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**THE PLIGHT OF MAIDS IN RELATION TO  
EXPLOITATION AND DOMESTIC AGGRESSION:  
A CASE STUDY OF NAKURU MUNICIPALITY**

*A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree (Sociology)  
of The University of Nairobi.*

**By:**

**Jospeter Mugambi Mbuba**

**1997**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Jospeter Mugambi Mbuba, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not, to the best of my knowledge, been presented for examination in any other University.

Jospeter Mugambi Mbuba  
Sign.

12/6/97  
Date

This thesis has been submitted with my approval as a University Supervisor.

Erasto Muga  
Prof. Erasto Muga

12/6/97  
Date



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## **ABSTRACT**

In this report, the researcher presents the findings of a study investigating the factors behind mistreatment of maids by their employers. The study was carried out from November 1994 to February 1995 in Nakuru Municipality, Nakuru District.

Realising that there is no one overall theory of exploitation and aggression, the study was based on two theoretical perspectives; the theory of aggression and the Marxist Social Class Theory. A number of distinct areas were covered in the literature review, including the entire realm of domestic violence where, it was deemed, aggression and general mistreatment of maids lie.

It was found that literature on domestic violence is dominated by a few strands of thought. These include child abuse, spouse battering, incest, abuse of the elderly and marital rape.

General literature on maids' predicaments was addressed and this includes employers' suspicion on maids, maids' salaries, maids and discipline, their ignorance on their own rights and privileges and emotional insecurity. Literature on maids outside the Kenyan context was also reviewed, as well as the provisions of the law on general mistreatment.

The study assumed 'prima facie' that maids cannot be aggressors, hypothesising that maids background together with the characteristics of the employer constitute the key factors that may explain the maid's tribulations.

The research design was an intra-municipality survey. An interview schedule was developed as the principal research instrument and this was administered to a total of 104 maids in 10 residential estates, their respective 104 employers and 14 children in some of these families. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, and the Gamma coefficient is the major tool used in analyzing this information.

Data were presented in simple frequencies, then followed a comprehensive cross-tabulation analysis and interpretations. These cross-tabulations revealed the following major findings:

1. Higher achiever maids in terms of formal education have an easier life than those with very low or no education at all.
2. Maids who have the same religion and ethnicity as the employer are more vulnerable to acts of mistreatment than those who differ in these respects. Those who are related to the employer by either blood, marriage or adoption are the most hit by the incidence of mistreatment.
3. There is a continuum with respect to intensity of mistreatment from single maids through single mother maids to the married maids. Married maids are mistreated the least.

4. Marital status of the employer influences mistreatment of maids in the following order: Divorced employers are the most aggressive followed by the never-married, then the married. Widowed employers are the least known in mistreating maids.

5. Low education of employers leads to low salaries for maids, although it does not necessarily bring about other aspects of mistreatment.

The study concludes that different backgrounds of maids bring about different levels of mistreatment, and that the socio-economic characteristics of the employer constitute a major factor in mistreatment. The study recommends a change of attitude by employers towards maids.

# **CHAPTER ONE. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Families are supposed to be oases of love where good feelings flow from each member. They are havens from an uncaring, impersonal world, a place where love and security prevail.

Unfortunately, this lovely picture is not accurate. Violence seems as typical of family interaction as love. Family members physically abuse each other far more often than do non-related individuals. "The presence of tension and discord can be found in all families at various phases in the family life cycle" (Eitzen *et. al.*, 1989:398). However, this is at varying degrees of intensity.

Starting with slaps and going on to torture and murder, the family provides a paramount setting for various forms of physical violence. Hence the saying that "love paradoxically gives the power to hurt" (Gelles and Straus, 1979), in (Burr, *et. al.*, 1979:549-81).

(Eitzen *et.al.*,1989:415) observe that "the bonds between wife and husband, parent and child, and adult child and parent are based on love, yet for many, these bonds represent a trap in which they are victims of unspeakable abuses". This family friction does not spare servants including maids.

In Kenya, in both rural and urban areas, maids form a clique of people which has been known to suffer physical, Psychological, economic and emotional trauma from their employers, the very fact of very little pay incommensurate with their efforts and duties notwithstanding. Besides, the little remuneration given to them is also delayed as a characteristic trend.

Maids are the most talked about by their employers in mirthful gossips, though never discussed on a positive note (Mwakisha, 1991.v).

Pertinently, aggression on maids ranges from simple facts of ignoring their interests, through denial of time off over the weekend to either visit their friends/lovers or go to church, vitriolic comments about them especially in presence of visitors to physical battering, and to a lesser extent mutilation with sharp and dangerous weapons.

