



Psychology of Domestic Servants - A Qualitative Research

¹**Bihisht Khanday**, *Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh, Noida*

bihishtkhanday@icloud.com

²**Dr. Mamata Mahapatra**, *Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh, Noida*

Abstract: Domestic workers constitute an important though neglected segment of the informal economy of developing societies, where the household labor supports the social, economic, and cultural organization. It is qualitative research that sheds light on their inner worlds in terms of emotions, perceptions, coping mechanisms, relationships, and self-identity, but does not focus on quantitative data. In-depth interviews and conversations through purposive sampling have been used to capture a variety of participants who differ in terms of age, gender, migration status, job type, and experience. Some of the themes covered were job satisfaction, employer relations (e.g., respect vs. discrimination), economic pressures, emotional wellbeing and future aspirations. Thematic analysis identified organic patterns based on responses. Early indications are of complicated, ambivalent feelings, which are caused by economic need, social stratifications, and treatment: insecurity, low self-worth, and invisibility versus pride and attachment with dignity being offered, with inequality awareness moderating these feelings. Social networks, religion, humor, and resilience were used as coping mechanisms. The identity, aspirations, and vulnerability are determined by structural factors such as poverty, low levels of education, early entry into workforce, migration, and gender norms, and tend to perceive work as survival with minimal chances of progress.

Keywords: *Domestic Servants, Qualitative Research*

1. Introduction

Domestic service is an old profession that has been practiced since the early homesteads up to the modern urban houses and is still dominant but unrecognized in policy, economics, sociology, and in the general discussion. Whereas other studies focus on wages, conditions, migration, and rights, the psychological inner worlds of domestic workers, feelings, thoughts, and identities were ignored. This qualitative research lends a voice to these silenced people, and it explores their experiences within the intimate hierarchical household.

In contrast to the formal workplaces, the households are a mixture of professional responsibilities and personal interactions, traditions, and emotional changes. Employees have to strike a balance between detachment, discipline, and responsiveness, which causes psychological tension in the context of unequal power relations.

Socioeconomic and Gender Influences

Many are forced into domestic work because of poverty, low levels of education, and lack of other options which is necessitated by economic need. This survival need may destroy self-esteem, ambitions, and drive, but it also brings stability, earnings, and pride to some, bringing meaning.

Gender plays a central role: The world has a female dominated domestic work, which is in line with the cultural expectations of women in the household. This undermines the work, and the vulnerabilities of the workforce are reinforced by the factors of class and migration, the long working hours, the loss of privacy, and the separation of the family, contributing to the emotional pressure.

Migration introduces new dimensions rural-urban or cross-border migration cuts off support systems, creating loneliness, homesickness, cultural dislocation, and language barriers. But it is a source of financial advantages and development.

Relationships, Hierarchy, Emotional Labor

Psychology is greatly influenced by employer-worker relationships. No contracts, fluid hours (informal arrangements) create uncertainty and anxiety. Courteous, understanding treatment enhances satisfaction and stability; disrespect or exploitation elicits stress, resentment and low self-worth.

The household hierarchies also support the class division by separating spaces or utensils, which entrench inequality. This can be absorbed by workers leading to resignation or it can be resented leading to frustration.

Emotional work requires one to restrain anger, grief, or fatigue to preserve the harmony, which is exhausting during maltreatment. On the positive, it can also create satisfying relationships with children or older people, but the lack of boundaries may lead to conflict, guilt, or shame.

Identity, Dignity, and Coping

Work shapes identity: Stigma can lead to embarrassment or secrecy, which is harmful to self-image. On the other hand, most of them take pride in family support, education of children or independence, and therefore stress resilience more than status.

Dignity--self-respect, recognition--prosperity with justice, inspires health; its destruction through humiliation causes distress.

Coping is based on social networks (friends, peers) to belong and be advised; religion/spirituality to hope; humor/storytelling to relieve; and goal setting (e.g., savings to education/business) to have purpose.

Invisibility in domestic houses underrates the contribution, which alienates the workers psychologically, but familiarity provides a sense of security. The lack of legal protection (no laws) increases vulnerability and stress; legal protection increases security.

The attitudes to culture are different, decent in one society, stigmatized in another, and they affect treatment and self-image.

