarantees that domestic workers can get the assistance and defense they require to live safely and with dignity.

Similarly, associations, unions, and alliances of domestic workers take part in a variety of activities to safeguard and promote the rights of their members. Since domestic work is done in remote, private houses, these associations are essential in giving a vulnerable workforce a collective voice, support, and advocacy. The domestic workers' contact with the various associations, the resolutions in association meetings and registration issues are examined.

6.5.1 Role of GOs and NGOs

Mizoram is taking steps to improve the well-being and safety of women domestic workers through legislation and awareness campaigns. The state is working on a new bill to protect domestic workers, particularly those working abroad, and has also hosted seminars on their safety. Moreover, the state government and other organizations are involved in rescuing and assisting Mizo women facing legal issues while working as housemaids in other countries. Association of Women Domestic Workers have also undertaken some suggestions for the betterment of their association and their well-beings in general. The following are the main resolutions taken from their annual association meetings held between the years 2022-2024.

Mizoram Private Placement Agencies (Regulation) Bill:

This bill, although previously enacted in 2015, is being updated to address legal issues faced by domestic workers from Mizoram working abroad, especially in countries like Syria, UAE, and other Gulf nations.

The association should mandate the proper implementation of this Act and they had a periodical briefing of their members from engaging in unknown or unwarranted agency that can promise them to send them in foreign countries. The association tried their best to educate and aware young women from going abroad to work and if they do so, only engage with reliable agency. Whenever women domestic workers from abroad face issues from the country they are working on, the members work together to provide and help the needs of those women in need. They have kept aside separate funds to utilize in such times as well.

New Bill for Jobseekers:

The state is currently considering a new bill to protect jobseekers, including domestic workers, both within India and abroad, by licensing private placement agencies. The association also follow up this bill and had a periodical meeting with the concerned authorities and government authorities to provide license to reliable

agencies in Mizoram that work towards providing employment to job-seekers abroad, including women domestic workers.

Seminars and Workshops:

The state government, in collaboration with organizations like the National Commission for Women (NCW), the Mizoram State Commission for Women and Association of Women Domestic Workers in Mizoram has organized seminars and workshops to address the safety and well-being of domestic employees. Selected members of the associations and the leaders of the association attended these seminars and workshops and shared the result and outcome to their fellow members in later association meetings and in their whatsapp groups as well.

DGP Mizoram's Address:

In this sense, the Office Bearers of the association had a meeting with the DGP and shared the various problems and issues faced by them in a detailed manner. The Director General of Police (DGP) of Mizoram has spoken about the conditions of domestic workers and the measures taken to ensure their safety and well-being.

Rescue Missions:

The Office Bearers of the association requested the state government and other organizations within Mizoram to help them in rescuing and assisting Mizo women who were working as domestic workers in other countries and to prevent them from facing legal issues.

Mizoram State Commission for Women:

The selected members along with the Office Bearers had a periodical meeting with the authorities of the Mizoram State Commission for Women. The outcome of these meetings led the Commission to play a role in ensuring that women's rights, including those of domestic workers, are protected under the Constitution of India and relevant legislations.

Protection Orders:

The association also has a meeting with the state authorities to led them regulate the state to have mechanisms in place, like protection orders, to address cases of domestic violence, according to the Directorate of Women & Child Development, Government of Mizoram.

6.5.2 Registration issues

Registration with a domestic worker's association was a formal process that allows individuals to become part of a collective movement advocating for the rights and welfare of domestic workers. By joining such organizations, domestic workers can access support, resources, and solidarity within a broader community dedicated to addressing the challenges and improving the conditions of domestic work.

Table 14: Registration with domestic worker's association or agency

Registration in Domestic Worker's Association/Agency				
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Not applicable	Total
Live In/ Riak	0 (0%)	110 (98.2%)	2 (1.8%)	112
Live-out/Lang	32 (28.1%)	80 (70.2%)	2 (1.8%)	114
Total	32 (14.2%)	190 (84.1%)	4 (1.77%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above table shows that most of the workers with a total of 110 (98.2%) did not have any form of registration in any Domestic Worker's Association within and outside of Mizoram while the two remaining expressed how the registration was not applicable to them. The table also shows how live-out workers were more aware of and more in contact with the Domestic Workers Association. This results to a great progress in terms of registration among the live-out workers unlike the former. Even though 80 (70.2%) workers claimed that no registration was made with the DWA, 32 workers or 28.1% of the total 114 domestic workers have been registered to DWA which showed that progress has been made with the popularity and awareness of the

Association among the workers. Similar to the live-in workers, two of the latter said that the registration was not applicable to them.

“I have never even heard of any association for us. I have heard it from you only! The association should publicize themselves more so that more workers are in close connection with them and yield better outcome for the future of all women domestic workers in Mizoram.” – Chawngthanchami, Republic Veng

6.5.3 Contact with domestic workers’ association

Domestic workers associations were organizations that advocate for the rights, welfare, and interests of domestic workers. They may provide various services and support to domestic workers, including advocacy, legal assistance, education, training, and networking opportunities. Many countries and regions have state, local or regional associations specifically focused on domestic workers’ rights and issues.

Table 15: Contact with domestic worker’s association

Contact with Domestic Worker's association/agency			
Domestic Worker	Yes	No	Total
Live In/ Riak	1 (0.9%)	111 (99.1%)	112
Live-out/Lang	33 (28.9%)	81 (71.1%)	114
Total	34 (15%)	192 (85%)	226

Source: Fieldwork

The above table points out that majority of the lived-in workers with a majority percentage of 99.1% or 111 in frequency do not have any relationship or connection with the Domestic Worker’s Association. Even though the concept of DWA was uncommon among the live-in workers, there was 1 (0.9%) individual who acknowledge her connection with DWA. Contrary to them, there were surprisingly a

number of live-out workers who came in contact with DWA. Although majority of them with a total of 81 (71.1%) stated that no contact was made with the Domestic Workers Association, there were 33 individuals who gave a positive answer, adding up to 28.9% in terms of percentages which confirmed that the live-out workers were more aware of their rights and privileges and their surroundings concerning their jobs in comparison to the live-in workers.

This finding shows that few contacts occur between women domestic workers with their association and so, there is a dire need for close collaboration and contact between the two.

6.17 An overview

This chapter has been further sub-divided into various categories and are analyzed accordingly. An overview of each category is done which are concerned with worksite relationships regarding their problems shared with others, building closest relationship, relationship with other members of the family, gifts or rewards received from families, the problem faced with employers like employers' treatment, problems faced with employer's wife, problems faced with employer's husband, worksite harassment including scolding by employers, termination from work, day-off issues, and association activities concerning their contact with domestic workers' association, registration issues and resolutions in association meetings.

Worksite relationships: The worksite is the employer's private home, which creates a personal and often isolated environment, blurring the lines between professional and personal life. The relationship between employer and employee is inherently unequal. The worksite relationship for domestic workers highlights the real need to recognize domestic work as "real work" and to extend the same labour rights and protections to these workers that are afforded to employees in other sectors.

Problem shared with others: Like any other human beings, women domestic workers often faced problems in many walks of life and when such unforeseen circumstances arrived, women domestic workers mainly share their problems with the employers' wives. These show that the women have more trust towards another

women and share their problems to them and it also indicates that employers' wives are mostly kind towards their workers because if kindness and respect is absent, they would not share their problems with them. Secondly, women domestic workers mainly share their problems with the employers' daughters. Only a small fraction of the women has stated that they have shared their problems with the employers' husbands and some limited numbers of women have stated that they have never shared their problems and hardships with anyone and just kept their issues privately, without sharing it to anyone.

Building closest relationship: In terms of closeness, women domestic workers have built the closest relationships with their employers' wives to whom they confided to whenever issues arise in their lives. They also turn to them in terms of sorrows and women related health issues. The second closest relationship they built with is that of the daughter of the employers. The women have felt that other women understood their problems the best and so, confided and built stronger relationship more with the female members of the family as compared with the male family members. There are also few numbers of women domestic workers who did not form a close relationship with any of the family members of their employers and just work professionally without building close bonds and relationships with anyone.

Relationship with other members of family: Building a close relationship with the family members of the employers is a key factor for living peacefully and working in a safe environment for women domestic workers. Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they built a strong relationship with all other members of the family. Issues with regards to hatred and conflict in the relationship between the women domestic workers and their employers are not observed and find out among most of the women domestic workers.

Gifts or rewards received from employers: Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they received gifts or rewards from their employers either in cash bonus or in kind. There are a limited number of women domestic workers who never received gifts other than their monthly income and some small number of women also chose not to disclose any information with regards to the gifts they

received. In comparison, women domestic workers who are live-in receive more gifts or rewards as compared to live-out women due to the bond shared between them and their employers by staying in their houses and building long-term connection with them.

Problems faced with employers: Majority of the women domestic workers have stated that they did not face any ill treatments or harsh treatments from their employers and have maintained healthy relationships with their employers. However, there are only few exceptions to some women who have stated that they have ill relations with their employers but hesitate to quit their work due to them not being able to find other jobs currently. These women have stated that when the odds are in their favor, they will leave eventually and find other works and that they are not in a position to talk back or stand up against their employers.

Employers' treatment: The study of the treatment of employers towards their employees shows that most of the women domestic workers did not experience any abuse nor harsh treatment from their employers and they have all stated that they worked in a desirable environment and they have high praises for the work environment that prevails in Mizoram. Even though most of the women domestic workers receive low income, they have stated that they are content in working in Mizoram due to the peaceful nature associated with it. However, there are only few women who have stated that they have bad experiences with their employers who would often scold them or shout at them due to the minor inconvenience caused by them. Even so, they refused to quit due to the bond and love they share with the children of their employers.

Problem faced with employer's wife: The wives of the employers have a rather soft spot for their employees as the study shows that most of the employees have maintained healthy relationships with their employers' wives. They formed a close bond with them and most often did not have much complains and negative issues with them. They are only a handful of women who have ill relationships with the wives of their employers who all were unwilling to speak out the exact cause and nature of the reasons.

Problem faced with employers' husbands: As against the absence of male figures in limited houses, most of the women domestic workers, who stayed in a household with male figures as head of the households have said that they were being treated with respect and loyalty and the employers' husbands exude kindness in their lives. They were never treated with abuse nor harsh tones were used towards them. They are, however, only some limited women who have said that they were occasionally being treated violently but did not want to further comment on this issue. Overall, most women domestic workers did not face any issues or harsh treatments from the employers' husbands.

Employer's husband treatment of domestic worker: Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they are being treated nicely by their employers' husbands and most of them did not have any issue with them. Abuse is absent and scolding hardly ever occur from the men of the family but there are only some small numbers of women who did not wish to disclose any problems encountered with their employers' husbands. There are only few women who did not bother/ declined to answer the questions posed to them and these women were uneasy with the question directed towards them.

Worksite harassment: The unique nature of the employment of domestic work, that is working in the private home, often in isolation makes them particularly vulnerable for various forms of abuse. Worksite harassment of domestic workers is a human rights issue that requires a multi-pronged approach, including strong legal frameworks, effective enforcement mechanisms, and social recognition of domestic work as a dignified and protected profession.

Scolding by employers: In terms of scolding received by the women, most of the women domestic workers from both live-in and live-out have said that they received scoldings from their employers at least once in their working experiences, while only a handful of women do not bother to answer whether they received scoldings from their employers or not. These scoldings occurred usually when mistakes were

committed by the women domestic workers in the work that they do and not due to other reasons than that. However, there are also small numbers of women who have stated that they never received any kinds of scolding from their employers which show the genuine love from their employers. The working environment in Mizoram for domestic workers is still peaceful as violence and scoldings, including abuses hardly take place among them.

Termination from work: In terms of job termination, most of the women domestic workers from both live-in and live-out categories were never fired from their job as a domestic worker. Only a small number of women were fired from their job which shows the professional ethics maintained by both the employers and employees in Mizoram and how the working condition presents a perfect scenario where both employers and employees share mutual respect and genuine relationship creating a perfect work-life balance leading to a smaller number of women domestic workers to experience termination from their jobs.

Day-off issues: This study reveals whether women domestic workers were given regular day-offs by their employers and the findings show that most of the women domestic workers were given off-day on a regular basis. The benefits of having off-days show that workers were more efficient on their working days if day-off was given to them. Besides, most of the women domestic workers were given off-days on weekends by their employers and this shows that the association should lay down specific working conditions for domestic workers which include the provision of regular off-days to women domestic workers in Mizoram.

Role of GOs and NGOs: The roles of governmental organisations (GOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs) in promoting and enhancing the lives of domestic workers are important, however different. It is primarily the duty of national and state governments to develop and implement the legal and policy frameworks that safeguard domestic workers. Given the informal nature of their labour, domestic workers in Mizoram, as well as other regions of India, confront particular difficulties. Mizoram's government, through the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department (LESDE), is the main government

agency in charge of worker welfare, including minimum wage determination, registration, and social security under the Unorganised Workers Security Act of 2008, as well as placement agency regulation. However, the state of Mizoram has yet to formally implement any of these plans for the workers in the informal organizations.

NGOs in Mizoram play critical roles as advocates, service providers, and watchdogs. Advocacy and mobilisation through NGOs such as YMA and MHIP are critical in raising awareness and giving holistic support during times of hardship and need. Strong collaborations between government bodies and civil society are frequently witnessed in Mizoram to help domestic workers turn their occupation into a recognised and respected profession.

Association activities: Domestic workers associations, unions, and collectives play a crucial role in improving the lives of workers, advocating for their rights, and addressing the unique challenges they face. These associations and organizations engage in a wide range of activities at the local, national and international levels.

Contact with domestic worker's association: In a surprising turn of event, most of the women domestic workers in Mizoram have never heard about the existence of domestic workers association in Mizoram which in turn shows that most women workers do not have any contact with the leaders of the workers association in Mizoram. This shows the need to publicly made aware of the existence of the association and take steps to improve the current working conditions and benefits for women domestic workers within the state.

Resolutions of Association's Meetings: The Office Bearers and the members of the domestic women association in Mizoram had a regular and periodical meeting with the government of Mizoram and other concerned authorities to implement laws laid down for their protection and well-being. Besides, the association has taken steps to provide help and assistance to women domestic workers from facing abuse and violence in their workplaces and also take steps and measures to protect women domestic workers working abroad. The main steps taken by the association is to

request and assist the government in providing better invigilation and license to all agencies within Mizoram so that youths going abroad will not face any problems.

Registration issues: Most of the women domestic workers in Mizoram do not register with the association for women domestic workers as they have never even heard about the existence in the first place. This makes it obvious as to why most of them are not registered with the association. The concerned authorities should make the public and the women workers of their existence and the whereabouts of the location of their office so that the women domestic workers in Mizoram can register with the association and come in close contact with them so as to improve the livelihood conditions and working conditions of all women domestic workers in Mizoram.

The next chapter shows the summary and conclusion portion of the study.



‘Meeting of Group Leaders and How Unions Work’ at Peace Home Durtlang organized by Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance, Aizawl on 16th November, 2021.



State Level Meeting on “A Better Way of Employment for Domestic Workers and Employers” organized by Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI) on 24th May 2025 at Hrangbana College Conference Hall, Aizawl.

CHAPTER – VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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CHAPTER – VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

Women domestic workers form a significant and often invisible part of the global labour force. Engaged in tasks such as cooking, cleaning, childcare, and elder care, these workers play a crucial role in supporting households and enabling others to participate in the formal economy. Despite the importance of their work, women domestic workers frequently face poor working conditions, low wages, long hours, and lack of legal protections. Many of these workers operate in informal or unregulated sectors, which makes them vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. In numerous countries, domestic work is undervalued and not fully recognized under labour laws. Migrant women domestic workers, in particular, face added risks due to language barriers, isolation, and dependency on their employers. International efforts, such as the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, aim to improve protections and promote fair treatment. However, enforcement remains a challenge in many regions. Empowering women domestic workers through legal recognition, access to social protections, and the right to unionize is essential for achieving gender equality and social justice. In Mizoram, as in other parts of the world, women domestic workers play a vital yet often unrecognized role in the household and the local economy. They are employed to perform tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, caregiving for children, the elderly, or people with disabilities, and other household responsibilities. Despite the essential nature of their work, they remain one of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in the labour force.

A large proportion of domestic workers globally are women, many of whom come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, minority communities, or rural areas. Some are internal migrants within their own countries, while others travel abroad in search of better livelihoods. In both cases, their work is undervalued, informal, and often excluded from labour law protections. One of the major

challenges faced by women domestic workers in the context of Mizoram is the lack of formal employment contracts. Many are hired verbally, without clear terms of employment, wages, or working hours. As a result, they may be expected to work excessively long hours without overtime pay or rest days. In live-in arrangements, the boundaries between work and rest are often blurred, leading to overwork and isolation. Additionally, domestic work tends to be low-paid, regardless of the number of hours worked or the intensity of the labour involved. In many countries, domestic workers are not entitled to minimum wage, health insurance, or pensions. Migrant domestic workers may face even harsher conditions, including language barriers, restricted movement, and dependency on employers for legal status, which can increase the risk of abuse and exploitation. Gender plays a central role in the marginalization of domestic workers and since domestic work is traditionally viewed as “women's work” or an extension of household duties, it is often devalued economically and socially. This gendered perception contributes to the lack of recognition and respect for domestic workers and limits their bargaining power.

Chapter I deals with the introduction part of the study while chapter II consisted of literature review and chapter III details methodology adopted for this study. Chapter IV of the study is about the socio-economic profile of women domestic workers and chapter V delves into the work and working conditions of women domestic workers. Chapter VI details about the employers and employees' relations and chapter VII consisted of the policy recommendations while chapter VIII entails about the summary and conclusion.

In chapter I, introduction with regard to the meaning of domestic work and women domestic workers have been included. This chapter has been sub-divided into 9 headings. Following brief introduction, informal sector was defined and women in informal sectors were also defined. The study shifted to a more detail heading in which women in urban informal sectors were further described in details and the nexus of gender and intersectionality was described. Domestic work concept was defined and the study of women domestic workers from the lens of international, national and state scenario was further elaborated and the chapter concludes with the

need for study. Internationally, efforts have been made to improve the rights of domestic workers. The International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted Convention No. 189 in 2011, which sets standards for decent working conditions, fair pay, and social protections for domestic workers. However, the implementation of these standards remains uneven, and many countries have yet to ratify or enforce the convention. In recent years, women domestic workers have begun organizing to demand better rights and protections. Unions, cooperatives, and NGOs are playing a key role in empowering these workers, advocating for legal reforms, and raising public awareness about their contributions and challenges. Women domestic workers are indispensable to households and national economies, yet they remain among the most disadvantaged workers. Ensuring their rights, recognizing their labour, and providing them with social and legal protections is not only a matter of labour justice but also an important step toward gender equality and inclusive development.

Chapter II of the study deals with literature which are further sub-divided into three headings namely theoretical review, thematic review and methodological review. Under the theoretical review, four theories were reviewed which relates to the study of women domestic workers in Mizoram. Domestic work is one of the oldest and most important informal occupations for thousands of women across the world. There is an easy entry for women without education, poor economic background and lack of other opportunities in the domain of domestic work, therefore making it a gender-based under-evaluation of domestic work. These domestic workers also perform the traditional role of care and household task which is unpaid within their own households. Studies on gender and intersectionality addresses women domestic workers with intersections of race, gender, class and regional background. The theory of “intersectionality” was introduced by Kimberlee Crenshaw to feminist theory. In her paper written in 1989 Crenshaw for the University of Chicago Level Forum, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics”, she discussed Black Feminism, and puts across the fact and the experience of being black and of being a woman, which are considered independently, but which include the interactions frequently at play with each other. So, intersectionality refers to a sociological theory that outlines how an individual

may face multiple types of overlapping discrimination depending on their race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class or any other characteristics that might place them in a minority class. It is a feminist theory, a methodology for research, and a springboard for social justice. It develops from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and how soon enough operations of structures of power come into being. One of the pivotal ways to understand the sociological condition of domestic workers would be the concept of “intersectionality”. Intersectionality is an analytical framework in order to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are marginalised in society. Intersectionality considers that various forms of social stratification such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, disability and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are interwoven together. While the theory began as an exploration of the oppression of women of colour within society, today the analysis is potentially applied to all social categories including social identities usually seen as dominant when considered independently.

Under the thematic review, the reviews are further sub-divided into 5 sections which are women working conditions, migration, wage, rights issues, health conditions and domestic violence. The thematic review portion of the study has shown that women domestic workers have less desirable working conditions globally and they form an invisible work force. They received minimum wages and their rights are often violated without them speaking up or taking any actions against the injustice directed towards them. This review shows that there is a dire need for policy recommendations to uplift their working conditions and rights-based advocacy is solely needed not only in India but in a global context as well. There is also a need to provide health-care benefits and assistance to these women in their times of need as well.

The methodological review portion finally shows the methods employed by various scholars whilst their study on the topic of women domestic workers and these methods ranges from qualitative to quantitative methods, employing various research techniques like interviews, surveys, focus group discussion and case studies. From the above review

of literature on domestic workers it was felt that domestic workers are mostly women from poorer sections of the society, migrants, who are subjected to various kinds of exploitation, where employment is of the informal type with ease of entry, lowly paid, and unregulated in terms of laws and legislation. However, some topics not adequately covered are the topics of push and pull factors, financial freedom, their networking skills, gains of migration, and the empowerment on the part of the domestic workers. These sub themes would also be taken up as mentioned in the objectives and covered while studying the domestic workers in the present study. Hardly any work has been covered and studied so far on the topic of domestic workers in Mizoram. Therefore, the study is crucial for understanding Mizo society and give importance to an extremely vital but neglected section of the Mizo household without whose help it is difficult to get by for many families in Aizawl. From the analysis of the review exercise, majority of the study and research done on domestic workers come under the theoretical and thematic types of research, however, a good number of works has also been done using the quantitative analysis and reports and studies of governments and non-government organizations are available while studying the transformation in the field of domestic work and domestic labour. The themes are seen to be largely of western origin though the literature under thematic heads is covering the countries across the globe including India. Methodologically, the studies are found to be largely qualitative and analytical in nature as the best viable option.

Chapter III is about the methodology employed for this study. This study has five objectives which are as under:

1. to find out the socio-economic profile and the migration pattern of the domestic workers
2. to study the nature of their work and working conditions
3. to delve into the gender relations of power between employer and employee
4. to examine the role of NGOs, GOs towards the welfare of the domestic workers

5. to study the problem dimensions and to recommend solutions to such problems

The study uses an exploratory design and it incorporates largely qualitative and sometimes quantitative techniques. The study is conducted in Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram. Aizawl since being the capital of Mizoram attracts migrants from various parts of the state and also from neighbouring states of Assam, Tripura, and from Myanmar, and Bangladesh as well. The affluence of the middle classes, coupled with education and employment of women has opened doors for domestic workers generating employment for the women of the poor sections from rural places, natives as well as migrants from other states and across the international border. Therefore, the growing city of Aizawl serves as an appropriate place of study because there has been a steady rise in population of domestic workers. It is in this context that the present study has been conducted.