They are known to be overloaded with all known domestic duties, over-worked during off

duty hours of the night without overtime emoluments, people whose rights are so suppressed that they can be hired and fired the same week, if not day.

They are people who, it is alleged, do not know any weekend or public holiday in terms of being on duty. In fact, they work most during these days while the employer is around and so can supervise duty at close quarters. They sometimes work up to twenty hours a day, seven days a week at a range of domestic tasks for little or no pay (Weeremunde, 1982, and Onyango, 1988:162).

The maid is also expected to be pacing up and down as a messenger always on errands. It is alleged that maids' backgrounds and temperaments are the same, hence, even those of them who tend to exemplify a sense of responsibility are watched by the employer with suspicion. Yet other maids are cooped up in houses by cruel employers for months without stepping out of the compound, the reason for which this study tries to establish.

Alongside with this, the psychological trauma suffered by the house-girl forced to work in a situation where the employer's children enjoy all the privileges they are denied cannot be underestimated.

Maids are hired for baby-sitting and the general house keeping including cooking, washing, cleaning and keeping the entire compound tidy. Some maids are also known to play additional roles including duties of a receptionist, receiving telephone calls, shopping, taking children to and from school, farm work and in a few isolated cases as security guards in homesteads - ensuring that strange faces are not allowed in.

This study attempts to look at the nature of the relationship between maids and employers and tries to find out reasons for various trends of relationships.

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Although it has not been established to what extent maids are mistreated, it is well known that they suffer all kinds of cruelty at the hands of their employers (Ndegwa, 1987:84-5). Their lot



is to be submissive even when they are pushed through highly formidable experiences. Some of them, according to Goonesekere (1993:11) "have been starved and some battered, burnt or tortured to death, in uncouth ways like forcing them to consume excessive quantities of salt."

Domestic aggression and exploitation of maids occurs from four salient sources. The first one, and most widespread is from the employer, allegedly because she is the immediate supervisor of the maid. The aggression takes the form of insults, denial of food, issuing threats or physical battering (Onyango, 1988:169). Other acts of mistreatment by the employer include forcing them to eat in the kitchen, very poor accommodation and no freedom of association with other people and especially other maids.

Secondly, it comes from the man of the house. This takes the form of sexual abuse, and according to Onyango (1988:169), when maids cannot withstand this kind of treatment, some steal and end up in police cells; some end up in Kenyatta National Hospital; some find employment elsewhere and some become pregnant, and this marks the beginning of a very hard life to them.

Thirdly, aggression and exploitation of maids may feature from the older siblings of the family who regard her as part of the tools and equipment of the home and who therefore should be handled without the least reference to human dignity. According to Goonesekere (1993:11), although the offender is usually an adult, reports suggest that sometimes the employer's children also attack these young workers.

Lastly, it may appear from the kin members of the family who may come visiting or are living with the employing family. A drama organised by Onyango (1988:166-171), part of whose objectives was to create awareness among the employers and parents about the dangers of exploiting child labour explains that maid's abuse mostly occurs in certain situations: when the worker eats food or drinks milk belonging to the employer's children; when she damages or breaks things; when she beats or mistreats her employer's children; when the children in her charge are hurt accidentally and when she does not work well.

Mailu (1986:57) further attests to this when he writes that such tribulations may occur due

to simple and unavoidable acts like the maids "touching your cream, making away with a ten cent piece they have found under the bed, drinking a glass of milk, or eating 'a whole egg' when you are not there".

But the current study is geared towards asking: are such postulates inkeeping with the realities of the current urban domestic service of maids both young and older ones who could even get married and employ their own maids back at their homes? And if so, then the magnitude of this exploitation and mistreatment will be sought.

However, that Onyango's drama (1988:171) "managed to help the audience recognise that children are working in disadvantageous circumstances as domestic servants" cannot be ignored.

All these forms of aggression occur even in the wake of the fact that legally, Section 74 of the constitution of Kenya provides that no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading punishment. Further, Section 238 of the penal code states that any person who intimidates or molests any other person is guilty of an offense and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years.

Intimidation is hereby described as threatening to injure a person's body, reputation or property. Molestation is itself defined as interfering with a person in their private or professional life by whatever means.

## **1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Domestic aggression in general includes child abuse, incest, parental child stealing, abuse of the elderly, spouse battering, marital rape, and aggression on maids. But this study is specifically confined within the scope of mistreatment (see definition elsewhere in this report) of maids, while leaving out all other forms of aggression in the home. However, available literature on each of them is reviewed.

It is also limited within the employer's home. The nature of relationships that is taken into account is between the maid and the employer, the employer's husband, their children, and relatives

who may come visiting, or are temporarily or permanently living with them. Mistreatment of maids within their parental homes are similarly ignored.