1.1 Research Rational and Implication

This is best captured with qualitative methods that capture subjective lived realities through personal accounts as opposed to quantitative trends. Interviews permit genuine voices on feelings and meanings. This study contributes to the field of labor, creates awareness, and makes workers more human. It educates caring policies, family behavior, mental health care (counseling, groups), and empowerment training. Finally, the psychology of domestic workers reflects the greater inequalities, economic systems, norms, gender, power, and shows the human nature of labor beyond work.

2. Review of Literature

Kumari and Ali (2023): Emotional experiences of domestic workers in urban households. This qualitative study examined how domestic workers employed in middle, class urban households experience emotions. The research was based on interview data and identified several patterns in the reports of domestic servants. Most respondents report feelings of gratitude, anxiety and emotional exhaustion, however many also expressed feelings of

invisibility; they were unseen despite their long work hours. Respondents also expressed attachment to the children and elderly people in the household. Overall, the impact of qualitative relationships between services users and providers has a primary effect on the emotional health of domestic workers.

Sharma (2023): Domestic servants and self-identity. This research documents the process of construction of identity and self, perception by domestic servants. It shows that most of the workers define themselves by their work according to that work is demeaning and they have low self, confidence and self, esteem. Nonetheless some others take pride in working and earning money for their families. The study describes the complex identity and self, perception among domestic servants in terms of societal and individual factors.

Irfan (2023): Migration and psychological adjustment among domestic workers. This research explores the emotional adjustment of rural to urban migration amongst domestic workers. Results suggest that many migrant employees faced problems of loneliness, cultural estrangement, and emotional strain during the initial adjustment phase. Separation from family and close friends was a prominent stressor. Some participants soon learned to adapt by developing a support network and friendship groups amongst other workers. Overall, the research acknowledges the potential effects of migration on the emotional health and social self, perception of domestic workers.

Das (2023): Employer, employee relationships in domestic service. The author explores the connection between interpersonal interaction in homes and the psychological health of the domestic workers. According to the results, domestic workers who were treated respectfully and were listened to were usually satisfied with their job and remained stable emotionally. In contrast, the workers who were discriminated against, screamed at, and overworked felt humiliated and are prone to stress and depression. The author's main argument is that the emotional environment is key for the domestic workers' psychological well, being.

Mehta and Roy (2023): Coping mechanisms among female domestic workers: This study deals with the ways in which psychological stress is expressed and dealt with by women working in servitude. The findings suggested the use of social support groups, local support network including friends and family members and other domestic workers.

Religious, spiritual and casual beliefs emerged as a prevalent form of coping method. Humor, empathy and narration proved to be an effective way of battling tension and keeping oneself in check. This study emphasizes the significance of informal means of coping to keep mental healthy and strong.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Aim

This research targets qualitative research on the psychological life of domestics. It is more likely to discover the state of mind and thoughts of the domestic workers, the reflection of work, the relation to others, the coping mechanisms and who they are. It also aims at exploring how the social stratification, economic conditions, gender roles, and the migration backgrounds shape the daily life of the domestics.

3.2 Research Objectives

- a) To explore the emotional experiences of domestic servants in their day to day working situations.
- b) To explore the impact of employer, employee relations on the mental health of domestic servants.
- c) To examine how the application of emotional labor can be applied to regulate the emotional wellbeing of domestic workers.
- d) To examine how social, economic and cultural discourses influence the self-concept of domestic workers.
- e) To study the impact of migration and the dual gendered and insecure status of employment of domestic workers.

3.3 Operational Definitions

Domestic Servants: Domestic servant refers to individuals who are employed in a domestic setting with respect to employment, including cleaning, cooking, child minding, taking care of the elderly, or otherwise, who offer a service. This involves in-house and out-house employees, full-time or part-time.

Psychological Experiences: Experiences refer to the psychological responses of the internals; they encompass the feelings, attitudes, perception, thoughts, internal responses of the hired workers towards their work and their social environment, as well as the associated feelings of attachment, security and self-esteem.

Employer-Employee Relationship: This is the interactions, communication, treatment and general expectations that dominate the natural relationship that exists between domestic servants and their employers. It includes the employer-employee relationship in terms of respect and authority and emotional and conceptual facets.

Coping Strategies: The coping strategies refer to the methods used by domestic workers to survive the emotional pain, work-related stress and other issues. These methods are

in search of social support, in search of religious or spiritual comfort, humor, emotional distancing or future orientedness.

