

# Impact of Covid 19 outbreak on housemaids in Pimpri Chinchwad

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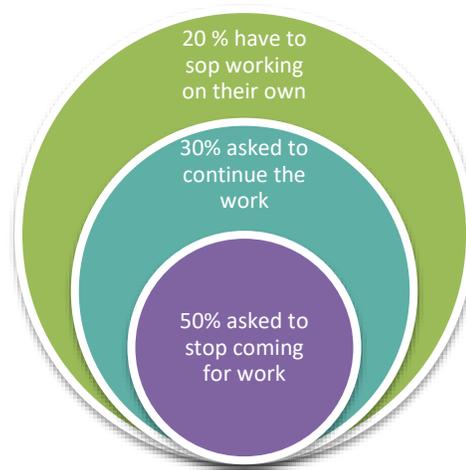
## Abstract

The first case of the COVID-19 pandemic in India was reported on 30 January 2020, originating from China. As of 21 May 2020, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have confirmed a total of 112,359 cases, 45,300 recoveries (including 1 migration) and 3,435 deaths in the country. India currently has the fourth largest number of confirmed cases in Asia with number of cases breaching the 100,000 mark on 19 May 2020. The outbreak has been declared an epidemic in more than a dozen states and union territories, where provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 have been invoked, and educational institutions and many commercial establishments have been shut down. India has suspended all tourist visas, as a majority of the confirmed cases were linked to other countries. In this situation many of the societies and residential areas have asked the household maids to stop coming due to the corona outbreak. As we all know every coin has two sides, one side is these maids are asked to stop coming for work but on the other hand what about their livelihood. Many of them were having these works as a only source of earnings. Considering this the researcher interviewed 100 house hold workers from Pimpri – Chinchwad to find out how the corona virus and subsequent lockdown has impacted the life of the housemaids.

House helps are an indelible part of everyone`s life, and COVID-19 pandemic has caused several to leave their jobs with homes they had been working in for decades. When asked various surprising situation were shared by these maids which can be more clearly illustrated with the help of graphs and charts. Total 100 housemaids were interviewed personally where the questions related to their per month earnings, understanding their income condition, current situation, staying and health conditions and many other issues which are faced by them.

The respondents were very candid during the interaction and shared how they are facing new challenge everyday. Now the uncertainty about when all this condition will be normalized is creating a tremendous stress on them. Even many of them are planning to go back to their hometown. Many of the maids said that the few of the owners are paying them partly every month but till when they will pay is again a question mark. Normally these maids work for 3 to 4 houses for the daily work such as sweeping, dusting, washing cloths and utensils' etc.

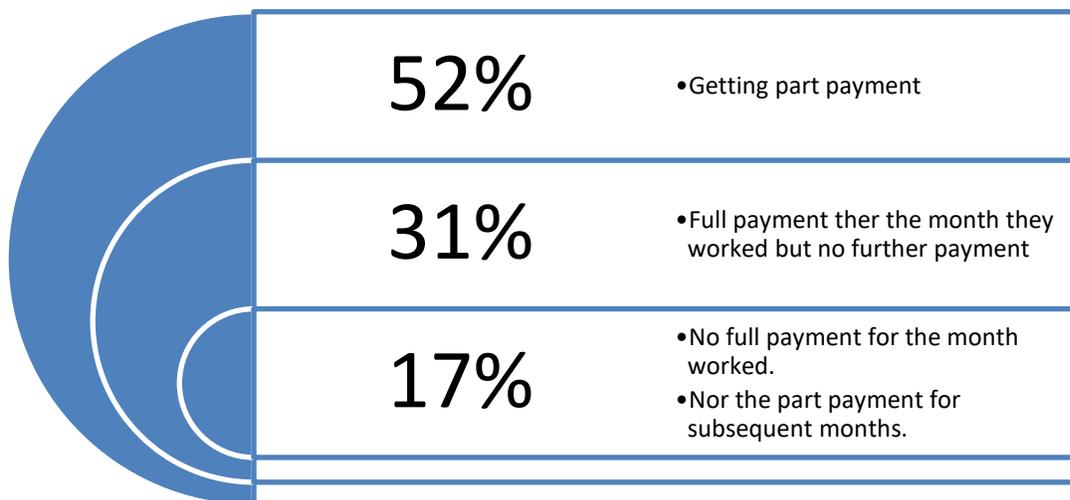
The respondents were asked that from when they have stopped working and how the response is illustrated in the below graph, where 50% of the respondents are saying that they were asked to stop coming by the owners from the week starting from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 itself. 30% respondents were continuing their work for a long but ultimately they also need to stop when societies have restricted the entries. But surprisingly 20 % respondents said that the owners were willing to continue them for work but the maids have to take a call and stop working due to the fear of the virus.



52% respondents said that they are getting part payment ranging from 50% to 70% from their owners though they have stopped working since last 2 months. They also shared that they are getting this part payment from the families where they were working from too long.

31% said that they have received full payment for the month of March though they have stopped working from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020 but after that no payment is been received.