The study assumed that maids themselves cannot be aggressors.

### **1.3 STUDY JUSTIFICATION**

Maids form a group of employees who are notably either un-educated, or semi-educated and consequently people who very remotely know their rights. Even with the existence of bodies like Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied (KUDHEIHA) workers; Family Life Education Programme (FLEP); Salvation Army and the numerous House girl Agencies in Kenya, some maids are either illiterate or too young to know their entitlements. Recommendations from the study do not only attempt to streamline the conduct of the employer but also highlight on the rights entitled to a maid, while advising them on how to handle problems that may seem insurmountable.

Maids and employers alike should therefore largely benefit from the research, as employers are advised on how to treat their maids in order to get the best out of them.

Secondly, domestic services rendered by maids continue to be a central activity in nation-building and in their absence, other areas considered primal would collapse. Maids also play a very important role as far as socialization of children is concerned. Their welfare is thus an important issue. However, while domestic aggression in general has been widely addressed to, belligerence on maids in particular has received a raw deal. For example, Ndegwa (1987) studied in general the whole institution of maids but only very mildly mentions cruelty meted out against maids.

However, she fully analyses other areas of this institution, but which are not relevant to this study. For instance, she elaborates on the making of maids, how they are engaged, their duties and what they resent doing. But since the concern of this study is specifically on aggression and exploitation of maids, this underscored the need to carry it out.

On domestic violence in general, Reid (1985:253) observes that "it occurs within the

setting where people can and should expect warmth, reinforcement, support, trust and love... Despite the seriousness of domestic violence, it has only recently become recognised as a type of violent crime".

It is important to establish the impact of reversing the above expectations to the maid as this is what seems to be taking place. This is really a devastating predicament. It is worsened by the fact that domestic matters are to a large extent dismissed by a wave of the hand as a dispute to be settled by those concerned without involving outsiders. But unfortunately, while a maid is an integral person in the household, she finds herself entangled in the web of misery in the circumstances because her security is not guaranteed by the employing family. Her rights have therefore to be established.

Reid, (1985:254) further observes that even after the abuse of family members was no longer sanctioned as 'proper', little attention was paid to such actions. They were after all considered to be domestic matters and of little or no concern to the rest of Society.

However, while Reid and others have 'exhaustively' studied violence in the home, including such areas as child abuse, incest, parental child stealing, abuse of the elderly, spouse battering and marital rape as said earlier, they have ultimately omitted brutality of employers on maids. This underscored further, the necessity to undertake the study.

Finally, since as aforesaid, nothing of significance has been written in this field, it is hoped that the findings of this research will serve as a good background information for future scholars and researchers on domestic aggression.

#### **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

There are basically four objectives in this study. First, to find out whether the maid's background influences the extent of her mistreatment and if so, how and why.

Various issues are investigated here. These include the maids' educational level and her religious

background, that is, whether she shares the same religious beliefs or not, with the employer. They also include her marital status and her relationship, if any, with the employer.

Secondly, the study aimed at investigating whether characteristics of the maid with respect to her age and awareness of her own rights and privileges affect how she gets along with her employer.

Further, it was the primary aim of the study to find out if the general characteristics of the employer determine how she treats her maid. Here, focus was directed to issues like the employer's occupation, income, family size and the size of her house.

Finally, the study aimed at examining the position of children and some relatives of the employer, where applicable, in relation to the maid. Provision of a recommendation on how both parties should relate to each other in order to control the friction between themselves was an added objective.

## **1.5 LOCALE OF THE STUDY**

This section describes the area of the study. Outlined here are the reasons for hand-picking Nakuru Municipality amidst all other municipalities of its kind for a research. The researcher further describes in some detail various features of the study site.

### **1.5.1 SITE SELECTION**

Data on this research report was collected from Nakuru Municipality. The choice of this area as study site was based on certain factors. First, it was purposefully selected due to its high concentration of respondents. This helped minimise the cost of field work. Though the concentration of maids and therefore employers is characteristic of almost all major urban centres in the country, the proximity of Nakuru Municipality to Egerton University where the researcher was working during the time of field work gave it the privilege of selection, amidst all other municipalities of its kind.

Additionally, the researcher's knowledge of all the residential estates in Nakuru Municipality led to its selection as the site of this study. (*see maps at the end of this chapter*).

### **1.5.2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

Nakuru Municipality is situated at the heart of Nakuru district, which is one of the 14 districts of the Rift Valley Province. The district lies within the Great Rift Valley and borders seven other districts namely Kericho to the west, Baringo to the north, Nyandarua to the east, Narok to the south, Kajiado and Kiambu to the south east, and Laikipia to the north east.