Social and Economic Context: This is a general situation that defines the lives of domestic workers like employment status, education, marital status, migration, gender expectations, employment terms and cultural expectations.

3.4 Research Questions

Since it is a qualitative study, it is structured around research questions and not statistical hypotheses.

- a) How will domestic servants feel about their workplace?
- b) What are the perceptions of the domestic servants towards their relationship with their employers and other members of the household?
- c) What is the reaction of domestic servants to the stress in the workplace?
- d) How does the social, cultural and economic environment impact on the psychological experience of domestic servants?
- e) How do the domestic servants perceive themselves, their dignity and future plan?

3.5 Research Design

The research design adopted in this study is qualitative and exploratory. This design will suit well considering that the purpose of the research is to elicit subjective experiences, feelings and personal meaning of being a domestic worker. Qualitative design allows the subjects to express their issues, experiences and feelings using their own language and therefore gives a deep insight into the psychological reality of another person.

It is a non-experimental and interpretative study. No effort is made to manipulate variables or test causal relationships, but the aim of analysis is to find themes and patterns of meaning that arise out of narratives. This will include thematic analysis so that psychological themes can be determined in the interviews.

The respondents were selected purposely to target individuals who had the pertinent experience of domestic work. The research concentrated on the experience of urban domestic servants of different age, gender and conditions of employment that offer a more holistic view of the psychological problem of domestic work.

Semi-structured interviews were used to get the information. Semi-structured interviews were used to ensure that the interview guide remained consistent and to encourage the respondents to share their personal experiences and views. The interviews covered the

working life of the participant, his/her relations with the superior, emotional problems, coping mechanisms and objectives.

The data were thematically analyzed. This was done by reading the responses in detail and then collating them or grouping them into similar responses where broad themes were created to communicate the psychological experience of the individuals. The thematic analysis primarily aimed at getting the voice of the participants as authentic as possible.

3.6 Sample

The current research consisted of domestic servants who were purposely and conveniently sampled. The subjects were of city dwellings and informal systems. The sample comprised of male and female domestic servants and live in and out domestic servants.

The sample size was determined based on the principles of qualitative research that are more concerned with the comprehensive information than the representation of any figures. The research involved the point of saturation of the themes i.e. no new major themes were emerging during the interviews. Every participant knew the nature of the research and all of them accepted to take part in the study.

3.7 Inclusion criteria

- a) Worked as house helps during the interview.
- b) The participants are expected to be 18 years and over.
- c) Must have worked in the domestic field over 6 months.
- d) Should be ready to share experiences and provide written permission.

3.8 Exclusion criteria

- a) The participants were under 18 years old.
- b) Respondents who are not currently employed.
- c) Those who declined to take part on personal grounds.
- d) Respondents who revoked their consent in the study.

3.9 Tools Used

A semi-structured interview schedule was the primary data collection tool. The interview schedule was developed following the review of the research available on domestic labor, informal employment and psychological well-being. The interview questions were drafted using simple and clear language to be comprehended by other people with various educational backgrounds.

The interview schedule questions were:

- a. Biography and motives of entering domestic work.

- b. Everyday job and household tasks.
- c. Family relationships and employer relationships.
- d. Attitudes to work and other employees.
- e. The way you handled your emotions and other people in your life.
- f. Who and what assisted you to reach your personal ambitions.

The research supervisor checked the instrument to ascertain the appropriateness of the instrument, relevance and understandability of the instrument. A pilot interaction was conducted with a limited number of participants, to observe whether the questions were comprehensible and that there were no problems in responding to them.

3.10 Procedure

The participants were then reached using personal contacts and community-based networks on completion of the research design and interview schedule. The participants were informed about the objectives of the study in a lay manner. The participants were told that the participation was voluntary and could be canceled at any moment.

Informed consent was obtained before the interview by the researcher. The interview was conducted at home of the participants, within the comfort of their surrounding community. Each interview lasted 30-45 minutes.

The interviews were either audio taped (with the consent of the interviewee) or they were written down in cases where audio recording was not possible. The obtained data were transcribed and sorted to be analyzed. The data was thematically analyzed with the aim of determining common themes, recurrent feelings, and interesting psychological themes across the data.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Every respondent signed an informed consent before taking part in the interviews. The participants were informed about the objectives of the research and that they were free to drop out.