A sample of 226 domestic workers were selected as of 2019 who were chosen through convenient sampling method. In 2019, out of the 226 domestic workers, 112 are selected from live-in /full-time/*riak* workers consisting 57 native Mizo domestic workers and 55 non-native full-time domestic workers. Another 114 domestic workers were selected from live-out consisting 60 part-time domestic workers native to Mizoram and 54 from the part-time domestic workers, from outside the state of Mizoram. Using the same sampling technique, 226 samples were gathered from 42 distinct neighbourhoods in the city under the Aizawl Municipal Corporation in Mizoram that are listed in the domestic worker's alliance. Interviews were also conducted with one Government officer (Joint Director of Labour and employment Department), representatives of various domestic worker organizations (Director of Peace Home and Co-ordinator of FDWA i.e. Ferrando Domestic Workers Association), and one volunteer from the Domestic Workers Alliance. The overall sample size to represent domestic workers in Aizawl is 226 and 04 Key Informants.

7.2 Socio-economic profile

Chapter IV of the study delves deep about the socio-economic profile of women domestic workers in Mizoram and is placed under 10 headings which are 1. Gender

2. Age 3. Marital status 4. Religion 5. Family 6. Place of domicile 7. Educational status 8. Wage 9. Assets owned 10. Migration patterns.

Gender, in this study, included only women domestic workers and excluded the men due to the difficulty in locating male domestic workers. Moreover, in Mizoram, there are more women domestic workers than men. The researcher could not locate many male domestic workers and so, due to the difficulty in locating the men, this study has included only the women domestic workers.

This study shows that in terms of age, most women domestic workers comprise of a young age who are below 25 years of age and this is followed by women who are between the ages of 25-35 years. This shows that youth and energy have active role to play as young women are still active both physically and mentally which leave them in a position to work and also, they are more deem fit to be employed by their employers due to this nature. Older women do not possess as much strength and stamina as compared to the younger women which make the employers reluctant to hire them and besides, older women also do not typically like to engage in economic activities like strength-demanding jobs such as domestic jobs as their capabilities do not longer permit them. This is the reason why women of younger age are found in abundance in informal sector work like domestic work.

Similarly with age, employers often hire women who are not married and this study has also reflected this. Majority of the women domestic workers are unmarried and this shows that employers are more enthusiast to hire women who are unmarried and besides, unmarried women, unburdened by family issues are more active and willing to work, especially to stay in their employer's house and work as a maid. They are not much burdened by responsibilities in their houses and families which give them much freedom and space to concentrate on their work as a domestic worker. In the case of married women, they have many responsibilities at home and have to care for their children and husbands which did not permit them enough space to concentrate fully in their job. This is the main reason why unmarried women are more engaged in the job of domestic work in Mizoram as against women who are married and are already having their own families.

In terms of religion, the findings of this study reflect the current scenario of Mizoram wherein majority of the population belong to Christian religion. Most of the women respondents of this study also belong to Christianity and are also mostly Presbyterian followed by Baptist and United Pentecostal Church. However, the study also finds that there are few women domestic workers who are from Hinduism religion. These women are all Nepali women who have stayed in Mizoram since their forefathers and have all adopted Mizo traditions and lifestyles in many ways. They all belong to Young Mizo Association and actively participate in their own community as well. Their religion does not draw any discriminatory practices from their employers and their employers all treated them like their own family members. This also shows the compassionate nature of the Mizos towards other communities.

The study shows that among the women domestic workers, there are a greater number of women who belong to a family member between the size of 4-6 sizes. Contrary to this, most of the women domestic workers worked for employers who had only between 1-3 family members.

The study shows that most of the women domestic workers belong to Mizoram and are natives of the state. However, there are few women who are not natives of the state. These women migrated to Mizoram due to conflicts and war in their region which forced them to migrate to Mizoram from places like Manipur and Myanmar and work as a domestic worker due to absence in skills. All in all, most women domestic workers are natives to Mizoram and are mostly from Mizo community with few exceptions of women who hailed from a Nepali background.

Among the women domestic workers in this study, most of them had only attained the educational qualifications of upper primary level and it is followed by high school degree, which is in turn, followed closely by primary level of education. Most of the women have low educational qualifications as their family financial conditions did not permit them to study higher and also because most of the women are not academically strong to pursue further education. These women engaged in the field of domestic work as these kinds of jobs did not require high educational

qualifications and it could be worked by people from all backgrounds and educational qualifications. Hence, this is the main reason why women from this study have low educational qualifications.

In terms of wage salary, the highest number of women earn between Rs. 5000-6000 per month and this is followed closely by women who earn an income between Rs. 4000-5000 per month. Only a minute number of women earn an income which is more than Rs. 10,000 per month. The average earnings of the women are low and the findings show that the government and agencies should revised the income of these women as inflation had occurred in recent times and their current average earnings might not help them to acquire their daily needs in the long-run.

In terms of regularity in receiving wages, almost all the women have expressed that they regularly receive their monthly income without fail from their employers.

This study has shown that most of the women domestic workers did not own basic household assets such as television, washing machines, refrigerators and LPG connections. The situations are worse among the live-in domestic workers in which majority of the women did not own any of these assets when compared with the live-out women. In terms of houses, most of the women did not own houses but when comparisons are made between the live-out and the live-in, more women in live-out categories' own houses while most women in live-in did not own any house.

The migration patterns of this study have shown that most of the women domestic workers in Aizawl have migrated due to financial problems faced by them which is followed by the influence and pressure exerted upon them by their family members and their friends. The women from this study, though lacking educational qualifications and vocational skills, had resorted to domestic work and migrated to urban areas solely for the purpose of this work. There are a greater number of women who have migrated solely to work as a maid while only lesser number of women have migrated for other purposes other than working as a maid. The chapter finally concludes with the case of three women. All the women from these case

studies had a similar story in which they have all worked as a maid for a purpose and that is to support their family members and they have all said that they saved their income, even though it may be less, so that they can use it to sustain themselves in the future.

In align with the study by Savita (1993), most of the women from this study are sole breadwinners in their families and based on the theory of intersectionality by Crenshaw (1989), most of the women respondents hailed from a lower income family and the intersection of their low-income along with the women's gender have led them to experience lower status in society as their low-income family prohibits them from acquiring higher education and vocational training and their gender further prohibits them from working high-paying manual jobs which give them limited choice but to work as a domestic worker earning lesser income. As pointed by British sociologist Oakley (1974), the view of women as "weak" offer them no other choice but to work in the field of domestic work like cleaning, tidying and housekeeping. In fact, the women respondents from this study have mostly claimed that they have no other option due to limited knowledge in skills which led them take up the work of domestic work thereby channelling the ease of entry into the field of domestic work.

7.3 Work and working conditions

Chapter V presents the work and working conditions of women domestic workers and the headings are sub-divided into 7 categories. They are 1. Work routine 2. Nature of work 3. Child-care provision at work 4. Household chores at home 5. Health problems 6. Bad treatment and abuse at work place 7. Daily rest periods

From the chapter on work and working conditions we come to know about the work routine of the women domestic workers that the live-in workers, begin their job at 6:00 am in the morning. This confirmed that the live-in workers usually began their work early in the morning right after waking up to do chores assigned by their employers. Contrary to the live-in workers, among the live-out domestic workers, those working from 9:30 am onwards exhibits the highest population with 47

individuals or 41.2% per cent. The above data illustrates the diverse nature of the employer's household and the differing schedules of live-in and live-out domestic workers, with live-in workers typically starting earlier to accommodate their living arrangements, while live-out workers tend to start work much later, potentially influenced by transportation and other factors.

The live- in workers finish their work at 7:00 pm with a total number of 38 girls adding up to 33.9% of the entire data collected. 32 girls finished their work by 8:00 pm. The third most common answer received were those who complete their work at 9:00 pm with 26 individuals or 23.2% picking this category. 50 workers completed their work at 4:00 in the afternoon occupying the highest among the live- out workers with 50.9% of the total population. This means that half of the live out workers, as their name live-out or part-time/*lang*, suggested, went home before sunset. Sharp differences which can be witnessed from following data was that, unlike the live- in workers in which 8:00 pm onwards remains a high time for their completion of work, the number of the live- out workers began to decline with a total percentage of 9.7% on all four categories i.e.- between 7:00 pm till 10:00pm (4.4%, 1.8%, 0.9%, 2.6% and 4.4% respectively). Notably, there were no workers who worked pass 10:00 pm which pointed out the true nature of live-out workers or part-time domestic workers.

The most common time period of waking up among both the live- in and live- out workers was 6:00 in the morning, with a whooping majority of 73.2% and 61.4% of the entire data collected. The data thus, showed that live-out workers have more autonomy over their timing and can adjust according to their work schedule, while the live-in workers have little to no autonomy over their time period and must adhere to the timing set by their employers which was usually early in the morning. The data collected among both live-in and live-out domestic workers, reveals that majority of the domestic workers sleep around 10:00 at night.

The household chores performed by the domestic workers were work such as cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing were the common work done by both the live-in and live-out workers. Other outdoor chore such as gardening, babysitting and

picking and dropping the kids to school and grocery shopping were also done by both the live-in and live-out workers.

Out of the 112 and 114 households served by live-in and live-out workers, the highest number among the employers of the domestic workers owned two living rooms. Majority of the live-in and live-out workers (78.6% and 86% respectively) agreed that no extra work was given to them by their employers while at work. The study confirmed that no extra wages were given to them for their extra workload. Interestingly, the category of 'not applicable' occupies the highest data with 87 individuals from live-in workers and 100 individuals from live-out workers opting for this category. There were also 97 individuals each who did not receive rewards through cash and in kind. At the same time, a whopping 87.7% or 100 workers and 94.7% or 108 workers among the live-out exclaimed how they did not receive any rewards, be it in cash or kind for their extra work.

The female employer, usually determines majority of the work to be done for the live-in as well as the live-out domestic workers. At the same time, the data shows how only a fraction of the employers' spouses dictate the work for the live-in and live out workers. There were 23 workers who arrived home by 6:00 pm and constitute the highest percentage among the live-out domestic workers. Data revealed that half of the live-out workers just lock the house while they were at work, which is followed by their neighbours looking after the houses for them. The live-out domestic workers confirmed that no one took care of their children while they were at work, which was both alarming and depressing at the same time because the children had no adult supervision, while their mothers were away trying to earn a decent livelihood for the family and was inevitably looking after their employer's homes and children.

The concept of providing child-care support is an uncommon practice within the Mizo society. Out of all the 226 responses, there is only 1 worker who stated that she was provided with child support while at work. Child-care provision is not common among the women domestic workers as most of them have not receive any.

At the same time, a majority of 70.2% or 80 out of 114 live-out workers said that the work done on both their house their employer's household were exactly the same as the work they do at their work place. The live-out domestic workers had mostly said that they had no other family members to help them in their household chores and they themselves have to do the same chores in their houses after their work from their employers' house is over.

From the study, 80 individuals have enjoyed day-off to carry out their private activities, and they constitute as many as 71.4% of the data. Among the live-in workers, 80 of them exclaimed how Sundays were the only day-off or break given to them throughout the whole week, it was revealed from the study that while 31 out of 112 said that it was not applicable since no day-off was given to them throughout the whole week. They also expressed how no exemptions or leave were given to them throughout the year. For some of them however, no such day off were not applicable to them. Most of the live-out workers were allowed to take a break from their duties of household work, accounting for as many as 98.2% while there were 2 individuals who were not given any vacation or break from their employers.

Many of the domestic workers were unable to say whether they had any health issues at all, and therefore doctor visitations were rare and not applicable amongst most of the domestic workers. They did not take medications for their illness even though they need the treatment for their health.

Any bad treatment faced by the domestic workers were not revealed or disclosed by them and the majority of them felt the question was not applicable to them to answer. If at all, they encountered any bad treatment, the domestic workers kept it to themselves and did not reveal any kind of ill-treatment they experienced. Alarming, there were 43 workers among the live-in workers and 96 out of the 114 live-out workers who tend to hide and rather not mention the kind of abuse they received in their employer's house. This was both alarming and concerning at the same time. Additionally, 57 live-in workers and one among the live-out workers stated that it was not applicable to them as they faced no such abuse. Regarding who is accountable for abusing their workers, since it was not an easy question for the

respondents to answer, hesitation can be witnessed when analyzing their answers. Most of the response was that the question was not relevant or did not bother to answer the question. It was seen from the study that the children of the household generally were good to them, but a few also had experienced some disrespect from the children in the family who were not so cordial to the domestic workers. The abuse they faced made them angry and resentful and hurt. Most of the response was that it was not applicable for them to answer. Lack of freedom and lack of security were mostly cited for the work-related problems and issues raised. Some wished not to share their problems and would rather live with it then relate the issues faced by them.

Most of the domestic workers were able to rest during the day while still at work, some rested during the afternoon and some in the night. Watching television was another form of relaxation which could be enjoyed by the live-in domestic workers, but not so much for the live-out domestic workers. A good number of the domestic workers did not feel the need or compulsion to run away from work, especially without giving prior information to their employers, although rare cases do suggest it did take place among a few live-in domestic workers. Quitting without giving prior notice or before receiving wages is not considered a suitable option among to domestic workers. This points out the importance receiving money for the minimal wage earners like the domestic workers who depend on their salary and wages for survival.

In align with the study by International Labour Organization (2009), the women domestic workers engaged in one of the lowest earning jobs in the state and the women mostly do not associate themselves with the association for domestic work which led them work informally in the labour market. As described by Pedraza (1991), women domestic workers are often inclined to migrate to other cities or countries for better working conditions and many women domestic workers from this study are also motivated to city areas in search for better work as against the limited work available for them in their hometown and villages. Hochschild's (1989) study, which stated that women domestic workers often faced double burden is also

applicable in this study as among the live-out women domestic workers, household chores were also performed solely by them after working in their employers' houses which left them with ached bodies, a concept which was coined as "double-burden" by Hochschild. Ferri & Smith's (1996) arguments also align with this study as most of the husbands of the women domestic workers, especially among live-out women, do not engage in household chores and they rely heavily on their wives and daughters both for their meager income as well as their household chores and duties in their house, a system which led many feminists to state is the reason for continued patriarchy in society.

7.4 Relations of employers and employees

Chapter VI details about the relations of the employers and the employees and under this, various sub-headings were presented: 1. Employers' treatment 2. Problems faced with employers 3. Problem faced with employer's wife 4. Problem faced with employers' husband 5. Problem shared with others 6. Building closest relationship 7. Employer's husband treatment of domestic worker 8. Scolding by employers 9. Relationship with other members of family 10. Gifts or rewards received from employers 11. Termination from work 12. Resolutions of Association's Meetings

The study of the treatment of employers towards their employees shows that most of the women domestic workers did not experience any abuse nor harsh treatment from their employers and they have all stated that they worked in a desirable environment and have high praises for the work environment that prevails in Mizoram. Even though most of the women domestic workers receive low income, they have stated that they are content in working in Mizoram due to the peaceful nature and environment associated with it. However, there are only few women who have stated that they have bad experiences with their employers who would often scold them or shout at them due to the minor inconvenience caused by them. Even so, they refused to quit simply because of the bond and love they share with the children of their employers.

Majority of the women domestic workers have stated that they did not face any ill treatments or harsh treatments from their employers and have maintained healthy relationships with their employers. However, there are only few exceptions to some women who tell a different story. These domestic workers who are few in numbers have experienced ill relations with their employers but are hesitant to quit their work due to difficulty and uncertainty of not being able to find other jobs so easily. These women have stated that when the odds are in their favour, they will leave eventually and find other work, but are currently not in a position to talk back or stand up against their employers.

The wives of the employers have a rather soft spot for their employees as the study shows that most of the employees have maintained healthy relationships with their employers' wives. They formed a close bond with them and most often did not have much complains and negative issues with them. They are only a handful of women who have ill relationships with the wives of their employers who all were unwilling to speak out the exact cause and nature of the reasons.

As against the absence of male figures in limited houses, most of the women domestic workers, who stayed in a household with male figures as head of the households have said that they were being treated with respect and loyalty and the employers' husbands exude kindness in their lives. They were never treated with abuse nor harsh tones were used towards them. They are, however, only some exceptional cases who say that they were occasionally being treated harshly but who refused to further comment on this issue. Overall, most women domestic workers did not face any issues or harsh treatments from the employers' husbands.

Like any other human beings, women domestic workers often faced problems in many walks of life and when such unforeseen circumstances or incidents take place, women domestic workers mainly share their problems with the employers' wives. These show that the women have more trust towards another women and share their problems with them and it also indicates that employers' wives are mostly kind towards their workers because if kindness and respect is absent, they would not share their problems with them. Secondly, majority of the women domestic workers

mainly share their problems with the employers' daughters. Only a small fraction of the women has stated that they have shared their problems with the employers' husbands and some limited numbers of women have stated that they have never shared their problems and hardships with anyone and just kept their issues privately to themselves, without sharing it to anyone.

In terms of closeness, women domestic workers have built the closest relationships with their employers' wives to whom they confided to whenever issues arise in their lives. They also turn to them in terms of sorrows and especially, when faced with women related health issues. The second closest relationship they have built with, is with that of the daughter of the employers. The women have felt that other women understood their problems the best and so, confided and built stronger relationship more with the female members of the family as compared with the male members of the family. There are also few numbers of women domestic workers who did not form a close relationship with any of the family members of their employers and just work professionally without building close bonds and relationships with anyone.

Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they are being treated nicely by their employers' husbands and most of them did not have any issue with them. Abuse is absent and scolding hardly ever occur from the men of the family but there are just a small number of women who did not wish to disclose any problems encountered with their employers' husbands.

In terms of scolding received by the women, most of the women domestic workers from both live-in and live-out have said that they have received scoldings from their employers at least once in their working experiences. These scoldings erupted usually from the mistakes committed by the women domestic workers in the work that they do and not due to any other reason. However, there are also small numbers of women who have stated that they never received any kind of scolding from their employers which show the genuine love and support from their employers. The working environment in Mizoram for domestic workers is still very much based on mutual understanding, free from abuse to a certain degree, as violent abuses and

exploitation hardly take place among them. There is reciprocal relationship between employers and employees.

Building a close relationship with the family members of the employers is a key factor for living peacefully and working in a safe environment for women domestic workers. Most of the women domestic workers have expressed building a strong relationship with all other members of the family. Issues with regards to hatred and conflict in the relationship between the women domestic workers and their employers are not observed and found among most of the women domestic workers.

Most of the women domestic workers have expressed receiving gifts or rewards from their employers either in cash bonus or in kind. There are a limited number of women domestic workers who never received gifts other than their monthly income and some small number of women also chose not to disclose any information with regards to the gifts they received. In comparison, live-in domestic workers receive more gifts or rewards as compared to live-out women due to the bond shared between them and their employers as a result of the connections shared and the familiarity with each other while staying in their houses.

In terms of job termination, most of the women domestic workers from both live-in and live-out categories were never fired from their job as a domestic worker. Only a small number of women were fired from their job which shows the professional ethics maintained by both the employers and employees in Mizoram and how the working conditions present a perfect scenario where both employers and employees share mutual respect and genuine relationship, thus creating a perfect work-life balance leading to a smaller number of women domestic workers getting fired and being terminated from their jobs.

The Office Bearers and the members of the domestic women association in Mizoram had a regular and periodical meeting with the government of Mizoram and other concerned authorities to implement laws laid down for their protection and well-being. Besides, the association has taken steps to provide help and assistance to women domestic workers from facing abuse and violence in their workplaces and

also take steps and measures to protect women domestic workers working abroad. The main steps taken by the association is to request and assist the government in providing better invigilation and license to all agencies within Mizoram so that youths going abroad will not face any problems.

As opposed to the study by Savita (1993), the employers have mostly talked positively of their employees and unhygienic and unprofessional attitudes of the employees have found to be absent in this study of domestic workers in Aizawl. Perez & Llanos (2017) have stated that the abuse faced by women domestic workers are largely unreported and the women domestic workers in this study have pointed that they have never experience any abuse from their employers in any way. Sachdeva & Arora (2018) have also stated that women domestic workers are paid less but forced to work beyond their working hours without proper breaks in between but this study shows that even though the workers are paid less, they enjoy timely and routinely break and resting periods between their jobs and they mostly have healthy relationships with their employers. As stated by Vanlaltlani (2019) in her work, there is a dire need for close connection between association and women domestic workers as well as the concerned government in order to work out the best policy implications for women domestic workers. Currently, there is no proper relation between women domestic workers and the domestic workers association as many of the women have not even heard of the aforementioned associations of domestic workers. So, there is a need to associate close bond between the two so that policy framework can be better framed for the women domestic workers.

7.5 Role of GOs, NGOs and Association activities: The activities of GOs and NGOs in promoting and improving the lives of domestic workers are crucial, however they differ. It is the primary responsibility of national and state governments to create and implement legal and policy frameworks that protect domestic workers. Domestic workers in Mizoram and other parts of India face unique challenges because their labour is informal. Mizoram's government, through the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department (LESDE), is the primary government agency in charge of worker welfare, including minimum wage

determination, registration, and social security under the Unorganised Workers Security Act of 2008, as well as placement agency regulation. However, the state of Mizoram has yet to formalise any of these measures for informal workers. In Mizoram, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) perform significant roles as advocates, service providers, and watchdogs. Advocacy and mobilisation through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as YMA and MHIP are vital in raising awareness and providing comprehensive support during times of hardship and need. Strong collaborations between government agencies and civil society are common in Mizoram to assist domestic workers in making their career a recognised and respected profession.

Association activities: Domestic worker associations carry out a number of initiatives to improve the lives and working circumstances of domestic workers. These include campaigning for legal safeguards, promoting equitable salaries and working hours, ensuring access to social security and healthcare, providing training and skill development opportunities, and establishing platforms for collective bargaining and representation. They also aim to increase knowledge of domestic workers' rights and battle concerns such as violence, harassment, and exploitation.

Association activities

The domestic workers' association organize activities which benefit the welfare of the association and its members which are highlighted as follows:

1. The leaders of the association attended refreshers' course from time to time and had leadership training in these occasions to improve the way they guide the association and its members.
2. The association regularly held meeting with all the members and invited speakers and trainers to help them with their work and also to boost their morale.
3. Recreational activities like sports are organized occasionally to build friendships among the workers and also to refresh their minds from their work stress.

4. Counselling sessions are occasionally organized where special invited speakers gave lectures on the importance of mental health and have a one-on-one session with all women attendees where they confide in their hardships and mental stress to the counsellors.
5. Legal awareness day is also observed once a year where the rights and duties of women domestic workers are made aware to the workers by advocates within the state.
6. Observation of Domestic Workers Day on 16 June is another yearly activity of the association where all the members gather and have recreational activities together and receive a one-day vocational training and organise awareness programmes in this occasion.
7. The leaders of the association often visited the member workers from time to time in their workplaces and enquire about their working environment in their current workplaces. They also enquire about whether they face any issues or abuse in their workplaces. However, this activity could not be regularly performed as the leaders also had to work daily and could only do so among only few members and only from time to time.
8. The leaders had occasional meetings with government authorities to discuss the income issues, future scope of women domestic workers in Mizoram and also about various technical and personal issues they faced as an association in Mizoram.

7.6 Sociological Implications of the study

Research on domestic workers has substantial sociological consequences for labour, social inequity, and gender dynamics. It underscores the vulnerability of domestic workers, who are frequently marginalised and denied labour protections, as well as power imbalances within households and the intricacies of informal employment arrangements. The informal nature of domestic employment, which lacks formal contracts and legal protections, exposes workers to exploitation, low wages, long hours, and a lack of social security. Domestic work is primarily undertaken by women, highlighting gender inequality and power relations inside the household. Research on domestic labour focusses on the “relational work” between workers and employers, which can alter work arrangements and perpetuate or challenge social inequalities.