Nakuru town is situated between Menengai crater to the north and Lake Nakuru to the south.

The name "Nakuru" is derived from the Maasai dialect meaning a dusty place or a place of the devil's dust. It is said that this is because the place had a history of dust gales at certain times of the year and this could explain why a certain estate in the town is still called "Kivumbini", meaning "within dust".

Nakuru owes its existence to the engineers who, when laying the Kenya-Uganda Railway along the floor of the Great Rift Valley in 1904, created a base here from which to survey the route by which to climb out of the Rift Valley, and on to Lake Victoria.

According to Ndua & Ng'ethe (1984:13), it grew as a service centre for colonial administration and became a nodal point for the clusters of European settlements which began to form in the early 1900's around the Mau Escarpment.

By proclamation dated 28th January 1904, it was declared a township. With increased European settlements especially after 1915, Nakuru expanded quickly and was declared a municipality in 1929. Over the years, the town grew in size and importance and today, it is the Headquarters of the large Rift Valley Province.

According to the boundary plan No. 451/10 (b), the municipality is currently estimated at 290 sq.km. Nakuru is connected to Nairobi by a 155 km tarmac road, the A104 Nairobi-

Uganda Trans-African Highway which passes through Gilgil and Naivasha. Nakuru is also a rail juncture for Uganda, Kisumu and Eldoret.

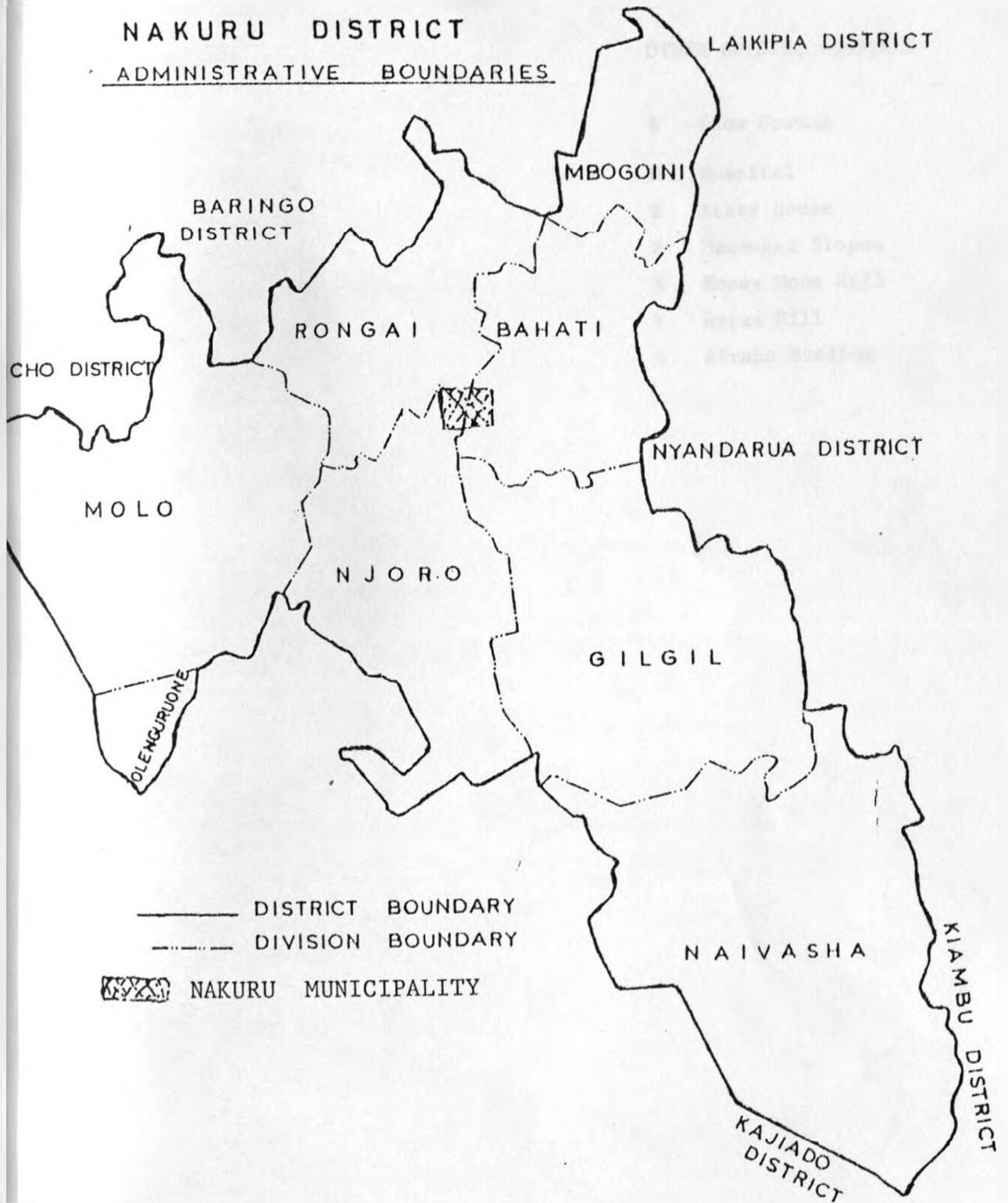
Nakuru is well represented in harbouring industries of reputed size and complexity. The main sources of water supply to Nakuru Municipality are the Malewa and the Marevoni Rivers, supplemented by several boreholes. Full treatment of water is undertaken prior to introduction to the distribution system and this includes chemical dosing with alum for coagulation, soda for PH correction and chlorine for disinfection.