The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were always guaranteed and pseudonyms were used to identify the participants. Quotes etc. had identifiable information removed.

All interviews with the participants were conducted in a very careful and sensitive manner keeping in view the comfort levels of the individuals. No one was pressured to respond to any questions that were not comfortable. The responses provided by the respondents were not utilized in any other way other than academic/research.

4. Data Analysis

Qualitative Study of the Psychology of Domestic Servants

The qualitative analysis of the interview text records a very complicated psychological image of the economic vulnerability, structural power, emotional persistence and survival. Having read and applied the codes to the framework of the text of the nine domestic workers methodically, it is possible to see several patterns. These trends demonstrate the meaning of domestic workers concerning their work, self, others, stress, and future. The following qualitative analysis incorporates the personal narratives of the domestic workers into interpretative commentary.

Work as Survival, Not Choice

In the interview process, the respondents place domestic work in the context of need rather than work. Some of the interviewees summarize their choice to take up domestic work because of poverty, widowhood, divorce, poor spousal compensation and/or migration. Work has a psychic meaning that is directed towards necessity.

This survival orientation defined work relationships which are functional and not dreamlike. Employees do not refer to passion or growth but emphasize responsibility and duty. The emotion of the theme of responsibility is that of resignation with heroic struggle. Employees are constantly emphasizing the feeling of being forced or having no choice or necessity to cope in some way.

At the psychological level, this implies a coping-based acceptance. The menu of alternatives is as open as there are no perceived dissatisfaction options. Rather than criticizing structural injustice, workers learn to establish endurance as a virtue, basing themselves in sacrifice and obligation.

The Body as a Work and Stress Space

One of the qualitative themes is a consistent embodiment of labor. Respondents discuss being tired, having back pain, aches everywhere, and standing all the time. The centrality of how physically demanding housework is is systematic.

However, the psychological consequences of physical exhaustion are more than fatigue. The body is a place of perseverance. The employees are taught to think of pain as a normal thing in life. Phrases: constant motion, minimal rest and feeling exhausted demonstrate the integration of physical and emotional energies.

Interestingly, the majority does not show much anger towards their physical work requirements but rather embraces it as a matter of fact (see above). The body is controlled via

a way of knowing (Galasi, 2012). The chronic fatigue appears to affect mood, and the emotional room is filled with fatigue and lack of time.

Power Relationship and Emotional Insecurity

One of the qualitative themes was the problem of hierarchical inequality in employer relationships. Some of the workers had stories of authoritative or contemptuous tones towards them. Several respondents mentioned being publicly reprimanded, accused and criticised.

Some of the feelings that we would anticipate are embarrassment, humiliation, anxiety and low self-esteem. When they are treated with disrespect, employees would continue to keep their silence as they are afraid of losing their jobs. The best strategy to survive is to keep quiet.

This is a psychologically articulated expression of limits that are put around agency. When faced with actual injustice, employees must overcome the urge to feel punished and bitter so that they can work and make a living. This is a conflict between dignity and money, which is conveyed in a hierarchical manner using emotion. In comparison, the participants who mentioned respectful employers were emotionally stable and happy. This once again is the manifestation of the psychological well-being based on the nature of relations and not load.

Fear as a Perennial Emotional Substratum

The theme of fear is present in the stories, fear of losing a job, fear of being marginalized, fear of being reprimanded and fear of delayed salaries. This prolonged indecision leads to anxiety of foreboding or anticipation. Some of the employees even report about the mental strain it has even before their employment. The day does not begin with an indifferent anticipation of what is to be, but with concern.

The qualitative texture of this fear is sensitive yet permanent. It does not necessarily break into a crisis: It is a background state of feeling. This implies that labor within the informal framework of the domestic labor is psychologically unstable. Their vulnerability is further enhanced by the absence of contracts and job security. The employees generalize anxiety, hyper-alertness and self-monitoring to be adaptive.

Economic Poverty and Mental Stress

Lack of savings and income was the biggest cause of stress. The most frequent issues that were reported by the respondents include daily costs, crises, and failure to save. There are also the non-monetary implications of financial problems that affect peace of mind, sleep and future planning. Employees are defined as a daily mental computation of rent, food, school or medical bills.