Table 7.1: Sociological Implications: Text and Context

S/No.	Theory	Theorist	Emphasis	Study Context
1.	Feminist Perspective/ Gendered Division of Labour	Ann Oakley, Joan Acker	Analysis of patriarchal structures that assign domestic and care work primarily to women, reinforcing gender inequality.	Labour market segregation; institutionalised gender roles.
2.	The Second Shift/ Double Burden	Arlie Russell Hochschild	The unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work that women perform after their paid employment, leading to time poverty.	Analysis of total work hours (paid & unpaid); family negotiation of housework.
3.	Intersectionality	Patricia Hill Collins, Kimberlé Crenshaw	How multiple axes of inequality (gender, class, ethnicity, migrant status) combine to create compounded vulnerability and precarity.	Analysing discrimination against specific vulnerable group.
4.	Formal/ Informal Economy Linkage	Alejandro Portes, International Labour Studies	The structural relationship where the formal economy relies on the cheap, unregulated labour of the informal sector (domestic work) to subsidize its own costs.	Labour market segmentation; understanding how families in the formal sector (e.g. dual- earner households) afford domestic maintenance.
5.	Decent Work Perspective	ILO (International Labour Organisation)	Normative standard (Rights, Social Protection, etc.) used to critique the structural precarity and exclusion of workers from legal protection.	Policy analysis; evaluation of national labour laws; comparison against ILO Convention 189.
6.	Emotional Labour	Arlie Russell Hochschild	Commodification of emotion: the obligation to control one's own emotions (e.g., deference) as a paid skill.	An expression of gratitude is necessary for job security in the services sector.
7.	Global Care Chains (GCC)	Rhacel Parrenas, Arlie Russell Hochschild	The transnational migration of care from poor to rich countries reinforces global gender and economic inequalities.	Understanding the "care deficit" in sending countries is important for migrant domestic workers.
8.	Relational Work Approach	Viviana Zelizer, Arlie Russell Hochschild	Boundary management is the ongoing process of defining the boundaries of the relationship between personal and market forces.	Managing conflicting expectations in employer-employee relationships.

An overview of eight important theoretical and analytical frameworks utilised in domestic labour research is provided in this context.

The sociological implications in the study of Mizo domestic workers and ideas progress from the micro-level (like the interpersonal dynamics examined by Relational Work Approach and Emotional Labour) to the macro-level (like the Formal/Informal Economy Linkage and Global Care Chains). Together, the frameworks examine how migration, gender and class make domestic workers structurally vulnerable. Concepts like Decent Work Perspective and Intersectionality are used to support the domestic workers formal legal inclusion.

This selection of theories provides a comprehensive analytical toolkit for studying **domestic workers (*awmpui / nula*) in Aizawl**, highlighting that their exploitation is a **multi-layered social phenomenon**. The core issue is the **gendered devaluation of care work** (Feminist Perspectives, Emotional Labour), which is the foundation for all other forms of exploitation. This devaluation ensures a cheap labour supply that facilitates the **Formal/Informal Linkage**, where the rising **Mizo middle-class** (especially professional women) relies on the *awmpui/ nula* domestic worker to manage the **Second Shift/Double Burden** in their own homes, allowing the employers to fully participate in the formal economy. **The Global Care Chains** concept further reveals that this shift in care often means the *awmpui/ nula* domestic worker themselves must neglect their own families, transferring the care deficit.

Crucially, the **Intersectionality** framework is essential in the Mizo context, as it explains the varying degrees of vulnerability based on identity. Exploitation is not uniform: it is **intensified** for those who are poor, often **rural-to-urban migrants**, and particularly for those who are **non-Mizo ‘outsiders’** who lack local social networks. The **Relational Work Approach** then addresses how these systemic inequalities play out in the **private household**, where the lack of contracts and regulation (the **Decent Work Perspective** deficit) allows the employer’s class and social power to translate into personalized control, surveillance, and often emotional burden. Together, these theories shift the analysis from viewing the *awmpui* as merely low-paid laborers to

recognizing them as **highly exploited women** whose systemic marginalization underpins the contemporary social structure of urban Mizo society.

Arlie Hochschild's work, particularly *The Managed Heart* (1983) and *The Second Shift* (1989) provided the conceptual language for the emotional dimension of the relational approach. She has defined emotional labour as the "management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage." This concept highlights the work of managing one's own emotions and the emotions of others as part of a job—a central feature of domestic work.

Link to Relational Work: Hochschild's work on emotional labour in the market (e.g. flight attendants) and emotion management in the family (e.g. negotiating housework) is a vital precursor as it focuses on the active, demanding nature of emotional maintenance that underpins the power dynamics in the relational work approach.

Erving Goffman and "Impression Management". Goffman's dramaturgical analysis (*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 1959) views social interaction as performance. Taking this into account, the domestic worker's need to constantly **perform gratitude, humility, and deference (as seen in the Mizo context)** is essentially **impression management - a form of relational work** – aimed at maintaining the employer's desired definition of the relationship (as "family") to secure their job.

The study of Mizo domestic workers demonstrates how domestic workers and employers constantly work to define the terms of the relationship outside of formal contracts, a process central to the Relational Work Approach. To sum it up, the study perspective focuses on the **intimate, unequal and constantly negotiated nature of the employer-employee bond** in the domestic sphere.

Domestic work is typically devalued and undercounted in economic statistics, highlighting the impact of unpaid labour on individuals and families. The study of domestic workers gives light on the dynamics of informal employer-employee relationships and the processes of social inclusion and exclusion, illustrating how certain groups are marginalised and denied access to basic rights. Government regulation and social welfare mechanisms are undone about it. The lack of such state intervention and social security for domestic workers emphasises the importance of

policy measures to defend their rights and secure their welfare. This section attempts to contextualise the review attempts made in Chapter II on Review of literature (Table 2.1) so as to delineate the sociological implications of the study.

Theories in Context: Gender studies (Hochschild, 1989; Oakley, 1974; Romero, 1992; Bennet, 1972; Butler, 1990) and intersectionality (Crenshaw's, 1989) serve as the foundation for theoretical viewpoints, emphasising the gendered differences between men and women. They also contend that women's earnings and domestic work benefit men which is not contrary to the findings of this study. This led to the division of labour, even at home, between men's and women's roles, which has been the subject of intense discussion among academia. There were such gender issues like hiring, unionisation, lack of legal protection, changes and procedures, migration and geographic disparity in case of the migrant respondents in this study in the same line as argued by Brites (2013). Butler (1990) argues that although the gender theory was initially developed to examine the oppression of women of colour in society, it may now be applied to all social categories, including social identities that are typically viewed as dominant when taken into account separately.

Romero (1992) mentions "double days" when discussing the power struggle that exists not only between men and women but also between women of different races and socioeconomic backgrounds. A "double day" is when women work full days in a job outside the home and then return home to take care of the house, making sure everything is tidy, the food is prepared, and the family members are clean and well. One of the benefits of paid domestic labour for Latina maids is considered to be the flexibility of working hours. Second shift or double day syndrome is mostly experienced by the Mizo live-out domestic workers in the study, as in after their daily work is done in their employer's household, they come home to do the same kind of work in their own homes.

However, despite the fact that women work just as much outside the home as men do, they still bear a greater share of the household labour weight. This is what Hochschild (1989) referred to as the double load, double day, or second shift. There is minimal

evidence of a “new man” who contributes equally to family and domestic tasks, according to feminist authors.

While some scholars acknowledge that domestic maids experience slavery (Sharma ,2009) through numerous social identities and situations, including gender, ethnicity, class, and migrant status. Intersectionality provides a more nuanced view of individuals’ diverse vulnerabilities by exploring how various elements interact, this study fails to confirm it fully as exploitative and abusive treatment were observed (though they were not very vocal about it) only in very few cases who especially worked full-time in their employers’ houses. Bernardino-Costa (2014) and Perez & Llanos (2017)’s findings which stated that the violence and abuse faced by women domestic workers largely go unnoticed is also true based on the context of this study. This study is rather construed in terms of a ‘**relational work approach**’ which sees informal domestic work (Mizo culture specific due to largely lack of structural hierarchical relationships) as part of a relational foundation of social ties and reciprocal favours. The argument is vouchsafed by interrogating the field if the informal household interactions are mutual, rather than exploitative and abusive. Based on in-depth interviews with 226 domestic workers, the findings show that, while majority workers often function within constricted opportunity structures, their employment relationships include an implicit sociological element of reciprocal advantages. However, the study concludes that by incorporating reciprocal components into employer-employee relationships, domestic workers benefit but ultimately strengthen their unequal position.

The concept of intersectionality includes many types of social stratification—such as gender, age, sexual orientation, class, race, and disability—are entwined with one another rather than existing independently. Crenshaw’s (1989) introduction of the study of intersectionality best captures the characteristics of domestic workers, including their working conditions, the nature of their labour, their background, gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and any other characteristic that would place them in a minority class. The extremely personal power dynamics between domestic workers and their employers are highlighted by intersectionality. Since they

labour in private homes, it is challenging to keep an eye on their job and establish a legal union. The same goes for the domestic workers in Aizawl, especially for the live-in domestic workers as they are bound to their workplace almost throughout the week. Since they are not free and not allowed by their employers to take day-off, it therefore becomes impossible for them to join the other domestic workers in elevating their situation or join in any associational activities of domestic workers and legalise their union. .

Theoretically, there is a strong linkage between the formal and informal economies, which both contribute to the broader economy, and supporting the working poor in the informal economy is just as vital for decreasing poverty and inequality as helping working women in the formal sector. Domestic workers allow many working men and women to pursue a variety of jobs and careers outside of the home. The informal formal linkage contextualises women domestic workers in Aizawl, and the impact flows in both directions. The link between the formal and informal economies is blurred and unrecognisable due to the high level of interaction between formal and informal activity at the lower end of the labour market and also at the home household level. Unquestionably, the rather inexpensive goods and services provided by the informal sector, which employs low-paid workers and unpaid family labourers, satisfy the basic necessities of the workers in the formal sectors. Domestic maids' labour can readily be classified as falling into this category.

In line with Oakley's (1974) study which stated that the work of domestic work comes in align with the nature of women's role in their families as most of the women in the study of domestic workers in Aizawl have stated that they do not have any other skills apart from domestic roles. They are confined to the only job that they know and can perform best which is domestic work. This is the nature of their role in their families which made them work at ease in their workplaces as domestic maids in Aizawl.

Themes in Context: Thematic assessments are further separated into five sections: women's working conditions, migration, wage, rights issues, health conditions, and domestic violence. According to the study's thematic evaluation, women domestic workers face less desirable working circumstances in Aizawl, the country and nay the

world and are an unseen workforce. They were paid minimum pay, and their rights were frequently infringed without them speaking up or taking action to combat the injustice if any levelled at them. This research demonstrates that there is an urgent need for policy suggestions to improve their working circumstances, social security as well as rights-based advocacy, not only in India but also globally, as well as health-care benefits for domestic workers.

In consonance with the studies of Pedrazza (1991) and Hondagneu-Sotelo Pierette (1994), this study shows how the domestic workers find employment and settle in new places, as well as how their new beliefs and lifestyles change as a result. Moreover, women find it difficult to consider leaving “the gains that migration and employment have brought for them” (Savita,1993 and Brites, 2013)because they are reluctant to return to their hometown or country of origin. This side of the theory was also seen among the domestic workers in Aizawl. The domestic workers hailing from the rural parts of the state of Mizoram and those from outside the state remain in the city of Aizawl in search of jobs and do not want to return to their native hometown. This study also reveals that the domestic workers in Aizawl would rather stick on and reside in the city of Aizawl and look for more opportunities for a better life. The domestic workers in Aizawl, Mizoram mostly hailed from rural areas and most of them migrate to urban areas in search of better opportunities in work and lifestyle.

As noted by Pedraza (1991), women domestic workers migrated to urban areas and do not necessarily want to migrate back to their native places due to better opportunities and lifestyles enhancement that prevail in their working areas. ILO (2009) has noted that most of the women domestic workers are women which also comes in alignment with this study as all the respondents are women and almost all domestic workers in Mizoram state are also women.

The ILO (2011) reports, along with Anker 1997; Rubery, Smith and Fagan 1996; Edgeworth 1992; Caplow 1954; Vimala 2010; Poonam 2016 all relate to the low wages and a lack of benefits for the domestic workers. Domestic workers are usually among the lowest-paid workers, and lack benefits and they are frequently exempt from minimum wage legislation and other labour safeguards. Their earnings do not reflect

their work, resulting in widespread poverty. Similarly, it is found that wages for the domestic workers in Aizawl are low-paying, and they are entirely reliant on their employers, which makes it certain that domestic employment is therefore among the lowest paying occupations. The Mizo domestic workers are still denied a basic minimum wages salary still to be approved by the state government and therefore belong to the economically disadvantaged group and are compelled to do the job because of their low education and poor financial background.

Domestic worker in Aizawl still remains unregulated and informal and because domestic work is done in private homes, it is mostly invisible and challenging to govern. A significant social implication is the informality of the domestic work sector. Many workers in Aizawl lack formal contracts, set working hours, or a minimum wage, thus, leaving them with little or no job security and without recourse in case of disputes. Maids in Aizawl are often denied basic rights like weekly rests, sick leave, or paid overtime. The domestic workers in Aizawl are exposed to exploitation as a result of this informality, which includes unreasonably lengthy workdays, no paid time off, and no social security benefits. This lack of legal protection is a major reason why their rights are so frequently violated as in the case of the domestic maids in Aizawl, but it is still a distant reality to mobilize themselves and fight for their rights here in Aizawl.

The domestic workers in Aizawl face vulnerability when it comes to migration, and settling down, thereby adapting oneself in a new environment. Many domestic workers found in Aizawl have migrated from rural or different countries to urban areas or overseas in search of better economic opportunities. While they often send remittances to support their families, this migration can lead to family separation and emotional stress. These women workers are often isolated in their employer's homes, with limited social networks, which further increases their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. This is distinctly visible in the case of the domestic workers in Aizawl in the study.

Because of their social isolation and migrant status, they may be subjected to physical and psychological abuse, and have their rights infringed. Most of the domestic workers

rely on their friends and family and network supports to get by in their day-to-day activities. Sundays were the only day among Mizo domestic workers, especially those live-in domestic workers in Aizawl, when they could meet friends and socialize, thereby enhancing their networking skills and getting supports from friends and families. One of the most important factors for domestic workers is migration. Domestic workers in Aizawl typically migrate from rural to urban areas; rights issues: laws and rights for domestic workers have not been properly implemented within the state of Mizoram.

Health-wise, the health conditions of the domestic workers in Aizawl found that they continue to face a variety of physical and psychological health issues, similar to scholarly works such as Rani et al, 1989; Datta & Murthy, 2011 and Kasturi, 1997, draw attention to the health issues faced by domestic workers who work long hours in hazardous conditions without adequate rest or nutrition, making them vulnerable to a variety of illnesses and diseases without seeking medical benefits. However, the majority of replies, both from live-in and live-out domestic workers in Aizawl, claimed that they had not visited a medical practitioner and that they had not experienced any health issues that required them to do so. If they need to see one, they go alone rather than with their employers. The most common illness found among the domestic workers in Aizawl from the study were headaches, stomach ulcer, and gastro-intestinal problems to name a few.

The rights issues and problems encountered by the domestic workers are discussed and addressed under international labour law and international human rights law as studies by (Hensman, 2001; Ganesh, 2006) reveal which need to be addressed as well. Low pay, unfavourable working conditions, a lack of social security, and a lack of legal rights are common problems faced by domestic workers. It has been essential in lobbying for the inclusion of domestic workers in national labour laws, guaranteeing that they have access to the minimum wage, social insurance, and safe working conditions. By enacting laws and implementing interventions, formalising domestic

labour can lead to better working conditions, more access to benefits, and improved social and economic well-being.

7.6.1 The Study Perspective: Relational Work Approach

The “Relational Work Approach” is a sociological framework that focusses on the negotiations, emotional labour and mutual adjustments that take place between individuals in a relationship, especially those involving inequality, such as employer and employee, i.e. the domestic worker. In sociology, the “Relational Work Approach” is an analytical lens that arose from the Sociology of Emotion and Relational Sociology to focus on the continual effort and negotiation required to manage the social and emotional components of a relationship.

The origins of “Relational Work Approach” is most directly linked to the work of two key current sociologists: Viviana Zelizer and Arlie Russell Hochschild. Viviana Zelizer presented the idea of “relational work” in her 1994 book “The Social Meaning of Money” to explain how people actively distinguish, classify, and manage social connections that frequently entail financial transaction. She challenged the traditional belief that society is clearly divided into two domains: the economic/profane (markets, trade) and the intimate/sacred (family, care).

Relational work, according to Zelizer, is the practical effort made by individuals, courts, and institutions to define and regulate the borders between various domains. For example, she demonstrates how individuals “earmark” money (make it “sacred” or “marked”) to keep it from contaminating emotional connections, such as paying a child a special allowance for chores to separate it from affectionate gifts. Application to Domestic Work: In the study of domestic workers, relational work refers to the effort made by both the employer and the employee to manage the boundary between a strictly commercial wage transaction and the close-knit, pseudo-familial relationship necessary when working in a private residence.

The relation between employers and employee of domestic workers in Aizawl befits a new perspective called the ‘relational work approach’. The study perspective of ‘Relational work approach’ sees informal domestic work (Mizo culture specific due

to largely lack of structural hierarchical relationships) as part of a relational foundation of social ties and reciprocal favours and advantages. The informal household interactions in Aizawl are mutual, rather than discriminatory, exploitative and abusive and unlike the perspective found elsewhere in the country. However, the extremely personal power dynamics between domestic workers and their employers are highlighted by intersectionality. Since they labour in private homes, it is challenging to keep an eye on their job and establish a legal union.

Table 7.2 The Perspective: Examples of “Relational Work Approach” to Studying Mizo Domestic Workers

No.	Relational Work Approach	Mizo Specific Context/ Terminology	Theoretical Significance
1.	The Performance of “Chhungkua” Integration	Engaging in family devotions (<i>Chhung Inkhawm</i>) and demonstrating familiarity with Mizo hymns and prayers to represent inclusivity and a common faith.	Boundary Work & Moral Alignment: The worker adopts a <i>moral identity</i> that minimises her status as a contractual employee while aligning her with the family’s basic Christian identity, thereby establishing trust.
2.	The over-performance of “Tlawmngaihna”	Taking on extra tasks on a regular basis without being asked or expecting compensation, such as carrying kids to school in the rain or staying up late for family members.	Patronage Reinforcement: This supports the employer’s unstated cultural expectation of selfless service (<i>Tlawmngaihna</i>), allowing the employer to reward the worker in non-monetary ways (gifts, verbal praise, and security) rather than set salary.
3.	Understanding the “Bawihi/Bawiha” Endearment	Responding to the employer’s use of these personal yet historically loaded language with submissive gratitude and increased diligence, never challenging the term itself.	Power & Affection Contradiction: This relational strategy acknowledges the <i>hierarchical</i> reliance connected to the term’s traditional usage while accepting the <i>employer’s request for intimate connection</i> .
4.	“Veng” (Neighbourhood) Protection of Reputation	When interacting with Veng (local community) members, actively avoid participating in	Social Control & trust Capital: Aizawl’s close-knit <i>Veng</i> system places a high value on employee discretion.

		neighbourhood gossip (<i>sawiselna</i>) or discussing any personal family concerns.	In a small urban setting, her reputation and job stability are strongly related to the high <i>trust capital</i> that is developed through her relational activity.
5.	The Subordination Strategy of the “Migrant”	Non-Mizo migrant labourers (e.g., from Assam or Chin state) frequently exhibit extreme submissiveness and only frequently use their native language, even while communicating with one another.	Intersectionality of Ethnicity & Class: This carries out ethnic/cultural subordination, attempting to counterbalance the employer’s possible security concerns related to non-local domestic workers and lessen ethnic prejudice.
6.	Understanding the weaponization of Hriatthiamna	The employee presents their request for a rise or leave of absence as a personal family emergency that requires the employer’s kind consideration rather than as a demand (<i>Hriatthiamna</i>)	De-commodification of Labour: This shifts the employer’s perspective from “cost” to “moral obligation,” turning the negotiation from a labour transaction into a plea for <i>charity or Christian duty</i> .
7.	Using Traditional Honourifics (e.g., Pi/Pu)	<i>Pu</i> (Sir/Male Employer) <i>Pi</i> (Madam/Female Employer)	Boundary Management & Impression Management: Reinforces the power hierarchy and the worker’s deference. It acts as a linguistic barrier that prevents the relationship from becoming too intimate, formally asserting the subordinate position and protecting the worker’s moral reputation (Goffman’s Front Stage)
8.	Navigating the “Pa” (Male Employer) Distance	To show morality, female employees retain very evident physical and visual deference to their male employers (for example, avoiding eye contact and exiting the room swiftly).	Gendered Self-Protection: Strictly adhering to conservative Mizo patriarchal traditions, this relational work serves as a defence mechanism against potential sexual misconduct or rumours, protecting the worker’s sensitive reputation.
9.	The “Sunday	Willingness to perform	Religious Integration: She

	Schedule” Agreement	additional, time-consuming work on Sundays -the main day for Mizo social feasting and church – without receiving payment.	validates her worth as a vital enabler of their social standing by coordinating her work with the family’s most significant weekly religious and social customs.
10.	Accepting Thuam (Dowry/Gift) as a substitute	Accepting presents, clothing, or used goods (Thuam frequently alludes to a woman’s belongings) as a bonus or official pay.	Paternalism vs. Wage Rights: This acknowledges the employer’s role as a generous <i>patron</i> (meeting her needs) while undermining her entitlement to a professional pay or formal financial security.
11.	The “ Silent Witness ” in Marital Conflict	The domestic worker becomes invisible when employer couples fight, intentionally pretending to be deaf or ignorant and avoiding eye contact the following day.	Preserving Family Privacy: This relational work perspective ensures that she is just present for work and is not a judge nor a participant in family matters, protecting the integrity of the private Mizo household .
12.	Managing Children’s Public Appreciations	When the employee receives praise from the employer’s child in front of the employer (“ Bawihi cooks better than Mom ”), the employee promptly brushes it off and gives the mother credit instead.	Hierarchical Validation: This is an essential step in maintaining harmony within the central home power structure by confirming the Pi/Mistress/Madam’s authority and averting any conflict resulting from perceived rivalry or competence.
13.	Performance of the “No Contract” Agreement	Agreeing to work without a written contract and depending only on the employer’s assurances of fairness and verbal understanding.	Trust-Based Governance: This makes the relationship <i>entirely relational rather than contractual</i> by confirming the employee’s faith in the Mizo moral code (Christian values/ honour) and shifting the <i>entire duty of fair treatment</i> onto the employer’s conscience.
14.	The act of watching TV together (Korean serials, Hindi serials, etc.) sharing a sofa.	The specific social context where class, ethnic identity and spatial proximity (living in the same home) are layered.	Boundary Work and Dramaturgical Analysis: Demonstrates how social boundaries (employer/employee) are actively blurred or performed

			in private settings to manage the underlying tension of unequal power relations. It also provides a clear illustration of how everyday interaction rituals (Goffman) are used as tools to maintain or challenge social order (class structure) in specific cultural contexts. The shared sofa is Goffman's Front Stage performance where a temporary, visible impression of intimacy and equality is staged.