Nakuru Municipality has 40 primary schools and 15 secondary schools, and two special schools for the mentally (Hills School) and physically (Ngala Special School) handicapped. The Nakuru Provincial General Hospital stands to offer specialised medical treatment for the entire province. Several health and community centres are strategically located at the extremities of the town. Social halls, markets and other community resources are also dispersed throughout the town.

Map 1: Nakuru District showing the municipality

NAKURU DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES



Scale 1:750,000

Source: District Development Plan



K E Y

ESTATES

- 1 Kaptembwa
- 2 Kenlands
- 3 Ponda Mali
- 4 Free Area
- 5 Langa Langa Phase III
- 6 Lake View
- 7 Race Track
- 8 Free Hold
- 9 Section 58
- 10 Milimani

OTHER GUIDING FEATURES

- S Show Ground
- H Hospital
- T State House
- Z Menengai Slopes
- X Honey Moon Hill
- Y Hyrax Hill
- A Afraha Stadium



Mwariki Sewage Pumping Station

Lake Nakuru

NAKURU NATIONAL PARK

ffice

TITLE  
ESTATES UN  
STUDY



Scale 1:40,000

Source: Rift Valley Provincial Planning Office

K E Y

ESTATES

- 1 Kaptembwa
- 2 Kenlands
- 3 Ponda Mali
- 4 Free Area
- 5 Langa Langa Phase III
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## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

Although the family is a process, it is not in process. This is to say that although some aspects of family life are changing rapidly, others are still clinging tenaciously to tradition. Part of what is changing sharply includes domestic relations in a wider view and domestic power structure in a narrower perspective.

The struggle on who makes important decisions in the family evokes aggression and violence among various members.

Numerous studies have been conducted on domestic violence in general, including spouse battering, child abuse, incest, marital rape and abuse of the elderly, while very little, if any, has been done on mistreatment of maids in particular. Literature in this specific field is therefore highly limited, as what is readily available is material on people's opinions as reported in the local print media. Authentic research is lacking.

Any scholarly work about this unfortunate scenario either builds on the general domestic violence, or deviates from the core of this problem in one way or another. It is hoped that the current study will cater for this gap. For instance Maillu (1990), gives an in-depth study of the life of a house-maid, a revealing account of the psychological, physical and even economic tribulations rampant within the ayah institution.

But found in his book is the life of one particular house-girl on whose extremely unpleasant experiences he bases his generalizations. He does not really explore into the entire realm of the institution of maids to find out the responses of various employers whose attitudes towards maids are as numerous as the employers themselves.

However, he illustrates that frustrating a maid may have fatal repercussions to the family as she looks for possible outlets to her suppressed feelings when he writes about a maid reporting that

"as they had mistreated me and were such awful people, when they were in their good house waiting for their food to come to the dining table, I served myself in the kitchen first, then did something good to theirs" (p.93).

But though superficially a nice bit of work, Maillu does not give any guidance towards the conduct of either party to obliterate the maid-employer friction. Neither does he show any discernible reason why the particular and the only maid in his book was so highly mistreated, other than the implied difference in ethnic background and the low educational achievement of the maid. Such will be covered by this study.

The only tangible piece of work as far as research is concerned is provided by Ndolo (1993) who, in his B.A. (Social Work) dissertation was about to produce what would have been a master piece.

But his work is lacking in depth as he is basing his findings on an interview of only 21 maids in three estates of Nairobi. He admits that "a more detailed and comprehensive study would have been better"(p.60).

It would thus be important to carry out research of a similar nature elsewhere because this, according to Tibamanya Mwene Mushanga (1976:1) "is necessary to discover patterns, similarities, repetitions and circumstances surrounding particular criminal behaviour". But the current study targeted views of 104 maids and their 104 employers as well as children in the respective families drawn from ten residential estates in Nakuru Municipality.