Cognitive load is also caused by financial insecurity. Their psychological orientation is always obsessed with the sense of deficiency. Such scarcity mentality also affects and mood states, which tend to increase worry and stress. Even the ones who report manageable income said that they are worried about uncertainty. Thus, the possible unsteady flow of economic sustainability of one is what indicates economic vulnerability rather than the level of his/her income.

Erosion and Maintenance of Self-Confidence

Constant condemnation and inability to appreciate appears to have reduced the self-esteem of some of the respondents. In some interviews, some respondents stated that they felt small, not powerful or less confident. This is qualitatively to mean that identity is relational. Workers had self-esteem when treated with respect, and when rebuked or mistrusted, the self-esteem declines.

However, there was self preservation. Although they are vulnerable, most of them are said to be good workers, strong, and responsible. This is a sign of how the treatment in degraded ways will jeopardize the confidence, but another layer of narrative will help the person maintain their identity and personhood. The combination of low confidence and self-predicted strength are indications of more subtle psychological processes and not any all-or none impairment.

Emotional Anchors of Coping Mechanisms

Nevertheless, despite these challenging conditions, coping mechanisms employed by these participants are that they are adjusting to their situations by communicating with their families, praying, listening to music or sharing with neighbors. Faith or religion has been especially applicable in situations where the workers are estranged by the social fabric. Prayer is not a ritual only, but an emotional refuge. It is a fount of peace, endurance and patience. Neighbors or siblings are alternative networks in the society since they are relied on by immigrant workers or those who are not living with their families.

Coping behaviors also appear to have two functions, qualitatively, Emotional release (taking the tension off temporarily). Reminding him/herself of his/her inner strength (identity reassurance). Employees who lack social support say that they cry alone and fall inside, which is more burdened. Psychological resilience depends on the presence or absence of social support.

Responsibility as Identity Core

One of the themes is responsibility, which is positive and strong. In one way or another, almost every woman identifies herself as, by nature, reliable and hard working. Working on the

gender divide, be it assisting in the cost of raising a child, or making your own way, becomes what you are. Responsibility is a psychological role of meaning-making. It makes pain purposeful. Employees do not view themselves as victims. They consider themselves as providers.

This is an identity orientation that fosters endurance. The self-motivation is founded on relationships and is made possible by the internal dialogue "I have to be strong because of my family. Thus, although the circumstances outside are oppressive, there are internally stories that bring hope.

Difference in Psychological Results

The qualitative data is diverse in terms of the experience that is described as there are workers who have suffered deep emotional trauma such as feelings of humiliation and fear and those who have been able to cope with work loads and respectful employers. This difference indicates that the domestic work does not have a psychological homogeneity. The contributing factors include, Employer behavior; Number of households served; Social support availability; The content of personal circumstances in relation to health. (e.g. widowhood, migration, divorce and other personal life circumstances).

During safe meetings, the participants report that they are emotionally stable and confident. During aggressive gatherings, the members report that they are nervous, and that they do not feel confident. What then comes out is the picture that psychological results are mediated by relations and not by structure.

Hopes of Decency and Solidity

Dignity is the common thread that cuts across all the interviews. Employees desire respect, good livelihood, a regular pay, and reduced stress. The demands are not excessive indeed. There is nothing fanciful that is put forward, ease, tenderness and familiarity. This proves the point that basic psychological needs, eg respect, safety, signposting are inherent.

The emotional exhaustion caused by precarity is deceived by the desire to live a peaceful life and be treated with respect (64). Aspirations are a type of psychological hope in that they drive the individual towards a future that he or she is heading to and in the process prevent hopelessness.

Integrative Psychological Interpretation

The qualitative analysis brings out a paradox of weakness and power. Although they are entrenched in the economic need and social inequality, domestic servants maintain themselves by being accountable, religious and relationship strength.

Three general psychological processes are created:

- a. **Endurance Under Constraint:** The workers adapt to structural inequality by internalizing silence and patience; to work without inquiring why to survive.
- b. **Relational Influence on Self-Esteem:** The employer behavior has a direct influence on confidence and emotional health.
- c. **Resilience By Meaning:** Identity as provider and survivor improves psychological resilience.