This framework reveals that the domestic worker's efforts are not random acts of personal kindness but a systematic, culturally-informed labour strategy driven by structural vulnerability.

1. Cultural labour and Boundary Control

The framework demonstrates the cultural specificity of Relational Work. Unlike generalised studies of domestic labour, this analysis shows how Mizo socio-religious norms are actively deployed as tools for boundary control:

- The Mizo Moral Code as a Governance Mechanism: The worker's performance (No. 1, 13) of shared Christian faith (Chhungkua Integration) and her reliance on her employer's honour (No Contract Agreement) reveal that the relationship is governed by extra-legal, trust based moral code rather than formal contracts. This is a critical insight, as it explains why formals rights and regulations often fail in this sector – the relationship is deliberately kept relational rather than contractual. Moreover, the practice of using honourifics (No. 7) helps stabilise a relationship base on relational trust and cultural deference.
- Tlawmngaihna as Labour Extraction: The Tlawmngaihna Over-Performance (No 2) is the clearest example of cultural labour. The worker is compelled to

internalise and perform the Mizo ideals of selflessness. This validates the employer's non-monetary rewards (Patronage Reinforcement), effectively justifying the extraction of uncompensated, flexible labour under the guise of cultural duty.

2. Intersectionality of Vulnerability

The framework highlights the intersectional nature of the worker's vulnerability, moving beyond simple class dynamics.

- Gendered Relational Work (No. 7, 12): The need for Manoeuvring the Pa distance and Managing Children's Compliments show how gender and the domestic power structure impose unique, highly stressful relational requirements on the female worker. She must manage her own visibility and strictly police boundaries, to protect her reputation in a conservative society.
- Ethnic Subordination (No. 5): The "Migrant" Subordination Strategy illustrates the intersection of class with ethnicity. Non-Mizo workers must perform exaggerated submission to mitigate prejudice and security fears, revealing the Relational Work is intensified by ethnic difference, demanding the labour of cultural and linguistic invisibility.

3. The Power of De-Commodification

The most profound sociological finding is the worker's strategic use of Relational Work to de-commodify her own labour when necessary (No. 6, 10):

- Weaponizing Hriatthiamna: By framing a raise request as an appeal for compassion (Hriatthiamna), the worker uses the employer's morality as leverage. She deliberately transforms the negotiation from an economic transaction (I need money) into a moral obligation (Please help my family).
- Thuam as Paternalism: Accepting gifts or used items (Thuam Substitutes) validates the employer as a benevolent patron who provides for her personal needs, while simultaneously diffusing her right to a professional wage. This maintains the power structure where the employer controls the terms of value exchange.

This framework successfully transforms anecdotal observations into theoretically significant data points for this thesis demonstrating that Relational Work is the hidden, essential and often unfair labour that sustains domestic service in Mizo society.

7.7 Policy Recommendations: The policy recommendations required by women domestic workers are shown in this study through diagnosis of the various problems faced and experienced by women domestic workers in Mizoram.

The women domestic workers were asked about their opinion on the income received by them on a monthly basis and the answers to the questions were almost all equal. Even though many women have agreed that their income was enough, many other women on an almost equal basis have also said that they were not satisfied with the income that they received. At the same time, there were also many women who did not even know whether they are satisfied or not with the monthly income that they received. The income that they received were diverse and there is no fixation of income among women domestic workers in Mizoram. This shows that there is a dire need from the association to fix a regular income for all women domestic workers and also, the income fix should be based on the categories of the work that they engaged in and in this sense, the size of the families and size of the house may play an important role.

This study reveals whether women domestic workers were given regular day-offs by their employers and the findings show that most of the women domestic workers were given off-day on a regular basis. The benefits of having off-days show that workers were more efficient on their working days if day-off was given to them. Besides, most of the women domestic workers were given off-days on weekends by their employers and this shows that the association should lay down specific working conditions for domestic workers which include the provision of regular off-days to women domestic workers in Mizoram.

When inquired about whether women domestic workers were given rest periods on their working hours, most of the respondents have claimed that they regularly enjoyed

resting periods between their working hours and these periods usually last between one to two hours. This period led the women to have a refreshing mind and rest their aching bodies so that they can continue their jobs without much hesitation and effectively. Hence, the provision of resting periods is a must for all employers within Mizoram districts.

The findings under this category show that women employers were mostly in-charge of the work for women domestic workers and the workers themselves have little to no say in their daily chores and work. Women domestic workers should have more say in the work that they engage and should also contribute their opinions on choosing the kind of work that they do on a daily basis. This will build a closer connection between both the employers and the workers and will improve the working environment between the two as well.

In a surprising turn of event, most of the women domestic workers in Mizoram have never heard about the existence of domestic workers association in Mizoram which in turn shows that most women workers do not have any contact with the leaders of the workers association in Mizoram. This shows the need to publicly made aware of the existence of the association and take steps to improve the current working conditions and benefits for women domestic workers within the state.

Most of the women domestic workers in Mizoram do not register with the association for women domestic workers as they have never even heard about the existence in the first place. This makes it obvious as to why most of them are not registered with the association. The concerned authorities should make the public and the women workers of their existence and the whereabouts of the location of their office so that the women domestic workers in Mizoram can register with the association and come in close contact with them so as to improve the livelihood conditions and working conditions of all women domestic workers in Mizoram.

The problems faced by women domestic workers and the policy recommendations for the issues are consolidated and presented in the following table as the policy outcome of the study.

Table 7.3 Problem dimensions and policy Recommendations

Diagnosis	Prognosis
1. Proper working hour	
No fixation on working hours for women domestic workers a) Working hours differ from women to women b) Overtime allowance is not provided c) Need for monitoring of proper working hours by the association	• There should be fixed working hours for women domestic workers in Mizoram • If worked extra, overtime allowances should be provided to them • Monitoring of proper working hour schedule by the association and the concerned authorities
2. Implementation difficulties	
a) Delayed implementation in proper working hours due to conflict of interests from many employers b) Monitoring Implementation c) Limited vocational training centres d) Need for diversification of training e) Proper determination and dissemination of the criteria and eligibility process	• Strict invigilation of implementation be done by the leaders of the association and a fine agreement be reached between employers and the association • Regular audit be done by the association leaders and concerned authorities in terms of implementation measures • More vocational training centres be open in every districts • Types of training available be easily approachable and beneficial for all women domestic workers • Proper criteria determination and dissemination be carried out through media platforms with regard to availability of the seats, eligibility and the criteria process
3. Health-issues	
a.) Quality assurance of health care is much needed b.) Unavailability of health care coverage by their income	• The employers should provide additional care and monetary aid if hospital care is needed • Proper health care be enlisted by the employers and cover all health-related costs
4. Need for GRO	
a) Need for the establishment of	• Inspection be made and letters

Grievance Redressal Office to share their work-site problems b) Need for join efforts by state government and association leaders c) Need for strict vigilance on meeting outcome	be written by association leaders of domestic workers to concerned authorities • Meetings be held to discuss plans for setting up GRO in easily accessible places within city areas • The meetings outcome and letters compliance be strictly monitored and recorded for reminders
5. Fixation on income	
a.)Need for a fix income for all women domestic workers b.)Allocation of income based on nature of work c.)Strict implementation by concerned authorities	• Proper fixation of income be done to be followed in Mizoram by all employers • Income be based on the nature of work engaged by women domestic workers • Implementation should be monitored by association leaders and concerned authorities and assurance of no violations
6. Need for day-off	
a) Need of day-off by women domestic workers b) Monitor of no violation on provision of day-off c) Overtime work hours be compensated d) Need for resting hours between working hours	• Day-off be provided by employers on every week • Association be informed about violation of this provision • Overtime work be compensated by providing additional income • Domestic workers be provided with proper resting hours by employers
7. Assurance of no abuse	
a) Domestic workers often faced physical and verbal abuse b) Need for proper laws to prevent abuse at workplaces c) Need for government intervention in such cases	• Employers be made aware of the consequences of abuse by association leaders (Sexual Harassment at Work Place-2013) • Strict implementation of laws by the government to prohibit abuse towards women domestic workers • Use of Helpline numbers by domestic workers facing abuse to report their issues and receive additional care
8. Employment issues	

a) Issue of employment b) Lower grooming opportunities and promotion c) Absence of background checks of domestic workers d) Limited contact between association and women domestic workers in Mizoram	• Grooming of aspiring domestic workers before joining of work by association • Background checking of aspiring domestic workers be conducted thoroughly • Public awareness be made with regard to the existence of association for women domestic workers

The policy recommendations came to arrive through diagnosis of the problems and the offering of solutions to counter the various issues faced at the level of the women domestic workers within the state.

1. Employers in Mizoram should allot a fix working hour for women domestic workers in Mizoram and this allocation of working hours should be closely monitored by the concerned authorities.
2. If worked extra within the scope of working hours, overtime allowances should be given and provided to the workers.
3. The implementation of the rules laid down by the association with regard to working hours should be strictly invigilated and monitored and violators must be made to pay the prices.
4. The concerned authorities and association leaders must maintain a close tie and connection so that proper laws can be framed with regard to the safeguard of the working conditions of women domestic workers.
5. Vocational training centres should be opened for women domestic workers to sharpen their skills on domestic work and other skill training.
6. In these centres, housekeeping and its related services should be taught to the women workers so that they can work more efficiently in their employers' houses.
7. The concerned authorities should make sure that the public is aware of the existence of such centres so that more women can attend the training and also, there should be a proper guideline to the admission process and the

skills taught at such centres should be properly framed by the concerned authorities so that the women can benefit most from such centres.

8. Proper health-care should be given to women domestic workers if the need arises.
9. The employers should make sure to cover the expenses of hospital visits and emergency medical need of their workers if the need arises.
10. The concerned authorities should set up GRO centre for women domestic workers so that they can submit their problems and grievances that they experience in their workplaces.
11. Meetings should be regularly held by the association leaders and the complaints received through GRO should be inspected and steps be taken so that the problems faced by women domestic workers can be solved effectively.
12. The association should fix proper income for all women domestic workers within Mizoram.
13. The association should make sure that all employers follow this system.
14. The income should be fixed based on the nature of work practiced by the women domestic workers and also, the income should depend on the duration of work engaged by the workers.
15. The association leaders should strictly invigilate the outcome of the policies framed in terms of income.
16. The employers should be made aware of the importance of day-off and resting periods for women domestic workers and hence, such periods should be provided to them so that the women can work more efficiently in their working hours.
17. The concerned authorities should amend the laws which prevent the experiences of facing both physical and mental abuse by the employers.
18. The onset of abuse should result in punishment in which all necessary steps be taken by the association leaders.
19. The existence of the association for domestic workers in Mizoram should be made more public and more women domestic workers should be encouraged to join the association so that better communication and grievances can be

shared.

20. Proper employment systems should be followed in Mizoram with regard to the hiring of women domestic workers and proper steps and procedures be listed out by the association so that the hiring becomes more formal and official.

7.8 Future areas for research

The future areas for research in terms of the study of women domestic workers are stated as under:

1. The study can be extended to other districts of Mizoram other than Aizawl and Lunglei.
2. Future researchers can employ more sociological theories to analyse the study of women domestic workers.
3. The sample size may be increased and future research may also focus on male domestic workers within the state.
4. A comparative study between male and female domestic workers may be conducted to point out the problems and issues faced by both genders in the field of domestic work within Mizoram districts.
5. In future course of study, researchers may triangulate their study by taking in the opinion and experiences of the employers and study the issues faced from the point of view of employers in hiring women domestic workers.
6. New roles played by Mizoram domestic worker's agencies and associations of both employers and employees in recruitment patterns could be studied.
7. The concept of 'Insta-maid' has emerged in Mumbai in 2025, where maids are booked for quick assistance through an online app. This new concept may need to be explored for further research.

APPENDIX-1

RESEARCH DIARY

- **11.07.2017:** Written Test and Interview for PhD in Department of Sociology, Mizoram University was conducted today.
- **12.07.2017:** Discussed with Prof. Mohanty and Sir Zara about topics for research.
- **14.07.2017:** Results declared.
- **17.07.2017:** Tentative topics for Research was discussed today with faculties of the department.
- **03.08.2017:** Sent a message to Prof. Mohanty my supervisor regarding my area of interests and we discussed certain topics together.
- **19.08.2017:** I had suggested to my supervisor different topics and after much discussion Prof. Mohanty suggested I work on women in Mizo society.
- **21.08.2017:** Prof. Mohanty sent me details of a Workshop on Research Methodology to attend which was to be conducted at MZU.
- **21.08.2017:** Discussed tentative topics again with Prof. Mohanty today.
- **31.08.2017:** Went to MZU and met my Supervisor and we discussed topics on women in Mizo society. My supervisor suggested I work on various organizations on Mizo women like MHIP and Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl or how women are abandoned by their husbands in Mizo society or about the major contributions of women in running businesses and in market places in Mizoram.
- **31.08.2017:** Read Prof. Mohanty's article on 'Writing a Research Proposal in Social Sciences: A Road Map for PhD Students and Funding Applicants'.
- **02. 09.2017:** Got a call from Prof. Mohanty regarding my research topic and we had a lengthy discussion about women's issues in Mizo society over the phone.
- **20.09.2017:** Prof. Mohanty discussed and suggested topic on various women's issues and also on domestic workers with me today.

- **05.10.2017:** Read on women breadwinner, and changing role of women in Mizo society and I thought of working on Mizo women and Social Change: Mizo women breadwinners in Aizawl, Mizoram.
- **12.10.2017:** Began looking up materials in the library on Maid Servants.
- **24-30.10.2017:** Attended a National Workshop on Research Methodology at Department of Education at MZU.
- **16-17.11.2017:** Attended National Seminar on ‘Rights of Girl Child’ in MZU organized by Department of Sociology.
- **18.12.2017:** Went to MZU and gave six-months report.
Discussed the tentative title of my PhD research with Prof. Mohanty and Sir Zara.
Prof. Mohanty corrected my tentative title suggesting the name ‘Women in Informal Sector: A study of domestic workers in Aizawl’ or ‘A study of House-maids/ Maid-servants in Aizawl.’
- **19.12.2017:** Sir Zara suggested I read Judith Butler’s work on gender today.
- **20.12.2017:** Still undecided about the topics to pursue for my research.
- **22.12.2017:** Read up on Judith Butler’s work on gender identity and gender roles.
- **28.12.2017:** More materials read on Judith Butler’s books ‘Gender Troubles and Do Bodies Matter.’
- **29.12.2017:** Am certain on studying about the maid servants in Aizawl.
- **03.01.2018:** Looked up on materials on maid servants done by previous researchers and scholars.
- **05.01.2018:** Discussed the topic on maid servants in Aizawl with my husband today. He seems to be keen on me working on the gender roles or to study the conditions of women running their businesses in the market place of Bara Bazar Aizawl.
- **06.01.2018:** Tried convincing my husband while we were discussing my tentative research topic that a study on maid servants would be much more novel a subject since not many researchers have taken up the issue, especially here in Mizoram.

- **08.01.2018:** Read materials that Sir Zara gave, downloaded from internet-JSTOR.
- **09.01.2018:** Read ILO Convention 189, Domestic workers Convention, 2011, No. 189.
- **10.01.2018:** Read Peggie Smith article, Keith Hart, 1973 on Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana, also, ILO 2015 c.
- **12.01.2018:** Discussed the topic on domestic workers with my cousin Maria Grace Lalramengi. She is also keen on me taking up the subject on maids in Aizawl, looking into their day to day affairs, profile, age, background, educational status, income, etc.
- **15.01.2018:** Read Shodhganga infliibnet.ac.in. Chapters on domestic servants.
- **18.01.2018:** Read Dr. Pawan Kumar, 'Women in inorganized sector: a case study of maid servants in Ghaziabad City' wherein the task of the paper is to explore this new class of women workers, especially their living and working conditions.
- **20.01.2018:** Am now most keen on exploring and studying the domestic workers in Aizawl.
- **25.01.2018:** Still undecided and unsure about what to work on. Wanted to call up my supervisor but could not master up the guts to call him up.
- **01.02.2018:** Scrolled and read through research topics on domestic maids.
- **04.02.2018:** Read up more on informal sector and women's work.
- **10.02.2018:** Had no energy to read materials today.
- **16.02.2018:** More reading done on materials - Maid servants and women.
- **22.02.2018:** Reading and collecting materials done on domestic maids.
- **27.02.2018:** Talked and discussed with my mother about domestic workers in general.
- **10.03.2018:** Nothing to write.
- **14.03.2018:** No work done. Felt lethargic thinking about research and the whole topic.
- **19.03.2018:** Read more International Journals on domestic maids.

- **23.03.2018:** Felt nervous thinking about my topic of research on domestic maids.
- **28.03.2018:** Thought about domestic workers in relation to Mizo society and realized the fact that paid domestic workers employed in Mizo homes is not a traditional practice of the Mizo households. The domestic workers in the traditional set-up would be those young boys and girls who came from the villages to stay with their relatives to study or simply to help out in the household work.
- **17.04.2018:** The ‘awmpui’ or domestic helpers in the olden days attended schools or colleges or would be working part-time in the bigger towns.
- **26.04.2018:** It came across to me that the idea of monetary benefits did not come about in the traditional set-up of Mizo households. I will have to incorporate this in my research.
- **03.05.2018:** It is also noticed that these domestic workers staying with their relatives in the towns and cities are provided for their education and basic amenities.
- **16.05.2018 :** ‘Awmpui’ literally translates to one who stays or lives with you/us.
- **29.05.2018:** Went to MZU to meet my supervisor, made the decision to work on domestic maids for my research.
- **31.05.2018:** Read Maids in India: Negotiating and Contesting the Boundaries of Domestic Work, published online, on 12th July 2016.
- **04.06.2018:** Read an article from local magazine called Lengzem June 2018 issue, ‘Awmpui Inpuanna by Lalmama Pa which translates as Secrets of a Maid Servant Told/Revealed. A very interesting piece of article.
- **05.06.2018:** Read Mary Romero’s article ‘Sisterhood and Domestic Service: Race, Class and Gender in the Mistress-Maid Relationship’ I Humanity and Society, Vol. 12, No.4 (1998) where ‘gift-giving’ in terms of raises and benefits, relationship with the ‘cleaning woman’ as exploitative or otherwise and also tackling feminist controversy of ‘double day syndrome’ should it be resolved in hiring another woman usually a woman of colour, lower status,

etc. to do the housework. This further leads to the question of ‘should everyone clean up after themselves?’.

- **06.06.2018:** Employer-worker relations to be incorporated in my study, the question of how involved are the men in doing household chores in Mizo households.
- **07.06.2018:** Went to MZU to meet Supervisor Prof. Mohanty and Sir Zara to discuss my topic and they suggested books to read and to incorporate case studies and take accounts of everyday life experience of the maids.
- **08.06.2018:** Conducted a test-interview at home with my Bru maid from Naisingpara Refugee Camp in Tripura.
- **12.06.2018:** Read ‘Women in Informal Sector: A study of domestic maids in the city of Cuttack- Sawmya Mishra, 1993.
- **13.06.2018:** Read ‘Women in unorganised sector: a case study of maid servants in Ghaziabad city- Dr. Pawan Kumar.
- **18.06.2018:** Saw in local new channel Zonet News about Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance (FDWA) where the Aizawl city Coordinator Ms. Mary Zoparliani mentioned that the domestic workers (awmpui) faced the most hardships amongst all workers. She along with their Advisor, ATC professor, Dr. T. Vanlaltlani highlighted the need for setting up a proper agency for hiring these domestic workers.
- **22.06.2018:** Conducted an interview with Dindini, a live-in maid staying in Mission Veng, also interviewed and interacted with the employer after interviewing the maid.
- **27.06.2018:** Realized that socio-economic profile is to be incorporated in the Interview Schedule.
Incorporated work culture and working hours in the interview schedule.
- **04.07.2018:** Case studies to be included in the research.
- **07.07.2018:** Thoughts about whether there is compulsion of hiring maids to be employed by the employer.

- **09.07.2018:** Again, there is the thought to have maids employed as a form of status symbols. Question like, how many maids does a family employ or can employ?
- **13.07.2018:** Got a call from Sir Zara about our invigilation duty for the M.A. entrance exams at the department in MZU.
- **16.07.2018:** Went to MZU for invigilation duty for M.A./M.Phil. /PhD entrance exam at MZU, Dept of Sociology.
- **20.07.2018:** Read about the ILO articles on domestic workers.
- **21.07.2018:** Domestic workers in Mizoram often meet in the local churches on Sunday with their friends and relatives. Sunday is the day they are free, at least some of them are free to socialize and share their problems with each other on Sundays.
- **22.07.2018:** Preparation for Research Proposal underway.
- **24.07.2018:** Wrote an introduction on Informal Domestic Work Sector.
- **25.07.2018:** Supervisor guided me to write more on the literature part i.e. more on review of literature with references to be detailed at the end of the writing.
- **27.07.2018:** What my supervisor basically told me was to write something under each head or title for a research proposal.
- **28.07.2018:** Methodology of the research and more theories was to be incorporated.
- **29.07.2018:** For what reasons are maids employed in Mizo households, nature of work for housemaids, live-in or live-out, daily workers, rate of wages, status of housemaids in Mizo society, etc.
- **30.07.2018:** How important are housemaids in Mizo society?
- **10.08.2018:** How important it is to understand the nature of socio-economic profile, relations between employer and employee- power relations, work environment- hours of work, discrimination factor, etc.
- **12.08.2018:** Most importantly to locate the push and pull factor of the individuals to become domestic maids/workers.

- **13.08.2018:** Black feminism and intersectionality to be incorporated in the study.

Outline of objectives was done with the help of my supervisor.

- **14.08.2018:** Proper format to be followed while preparing the research proposal.
- **20.08.2018:** Full preparation for proposal undertaken.
- **23.08.2018:** Review of literature regarding methodology underway. I have found that mixed method would be ideal. Some are theoretical and some are analytical.
- **27.08.2018:** The research design would most probably be descriptive and exploratory in nature, and not analytical.
- **28.08.2018:** Tools of the sampling, analysis and interpretation, limitations of the study, chapter plan, references, etc. all need to fit in.
- **14.09.2018:** Went to MZU to show my research proposal.
- **15.09.2018:** Case studies to supplement the main research will have to be incorporated.
- **19.09.2018:** Read on ILO survey on domestic workers. Socio-economic profile and nature of their working lives, hours of work to be considered, flexibility of working hours, etc.

Do the workers get to choose their employers? If so, is it considered empowering to be able to choose their own employers (pick and choose). If this is the case, then the maids in high demand in most Mizo households will not or most likely not have any problem securing or getting employment. Moreover, for this very reason, it allows the maids to leave or be able to leave abusive employers who do not care about their well-being.

- **20.09.2018:** The issue of power relations was thought about- that of exploitation and dominance because of the unequal relation between employer and the domestic worker.
- **21.09.2018:** Key Informant interviews (KII) to be included, like association heads, forums, NGO personnel, etc.