Probably a partial explanation to the current lack of research work in the area of maid-employer relationship is the fact that engagement of wage domestic labour has just recently began in Kenya as more and more women get into formal employment. They engage in job achievements that are socially recognised and rewarding. This trend is antithetical to the basic structure of what we call the traditional organization of the family and it could logically be expected to change it. Thus one of the changes that women indulge in career pursuit and job achievements has brought about to the family is the aforesaid need to engage a maid.

The demand for cheap labour at a time when adult domestic labour has become both scarce and expensive further prompts the need for engagement of maids.

Perhaps, on the other hand, studies in this area are limited due to scholars' lack of interest in the institution of maids as they allegedly form such an insignificant category which does not seem to merit that attention.

In this chapter, a review of literature deemed to be related to the central issue of this study is focused upon. Apart from this introductory remark, the chapter starts by addressing domestic violence in general. Focus here is directed to child abuse, spouse battering, incest, abuse of the elderly and marital rape. Further into the chapter is review of literature on violence and aggression meted out against maids, and this involves a wider spectrum including employers' suspicion on maids, maids' salaries, maids and discipline, physical abuse and sexual assault. Provisions of the law on such issues is also reviewed. Conclusions highlighting the key issues raised are drawn and four hypotheses are formulated at the end of the chapter. The chapter closes down with definition of technical terms employed in this research.

## **2.1 TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

The problem of family violence has long been neglected by both society and the academic community. In deed, the view that the family is and ought to be a warm setting has contributed to a perpetual black-out on family violence. Yet, the family is the single most frequent location for violence of all types, including homicide (Zanden, 1987:332).

This section outlines various aspects of domestic violence and aggression as seen by various scholars and researchers which, together with the mistreatment meted out against maids as revealed in this study, form the complete spectrum of domestic misunderstandings.

### **2.1.1 Child Abuse**

Despite evidence of child abuse throughout human history, its acceptance as a social

problem is a recent phenomenon and has not been "discovered" in some societies as yet.

In a study by Straus *et. al.* (1980), in Jones *et. al.*, (1988:167-8) in which they asked members of various American families how they dealt with family conflicts, nearly 8% of the parents admitted to kicking, biting or punching a child during the preceding year; 4% reported beating up a child and 3% confessed to threatening a child with a gun or a knife. They also concluded that about 2000 children are slain by their parents annually.

According to Gil (1970) and Owiti (1995:22), abusive parents come from all income levels, all ranges of intelligence and all cultural, religious and racial groups; yet reported abuse occurs most often in large, poor families. But it is also probable that children mistreated by more prosperous parents are most likely seen by private physicians who are less likely to report abuse than are representatives of public clinics, where poor background children are treated.

However, this fact notwithstanding, Gil (1970) receives a lot of support from Kempe (1973:804-808) who notes that the poor suffer more of life's stresses; they cannot take vacations, cannot hire baby-sitters, cannot fill their lives with other pleasures.

Thus since most of their time is spent at home and possibly idle, they turn the resultant stress on their own children. Indeed some parents are just abusive by nature. Those of them who were themselves beaten during their childhood and who therefore were emotionally deprived in other ways as well have no self image and have felt like failures for many years. According to Zanden (1987:332), such parents generally feel isolated, have no one whom they can depend upon to help them in times of distress, are unhappily married and demand a great deal from their children far more than the children can understand or respond to.

Therefore, because of their great needs which went unfulfilled by their own parents and continue to go unmet by their spouses and others, these parents often turn to their own children. But according to Steinmetz and Straus (1976/77:87) and Owiti (1995:22) parents who use physical punishment probably increase rather than decrease their child's aggressive tendencies; "violence begets violence, however peaceful and altruistic the motivation".

Child abuse is considered a form of family violence because about 75% of abusers are parents, step-parents, other relatives and family friends (Vrazo, 1984) in Jones *et. al.*, (1988:168).

But an inherent problem is that there is no clear dividing line between acceptable corrective punishment (normal violence) of a child and the extreme violence that is a social problem (Rose, 1978:54).

### **2.1.2 Spouse Battering**

*Frustrated, bored, and unable to find a satisfying outlet for their energy Britishers who are reduced to life on the dole meet adversity like men: they blame it on their wives. Then, pow!!! (Steinmetz and Straus 1976/77:90).*

According to Collins (1988:308), "Spouse battering is not usually an isolated incident; there is a continuum from the normal amount of quarrelling through mild violence up to serious battering". Spouse battering is a common domestic problem here in Kenya and beyond.

In the American society for example, Dobash and Dobash (1979:104) write that until the 20th century, laws actually gave a husband the right to physically chastise his wife for nagging or other offenses against her proper place.