Their narratives emphasize the fact that domestic labor is not merely physical but an emotional journey of power, insecurity, and dignity. The qualitative findings reveal that the psychology of the domestic helper is an outcome of economic necessity, power relations, financial insecurity and emotional patience. Fear, fatigue and low self-esteem are alongside perseverance, obligation and optimism.

The psychological defense is achieved through internal coping and social support that helps to cushion the impact of such structural vulnerabilities and, eventually, stress and fear levels. One of these ways is the respectful treatment.

5. Results and Discussion

The quantitative findings of the research provide a general, quantitative view of the psychological experiences of domestic servants, which they found to be mediated by economic hardship, work-related conflict, emotional and psychological well-being, identity, and coping strategies. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that domestic labor which is synonymous with mechanical or minimum work is deep in its psychological connotations that are mediated by structural disadvantages and social relations. Through thematic interpretation of the interview excerpts, I was able to come up with several related themes that can be inferred through the lives of the domestic employees.

Among the main problems that the accounts have revealed, there is the fact that the entry into domestic work was economically forced, not desired. The participants all repeatedly talked about their involvement in domestic work as a need that was predetermined by poverty, literacy, widowhood, divorce or migration, and domestic work was viewed as the simplest or even the only form of work they could find. The necessity to enter the work has several implications. The necessity, as opposed to personal desire, of the work, dictates how the individual perceives the work, how the workplaces him or her, and how he or she thinks of the working relationship. Work can become instrumental, a tool of keeping the family alive, instead

of an environment where intrinsic motivation might thrive. This work orientation appears to give individuals a sense of responsibility and an attitude of conscious persistence which seems to internalize endurance as a virtue.

The other important outcome is related to the physically intense and monotonous character of household work. Most of the participants stated that they spent long hours with constant motion, standing, lifting, washing, cooking, and cleaning, with little breaks. Physical exhaustion came out not only as a physical experience but as a mental condition. Chronic fatigue seems to diminish emotional energy and exposes one to stress. Employees reported that they went home with sore bodies and mentally exhausted, which means that physical and emotional stress were combined. This relationship implies that the physical needs of household work cannot be detached of the psychological health. In the long-term, chronic exhaustion can also be a cause of irritability, depressed mood, and loss of self-confidence.

Three of the most significant sources of stress among the workers seemed to be insecurity and financial precariousness as participants talked about fears of losing their job, being replaced or not paid on time. The lack of written contracts and dysregulation was also a source of insecurity and consequently, contributed to the overall anxiety of the worker concerning compensation. Financial precarity contributed to the constant anxiety of the workers regarding their capability to satisfy the regular financial needs and be ready to face the sudden spending. The financial instability explains the empty feeling and the worry about the future that is present on a regular basis on a large percentage of workers. Even those employees who believed that they had a manageable income, still felt a certain feeling of insecurity. This implies that it is not only the issue of monetary deprivation, but also unpredictability.

The latter also played an important role in predicting psychological outcome. Employees who felt that their interactions were civil and respectful reported to feel at ease, confident and satisfied with their jobs. Employees who characterized laborsaving saving as scolding, disrespectful and humiliating experienced embarrassment, inferiority and anxiety. Within the framework of the asymmetrical power dynamics inherent in domestic service, employees could not express indignation, and instead passively accepted it, being overwhelmed by the fear of being fired. This example underscores the fact that the way workers are relationally treated (with dignity and respect as opposed to harshly and disrespectfully) is a predictor of psychological wellbeing.

Another important theme is also raised about the internalized sense of social rank in people. Other participants said that they felt small, helpless, or less-than when they were

associated with hostility or unfair scolding. It seems that in the case of repetitive driving against one sexual schema, the feeling of inferiority can be gradually (though unconsciously) fixed in the self-concept. However, the descriptions of others appear to show reverse indications of conquering internalized inferiority. A lot of individuals concurrently described themselves as being hardworking, responsible, or strong. This apparent paradox shows the complexity of the psychology of man. Outside verbal/behavioral therapy can provisional psychological boundaries, yet the attitudes of strength are sustained (sometimes as the human resistance of a person). External/internal, self/other...identity is a negotiation that is never ending.

The predominant theme in every interview was emotional strain. Employees said that they were nervous prior to work, overwhelmed when they performed their duties and angry when they got negative feedback. Some of the workers said that they were anticipatory anxious because they expected to be reprimanded even before they went to work. Emotional strain appears to be cumulative, as opposed to episodic. It builds up through time as employees are subjected to a sequence of stressors, which are minor, but they include mean words, suspicious bosses, food insecurity and lack of recognition. Since employees lack formal means of making complaints and criticism, such emotional pressure must have no outlet.