- **22.09.2018:** Limitation of the study. The study of maids is not possible throughout the state of Mizoram, therefore my study will be concentrated only within Aizawl, and not study maids across the state of Mizoram.
- **23.09.2018:** Time constraints and manpower along with inadequate literature are also some of the limitations to studying the domestic maids in Mizoram.
- **23.09.2018:** As only a few male domestic workers were found in Mizoram, they were also excluded from the study.
- **23.09.2018:** In review of literature, the migration pattern, illness and health of the domestic maids will also be touched upon.
- **25.09.2018:** DRC (Department Research Committee) conducted today at Dean's office, SSS, MZU. I presented my proposal in front of the Dean and department teachers.
- **26.09.2018:** BOS (Board of Studies) was conducted in the Department at MZU.
- **27.09.2018:** Read on ILO 2006 Bangkok–The Mekong Challenge about underpaid, overworked and overlooked migrant domestic workers.
- **28.09.2018:** Went to MZU to meet my supervisor to do finishing touches to my research proposal, to do the last cleaning up before it goes to School Board.
- **01.10.2018:** Submitted 15 copies of Research Proposal to Dean's office for School Board.
- **03.10.2018:** School Board was held today.
- **22.10.2018:** Went to MZU to meet supervisor and discuss our research proposal.
- **23.10.2018:** Preparation of research proposal for the Academic Council.
- **26.10.2018:** Academic Council was held today.
- **November and December 2018:** Preparation and reading up for literature review.
- **14.01.2019:** Went to MZU library to read up on more literature.
- **24.10.2019:** Went to the library today.
- **04.02.2019:** Readmission for PhD done at MZU.

- **11.02.2019:** Went to MZU to meet supervisor. He suggested more readings on literature on domestic work.
- **12.02.2019:** Registration done at MZU today.
- **19.05.2019 :** Read more on domestic workers at the Library.
- **28.02.2019:** Attended Cultural Programme at Dept in MZU ‘Chapchar Kut’ with traditional attire. With Good mood and good food, spent an eventful day with the professors of sociology at the department today.
- **14.05.2019:** Got our University registration today.
- **06.06.2018:** Finally got PhD Registration today- No: MZU/PhD/1183 of 06.06.2018
- **09.07.2019:** Spent time visiting the Library and collecting materials for review of literature.
- **13.08.2019:** Read up literature on domestic workers in Library, MZU.
- **03.09.2019:** Got a letter from Supervisor Professor Mohanty informing us of our long absence in the department.
- **16.09.2019:** Progress Report was submitted today at the department.
- **18.09.2019:** Visited the department and met supervisor discussing our work. Sir scolded us research scholars and we were told to come every Friday of the week.
- **20.09.2019:** Review of Literature was tackled today.
- **25.09.2019:** More articles read for Review of Literature.
- **28.09.2019:** Working on review of literature.
- **11.12.2019:** Went to MZU to meet supervisor and he discussed the preparation for Interview Schedule.
- **12.12.2019:** More work done on review of literature. Visited Library today at MZU.
- **17.12.2019:** Met Prof Mohanty at the department, discussed review of literature.
- **18.12.2019:** Went to MZU to submit Progress Report. Discussed with supervisor the literature and theories based on the study of domestic workers.

- **18.12.2019:** Things discussed at the progress report with supervisor- interview schedule, research diary to be maintained properly, day-to day report to be entered from date of registration, problems faced to be noted in research dairy, etc.
- **26.02.2020:** Went to MZU to help in preparation of the department's National Seminar on 'Social Inclusion'.
- **28-29th February.2020:** At MZU, attended the national seminar on 'Social Inclusion and Diversity' at department of Sociology. Met Professor Nilika Mehrotra who was the keynote speaker in the seminar.
- **13.03.2020:** Went to meet supervisor, he told me to firstly visualize what you are going to get out of the respondents by asking questions.
- **07.04.2020:** Met supervisor and he discussed the need to have a list of concepts to be prepared along with the questions asked and raised.
- **12.05.2020:** REVIEW OF LITERATURE. In the review of literature, types of literature reviewed to be classified according to **Theoretical, Thematic, Methodological** and **Govt., National & International Reports**. These literatures reviewed were further told to list out the **prominent authors** in every classification.
- **09.06.2020:** Questions raised today, like, to whom does the domestic worker feel close to? How is the husband/wife treating the domestic worker? Does scolding take place at the workplace?
- **29.07.2020:** Read articles on the problems faced by domestic workers in Mumbai during Covid-19 pandemic. The maids or domestic workers were out of service and work during the nation-wide lockdown.
- **18.10.2020:** Most maids live in rented houses and are unable to pay their rents and bills which kept mounting up putting them more in a risky ordeal during the outbreak of the Covid-19.
- **11.12.2020:** Went to meet Supervisor Prof. Mohanty. We were told to go ahead with preparing Interview Schedule. All aspects must be covered from each **objective**. And to **conceptualize** the theories used. Ask questions, write 10 sentences about their answer, write **statements** about them, what

conclusion did you come to? What **comment** do you have? Which **question you did not like**. All these must be answered.

- **18.12.2020:** Went to meet Supervisor to submit progress report. Discussed at length how to conduct Interview schedule. Research diary to be maintained from day 1 till date. Problems were to be written down in Research Diary. List of concepts used to be prepared along with questions. For e.g. to whom does the domestic worker feel close to? How is the husband treating the domestic maid? Does scolding at work take place? etc. were discussed again today
- **03.08.2021:** Met Prof. Mohanty supervisor, discussed at length my Interview Schedule, made necessary changes.
- **04.08.2021:** Master Copy of the Interview Schedule to be maintained. Made necessary changes in interview schedule. All changes were to be marked in the Master Copy.
- **24.08.2021:** Indebtedness of domestic workers- the question as to why are so many of the domestic workers in debt? Domestic workers can face financial difficulties, which starts as early at the time of their recruitment due to loans and borrowing money from recruiters and also from agencies.
- **27.08.2021:** Read more articles and papers on the impact of covid-19 on informal sector.
- **06.10.2021:** Healthcare and state support systems for the workers during the pandemic situation was thought about today. Do the local NGOs and civil society volunteers care about the conditions of these daily workers who are now jobless and cashless.
- **14.10.2021:** Working hours, salaries, health issues, leave and medical benefits enjoyed by the workers, and their vulnerability as well as exploitation are to be included in the study.
- **05.11.2021:** Went to the MZU, met supervisor to finalize the Interview Schedule.
- **10.11.2021:** Called up supervisor and discussed the possible questions in the interview schedule. Supervisor told to include Pilot Study.

- **11.11.2021:** To collect list of possible key concepts used in the socio-economic profile of Interview schedule and to define them clearly.
- **13.11.2021:** Prof. Mohanty gave me the contact number of his maid Pi Thanpuii's husband regarding the Domestic workers' meet.
- **14.11.2021:** Spoke to Pi Famkimi, one of the group leaders of domestic workers alliance from Tanhril, currently working at MZU as a maid.
- **15.11.2021:** Learnt that there were cells of different groups of live-out domestic workers or *lang* located in different locations in Aizawl.
- **16.11.2021:** Attended 1st 'Meeting of Group Leaders and How Unions Work' at Peace Home, Durtlang, organised Ferrando Domestic Workers' Alliance, Aizawl

“MEETING OF GROUP LEADERS ON HOW UNION WORKS”

Venue: Ferrando Integrated Women's Development Centre (FIWDC), Peace Home, Durtlang; Date 16th November, 2021

The meeting of domestic workers was organized by **Ferrando Domestic Worker's Alliance (FDWA)**, Aizawl. It was learnt that the programme was pertaining to the **Union Leaders Meet**, where domestic worker leaders spread out across the city of Aizawl were clubbed into different groups base on their area of residence or locality. These groups were named after the many varied flowers found in and around Mizoram. The group leaders were appointed in different **Veng** or locality in the capital city of Aizawl.

The group leaders were named President, Vice-President and Treasurer from each locality. These leaders were called upon to attend the first ever meeting of its kind on this day. The members were all from the Domestic Worker's Alliance which was looked after or more so, managed by Ferrando Integrated Women's Development Centre (FIWDC) at Peace Home in Durtlang. My main question or rather concern today as I attended this group leader's meet were...

- (i) How are the Unions formed?
- (ii) How are groups formed?

- (iii) How are group leaders selected?
- (iv) How many members are there?
- (v) Are the members full-time (*riak*) or Part-time (*lang*) domestic workers?
- (vi) Is there a framework or structure for the union to function normally as other Union structures function?
- (vii) For the union to be registered, how many members do they need to have?
- (viii) Is there any other benefit or incentive

The Coordinator of FIWDC, Ms. Zodinpuui conducted the meeting of Group Leaders. She mentioned there were roughly less than 400 active members in this alliance. An important step to be taken by these domestic workers was that, the group Leaders from each Veng or locality were to be on the lookout for domestic maids in their respective localities. Ms Zodinpuui urged the need for membership -drive in each locality to be undertaken by the group leaders. All workers were advised to register themselves at **e-shram**, an online portal for registration of all unskilled workers. A much bigger programme was to be organized where all the registered members of domestic workers from FDWA would take part in. However, no dates have been set yet for that as of now.

The Coordinator mentioned the Centre does not function like a placement agency, but is more of a **Placement Hub**. It caters to women who need to find a job or work. Plans are in store to distribute Identity Cards very soon. It was the first time group leaders could have a Meeting today, so it marks an extremely special occasion for the domestic workers in Mizoram and especially in Aizawl city.

Ms, Esther, Asst. Coordinator highlighted the need to set up a Children's Club in the near future for the children of the FIWDC. For this, at least, there should be at the minimum 15 children registered in the Centre.

Sister Ruth, Director, FIWDC, Peace Home gave a speech and praise the hard-work and dedication of the domestic workers in their line of work. She highlighted FIWDC was initiated and set up for women's development. The

centre during many occasions co-ordinate and work together with MSACS, Ferrando Children' Home, Refugee Centres in Champhai and Saiha Districts. Sister Ruth mentioned the need to be diligent and trustworthy in their profession and only then will they see the fruit of the labour and reap the benefits of the hardwork. Perseverance is the key to success, that is the message put forward by the Director to the domestic workers in FDWA. Group Photo taken.

After the function, I was able to conduct five (5) interviews for Pilot study. A day well spent. All thanks to Prof. Mohanty.

- **18.11.2021:** Question: do maids have their own rooms to sleep in, especially the live-in domestic workers, relationship of maid with head of the family in family household?
- **19.11.2021:** Showed the interview schedule to my supervisor for finalizing the questions after corrections and additions were made.
- **19.11.2021:** Met supervisor today and we discussed more questions from the interview schedule. For example: best and worst experience from the domestic workers were shared shedding light and information on the relationship between owner and employee, or the structural difference between employer and employee.
- **15.12.2021:** Celebrated Advance Christmas Programme at the department at MZU.
- **10.02.2022:** Collected data and review some of the responses of the domestic workers.
- **17.02.2022:** Conducted interviews, and made necessary changes because some of the questions were irrelevant while conducting interviews.
- **17.03.2022:** Pilot study data and corrections to be entered manually in Master copy of the interview schedule after pilot study.
- **22.03.2022:** Discussed some of the questions and the problems we had while interviewing domestic workers with supervisor.

- **24.03.2022:** My supervisor instructed to define and justify each concept before giving tables and the tables analysis has to be systematic.
- **05.04.2022:** Some of the responses given by the maids are too depressing, their stories are heartbreaking. It was very exhausting to listen to their stories.
- **06.06.2022:** More data and responses collected, from New Capital Complex locality.
- **09.06.2022:** Feeling guilty for not contacting my supervisor and felt he must be disappointed in my work and progress.
- **14.06.2022:** Data collecting is going on in full swing, but managed to collect only a few due to time constraints. The respondents have so many stories to tell and it takes up so much time just to get to know them and make them feel comfortable to tell their side of the story.
- **16.06.2022:** So much to cover and yet so little time. I have still to do 100 or so interviews.
- **16.06.2022:** Attended and celebrated **International Domestic Workers & Signature Campaign on “I Support Decent Work and Dignified Life for Domestic Workers Beyond Covid-19”** at Herhse Picnic Spot, Phunchawng, Aizawl. 16th June, 2022, organized by Ferrando Domestic Workers Alliance.
- **22.06.2022:** Received a letter from Pu Mohanty regarding our progress report.
- **25.06.2022:** Finally managed to collect the required data for my study, i.e. 200 interviews scheduled collected so far. All thanks to Ms. Pli, without whose help I would not have completed my data collection.
- **02.07.2022:** Entered all data for SPSS, and I was able to send it to Gracie, introduced by Pu Mohanty, who helped me with data spss analysis.
- **05.07.2022:** Sent an email to Gracy, data on live-in or full-time domestic workers.
- **06.07.2022:** Mailed Gracy the remaining materials on live-out or part-time domestic workers.
- **11.07.2022:** Gracy compiled the frequency table and sent it back to me. Got it printed for tomorrow’s progress report.

- **12.07.2022:** Went to MZU and gave our progress report at 2:00 pm. Individual case studies, 1 each from Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Myanmar were to be included in the study, according to Sir Zara.
- **18.07.2022:** Sent a printed copy of progress report through Miss Pli to be submitted to the department.
- **23.09.2022:** Attended Muansanga's MPhil pre-submission at MZU. Pu Mohanty called me up at night for rushing off to without meeting him today after Muansanga's presentation.
- **27.09.2022:** Attended BOS meeting today in the department, met supervisor after the BOS meeting and discussed the next step for my PhD research and that is to write Introduction and Methodology.
- **02.10.2022:** Read more materials on various PhD introductions on the internet.
- **10.10.2022:** Met Miss Pli and we discussed the data for Part-time or live-out domestic workers to be sent to Gracy.
- **16.10.2022:** Read Prof Mohanty's book on "Women Police in India".
- **18.10.2022:** Managed to send Gracy data on live-out /part-time for the frequency table.
- **06.11.2022:** Gracy sent back the comparison of live-in and live-out domestic workers 1 and 2.
- **20.11.2022:** Pu Mohanty called in the morning and asked me to arrange a tutor of Biology for a friend's child.
- **02.12.2022:** Conducted an interview with Hlawni, one of the domestic workers from Myanmar.
- **2-20th December 2022:** More interviews conducted and case studies entered.
- **09.01.2023:** Thought about multiple resistance theories today, especially from Intersectionality theory. It made me think of those domestic workers coming from rural areas, rural remote towns and villages, who have to struggle amidst lots of resistance and hardships.
- **13.01.2023:** Processes of superiority and inferiority complexes are played out, more so in relations to employers and employees among domestic

workers. There is this unequal relationship between owners and workers, dominance and subordination between the two.

- **21.01.2023:** Intersectionality is so much more, not just concerned with race, sex, class, colour, etc. learnt to not shut down other ideas of multiple representations of intersectionality. Also learnt that different voices need to be heard.
- **26.02.2023:** Went to MZU and met supervisor, he told me to maintain research diary, write the problem faced while doing research.
- **07.03.2023:** One key factor is to visualize what you are going to get by asking questions and to prepare a list of questions along with the questions.
- **20.04.2023:** Met supervisor, showed him, the table analysis and he told me to write a little introduction for all the sub-headings and table analysis.
- **25.04.2023:** Treatment received by the domestic worker was thought of today, how the wife/husband/children treat the workers in their homes.
- **29.04.2023:** Today read articles on abuse faced by the domestic workers, especially in Arab and Middle eastern countries from ILO reports.
- **30.04.2023:** Went through articles that I had as references again, Caplow, Rohini Hensman, Sachdeva and Arora, Jain and Mishra, Chandramouli, Augustine and Singh, etc. and many more.
- **11.05.2023:** Prepared myself for the national seminar at PUC.
- **16.05.2023:** Went to MZU to meet supervisor, we discussed Chapter IV- socio-economic profile. Prof Mohanty told me to reframe the tables and finish chapter iv as soon as possible.
- **18.05.2023:** Attended PUC seminar today.
- **19.05.2023:** Presented my paper at PUC national seminar titled, 'Migration pattern of domestic workers in Mizoram'.
- **30.05.2023:** Attended a national seminar organized by the department of sociology at MZU.
- **31.05.2023:** Presented a paper at the national seminar on the plight of the domestic workers and their future prospects.

- **01.06.2023:** Went to MZU, met supervisor and discussed research methodology, about random sampling, purposive sampling, or snowball sampling with Sir Zara.
- **10.06.2023:** Attended ‘North East Domestic Workers’ Week 2023’ at Peace Home Durtlang organized by FIWDC, with the theme ‘Recognising Decent Work for Domestic Workers for their Social Protection and Sustainable Development’ and a week-long line-up of activity like, tree plantation, petition for minimum wages, article writing, radio talk show, and a Get together culminating with International Domestic workers day on 16th June. The programme was also attended by Deputy Director of LESDE (Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneur), MINECO, GOM.
- **11.07.2023:** All qualitative responses from the interview schedule has been entered in Excel sheets for easy references and identification.
- **21.07.2023:** Work in progress on qualitative responses.
- **05.08.2023:** Work in progress on chapter iv, socio-economic profile of domestic workers.
- **14.08.2023:** Began work on chapter v work and working conditions of domestic workers. Felt exhausted, tired and lethargic. Cannot think straight.
- **25.09.2023:** Still stuck on chapter iv and v. Data analysis is such a major task, sat for hours on end analyzing the tables and trying to find the social implications of every finding.
- **10.10.23:** Am struggling with my progress and am still stuck with data analysis which takes up so much time to complete. One of the reasons for this is because, for every explanation we have to find out the social implications.
- **11.12.2022:** Prof Mohanty my supervisor instructed us to write a paper for publication as soon as possible, with introduction of the paper title, to give an introduction of what you are going to write, the methodology, then next theoretical contextualize, to Mizo society, data collection, data analysis, findings and an overview.
- **22.11.2023:** Sat with the chapters IV and V the whole day trying to make sense of the tables and give sociological explanations to all the questions.

- **08.12.2023:** Had to go to MZU to give our progress report. Went to MZU with Miss Teii and Pu Mohanty scolded us for not reporting ourselves, not visiting, and not keeping in touch with our supervisors in the department for a long time.
- **20.02.2024:** Got a letter from Prof Mohanty, HOD and supervisor to come to the department and to submit our progress report.
- **10.02.2024:** Got a WhatsApp message from supervisor about a notice from MZU about the Contemporary social scientist (CSS) to get an article published in the journal as soon as possible.
- **05.03.2024:** Found out from my study that employers have to sweet-talk and invite the domestic workers to come and work for them, to stay with them, and attract them with a good amount of salary, some employers entice and promise them a huge amount of salary. This shows that there is no regulation of wages fixed for the pay of the domestic workers.
- **08.07.2024:** Pu Mohanty sent me an article to read titled 'Focus on PhD quality, not on publication'. The paper tells us to maintain PhD quality and not run around publishing papers just for the sake of having a publication.
- **03.10.2024:** Finally got our two-year extension today.
- **06.10.2024:** Still working on Chapter 4, 5 and 6. Very slow work done.
- **12.10.2024:** Met supervisor and showed him the chapters, and he cleaned up chapter 4. From around 50 or more tables and analysis, he narrowed it down to 13 sub headings. Now I am more confused.
- **22.10.2024:** Final Reminder of our PhD Progress: the letter read, 'on your request you have been given 2-year extension', a final reminder to meet supervisor and plan things in the best interest.
- **30.10.2024:** Went to MZU and Prof. Mohanty guided me on how to lengthen and introduce all concepts in Introduction, to include domestic workers in India and North east, domestic worker in urban informal sector is to be expanded, especially the urban part, to delete heading for double burden and expand the paragraph, need for the study to be properly included. Chapter

summaries: begin with all previous sections, link them, then come to the need of the study. Age paragraph in age structure to be summarized.

- **31.10.2024:** Did the correction on yesterday's visit to supervisor. Sat with my work from morning throughout the day and I was able to do most of the things as was told to do.
- **04.11.2024:** Tackled chapter on Methodology today.
- **07.11.2024:** Research design, pilot study, sampling frame, etc. were touched upon today. Very difficult task to achieve, am kind of lost on how to do it.
- **14.11.2024:** Spoke to Miss Bzi on methodology and she advised me to go slowly and think with a clear head while writing the part on methodology.
- **18.11.2024:** Managed to do a little on methodology, wrote a little on interview schedule and research ethics.
- **03.12.2024:** Managed with great difficulty on research experience and data collection.
- **10.02.2025:** Sir Mohanty sent me the journal where we can get our paper published. Time is running out and we need to get things done quickly and smoothly.
- **02.04.2025:** Went to MZU and attended Lawmsangpuia's PhD viva-voce at the department.
- **01.05.2025:** Our paper is finally published on CSS. We were told to collect it from the Dean's office by paying a sum of Rs 500/-.
- **24.05.2025:** Attended a State level Meeting on "A Better Way of Employment for Domestic Workers and Employers" at Govt. Hrangbana College Conference Hall on 24.05.2025 organized by Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI). It was a very important meeting where office bearers of both employers and the workers met for the first time and were able to have a meeting to pressurize the state government and submit the initiatives for the welfare of both the employers and workers. I was invited as a guest speaker and a panelist in the discussion session. I am glad that I had the opportunity to speak about my topic in the meeting.

- **03.06.2025:** Attended Miss Zari's PhD viva-voce. Pu Mohanty asked me when I will be able to submit my PhD and have a pre-submission.
- **10.06.2025:** Got a message from my supervisor telling me to visit him and discuss my progress.
- **11.06.2025:** Went to MZU, met supervisor at 11:00 Am. I showed him chapter 7, however he told me to relocate some of the findings and data to chapters 5 – Work and Working Conditions, and some to chapter 6 – Relations of Employer and Employee instead.
- **11.06.2025:** Prof Mohanty called at night telling me to come and meet him at 11 in the morning. He also reported that he needed requirements for his house.
- **12.06.2025:** Went to meet supervisor today. He advised chapter 7 on Policy recommendations to be shifted to the previous chapters and to make chapter 8 summary and conclusions and to add all previous theories and contextualize them for the conclusion. Don't know if I will be able to do the contextualizing part of the task.
- **18.06.2025:** Got a call from the department regarding our Progress report to be submitted next week, most likely on 24.06.2025
- **06.08.2025:** Working for the final touches of my research, putting things in order, grammar checking, etc.
- **13.08.2025:** Went to meet supervisor today at the department. Social implications of the study are incorporate and discussed at length with supervisor.
- **18.08.2025:** Final touches done and discussed linking the findings to literature reviewed as advised by supervisor.
- **19.08.2025:** Notification for my PhD Pre-Submission Seminar to be conducted on 26.08.2025 at 1:15 pm is out today.
- **23.08.2025:** Went to meet supervisor for the final work before my Pre-Submission. Tako was there lending a helping hand a the department.

- **25.08.2025:** Spent the whole day running around for the printing, binding of the thesis at Lois Bet from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM at night. Am finally all set for the presentation tomorrow.
- **26.08.2025:** By God's grace I had my PhD Pre-Submission Seminar today.