In a study, Steinmetz (1978:1-16) found that 7% of all wives and 0.5 % of all husbands were severely beaten by their spouses at some time during their marriages. Straus and Gelles (1985) found that out of a sample of 3520 couples in U.S. in 1985, 4.4% of wives reported one or more physical attacks of severe violence by their husbands over the past year and 11.3% reported acts of minor violence.

But it is also likely that the proportion of battered husbands is higher, as men are less likely to report violence from their wives than it is the case with women, in keeping with an-almost-universal cultural orientation. Few men will admit they are victims of violence from their wives, especially with regard to reporting the matter to the police.

Gelles (1979:873-885) notes that in many cases of husband battering, perhaps even in the majority, wives are simply striking out in defense. Of course there are many other innocent men who are battered by their wives for reasons of either being weaker than the attacking wives, too sick or too old to fend off the attack.

But considering that the police are also mostly men, they may not quite understand how a man can be treated violently by his wife. Hence a man who is bold enough to report such a case to the police might end up being laughed at and not helped at all.

On spouse battering in general, it is argued that once it has happened, it seems to become more likely, unless something is done to head it off. Batterings can become a routine. It perpetuates itself. Hence the factors that set off later incidences, including very severe ones have no particular pattern (Collins, 1988:309).

However, as is the case of child abuse, spouse battering can be largely attributed to low individual incomes.

Dibble & Straus, (1980:71-80) observe that "low income husbands are less in a position to live up to their role obligations as providers than are middle class husbands. Their wives are therefore less likely to recognise the male as the head of the house than are their middle class counterparts. When such recognition and other resources are lacking, husbands may, in turn, use force to control their wives".

Such abusive husbands, according to Owiti (1995:22), tend to be immature, dependent and non-assertive and so suffer from strong feelings of inadequacy. His aggression is designed to humiliate his wife so that he can build his own low self esteem.

But Owiti further contends that some of these men feel remorse and guilty after an episode of violent behaviour and become particularly loving. This behaviour gives the wife hope and she remains until the next cycle of violence, which inevitably occurs. If the woman has small children to cater for, her problem is compounded.

### **2.1.3 Incest**

Incest is the sexual intercourse between persons so closely related that marriage is not customarily possible. Because of the stigma and secrecy associated with incest, accurate statistics on this incidence are difficult to obtain.

Explanation for incest, according to Jones *et. al.* (1988:413) includes physical reasons such as low self esteem, immaturity and paedophilia (sexual interest limited to children only), on the part of the perpetrator.

The most common form of incest is between a father and a daughter. It succeeds because the father is physically more powerful and has authority over the daughter.

Forward and Buck (1978:3) observe that in the U.S., by the time women age 18, one out of every 4 has been a victim of sexual molestation. And 38% of these molestations are incestuous, which works out to be one out of every 10 women.

But incest is not always abhorred. According to Robertson, (1987:236) for example, the Thonga of West Africa permit a father to have ritual sex with his daughter before he goes on a lion hunt; the Azande of Central Africa expect their highest chiefs to marry their daughters, and the mothers of Burundi are expected to cure impotence in their adult sons by having intercourse with them.

Elsewhere, incest is so serious a social problem that people do not even talk about it in the open. For instance, the Mundugumor of New Guinea recognize blood relationships in such a complex way that three quarters of all women in the society are ineligible as sex partners for any given man, and seven women out of eight are ineligible as wives (Ibid.,1987:237).

### **2.1.4 Abuse of The Elderly**

*Lizzie Borden took an axe and gave her father 40 whacks. When the job was neatly done, she gave her mother 41 (Steinmetz and Straus, 1976/77 :87).*

It is important to note here that physically abusive husbands, wives and children involved in everyday beating, slapping, kicking and throwing things are normal rather than deranged individuals (Steinmetz and Straus 1976/77:89).

Abuse of parents in particular and the elderly in general take many forms ranging from verbal abuse through neglect to physical violence. This may not seem part of domestic violence "prima facie". In Kenya for example, while this type of violence may be negligible - largely due to the coherent cultural context - the opposite obtains elsewhere.

In the U.S. for example, each year, up to one million teenagers victimized their parents, one in five children abused a parent and one in ten severely attacked a parent, sometimes using deadly weapons (Straus et.al., 1980, in Jones et. al., 1988:167-168). Children in the U.S. slay about 2000 parents annually (Bassis et.al., 1982) in Jones et. al. (1988:171).

Women are more vulnerable to elder abuse because, as Rose (1978:55) observes, most very old men are married while most very old women are widowed. Such women live in independent circumstances.