The coping strategies depicted the weaknesses of the participants and the possible sources of their strengths. Some of the respondents sought the solace and support of their family members, siblings, neighbors or friends. Talking about their experiences appeared to reduce the emotional burden and offered confirmation. To others, faith and prayer were the most important coping styles; the spiritual beliefs not only reflected their religion but also offered an emotional safe haven where the hope and patience were based on faith. In the cases where social support was not provided, some of them would cry alone or repress their feelings. These results imply that the psychological outcomes largely depend on the social supports that the individual was exposed to; social attachment is a well-known buffer to stress.

But there is another important discovery which concerns the centrality of responsibility to identity. The respondents referred to themselves as caregivers and providers. These are things of pride, paying their children to school, contributing their portion of the household costs, or even surviving under the tough circumstances. Their labor has a meaning when they are responsible. It is even during hard times that when one knows that the effort will help him or her support his or her family, he or she will be motivated to continue. The identity of being a hardworking, strong individual appears to offer some shield against complete emotional meltdown. Obviously, meaning making alleviates suffering by guided endurance.

The other determinants of psychological conditions are gender and life situation. Widowed, divorced and migrant workers said they felt more vulnerable because they were not socially supported or economically dependent. Migration brings about increased isolation and adaptation to a new environment, and widows or divorcees have more responsibility to shoulder on their own. Such transitions increase stress but also cause empowerment and resilience. Through these narratives, it is possible to see how personal life histories and professional careers interact to shape psychological conditions.

The desire to have dignity, security and to be treated with respect became a powerful, driving force. Obsession with massive wealth or celebrity was not demonstrated; all the players desired was well remunerated hours, consistency and love on the part of the employers and less passion. This humility is an example of the extreme of unproclaim human needs of acceptance and confirmation. Dignity (what it means to be a human being) is a psychologically inherent value; workers emphasize the importance of respect as an indicator of self-worth, "kind words mean just as much as paycheck."¹

The findings also show the differences that are experienced. The women in the study did not all experience a sense of being overwhelmed and having intense feelings of misery. People who were employed in a supportive and respectful environment had a better experience, as they felt comfortable and satisfied. This difference means that the domestic work as such is not harmful, but the results can be shaped more by the surrounding and the conditions of the employment, which are predetermined by the job, the character of the employer and the social networks around the home, and not always by the practices of the worker. This delicacy breaks the homogeneity of the original hypothesis and enables a more progressive comprehension upon which to unravel the issues.

Based on these narratives it is evident that the psychological lives of domestic servants are embedded in structural inequality in the informal employment. Economic stress, absence of contracts, and the pecking order of the domestic environment all create circumstances of vulnerability. Agents dominate their tales of emotional control, comfort finding and building identities of power. No one is simply a victim.

The results of this research are in line with the overall psychological model of stress and coping. Combination of high demands and low perception of control is chronic stress. MSE and Koseeta domestic workers are always in high demand and low control thus, they are prone to psychological strain. Nevertheless, there is some negative impact buffered by high coping resources such as faith, family and responsibility.

The other graduate that will be discussed is emotional labor. Housewives are required to serve physically, as well as emotionally. They must remain amiable and submissive to their employers despite being subjected to unfair insults or humiliation and being angry or sad. This kind of emotion control is not easy, and it takes a lot of emotional and cognitive resources. In fact, the inability to control emotions all the time is associated with fatigue, which can, in the long run, cause low self-esteem and internalization of pressure.

The other trend that was observed based on the findings was the importance of feeling recognized: Feeling unappreciated was a common reason to be demotivated. Appreciation does not just confirm the effort one has put in work but also recognizes the identity of the worker. Motivation of workers declines when they are neglected and made to feel unappreciated. Self-confidence and job satisfaction are both increased when the workers are treated with a courtesy appreciation. The consequences of generosity have never been better illustrated.

Overall, the discussion and the findings indicate a multidimensional psychological reality. The economy, physical exhaustion, relationship power disparities, and money management, are economically, physically, relationally, and financially constrained, which create stress and abject vulnerability. But fear, faith, family and friends, and the dream of human dignity are the sources of strength. Suffering and power go hand in hand.