APPENDIX-2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

WOMEN IN URBAN INFORMAL SECTOR: A STUDY OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN AIZAWL

(Purely for Academic Purpose)

Schedule No. _____

Date: _____

Time taken for Interview: _____

Interviewer: _____

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR DOMESTIC MAIDS (NULA AWMPUI RIAK/FULL- TIME/LANG/DAILY/PART-TIME)

1. Name: _____

2. Age:

1. Below 18 Years

2. 18 -25 Years

3. 26- 35 Years

4. 36- 45 Years

5. 46- 60 Years

6. Above 60 Years

3. Marital Status

1. Married

2. Unmarried
3. Widow
4. Separated
5. Divorced
6. Not applicable
4. Religion
 1. Christian
 2. Hindu
 3. Muslim
 4. Buddhist
 5. Others (specify)
5. If Christian, which denomination do you belong to?
 1. Roman Catholic
 2. Presbyterian
 3. Baptist
 4. Salvation Army
 5. United Penticostal Church
 6. Seventh Day Adventist
 7. Others (specify)
6. Are you from (Native)
 1. Rural
 2. Urban
 3. Semi-urban
7. Are you from Mizoram?
 1. Yes
 2. No
 - 7.A. If yes, from where?_____
 - 7.B. If no, from which state?_____

8. Educational Qualification:

1. Primary
2. Upper primary/Middle school
3. High School
4. Pre-University/10+2
5. Graduate
6. Others (specify)
7. Not applicable

8.A. Permanent place of residence/Locality_____

Family Table

Number of family members

1. 0-3
2. 4-6
3. 7-9
4. 10 and above

9.A

Sl. No	Name	Age	Relationship with Domestic Worker(DW)	Educational Qualification	Occupation	Income

Objective No: 1

To find out the socio-economic profile and the migration pattern of the domestic workers

9.B. When did you first come to Aizawl?

9.C. Where is your present place of work?

9. How did you come to know about this job?

1. Self
2. Friend.
3. Relative.
4. Agent.
5. Advertisement.
6. Others (Please specify)

10. Since when did you start working as domestic worker?

1. 1980-1985
2. 1985-1990
3. 1990-1995
4. 1995-2000
5. 2000-2005
6. 2005-2010
7. 2010-2015
8. 2015-2020
9. 2021

11.A. Where was your first employment as a domestic worker? Please mention the place/ Veng? _____

B. How many households have you worked for?

1. 1-3
2. 4-6
3. 7-9
4. 10 and above

11. Where is this place?

1. Within the city
2. Outside the city

12. How old were you when you first worked as a domestic worker?

1. 40-45
2. 35-40
3. 30-35
4. 25-30
5. 20-25
6. 15-20
7. Younger than 15 years

13. How did you reach Aizawl from your hometown?

1. Bus
2. Sumo Service
3. Taxi
4. Two-wheeler Taxi
5. On Foot
6. Not Applicable

14. Do you stay in your employer's house?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Others (specify)

- 4. Not Applicable
- 15. Are you staying in a rented house?
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. No
 - 3. Not applicable
- 16. Is yes, how much rent do you pay for your house?
 - 1. Below Rs. 1000
 - 2. 1000-1500
 - 3. 1500-2000
 - 4. 2000-3000
 - 5. 3000-4000
 - 6. 4000 and above
- 17. How much is your salary per month in rupees?
 - 1. Below Rs. 3000
 - 2. Rs. 3000-Below 4000
 - 3. Rs. 4000- Below 5000
 - 4. Rs. 5000- Below 6000
 - 5. Rs. 6000- Below 7000
 - 6. Rs. 7000- Below 8000
 - 7. Rs. 8000- Below 9000
 - 8. Rs. 9000- Below 10000
 - 9. Above Rs. 10000
- 18. Do you get your wage regularly?
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. No
 - 3. Sometimes
 - 4. Hardly received
- 19. Is your wage fixed by you or your employer or someone else?
 - 1. Self
 - 2. Employer
 - 3. Agent
 - 4. Someone else

20. When do you get your wage?

1. Monthly
2. Weekly
3. Daily
4. Others (Please specify)_____

21. Do you own a mobile handset?

1. Yes
2. No

22. Household Assets owned

1. Television
2. Refrigerator
3. Washing Machine
4. LPG Connection
5. Microwave oven
6. Not applicable

23. Do you own any vehicle?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

24.A If yes, specify_____

24. Is your vehicle new or pre-owned?

1. New
2. Pre-owned
3. Not applicable

25. How do you commute to your work place daily?

1. By own vehicle
2. By bus
3. By two-wheeler taxi
4. By taxi

- 5. By walking
 - 6. Not Applicable
26. Do you face any problem with transportation when getting to work on a daily basis?
- 1. Yes
 - 2. No
 - 3. Not Applicable
27. Do you have any savings account in the bank?
- 1. Yes
 - 2. No
28. If yes, in which bank do you have an account?
- 1. Nationalised Banks
 - 2. Rural Banks
 - 3. Cooperative Banks
 - 4. Others, please specify_____
29. Are you able to have a monthly savings on your earnings?
- 1. Yes
 - 2. No
30. If yes, how much can you save monthly?
- 1. Below Rs. 1000
 - 2. Above Rs. 1000 – Below Rs. 2000
 - 3. Above Rs. 2000 – Below Rs. 3000
 - 4. Above Rs. 3000 – Below Rs. 4000
 - 5. Above Rs. 4000 – Below Rs. 5000
 - 6. Above Rs. 5000
 - 7. No savings

31.A. Item Heads and Expenditure

Sl. No	Item	Expenditure per Month
1	Food	
2	Utilities Bills	
3	Rent	
4	Conveyance	
5	Toiletries	
6	Entertainment	
7	Donations (Thawhlawm)	
8	Medical Expense	
9	Remittance to Family	
10	Clothing	
11	Miscellaneous	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		

31. If you need to borrow money, who do you borrow from?

1. Friend
2. Relative
3. Neighbour
4. Employer
5. Employer's wife
6. Employer's husband
7. Agent
8. No one
9. Not applicable

32. Have you ever faced any difficulty in terms of borrowing money?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

33.A. If yes, can you tell me the problems faced? _____

33. What made you to migrate?

1. Family member
2. Parents
3. Friend/s
4. Financial problem
5. Indebtedness
6. Can't say

34. Did you migrate to work only as a maid servant?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't say

35.A. If yes, please elaborate.

35.B. If no, please elaborate.

35. Is there any other family member who is in the same type of work?

1. Yes
2. No

36.A. If yes, please specify the relative doing the same type of work?

Objective No: 2

To study the nature of their work and working conditions

36. At what time do you start working?

1. 5:00 AM – 5:30 AM
2. 5:30 AM – 6:00 AM
3. 6:00 AM – 6:30 AM
4. 6:30 AM – 7:00 AM
5. 7:00 AM – 7:30 AM
6. 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM
7. 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM

8. 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM
9. 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM
10. 9:30 AM – 10:00 AM
11. After 10:00 AM

37. At what time do you finish working?

1. 4:00 PM
2. 5:00 PM
3. 6:00 PM
4. 7:00 PM
5. 8:00 PM
6. 9:00 PM
7. 10:00 PM
8. 11:00 PM
9. After 11:00 PM

38. At what time do you get up in the morning?

1. 4:00 AM
2. 5:00 AM
3. 6:00 AM
4. 7:00 AM
5. 8:00 AM

39. At what time do you sleep in the night?

- 1 8:00 PM
- 2 9:00 PM
- 3 10:00 PM
- 4 11:00 PM
- 5 12:00 midnight

40. What is the nature of work you do? Tick whichever is applicable?

1. Cooking
2. Cleaning
3. Washing
4. Ironing

5. Gardening
6. Babysitting & dropping and picking up kids from school
7. Grocery shopping for the family
8. Others, please specify_____
9. Multiple (specify) / Full time

41. How many living rooms are there at your workplace?

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. More than four

42. Do they give you extra work beyond contract?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Others (specify)
4. Not applicable

43. Are you provided extra wage for working overtime?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

44. If yes, how are you paid while working overtime?

1. In cash
2. In kind
3. No payment
4. Not applicable

45.A. Which part of your work do you enjoy doing the most from the above-mentioned work? Please specify.

45.B. Which part of your work do you hate doing the most from the previously mentioned work? Please specify.

45. Who chooses which and what work you do at your workplace?

1. Self
2. Employer (Female)
3. Employer (Male)
4. Employer's wife
5. Employer's husband
6. Agent
7. No one in particular
8. Others (specify)

46. What time do you usually get back home from work?

1. 4:00 PM
2. 5:00 PM
3. 6:00 PM
4. 7:00 PM
5. 8:00 PM or later
6. Not applicable

47. Who looks after your home when you work?

1. My family
2. My husband
3. My children
4. My neighbor
5. No one, I lock it
6. Not applicable

48. Who looks after your children when you work?

1. My family
2. My husband
3. My elder children
4. My neighbor
5. No one
6. Not applicable

49. Are you provided with any child-care provisions while you work?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Not applicable
- 50.A. If yes, can you specify?_____
50. Who does the household chores when you get back home from work?
1. Self
 2. Husband
 3. Family members
 4. Children
 5. Others. Please Specify_____
 6. Not applicable
51. Is the work you do at home different from the work at your employer's house?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Not applicable
52. If yes, mention how different is the work from your house and employer's house?
1. Very different
 2. Slightly different
 3. Almost the same
 4. Same
53. Do you have any day-off?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Partly
 4. I don't know
54. If yes, what day is your day-off?
1. Monday
 2. Tuesday
 3. Wednesday

4. Thursday
5. Friday
6. Saturday
7. Sunday

55. Do you go to church on Sundays?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Sometimes
4. Not applicable

56. Are you in contact with any Domestic Worker's Association?

1. Yes
2. No

57.A. If yes, mention which association?

57. Are you registered with any Domestic Worker's Association/ Agency?

1. Yes
2. No

58.A. If yes, please specify?

58. Has DWA been of any help anytime?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

59.A. If yes, please narrate the
instance. _____

59. Do you have any health problems?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

60. Have you consulted a doctor for your illness?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

61. If yes, who accompanied you to see the doctor?

1. Alone
2. Friend
3. Family member
4. Employer
5. Employer's family
6. No visit to doctor

62. Are you taking any medications for your illness?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

63.A. If yes, please specify the medications and for what illness medications are taken. _____

63. Have you ever been treated badly or abused at the work place?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Declined to comment
4. Not applicable

64. What type of abuse did you face?

1. Verbal abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. No mention about abuse
4. No abuse

65. Who is the abuser?

1. Employer
2. Employer's wife
3. Employer's son
4. Employer's daughter
5. Family member of the employer
6. Others (specify)
7. Can't say
8. Not applicable

66. How do the children of the family behave with you?

1. Good
2. Bad
3. No issue
4. Can't say
5. Not applicable

67. If treated badly, how do you react to the abuse?

1. Ashamed
2. Angry
3. Hurt
4. Lost confidence
5. Revengeful
6. Others (specify)
7. Can't say
8. Not applicable

68. What specific work-site problems do you face? Name them. Tick as many.

1. Long working hours & lack of holiday
2. Low wages & lack of security
3. Harassment & sexual exploitation
4. Lack of freedom
5. Ill Health
6. Others (specify)

7. Can't say, I live with it.
69. Do you get to rest and relax during the course of your day?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Can't say
 4. Not applicable
70. If yes, at around what time do you usually get to rest and relax?
1. Morning
 2. Noon
 3. Evening
 4. Night
71. Is there time for you to watch T.V.?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Can't say
 4. Not applicable
72. Have you ever run away from your employer's house without prior information?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Can't say
 4. Not applicable
73. Have you ever considered quitting work without prior information to your employer?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Can't say
74. Have you ever considered quitting work before receiving your wage?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Not applicable

75. Are you satisfied with your job?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't say

76.A. If yes, please elaborate why?

76.B. If no, please elaborate why?

Objective No: 3

To find out the gender relations and relations of power between employer and employee

76. Do you think your employer treats you well?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't say

77. Do you have any problem or issues with your employer?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't say

78. How does your employer's wife treat you?

1. Good
2. Not so good
3. Bad
4. Very bad
5. Can't say
6. Not applicable

79. How does your employer's husband treat you?

1. Good
2. Not so good
3. Bad

4. Very bad
5. Can't say
6. Not applicable

80. To whom do you confide to with any of your problems?

1. Employer
2. Employer's wife
3. Employer's husband
4. Employer's son
5. Employer's daughter
6. Co-maid
7. As convenient
8. No sharing

81. To whom do you feel closest to?

1. Employer's wife
2. Employer's husband
3. Employer's son
4. Employer's daughter
5. Co-maid
6. No one in particular

82. How is your employer's husband treating you?

1. Very good
2. Sometimes Good
3. Not so good
4. Very bad
5. Extremely bad
6. Can't say
7. Not applicable

83. Have you ever been scolded by your employer?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not bothered to answer

4. Not applicable

84. Have you ever been scolded by employer's husband or wife?

1. Employer's wife
2. Employer's husband
3. Not so good
4. No problem faced

85. Do you get along with all the family members of your employers?

1. Yes
2. No
3. No scope

86. Do you get gifts or rewards from your employer?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Never received

87. If yes, what are the gifts you receive from your employers mostly?

1. Money
2. Clothes, toiletries, make-up, medicines, etc.
3. Holiday
4. Others

88. Have you ever been fired from work by any of your employers?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable

89.A. Tell me one of your best experiences?

89.B. Tell me one of your worst experiences?

89.C. What suggestions do you make for the amelioration of your condition as domestic worker?

List of topics/concepts to be covered in this research:

1. Migration
2. Gender, gender relations in workplace and Intersectionality
3. Double-day syndrome/ double shift
4. Decent work
5. Wage
6. Working hours
7. Working conditions
8. Expenditures/ Spending habits
9. Health issues
10. Job satisfaction
11. Relations between employer and employee
12. Indebtedness

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POST- MIZO PEACE ACCORD (1986-PRESENT):
NARRATIVES, DEVELOPMENTS & ONGOING ISSUES IN MIZORAM
[AS PART OF G20, 2023]



NATIONAL SEMINAR
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
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CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Prose Vanlakuati Pakte

presented a paper/panel chaired in the National Seminar “Post-Mizo Peace Accord (1986-Present): Narratives, Development and Ongoing Issues in Mizoram” titled Migration Pattern of Domestic Workers in Mizoram

on 18th-19th May 2023, at Seminar Hall, Pachhunga University College, Aizawl.

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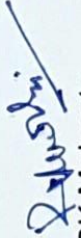
INDIGENEITY & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:
LOCATING THE LOCAL IN THE CONTEXT OF G20

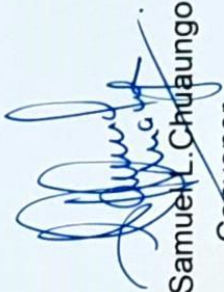


Certificate

This is to certify that Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms. Rosie Vanlabuati Ralte
of Government Aizawl College chaired/participated/organised/presented a paper entitled
Domestic maids : Working conditions and issue of sustainable
future for domestic workers in Mizoram
in the National Seminar 'Indigeneity & Sustainable Development: Locating the Local in the Context of G20', sponsored
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Research Paper

The Socio-Economic Profile of Women Domestic Workers in Mizoram: A Sociological Study

Rosie Vanlalruati Ralte¹

ABSTRACT

The majority of women domestic workers are not well-researched, and their contributions are frequently overlooked in academic studies. Their efforts are frequently overlooked, and numerous studies do not adequately highlight their contributions. With detailed research on their residences and marital status, this sociological study explores the study of women domestic workers in Mizoram. This study demonstrates that the majority of Mizoram's female domestic workers were state natives and were primarily young, single women.

KEY WORDS: Place of domicile, marital status, sociology, women domestic workers, Mizoram.

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I. INTRODUCTION

For thousands of women worldwide, domestic work is one of the most significant and traditional informal jobs. Women with less education, low incomes, and few alternative options can easily enter the field of domestic employment, which leads to a gender-based undervaluation of domestic work. In their own homes, these domestic workers also carry out the customary unpaid caregiving and housework duties. Women domestic workers with intersections of race, gender, class, and geography are the focus of studies on gender and intersectionality.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory of “intersectionality” was introduced by Crenshaw (1989) to feminist theory. In her paper written in 1989, Crenshaw for the University of Chicago Level Forum, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics”, she discussed Black Feminism, and puts across the fact and the experience of being black and of being a woman, which are considered independently, but which include the interactions frequently at play with each other. So, intersectionality refers to a sociological theory that outlines how an individual may face multiple types of overlapping discrimination depending on their race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class or any other characteristics that might place them in a minority class (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality is a feminist theory, a methodology for research, and a springboard for social justice. It develops from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and how soon enough operations of structures of power come into being.

One of the pivotal ways to understand the sociological condition of domestic workers would be the concept of “intersectionality”. Intersectionality is an analytical framework in order to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are marginalised in society. Intersectionality considers that various forms of social stratification such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, disability and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are interwoven together. While the theory began as an exploration of the oppression of women of colour within society, today the analysis is potentially applied to all social categories including social identities usually seen as dominant when considered independently.

Savita (1993) in her thesis ‘Sociological Study of Maidservants in Kolhapur City’ has studied the maidservants on the lines of the following objectives: i) to study the socio-economic condition of maid servants in Kolhapur city, ii) to find out the working and living conditions, iii) to examine the educational status and health condition of maid servants in Kolhapur city. A sample of 200 maid servants and 50 employers were selected as respondents for the study by using first quota sampling. Most of these maidservants are the sole breadwinners,

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however some children also work as part-time basis. Majority of the female heads of the employer family are dissatisfied with the domestic workers because these domestic workers are not punctual, they are irregular, and also not hygienic. They gossip a lot and are unreliable, according to the employers.

Brites (2013) presents that in the case of paid domestic workers, there is existence of inequality of gender, class, race, ethnicity and geographical background. The article touches upon such factors as women's entry into the labour market and studies about domestic workers across Brazil and Latin America on matters regarding their recruitment, unionisation, lack of legal protection, their transformations and processes, and migrations and global care chains.

Perez & Llanos (2017) highlight the role of migrant Indonesian domestic workers who are women working in a patriarchal society serving to deepen their social exclusion. This feeds into a politics of intersectionality where their role as outsiders in the public domain is cemented by their status as poor, as migrants, and as women, whereas their role as insiders in the private domain excludes them from acting as political subjects. "The abuse and disrespect that some of the country's 1.2 million domestic workers endure goes largely unchecked and unreported, mainly because it happens behind the closed doors of their employer's private property" (2017).

Oakley (1974) a British sociologist and supporter of Women's liberation Movement (women's lib) argues that the position that women hold in the family and in the society is mirrored in the number of women getting employed in various fields in the employment sector. Very often, the jobs that women take up are an extension of their domestic role pertain to caring for, cleaning or tidying up after others, waiting on, and serving.

Pedrazza (1991) in "Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender" brings to light the factors affecting the process of migration of women on a large scale. It tries to perceive the themes of interaction of ethnicity, class and gender in the process of migration. The literature highlighted are thematic in nature with concerns of gender and migration, largely contributing to the study of Sociology of Immigration.

RESEARCH GAP

The study gap about the marital status and place of birth or nativity of domestic workers demonstrates how these two criteria affect their personal lives, legal rights, social dynamics, and labour market experiences. Very little study has been done on domestic workers in Mizoram; the majority of the studies that are now accessible have been on domestic workers in India and elsewhere. Research gaps can be filled in several important areas, including:

1. Research on the vulnerabilities faced by migrant domestic workers compared to native workers, such as exploitation, poor working conditions, and restricted access to support services.
2. Migrant workers endure language challenges, fear of deportation, and lack of legal expertise compared to native labour.
3. Studies might examine the particular difficulties married and single domestic workers encounter that may affect their work-life balance, such as balancing hard work schedules with family obligations and the disparate expectations of their occupations.
4. There is a lack of study on the impact of domestic workers' nativity on their earnings and general financial security. Examining if migrant workers might earn less than native-born workers, or whether married women domestic workers might earn more because they are thought to be more stable, or less because they require more time off, etc.

Filling in these gaps can assist guide policy, enhance support networks, and promote improved working circumstances that cater to the requirements of domestic workers who are married or unmarried, as well as native and migrant workers.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative method to conduct a sociological study of domestic workers in Mizoram including their place of residence and also their marital status. Simple random sampling was used to locate 226 women domestic workers for this study who currently work in Aizawl, Mizoram. The result was then entered into excel sheet where coding was done and then the results were entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software where frequency and percentages were calculated. The results obtained were then analysed.

DOMICILE

The place of domicile or residence is the place where people live, a dwelling or home used as a main residence, either originally or currently. To have a permanent place of residence is to have a sense of identity or belongingness automatically protecting us from unwanted harm and burden. This question is important for the respondents as they are asked about their native place of residence, and whether they hail from within Mizoram or are from outside the state, or are from the rural, urban or semi-urban locality.

Table 1: Native of Mizoram

Whether Domestic Workers are Natives of Mizoram					
Domestic Worker	Yes	%	No	%	Total
Live In/ <i>Riak</i> ²	98	87.5	14	12.5	112
Live-out/Lang	95	83.3	19	16.7	114
Total	193	85.40	33	14.60	226

Majority of the live-in/ *riak* domestic workers are natives of Mizoram. This is 87.5 percent of the total number of domestic workers under study totaling 98 of the 112 full time domestic workers. Only 12.5 percent of them are from outside the state of Mizoram.

On the other hand, among the live-out/lang domestic workers, 83.3 percent of them are from the state of Mizoram. This is a total of 95 of 114 in numbers live-out/lang domestic workers taken up for study. And it is revealed that 16.7 percent of the total number of live-out/lang domestic workers are from outside the state of Mizoram.

In conclusion, there is a clear indication that the domestic workers both live-in and live-out are from within the state of Mizoram.

MARITAL STATUS

Marital status is the legally defined marital state. The union of two persons sanctioned by society and the congregation is known as marriage. Marriage is the joining of two people in a bond that putatively lasts until death, however, in practice is often cut short by separation or divorce. Knowing the marital status of a person helps us to know whether the person is married to another person, or not. In this study the marital status of the domestic workers will be taken into account to ascertain whether there are more married or unmarried or divorced or separated categories of domestic workers. The domestic workers are asked to answer a question about their marital status, whether they are married, unmarried, widow, separated or divorced.

Table 2: Marital status of domestic workers

Marital status											
Domestic Worker	Married	%	Unmarried	%	Widow	%	Separated	%	Divorced	%	Total
Live In/ <i>Riak</i>			108	96.4	1	0.9			3	2.7	112
Live-out/Lang	19	16.7	82	71.9	3	2.6	6	5.3	4	3.5	114
Total	19	8.41	190	84.07	4	1.77	6	2.65	7	3.10	226

Data incorporated in Table 2 implies that 96.4 of the total live-in domestic workers are unmarried. This further indicates that unmarried girls are more employable in their particular field as they can devote more time towards the household chores. At the same time, the unmarried girls are offering better services as they are not disturbed by any other social disabilities such as responsibility in the family, financial problem or mental health issues, etc.

Among the live-in domestic workers, only 2.7 percent are divorced which shows that women with personal issues are not likely to be chosen by the employers. At the same time, the divorced women themselves are not comfortable to be engaged in other's household works and would rather try to find other jobs to support themselves in other economic activities.

Meanwhile, widows who are live-in domestic workers comprises only 0.9 percent of the total number of live-in domestic workers which means that the salary offered out of the household works are not enough to support themselves and their children who depend upon them. So, they prefer to work elsewhere in other daily engagements works such as vegetable street vendors, house-to-house vegetable sellers, etc.