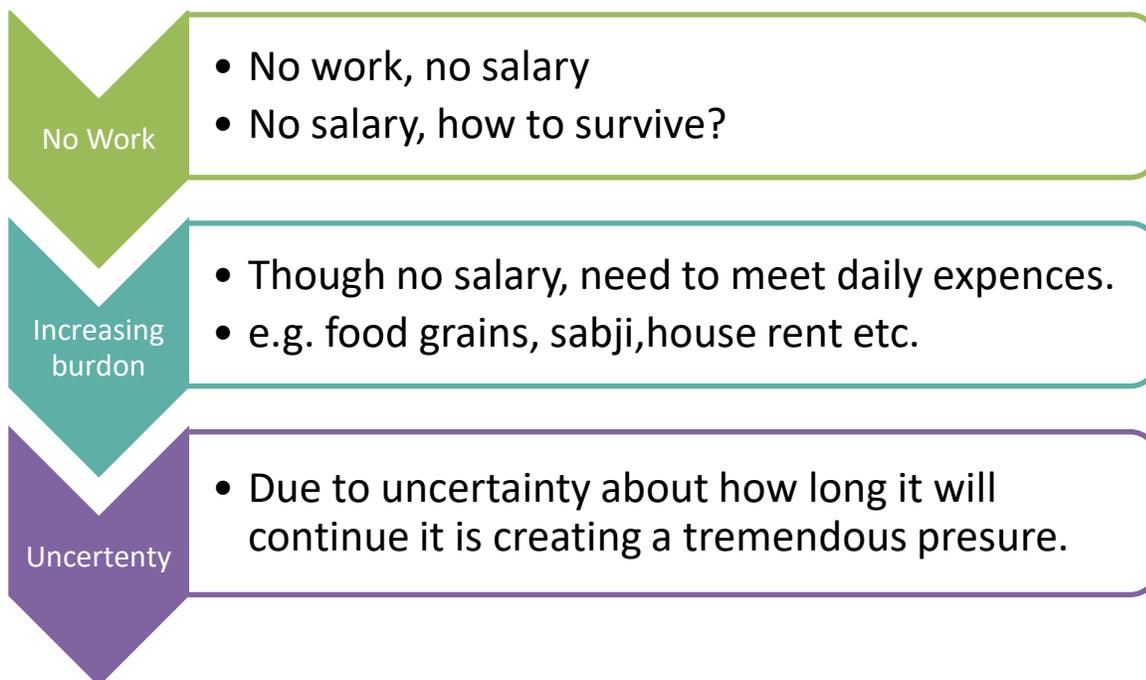
17% said that they have neither received the full payment for March nor the part payment for subsequent months.



When asked about their income level they said that on an average they are earning from 10,000 rupees to 15,000 rupees every month from these house hold work and contributes a major share in their livelihood. Domestic work in India falls under the category of unregulated and under paid work. Most of the domestic workers do not have any legal contract with their employers. This leaves them at the mercy of the employer who may choose to pay or deny to pay during unpaid leave. Modern lifestyle, leisure and growing participation of women in the labour market has resulted in growth in demand and dependence on domestic workers in urban areas.

It was observed that the living conditions of these maids are also not safe, the area where they are living is very much congested and maintain social distancing seems to be highly impossible. Even they are not very much aware about the safety measures to be followed. Many of the respondents also shared that they are planning to return back to their hometowns as they don't have any work as of now and can't maintain the daily expenses of the city.

On the top of this few of them said that the domestic violence is also increasing during this period and they have to face the heat.



5% of the respondents shared that they are having all together a different fear as they were working for a family who frequently travel abroad and now they are worrying that are they going to get infected with this deadly disease which is alarming. Since Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modiji announced the 21-day lockdown, which has now been extended until May

31, the plight of migrant workers due to the lockdown has been widely reported. Thousands of people, starving and jobless are stranded with little support in cities across the country. However, many stories will remain out of the purview of mainstream media and lost in the constant barrage of the corona virus-related news. When asked to one of the respondents, if he knew about the virus and the current restrictions in place. She said she did, and her employers had given her a mask for protection. She accepted that it was a really difficult situation but that there was no other option but to leave.

Now as the restrictions are bit relaxed, the respondents are having a hope that their routine work will start and they will get back on track soon.

To conclude we can say that, we must respect the domestic workers and try to help them as much as possible because they are struggling for living not for enjoying and it is really difficult for them to live if we as a responsible citizen of India don't pay them on time.

#### SUGGESIONS

1. All the owners or employers of domestic maids at least should pay half of the payment though they are not working.
2. Government should take initiative for this strata of the society.
3. As a social responsibility some sort of funding or provision should also be made under CSR.

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#### AUTHORS PROFILE



**MPM, Pursuing M.Phil. from SPPU**  
**10 years experience in Training and Placements**  
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**Taking care of end to end campus placements and Corporate Interface of MBA@IICMR. Making the students job ready and place them in respective companies according to their specialization is taken care by the Corporate Relations team.**

**Here my core expertise are to guide the student to decide their career goals understand their potential and areas of concern which may become barrier during the campus placement process and their final placement.**

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