Overall, in this study, it is possible to demonstrate that these domestic workers are ultimately not workers, but people, caught in circumstances full of emotional swings, influenced in their heads by treatments, stability, and recognition. Improved work experience, timely and equitable payment, more respectful employees, communication with the workers would go a long way in their mental well-being. Their testimonies emphasize that dignity maintenance is not a luxury but a necessity. These testimonies in many ways are testimonies to those worlds in the lives of invisible workers that must be seen, punted, respected and given structural security.

6. Conclusion

The general purpose of this qualitative research has been to learn the psychological worlds of domestic workers by exploring their daily descriptions of lived experience, emotional life, social relations, coping and future strategies. The indications of the evidence of narratives of interview accounts point to a subtle and humanized description of the psyches of domestic workers that are immersed in social and structural forces that create socio-economic dependence, social stratification, emotional acceptance and individual agency.

To a large extent, what we found through the research is reminiscent of the classical anthropological perspectives according to which paid domestic work was a necessity and a limitation to most of the individuals we researched. The main reasons provided as the reasons to leave home and join the paid system were poverty, low education levels, widowhood, divorce, migration, and absence of other employment opportunities. This just, scarcely, management oriented approach to work influenced the psychological meaning that they gave to it, where the paid system was a means of duty and perseverance to family well-being, not a means of self-expression. This orientation resulted in good attributes such as commitment and self respect but also made it difficult to consider paid work independently and dictated when paid work was not a choice that negative experiences and dissatisfaction had to be repressed, however much one might believe the case that hardships were inevitable. Economic subjugation transcends history; it is a part of the experience of people of themselves and of the world.

In fact, the contribution of the physical labor of the domestic labor cannot be undermined. The causes of chronic tiredness include, among others, the need to work long hours, do repetitive jobs, stand all day and do not have time to relax and take a break. The emotional exhaustion is connected to the physical one. Often, participants stressed the fact that they were too exhausted after returning home, physically and emotionally exhausted. Perhaps, the chronic fatigue at a daily level will result in decreased emotional strength and predisposition to stress. The body is transformed into a site of stamina, and the consequences of stamina are incorporated into the ordinary world of daily existence. The fact that pain is a constituent of work is not only an adaptation but also the recognition of the limited space to work with when it comes to relaxation and rest after the work.

One of the psychological stressors that were found during the project was financial uncertainty. Lack of contract and low cause workers to be in a constant insecure state.

References

- Anderson, B. (2000). *Doing the dirty work? The global politics of domestic labour*. Zed Books.
- Arlie, R. H. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. University of California Press.
- Boris, E., & Parreñas, R. S. (2010). *Intimate labors: Cultures, technologies, and the politics of care*. Stanford University Press

- Chen, M. A. (2012). The informal economy: Definitions, theories and policies. *WIEGO Working Paper No. 1. Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing*.
- England, K., & Stiell, B. (1997). They think you're as stupid as your English is: Constructing foreign domestic workers in Toronto. *Environment and Planning A*, 29(2), 195–215.
- Glenn, E. N. (2010). *Forced to care: Coercion and caregiving in America*. Harvard University Press
- Hochschild, A. R. (2000). Global care chains and emotional surplus value. In W. Hutton & A. Giddens (Eds.), *On the edge: Living with global capitalism* (pp. 130– 146). Jonathan Cape.
- International Labour Organization. (2011). *Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No. 201 concerning decent work for domestic workers*. ILO.
- International Labour Organization. (2021). *Making decent work a reality for domestic workers: Progress and prospects ten years after the adoption of Convention No. 189*. ILO.
- Kabeer, N. (2000). *The power to choose: Bangladeshi women and labour market decisions in London and Dhaka*. Verso.
- Lan, P. C. (2006). *Global Cinderellas: Migrant domestics and newly rich employers in Taiwan*. Duke University Press.
- Parreñas, R. S. (2001). *Servants of globalization: Women, migration, and domestic work*. Stanford University Press.
- Rollins, J. (1985). *Between women: Domestics and their employers*. Temple University Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1975). *Helplessness: On depression, development, and death*. W. H. Freeman.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications
- World Health Organization. (2022). *Mental health at work: Policy brief*. WHO.