A very interesting finding the researcher can point out here is that, married and separated women are not as much engaged as live-in domestic workers in Aizawl city. Some of the determining factors for this are, married girls and women are compelled to support themselves and their own families mentally and physically in 24/7 hours. Though they need to earn extra pay to support themselves, it is a huge challenge and cannot manage time to be engaged as live-in domestic workers.

Meanwhile, no separated women are chosen as live-in/*riak* domestic workers under the study. The main reason is that most separated women are struggling with psychological issues with regards to their personal affairs that makes them uncomfortable to be able to reside with their employers and be immersed in the employers' family administration. Having to face hardship and personal break down from their past life experiences, they

² *Riak* is a Mizo word which means 'live-in'

have not completely regained confidence with themselves and most of the separated domestic workers are not willing to resume in any economic activities.

As shown in the above table, 71.9 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers are unmarried. This clearly indicates that unmarried girls are the most preferred to be employed in domestic works. As unmarried girls are free and available to help and render their services to others, they are more compatible to be chosen to do the household chores in the homes of their employers.

Contrary to the findings of live-in/*riak* domestic workers (where no married women are chosen for domestic works), 16.7 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers are married. This further implies that married women are extremely in need to find part-time jobs to financially support themselves and their families. The study also reveals that married women resolve many financial issues and expenditure of the families such as, children's school fees, house rent, household daily needs, medical, water, electricity bills, etc. out of their personal pockets earned by engaging themselves as live-out/lang domestic work.

Interestingly, widows, separated and divorced women are on the look-out for jobs with easy entry and are engaged as live-out domestic workers. The study shows that there are 2.6 percent widows who are live-outs/lang, while 5.3 percent and 3.5 percent are found with respect to separated and divorced women.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the majority of the women domestic workers are from Mizoram and are employed in the state's district capitals; even more of them reside with their families. The majority of female domestic workers in Aizawl, Mizoram, are single, indicating that domestic labour is primarily assigned to and associated with young, single women, as married, divorced, and separated women only make up a small portion of the population.

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Rosie Vanlalruati Ralte

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Analysing the Working Conditions of Women Domestic Workers in Mizoram

Rosie Vanlalruati Ralte

ABSTRACT

Research on the majority of women domestic workers is lacking, and academic studies usually ignore their contributions. Their work is often disregarded, and many studies fail to sufficiently acknowledge their contributions. This sociological study investigates women domestic workers in Mizoram, including their dwellings and work conditions in the state. According to this study, the vast majority of Mizoram's female domestic workers were young, unmarried women who were state natives and their working conditions are usually mild as compared to women domestic workers from other parts of the country.

Keywords: Place of domicile, marital status, sociology, women domestic workers, Mizoram.

INTRODUCTION

For thousands of women worldwide, domestic work is one of the most significant and traditional informal jobs. Women with less education, low incomes, and few alternative options can easily enter the field of domestic employment, which leads to a gender-based undervaluation of domestic work. In their own homes, these domestic workers also carry out the customary unpaid caregiving and housework duties. Women domestic workers with intersections of race, gender, class, and geography are the focus of studies on gender and intersectionality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Crenshaw (1989) introduced the concept of "intersectionality" to feminist theory. In 1989, Crenshaw wrote a paper for the University of Chicago Level Forum titled "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." In it, she talked about Black feminism and the experiences of being a woman and being Black, which are often viewed separately but also involve interactions with one another. Accordingly, the sociological theory of intersectionality describes how a person may experience several forms of overlapping discrimination based on their race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class, or any other traits that could put them in a minority group (Crenshaw, 1989).

The idea of "intersectionality" is crucial to comprehending the sociological situation of domestic workers. An analytical approach called intersectionality is used to determine how interconnected power structures affect society's marginalized people. According to the theory of intersectionality, many types of social stratification—such as gender, age, sexual orientation, class, race, and disability—are entwined with one another rather than existing independently. Although the theory was initially developed to examine how women of colour were oppressed in society, it may now be extended to all social categories, including social identities that are typically viewed as dominating when taken into account separately.

In her 1993 thesis, "Sociological Study of Maidservants in Kolhapur City," Savita examined maidservants with the following goals in mind: i) to investigate the socioeconomic state of Kolhapur city's female workers; ii) to learn about their living and working conditions; and iii) to look into their health and educational status. Using first quota sampling, a sample of 200 maid servants and 50 employers were chosen to participate in the study. While some children work part-time, the majority of these maidservants are the only ones who make a living. Due of their lack of punctuality, irregularity, and hygiene, the majority of female heads of the employer family are not happy with the domestic workers.

Brites (2013) presents that in the case of paid domestic workers, there is existence of inequality of gender, class, race, ethnicity and geographical background. The article touches upon such factors as women's entry into the labour market and studies about domestic workers across Brazil and Latin America on matters regarding their recruitment, unionisation, lack of legal protection, their transformations and processes, and migrations and global care chains.

Perez & Llanos (2017) highlight the role of migrant Indonesian domestic workers who are women working in a patriarchal society serving to deepen their social exclusion. This feeds into a politics of intersectionality where their role as outsiders in

the public domain is cemented by their status as poor, as migrants, and as women, whereas their role as insiders in the private domain excludes them from acting as political subjects. “The abuse and disrespect that some of the country’s 1.2 million domestic workers endure goes largely unchecked and unreported, mainly because it happens behind the closed doors of their employer’s private property” (2017).

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METHODOLOGY

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative method to conduct a sociological study of domestic workers in Mizoram including their place of residence and also their marital status, all while analysing their working conditions in their employers’ houses. Simple random sampling was used to locate 226 women domestic workers for this study who currently work in Aizawl, Mizoram. The result was then entered into excel sheet where coding was done and then the results were entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software where frequency and percentages were calculated. The results obtained were then analysed.

Domicile

The place of domicile or residence is the place where people live, a dwelling or home used as a main residence, either originally or currently. To have a permanent place of residence is to have a sense of identity or belongingness automatically protecting us from unwanted harm and burden. This question is important for the respondents as they are asked about their native place of residence, and whether they hail from within Mizoram or are from outside the state, or are from the rural, urban or semi-urban locality.

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Live-out/Lang	95	83.3	19	16.7	114
Total	193	85.40	33	14.60	226

Majority of the live-in/ riak domestic workers are natives of Mizoram. This is 87.5 percent of the total number of domestic workers under study totaling 98 of the 112 full time domestic workers. Only 12.5 percent of them are from outside the state of Mizoram.

On the other hand, among the live-out/lang domestic workers, 83.3 percent of them are from the state of Mizoram. This is a total of 95 of 114 in numbers live-out/lang domestic workers taken up for study. And it is revealed that 16.7 percent of the total number of live-out/lang domestic workers are from outside the state of Mizoram.

In conclusion, there is a clear indication that the domestic workers both live-in and live-out are from within the state of Mizoram.

¹Riak is a Mizo word which means ‘live-in’

Marital Status

Marital status is the legally defined marital state. The union of two persons sanctioned by society and the congregation is known as marriage. Marriage is the joining of two people in a bond that putatively lasts until death, however, in practice is often cut short by separation or divorce. Knowing the marital status of a person helps us to know whether the person is married to another person, or not. In this study the marital status of the domestic workers will be taken into account to ascertain whether there are more married or unmarried or divorced or separated categories of domestic workers. The domestic workers are asked to answer a question about their marital status, whether they are married, unmarried, widow, separated or divorced.

Table 2: Marital status of domestic workers

Marital status											
Domestic Worker	Married	%	Unmarried	%	Widow	%	Separated	%	Divorced	%	Total
Live In/ Riak			108	96.4	1	0.9			3	2.7	112
Live-out/Lang	19	16.7	82	71.9	3	2.6	6	5.3	4	3.5	114
Total	19	8.41	190	84.07	4	1.77	6	2.65	7	3.10	226

Data incorporated in Table 2 implies that 96.4 of the total live-in domestic workers are unmarried. This further indicates that unmarried girls are more employable in their particular field as they can devote more time towards the household chores. At the same time, the unmarried girls are offering better services as they are not disturbed by any other social disabilities such as responsibility in the family, financial problem or mental health issues, etc.

Among the live-in domestic workers, only 2.7 percent are divorced which shows that women with personal issues are not likely to be chosen by the employers. At the same time, the divorced women themselves are not comfortable to be engaged in other's household works and would rather try to find other jobs to support themselves in other economic activities.

Meanwhile, widows who are live-in domestic workers comprises only 0.9 percent of the total number of live-in domestic workers which means that the salary offered out of the household works are not enough to support themselves and their children who depend upon them. So, they prefer to work elsewhere in other daily engagements works such as vegetable street vendors, house-to-house vegetable sellers, etc.

A very interesting finding the researcher can point out here is that, married and separated women are not as much engaged as live-in domestic workers in Aizawl city. Some of the determining factors for this are, married girls and women are compelled to support themselves and their own families mentally and physically in 24/7 hours. Though they need to earn extra pay to support themselves, it is a huge challenge and cannot manage time to be engaged as live-in domestic workers.

Meanwhile, no separated women are chosen as live-in/riak domestic workers under the study. The main reason is that most separated women are struggling with psychological issues with regards to their personal affairs that makes them uncomfortable to be able to reside with their employers and be immersed in the employers' family administration. Having to face hardship and personal break down from their past life experiences, they have not completely regained confidence with themselves and most of the separated domestic workers are not willing to resume in any economic activities.

As shown in the above table, 71.9 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers are unmarried. This clearly indicates that unmarried girls are the most preferred to be employed in domestic works. As unmarried girls are free and available to help and render their services to others, they are more compatible to be chosen to do the household chores in the homes of their employers.

Contrary to the findings of live-in/riak domestic workers (where no married women are chosen for domestic works), 16.7 percent of the live-out/lang domestic workers are married. This further implies that married women are extremely in need to find part-time jobs to financially support themselves and their families. The study also reveals that married women resolve many financial issues and expenditure of the families such as, children's school fees, house rent, household daily needs, medical, water, electricity bills, etc. out of their personal pockets earned by engaging themselves as live-out/lang domestic work.

Interestingly, widows, separated and divorced women are on the look-out for jobs with easy entry and are engaged as live-out domestic workers. The study shows that there are 2.6 percent widows who are live-outs/lang, while 5.3 percent and 3.5 percent are found with respect to separated and divorced women.

Table 3: Nature of job awareness

How Did You Come to Know About This Job					
Domestic Worker	Relative Percent	Friend Percent	Self Percent	Agent Percent	Total
Live In/ Riak	67 (59.8%)	35 (31.3%)	6 (5.4%)	4 (3.6%)	112
Live-out/Lang	43 (37.7%)	57 (50%)	12 (10.5%)	2 (1.8%)	114
Total	110 (48.7%)	92 (40.7%)	18 (8.0%)	6 (2.7%)	226

Among the women domestic workers, as many as 67 (59.8%) of women who are live-in said that they came to know about the job through their relatives while 35 (31.3%) know about this job through their friends. 6 (5.4%) of the women know about this job by themselves and 4 (3.6%) of them know about this job through their agents.

Among the women who are live-out domestic workers, 43 (37.7%) women know about this job through their relatives while another 57 (50%) know about this job through their friends. 12 (10.5%) know about this job by themselves and another 2 (1.8%) know about this job through the information provided by their agents.

Table 4: Salary receive timing

When Do You Get Your Wage				
Domestic Worker	Monthly	weekly	Daily	Total
Live In/ Riak	110 (98.2%)	2 (1.8%)		112
Live-out/Lang	86 (75.4%)	19 (16.7%)	9 (7.9%)	114
Total	196 (86.7%)	21 (9.3%)	9 (4%)	226

Among the women domestic workers, there are 110 (98.2%) women among live-ins who receive their salary monthly and only 2 (1.8%) of them receive on a weekly basis.

Among the live-out women domestic workers, there are as many as 86 (75.4%) women who receive their salary on a monthly basis while another 19 (16.7%) women who receive their salary on a weekly basis. Only 9 (7.9%) women from live-out categories receive their salary on a daily basis.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Mizoram is home to the bulk of the women domestic workers who work in the district capitals of the state; even more of them live with their family. Since married, divorced, and separated women only make up a small percentage of the population, the majority of female domestic workers in Aizawl, Mizoram, are unmarried, suggesting that domestic work is largely assigned to and associated with young, single women. In terms of their job awareness, there are a greater number of women who are aware of their jobs through their relatives hence, the importance of relatives as awareness agents is found out in this study and also, most of the women domestic workers receive their salary on a monthly basis.



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- [4]. Pedraza, S. (1991). Women and migration: the social consequences of gender. Annu. Rev. Sociol, 17, 303. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2083345>.
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- [6]. Savita, J. (1993). Sociological study of maidservants in Kolhapur city. <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/138315>.

Particulars of the Candidate

NAME OF THE CANDIDATE : Rosie Vanlalruati Ralte

DEGREE : Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D)

DEPARTMENT : Sociology

TITLE OF THESIS : Women in Urban Informal
Sector: A Study of Domestic
Workers in Aizawl

DATE OF ADMISSION : 26th July, 2017

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. DRC : 25.09.2018

2. BOARD OF STUDIES : 26.09.2018

3. SCHOOL BOARD : 03.10.2018

4. MZU REGN. NO. : 1807600

5. Ph. D REGN. NO. & DATE : MZU/Ph. D/1183 of 03.10.2018

6. Extension : No.16-2/MZU(Acad)/24/14-15
Dated: 3rd July, 2024

(Prof. R.K. MOHANTY)

HEAD

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

ABSTRACT

WOMEN IN URBAN INFORMAL SECTOR: A STUDY OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN AIZAWL

**AN ABSTRACT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY**

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**WOMEN IN URBAN INFORMAL SECTOR: A STUDY OF DOMESTIC
WORKERS IN AIZAWL**

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Women domestic workers form a significant and often invisible part of the global labour force. Engaged in tasks such as cooking, cleaning, childcare, and elder care, these workers play a crucial role in supporting households and enabling others to participate in the formal economy. Despite the importance of their work, women domestic workers frequently face poor working conditions, low wages, long hours, and lack of legal protections. Many of these workers operate in informal or unregulated sectors, which makes them vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. In numerous countries, domestic work is undervalued and not fully recognized under labour laws. Migrant women domestic workers, in particular, face added risks due to language barriers, isolation, and dependency on their employers. International efforts, such as the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, aim to improve protections and promote fair treatment. However, enforcement remains a challenge in many regions. Empowering women domestic workers through legal recognition, access to social protections, and the right to unionize is essential for achieving gender equality and social justice. In Mizoram, women domestic workers play a vital yet often unrecognized role in households and economies around the world. They are employed to perform tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, caregiving for children, the elderly, or people with disabilities, and other household responsibilities. Despite the essential nature of their work, they remain one of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in the labour force.

A large proportion of domestic workers globally are women, many of whom come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, minority communities, or rural areas. Some are internal migrants within their own countries, while others travel abroad in search of better livelihoods. In both cases, their work is undervalued, informal, and often excluded from labour law protections. One of the major challenges faced by women domestic workers in the context of Mizoram is the lack of formal employment contracts. Many are hired verbally, without clear terms of employment, wages, or working hours. As a result, they may be expected to work excessively long hours without overtime pay or rest days. In live-in arrangements, the boundaries between work and rest are often blurred, leading to overwork and

isolation. Additionally, domestic work tends to be low-paid, regardless of the number of hours worked or the intensity of the labour involved. In many countries, domestic workers are not entitled to minimum wage, health insurance, or pensions. Migrant domestic workers may face even harsher conditions, including language barriers, restricted movement, and dependency on employers for legal status, which can increase the risk of abuse and exploitation. Gender plays a central role in the marginalization of domestic workers and since domestic work is traditionally viewed as “women’s work” or an extension of household duties, it is often devalued economically and socially. This gendered perception contributes to the lack of recognition and respect for domestic workers and limits their bargaining power.

Chapter I deals with the introduction part of the study while chapter II consisted of literature review and chapter III details methodology adopted for this study. Chapter IV of the study is about the socio-economic profile of women domestic workers and chapter V delves into the work and working conditions of women domestic workers. Chapter VI details about the employers and employees’ relations and chapter VII consisted of the policy recommendations and entails the summary and conclusion.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In chapter I, introduction with regard to the meaning of domestic work and women domestic workers have been included. This chapter has been sub-divided into 9 headings. Following brief introduction, informal sector was defined and women in informal sectors were also defined. The study shifted to a more detail heading in which women in urban informal sectors were further described in details and the nexus of gender and intersectionality was described. Domestic work concept was defined and the study of women domestic workers from the lens of international, national and state scenario was further elaborated and the chapter concludes with the need for study. Internationally, efforts have been made to improve the rights of domestic workers. The International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted Convention No. 189 in 2011, which sets standards for decent working conditions, fair pay, and social protections for domestic workers. However, the implementation of these standards remains uneven, and many countries have yet to ratify or enforce the

convention. In recent years, women domestic workers have begun organizing to demand better rights and protections. Unions, cooperatives, and NGOs are playing a key role in empowering these workers, advocating for legal reforms, and raising public awareness about their contributions and challenges. Women domestic workers are indispensable to households and national economies, yet they remain among the most disadvantaged workers. Ensuring their rights, recognizing their labour, and providing them with social and legal protections is not only a matter of labour justice but also an important step toward gender equality and inclusive development.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Chapter II of the study deals with literature which are further sub-divided into three headings namely theoretical review, thematic review and methodological review. Under the theoretical review, four theories were reviewed which relates to the study of women domestic workers in Mizoram. Domestic work is one of the oldest and most important informal occupations for thousands of women across the world. There is an easy entry for women without education, poor economic background and lack of other opportunities in the domain of domestic work, therefore making it a gender-based under-evaluation of domestic work. These domestic workers also perform the traditional role of care and household task which is unpaid within their own households. Studies on gender and intersectionality addresses women domestic workers with intersections of race, gender, class and regional background. The theory of “intersectionality” was introduced by Kimberlee Crenshaw to feminist theory. In her paper written in 1989 Crenshaw for the University of Chicago Level Forum, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics”, she discussed Black Feminism, and puts across the fact and the experience of being black and of being a woman, which are considered independently, but which include the interactions frequently at play with each other. So, intersectionality refers to a sociological theory that outlines how an individual may face multiple types of overlapping discrimination depending on their race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class or any other characteristics that might place them in a minority class. Intersectionality is a feminist theory, a methodology

for research, and a springboard for social justice. It develops from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and how soon enough operations of structures of power come into being. One of the pivotal ways to understand the sociological condition of domestic workers would be the concept of “intersectionality”. Intersectionality is an analytical framework in order to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are marginalised in society. Intersectionality considers that various forms of social stratification such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, disability and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are interwoven together. While the theory began as an exploration of the oppression of women of colour within society, today the analysis is potentially applied to all social categories including social identities usually seen as dominant when considered independently.

Under the thematic review, the reviews are further sub-divided into 5 sections which are women working conditions, migration, wage, rights issues, health conditions and domestic violence. The thematic review portion of the study has shown that women domestic workers have less desirable working conditions globally and they form an invisible work force. They received minimum wages and their rights are often violated without them speaking up or taking any actions against the injustice directed towards them. This review shows that there is a dire need for policy recommendations to uplift their working conditions and rights-based advocacy is solely needed not only in India but in a global context as well. There is also a need to provide health-care benefits and assistance to these women in their times of need as well.

The methodological review portion finally shows the methods employed by various scholars whilst their study on the topic of women domestic workers and these methods ranges from qualitative to quantitative methods, employing various research techniques like interviews, surveys, focus group discussion and case studies. From the above review of literature on domestic workers it was felt that domestic workers are mostly women from poorer sections of the society, migrants, who are subjected to various kinds of exploitation, where employment is of the informal type with ease of entry, lowly paid,

and unregulated in terms of laws and legislation. However, some topics not adequately covered are the topics of push and pull factors, financial freedom, their networking skills, gains of migration, and the empowerment on the part of the domestic workers. These sub themes would also be taken up as mentioned in the objectives and covered while studying the domestic workers in the present study. Hardly any work has been covered and studied so far on the topic of domestic workers in Mizoram. Therefore, the study is crucial for understanding Mizo society and give importance to an extremely vital but neglected section of the Mizo household without whose help it is difficult to get by for many families in Aizawl. From the analysis of the review exercise, majority of the study and research done on domestic workers come under the theoretical and thematic types of research, however, a good number of works has also been done using the quantitative analysis and reports and studies of governments and non-government organizations are available while studying the transformation in the field of domestic work and domestic labour. The themes are seen to be largely of western origin though the literature under thematic heads is covering the countries across the globe including India. Methodologically, the studies are found to be largely qualitative and analytical in nature as the best viable option.

Chapter III: Methodology

Chapter III is about the methodology employed for this study. This study has five objectives which are shown as under:

1. to find out the socio-economic profile and the migration pattern of the domestic workers
2. to study the nature of their work and working conditions
3. to find out the gender relations and relations of power between employer and employee
4. to examine the role of NGOs, GOs towards the welfare of the domestic workers
5. to study the problem dimensions and to recommend solutions to such problems

The study uses an exploratory design and it incorporates both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative approaches assist in providing a thorough description of complicated events, grasp unique events or unexpected occurrences which allows researchers to have a deeper grasp of the situation. Qualitative approach can provide valuable insights about the exact conditions and social reality of the domestic workers

who are under-represented and voiceless in the larger society. The study is conducted in Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram. Aizawl since being the capital of Mizoram attracts migrants from various parts of the state and also from neighbouring states of Assam, Tripura, and from Myanmar, and Bangladesh as well. The affluence of the middle classes, coupled with education and employment of women has opened doors for domestic workers generating employment for the women of the poor sections from rural places, natives as well as migrants from other states and across the international border. Therefore, the growing city of Aizawl serves as an appropriate place of study because there has been a steady rise in population domestic workers. It is in this context that the present study had been conducted.

A sample of 226 domestic workers were selected as of 2019 who were chosen through convenient sampling method. In 2019, out of the 226 domestic workers, 112 are selected from live-in /full time / *riak* workers consisting 57 native Mizo domestic workers and 55 non-native domestic workers. Another 114 domestic workers are selected from live-out /part-time / *lang* consisting 60 part-time domestic workers native to Mizoram and 54 from part-time workers from outside the state of Mizoram. Using the same sampling technique, 226 samples were gathered from 42 distinct neighbourhoods in the city under the Aizawl Municipal Corporation in Mizoram that are listed in the domestic worker's alliance. Interviews were also conducted with officials, representatives of various domestic worker organizations, and volunteers for the Domestic Workers Alliance. The overall sample size to represent domestic workers in Aizawl is 226, with the goal of shedding light on the study's first objective, which is to determine the socio-economic profile and migration patterns of domestic workers in Aizawl, Mizoram.

Chapter IV: Socio-Economic Profile

Chapter IV of the study delves deep about the socio-economic profile of women domestic workers in Mizoram and is placed under 10 headings which are 1. Gender 2. Age 3. Marital status 4. Religion 5. Family 6. Place of domicile 7. Educational status 8. Wage 9. Assets owned 10. Migration patterns.

Gender, in this study, included only women domestic workers and excluded the men due to the difficulty in locating male domestic workers. In Mizoram, there are

otherwise more women domestic workers than men. The researcher could not locate many men domestic workers and so, due to the difficulty in locating the men, this study has included only the women domestic workers.

This study shows that in terms of age, most women domestic workers comprise of a young age who are below 25 years of age and this is followed by women who are between the ages of 25-35 years. This shows that youth and energy have active role to play as young women are still active both physically and mentally which leave them in a position to work and also, they are more deem fit to be employed by their employers due to this nature. Older women do not possess as much strength and stamina as compared to the younger women which make the employers reluctant to hire them and besides, older women also do not typically like to engage in economic activities like strength-demanding jobs such as domestic jobs as their capabilities do not longer permit them. This is the reason why women of younger age are found in abundance in informal sector work like domestic work.

Similarly with age, employers often hire women who are not married and this study has also reflected this. Majority of the women domestic workers are unmarried and this shows that employers are more enthusiast to hire women who are unmarried and besides, unmarried women, unburdened by family issues are more active and willing to work, especially to stay in their employer's house and work as a maid. They are not much burdened by responsibilities in their houses and families which give them much freedom and space to concentrate on their work as a domestic worker. In the case of married women, they have many responsibilities at home and have to care for their children and husbands which did not permit them enough space to concentrate fully in their job. This is the main reason why unmarried women are more engaged in the job of domestic work in Mizoram as against women who are married and are already having their own families.

In terms of religion, the findings of this study reflect the current scenario of Mizoram wherein majority of the population belong to Christian religion. Most of the women respondents of this study also belong to Christianity and are also mostly Presbyterian followed by Baptist and United Pentecostal Church. However, the

study also finds that there are few women domestic workers who are from Hinduism religion. These women are all Nepali women who have stayed in Mizoram since their forefathers and have all adopted Mizo traditions and lifestyles in many ways. They all belong to Young Mizo Association and actively participate in their own community as well. Their religion does not draw any discriminatory practices from their employers and their employers all treated them like their own family members. This also shows the compassionate nature of the Mizos towards other communities.

The study shows that among the women domestic workers, there are a greater number of women who belong to a family member between the size of 4-6 sizes. Contrary to this, most of the women domestic workers worked for employers who had only between 1-3 family members.

The study shows that most of the women domestic workers belong to Mizoram and are natives of the state. However, there are few women who are not natives of the state. These women migrated to Mizoram due to conflicts and war in their region which forced them to migrate to Mizoram from places like Manipur and Myanmar and work as a domestic worker due to absence in skills. All in all, most women domestic workers are natives to Mizoram and are mostly Mizo community with few exceptions of women who hailed from a Nepali background.

Among the women domestic workers in this study, most of them had only attained the educational qualifications of upper primary level and it is followed by high school degree, which is in turn, followed closely by primary level of education. Most of the women have low educational qualifications as their family financial conditions did not permit them to study higher and also because most of the women are not academically strong to pursue further education. These women engaged in the field of domestic work as these kinds of jobs did not require high educational qualifications and it could be worked by people from all backgrounds and educational qualifications. Hence, this is the main reason why women from this study have low educational qualifications.

In terms of wage salary, the highest number of women earn between Rs. 5000-6000 per month and this is followed closely by women who earn an income between Rs. 4000-5000 per month. Only a minute number of women earn an income which is more than Rs. 10,000 per month. The average earnings of the women are low and the findings show that the government and agencies should revised the income of these women as inflation had occurred in recent times and their current average earnings might not help them to acquire their daily needs in the long-run.

In terms of regularity in receiving wages, almost all the women have expressed that they regularly receive their monthly income without fail from their employers.

This study has shown that most of the women domestic workers did not own basic household assets such as television, washing machines, refrigerators and LPG connections. The situations are worse among the live-in women in which majority of the women did not own any of these assets when compared with the live-out women. In terms of houses, most of the women did not own houses but when comparisons are made between the live-out and the live-in, more women in live-out categories' own houses while most women in live-in did not own any houses and live-in rented houses.

The migration patterns of this study have shown that most of the women domestic workers have migrated due to financial problems faced by them which is followed by the influence and pressure exerted upon them by their family members and their friends. The women from this study, though lacking educational qualifications and vocational skills, had resorted to domestic work and migrated to urban areas solely for the purpose of this work. There are a greater number of women who have migrated solely to work as a maid while only lesser number of women have migrated for other purposes other than working as a maid. The chapter finally concludes with the case of three women. All the women from these case studies had a similar story in which they have all work as a maid for a purpose and that is to support their family members and they have all said that they saved their income, even though it may be less so that they can used it to sustain themselves in the future.

In align with the study by Savita (1993), most of the women from this study are sole breadwinners in their families and based on the theory of intersectionality by Crenshaw (1989), most of the women respondents hailed from a lower income family and the intersection of their low-income along with the women's gender have led them to experience lower status in society as their low-income family prohibits them from acquiring higher education and vocational training and their gender further prohibits them from working high-paying manual jobs which give them limited choice but to work as a domestic worker earning lesser income. As pointed by British sociologist Oakley (1974), the view of women as "weak" offer them no other choice but to work in the field of domestic work like cleaning, tidying and housekeeping. In fact, the women respondents from this study have mostly claimed that they have no other option due to limited knowledge in skills which led them take up the work of domestic work.

Chapter V: Work and working conditions

Chapter V presents the work and working conditions of women domestic workers and the headings are sub-divided into 7 categories. They are 1. Work routine 2. Nature of work 3. Child-care provision at work 4. Household chores at home 5. Health problems 6. Bad treatment and abuse at work place 7. Daily rest periods

From the chapter on work and working conditions we come to know about the work routine of the women domestic workers that among the live-in workers, begin their job at 6:00-6:30 am in the morning. This confirmed that the live-in workers usually began their work early in the morning right after waking up to do chores assigned by their employers. Contrary to the live-in workers, among the live-out domestic workers, those working from 9:30-10:00 am exhibits the highest population with 47 individuals or 41.2% per cent. The above data illustrates the diverse nature of the employer's household and the differing schedules of live-in and live-out domestic workers, with live-in workers typically starting earlier to accommodate their living arrangements, while live-out workers tend to have later starting times, potentially influenced by transportation and other factors.

The live- in workers finish their work at 7:00 pm with a total number of 38 girls adding up to 33.9% of the entire data collected. 32 girls finished their work at 8:00 pm, coming into the second place among the 112 workers interviewed. The third most common answer received were those who complete their work at 9:00 pm with 26 individuals or 23.2% picking this category. 50 workers completed their work at 4:00 in the afternoon occupying the highest among the live- out workers with 50.9% of the total population. This means that half of the live out workers, as their name *lang*, suggested, went home before sunset. Sharp differences which can be witnessed from following data was that, unlike the live- in workers in which 8:00 pm onwards remains a high time for their completion of work, the number of the live- out workers began to decline with a total percentage of 9.7% on all four categories i.e.- between 7:00 pm till 10:00pm (4.4%, 1.8%, 0.9%, 2.6% and 4.4% respectively). Notably, there were no workers who worked pass 10:00 pm which pointed out the true nature of live-out workers.

The most common time period of waking up among both the live- in and live- out workers was 6:00 in the morning, with a whooping majority of 73.2% and 61.4% of the entire data collected. The data thus, showed that live-out workers have more autonomy over their timing and can adjust according to their work schedule, while the live-in workers have little to no autonomy over their time period and must adhere to the timing set by to their employers which was usually early in the morning. The data collected among both live-in and live-out domestic workers, reveals that majority of the domestic workers sleep around 10:00 at night.

The household chores performed by the domestic workers were work such as cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing were the common work done by both the live-in and live-out workers. Other outdoor chore such as gardening, babysitting and picking and dropping the kids to school and grocery shopping were also done by both the live-in and live-out workers.

Out of the 112 and 114 houses of live-in and live-out workers, owning two living rooms was the highest number among the employers of the domestic workers. Majority of the live-in and live-out workers (78.6% and 86% respectively) agreed

that no extra work was given to them by their employers while at work. The study confirmed that no extra wages were given to them for their extra workload. Interestingly, the category of 'not applicable' occupies the highest data with 87 individuals from live-in workers and 100 individuals from live-out workers opting for this category. There were also 97 individuals each who did not receive rewards through cash and in kind. At the same time, a whopping 87.7% or 100 workers and 94.7% or 108 workers among the live-out exclaimed how they did not receive any rewards, be it in cash or kind for their extra work.

The employer who was female, usually determines most of the work to be done for the live-in as well as the live-out domestic workers. At the same time, the data shows how only a fraction of the employers' spouses dictate the work for the live-in and live out workers. 23 workers arrived home by 6:00 pm and constitute the highest percentage among the live-out domestic workers. Data revealed that half of the live-out workers just lock the house while they were at work, which is followed by their neighbours look after the houses for them. The live-out domestic workers confirmed that no one took care of their children while they were at work, which was both alarming and depressing at the same time because the children had no one to look after themselves without adult supervision, while their mothers were away trying to earn a decent livelihood for the family.

The concept of providing child-care support is an uncommon practice within the Mizo society. Out of all the 226 responses, there is only 1 worker who stated that she was provided with child support while at work. Child-care provision is not common among the women domestic workers as most of them have not receive any.

At the same time, a whopping majority of 70.2% or 80 out of 114 live-out workers said that the work done on both their house their employer's household were exactly the same as the work they do at their work place. The live-out domestic workers had mostly said that they had no other family members to help them in their household chores and they themselves have to do the same chores in their houses after their work from their employers' house is over.

80 individuals have enjoyed day-off for them to carry out their private life, who constitute as many as 71.4% of the data. Among the live-in workers, 80 of them exclaimed how Sundays were the only day-off or break given to them throughout the whole week while 31 out of 112 said that it was not applicable since no day-off was given to them throughout the whole week. expressed how no exemption were given to them throughout the year. For some of them however, no such day off were not applicable to them. Most of the live-out workers were allowed to take a break from their duties of household work, which is as many as 98.2% while there were 2 individuals who were not given any vacation or break from their employers.

Many of the domestic workers were unable to say whether they had any health issues at all, and therefore doctor visitations were rare and not applicable amongst the domestic workers. They did not take medications for their illness even though they need the treatment for their health.

Any bad treatment faced by the domestic workers were not disclosed by them and the majority of them felt the question was not applicable to them to answer. Alarming, there were 43 workers among the live-in workers and 96 out of the 114 live-out workers who tend to hide and rather not mention the kind of abuse they received in their employer's house. This was both alarming and concerning at the same time. Additionally, out of 57 live-in workers and one among the live-out workers stated that it was not applicable to them as they faced no such abuse. Regarding who is accountable for abusing their workers, since it was not an easy question for the respondents to answer, hesitation can be witnessed when analysing their answers. Most of the response was that the question was not relevant or cannot answer to the question. The children of the household generally were good to them, but a few were also not so good to the domestic workers. The abuse they faced made them angry and resentful and hurt. Most of the response was that it was not applicable for them to answer. Lack of freedom and lack of security were mostly cited for the work-related problems and issues raised. Some wished not to share their problems and would rather live with it then relate the issues faced by them.

Most of the domestic workers were able to rest during the day while at work, some rested during the afternoon and some in the night. Watching television was another form of relaxation which could be enjoyed by the live-in domestic workers, but not so much for the live-out domestic workers. A good number of the domestic workers did not feel the need or compulsion to run away from work, especially without giving prior information to their employers, although rare cases do suggest it did take place among a few live-in domestic workers. Quitting without giving prior notice or before receiving wages is not considered a suitable option among domestic workers. This points out the importance receiving money for the minimal wage earners like the domestic workers who depend on their salary and wages for survival.

In align with the study by International Labour Organization (2009), the women domestic workers engaged in one of the lowest earning jobs in the state and the women mostly do not associate themselves with the association for domestic work which led them work informally in the labour market. As described by Pedraza (1991), women domestic workers are often inclined to migrate to other cities or countries for better working conditions and many women domestic workers from this study are also motivated to city areas in search for better work as against the limited work available for them in their hometown and villages. Hochschild's (1989) study, which stated that women domestic workers often faced double burden is also applicable in this study as among the live-out women domestic workers, household chores were also performed solely by them after working in their employers' houses which left them with ached bodies, a concept which was coined as "double-burden" by Hochschild. Ferri & Smith's (1996) arguments also align with this study as most of the husbands of the women domestic workers, especially among live-out women, do not engage in household chores and they rely heavily on their wives and daughters both for their meagre income as well as their household chores in their house, a system which led many feminists to state is the reason for continued patriarchy in society.

Chapter VI: Relations of employers and employees

Chapter VI details about the relations of the employers and the employees and under this, various sub-headings were presented: 1. Employers' treatment 2. Problems faced with employers 3. Problem faced with employer's wife 4. Problem faced with employers' husband 5. Problem shared with others 6. Building closest relationship 7. Employer's husband treatment of domestic worker 8. Scolding by employers 9. Relationship with other members of family 10. Gifts or rewards received from employers 11. Termination from work 12. Resolutions of Association's Meetings

The study of the treatment of employers towards their employees shows that most of the women domestic workers did not experience any abuse nor harsh treatment from their employers and they have all stated that they worked in a desirable environment and they have high praises for the work environment that prevails in Mizoram. Even though most of the women domestic workers receive low income, they have stated that they are content in working in Mizoram due to the peaceful nature associated with it. However, there are only few women who have stated that they have bad experiences with their employers who would often scold them or shout at them due to the minor inconvenience caused by them. Even so, they refused to quit due to the bond and love they share with the children of their employers.

Majority of the women domestic workers have stated that they did not face any ill treatments or harsh treatments from their employers and have maintained healthy relationships with their employers. However, there are only few exceptions to some women who have stated that they have ill relations with their employers but hesitate to quit their work due to them not being able to find other jobs currently. These women have stated that when the odds are in their favour, they will leave eventually and find other works and that they are not in a position to talk back or stand up against their employers.

The wives of the employers have a rather soft spot for their employees as the study shows that most of the employees have maintained healthy relationships with their employers' wives. They formed a close bond with them and most often did not have much complains and negative issues with them. They are only a handful of women

who have ill relationships with the wives of their employers who all were unwilling to speak out the exact cause and nature of the reasons.

As against the absence of male figures in limited houses, most of the women domestic workers, who stayed in a household with male figures as head of the households have said that they were being treated with respect and loyalty and the employers' husbands exude kindness in their lives. They were never treated with abuse nor harsh tones were used towards them. They are, however, only some limited women who have said that they were occasionally being treated violently but did not want to further comment on this issue. Overall, most women domestic workers did not face any issues or harsh treatments from the employers' husbands.

Like any other human beings, women domestic workers often faced problems in many walks of life and when such unforeseen circumstances arrived, women domestic workers mainly share their problems with the employers' wives. These show that the women have more trust towards another women and share their problems to them and it also indicates that employers' wives are mostly kind towards their workers because if kindness and respect is absent, they would not share their problems with them. Secondly, women domestic workers mainly share their problems with the employers' daughters. Only a small fraction of the women has stated that they have shared their problems with the employers' husbands and some limited numbers of women have stated that they have never shared their problems and hardships with anyone and just kept their issues privately, without sharing it to anyone.

In terms of closeness, women domestic workers have built the closest relationships with their employers' wives to whom they confided to whenever issues arise in their lives. They also turn to them in terms of sorrows and women related health issues. The second closest relationship they built with is that of the daughter of the employers. The women have felt that other women understood their problems the best and so, confided and built stronger relationship more with the female members of the family as compared with the male family members. There are also few numbers of women domestic workers who did not form a close relationship with any

of the family members of their employers and just work professionally without building close bonds and relationships with anyone.

Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they are being treated nicely by their employers' husbands and most of them did not have any issue with them. Abuse is absent and scolding hardly ever occur from the men of the family but there are only some small numbers of women who did not wish to disclose any problems encountered with their employers' husbands.

In terms of scolding received by the women, most of the women domestic workers from both live-in and live-out have said that they received scoldings from their employers at least once in their working experiences. These scoldings erupted usually from the mistakes committed by the women domestic workers in the work that they do and not due to other reasons than that. However, there are also small numbers of women who have stated that they never received any kinds of scolding from their employers which show the genuine love from their employers. The working environment in Mizoram for domestic workers is still peaceful as violence and scoldings, including abuses hardly take place among them.

Building a close relationship with the family members of the employers is a key factor for living peacefully and working in a safe environment for women domestic workers. Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they built a strong relationship with all other members of the family. Issues with regards to hatred and conflict in the relationship between the women domestic workers and their employers are not observed and find out among most of the women domestic workers.

Most of the women domestic workers have expressed that they received gifts or rewards from their employers either in cash bonus or in kind. There are a limited number of women domestic workers who never received gifts other than their monthly income and some small number of women also chose not to disclose any information with regards to the gifts they received. In comparison, women domestic workers who are live-in receive more gifts or rewards as compared to live-out

women due to the bond shared between them and their employers by staying in their houses and building long-term connection with them.

In terms of job termination, most of the women domestic workers from both live-in and live-out categories were never fired from their job as a domestic worker. Only a small number of women were fired from their job which shows the professional ethics maintained by both the employers and employees in Mizoram and how the working condition presents a perfect scenario where both employers and employees share mutual respect and genuine relationship creating a perfect work-life balance leading to a smaller number of women domestic workers to experience termination from their jobs.

The Office Bearers and the members of the domestic women association in Mizoram had a regular and periodical meeting with the government of Mizoram and other concerned authorities to implement laws laid down for their protection and well-being. Besides, the association has taken steps to provide help and assistance to women domestic workers from facing abuse and violence in their workplaces and also take steps and measures to protect women domestic workers working abroad. The main steps taken by the association is to request and assist the government in providing better invigilation and license to all agencies within Mizoram so that youths going abroad will not face any problems.

As opposed to the study by Savita (1993), the employers have mostly talked positively of their employees and unhygienic and unprofessional attitudes of the employees have found to be absent in this study. Perez & Llanos (2017) have stated that the abuse faced by women domestic workers are largely unreported and the women domestic workers in this study have pointed that they have never experience any abuse from their employers in any way. Sachdeva & Arora (2018) have also stated that women domestic workers are paid less but forced to work beyond their working hours without proper breaks in between but this study shows that even though the workers are paid less, they enjoy timely and routinely break and resting periods between their jobs and they mostly have healthy relationships with their employers. As stated by Vanlaltlani (2019) in her work, there is a dire need for close

connection between association and women domestic workers as well as the concerned government in order to work out the best policy implications for women domestic workers. Currently, there is no proper relation between women domestic workers and the domestic workers association as many of the women do not even hear of the aforementioned association. So, there is a need to associate close bond between the two so that policy framework can be better framed for the women domestic workers.

Implications of the study

The policy recommendations required by women domestic workers are shown in this study through diagnosis of the various problems faced and experienced by women domestic workers in Mizoram.

The women domestic workers were asked about their opinion on the income received by them on a monthly basis and the answers to the questions were almost all equal. Even though many women have agreed that their income was enough, many other women on an almost equal basis have also said that they were not satisfied with the income that they received. At the same time, there were also many women who did not even know whether they are satisfied or not with the monthly income that they received. The income that they received were diverse and there is no fixation of income among women domestic workers in Mizoram. This shows that there is a dire need from the association to fix a regular income for all women domestic workers and also, the income fix should be based on the categories of the work that they engaged in and in this sense, the size of the families and size of the house may play an important role.

This study reveals whether women domestic workers were given regular day-offs by their employers and the findings show that most of the women domestic workers were given off-day on a regular basis. The benefits of having off-days show that workers were more efficient on their working days if day-off was given to them. Besides, most of the women domestic workers were given off-days on weekends by their employers and this shows that the association should lay down specific working

conditions for domestic workers which include the provision of regular off-days to women domestic workers in Mizoram.

When inquired about whether women domestic workers were given rest periods on their working hours, most of the respondents have claimed that they regularly enjoyed resting periods between their working hours and these periods usually last between one to two hours. This period led the women to have a refreshing mind and rest their aching bodies so that they can continue their jobs without much hesitation and effectively. Hence, the provision of resting periods is a must for all employers within Mizoram districts.

The findings under this category show that women employers were mostly in-charge of the work for women domestic workers and the workers themselves have little to no say in their daily chores and work. Women domestic workers should have more say in the work that they engage and should also contribute their opinions on choosing the kind of work that they do on a daily basis. This will build a closer connection between both the employers and the workers and will improve the working environment between the two as well.

In a surprising turn of event, most of the women domestic workers in Mizoram have never heard about the existence of domestic workers association in Mizoram which in turn shows that most women workers do not have any contact with the leaders of the workers association in Mizoram. This shows the need to publicly made aware of the existence of the association and take steps to improve the current working conditions and benefits for women domestic workers within the state.

Most of the women domestic workers in Mizoram do not register with the association for women domestic workers as they have never even heard about the existence in the first place. This makes it obvious as to why most of them are not registered with the association. The concerned authorities should make the public and the women workers of their existence and the whereabouts of the location of their office so that the women domestic workers in Mizoram can register with the association and come in close contact with them so as to improve the livelihood conditions and working conditions of all women domestic workers in Mizoram.

Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendations came to arrive through diagnosis of the problems and the offering of solutions to counter the various issues faced at the level of the women domestic workers within the state.

1. Employers in Mizoram should allot a fix working hour for women domestic workers in Mizoram and this allocation of working hours should be closely monitored by the concerned authorities.
2. If worked extra within the scope of working hours, overtime allowances should be given and provided to the workers.
3. The implementation of the rules laid down by the association with regard to working hours should be strictly invigilated and monitored and violators must be made to pay the prices.
4. The concerned authorities and association leaders must maintain a close tie and connection so that proper laws can be framed with regard to the safeguard of the working conditions of women domestic workers.
5. Vocational training centres should be opened for women domestic workers to sharpen their skills on domestic work and other skill training.
6. In these centres, housekeeping and its related services should be taught to the women workers so that they can work more efficiently in their employers' houses.
7. The concerned authorities should make sure that the public is aware of the existence of such centres so that more women can attend the training and also, there should be a proper guideline to the admission process and the skills taught at such centres should be properly framed by the concerned authorities so that the women can benefit most from such centres.
8. Proper health-care should be given to women domestic workers if the need arises.
9. The employers should make sure to cover the expenses of hospital visits and emergency medical need of their workers if the need arises.
10. The concerned authorities should set up GRO centre for women domestic workers so that they can submit their problems and grievances that they experience in their workplaces.

11. Meetings should be regularly held by the association leaders and the complaints received through GRO should be inspected and steps be taken so that the problems faced by women domestic workers can be solved effectively.
12. The association should fix proper income for all women domestic workers within Mizoram.
13. The association should make sure that all employers follow this system.
14. The income should be fixed based on the nature of work practiced by the women domestic workers and also, the income should depend on the duration of work engaged by the workers.
15. The association leaders should strictly invigilate the outcome of the policies framed in terms of income.
16. The employers should be made aware of the importance of day-off and resting periods for women domestic workers and hence, such periods should be provided to them so that the women can work more efficiently in their working hours.
17. The concerned authorities should amend the laws which prevent the experiences of facing both physical and mental abuse by the employers.
18. The onset of abuse should result in punishment in which all necessary steps be taken by the association leaders.
19. The existence of the association for domestic workers in Mizoram should be made more public and more women domestic workers should be encouraged to join the association so that better communication and grievances can be shared.
20. Proper employment systems should be followed in Mizoram with regard to the hiring of women domestic workers and proper steps and procedures be listed out by the association so that the hiring becomes more formal and official.

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