### **2.1.5 Marital Rape**

Marital rape can be defined as forced sexual relations between two married people, or between a husband and a wife, whereby force is applied by either of the two parties. To date, marital rape is not viewed as a crime in Kenya, nor is it conceived as a form of domestic violence. In fact, it is seen as a contradiction in terms.

However, feminists are working hard to sensitize Kenyans about the existence of marital rape, arguing against the notion that wives are the property of their husbands to be treated according to how the latter deems fit. Such feminists contend that if a husband forces his wife into sex, he should be charged with the crime of marital rape, or rape as such. Law, according to feminists, should be blind on marital status. But in societies like the United States, marital rape has



been criminalised with a hope that this would exert a downward pressure on its prevalence. But even then, the number of marital rapes is not negligible; in fact, a study by Russell (1982:118) of 930 randomly selected women found that 14% of ever married women had been raped by their present or former husbands.

## **2.2. VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION AGAINST MAIDS**

The conditions of employment of most children in domestic service resembles those normally associated with feudalism or slavery and closely parallel systems of bonded labour in South Asia (Obeysekere, 1967:67). Yet, while the feudal lord of the past may have treated his vassals as part of the household and cared for them, with the expansion of the materialist ethic, the benevolent element is minimised and the potential for exploitation maximised (Goonesekere, 1993:12).

This section addresses various aspects of aggression meted out against maids, as well as acts of exploitation as seen within the context of the law. In this regard, legislated minimum wages are reviewed.

### **2.2.1 Employers' Suspicion on Maids**

As noted elsewhere in this report, even maids who are inwardly determined to deliver the goods for which they are employed are watched with lots of suspicion by employers. It is not surprising therefore to hear comments like "don't let your househelp know when you are going away. They will rob you of everything you own the first chance they get" (Now magazine 12th June 1994:4).

This mistrust increases in magnitude between an employer and a maid whose background the employer is oblivious of and particularly one who claims to have worked for somebody else. It is thus on the same note that this correspondent reports other worrying views like "Don't give your staff any money even if it is just a hundred shillings when they ask for it. Say you need to go to the

bank so that they don't think you have any money in the house" (Now Magazine, 12th June 1994:4).

This kind of suspicion on maids by employers was further confirmed by the findings of this report when the researcher heard: "they will always borrow money for a funeral. This is always a lie" (Field respondent, 19th Jan 1995).

In the circumstances of such mistrust, when maids ask for financial assistance for reasons to do with their parental home, most employers interpret the excuse as lame or concocted. And when the maid requests for some time off due to health problems, some employers suspect that the maid is just malingering. While such could hold true, genuine cases end up suffering immensely.

### **2.2.2 Maids and Salaries**

Generally there is a feeling that many women would like to make the housegirl feel small so that she will have no doubt as to who the boss is. It is a commonplace fact that the factor behind anybody's ability to overcome the inner resistance to work is the payment so obtained.

It would be interesting therefore to ask why, with all the attendant odds surrounding the mystery of the office of a maid "a young girl (should) have the audacity to leave her parents and relatives to go and share the four walls with strangers" (Sauti ya Siti 1989:14).

This may be a function of a multiplicity of factors including educational resources, parental push forces into the job for the maid to remit some money to them at the end of the month, early pregnancy prompting the need to work in order to bring up the child, but either way the economic factor seems to dominate the scene.

Though the maid by this standard appears as one of the workers who are in dire need of the money, some employers feel that "it is not fair to pay too much because then your servant will get used to a standard of living that will plummet under (their) next employer" (Now magazine 12th June 1994:4). This unfortunate scenario shows that most employers harbour a feeling that the maid is soon leaving hence reference to "their next employer". They therefore guarantee no job security

to the maid.

This has led to high maid turnover and the situation is worsened by the existence of numerous housegirl agencies particularly in urban areas. These can provide a housegirl within hours. However, these agencies are a consolation to the maid because through them she can depart from a cruel employer and immediately get a job elsewhere.

For reasons that are not quite clear, some employers feel that "the money they give the maids is more important than the work that the maid has to keep up with" (Mwakisha, 1991: iv). This view is in agreement with that of a *Now Magazine* correspondent (12th June 1994:4) who reports an employer declaring that "maids aren't used to getting so much, it's not fair for them".

Others have a feeling that "the more you pay, the lazier they become" (Ibid). Yet, if cooking alone can commercially be paid for in restaurants, cleaning services in laundries and babysitting in child care centres, their services can fetch hundreds of dollars per month. But now all combined, maids receive 500 shillings! It is therefore evident that maids' remunerations are entirely at the discretion of the employer, the legislated basic minimum wages notwithstanding.

According to Legal Notice No. 93 in the Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 26 of 30th April 1993, the Regulation of Wages (General) (Amendment) Order states the minimum monthly wages for maids as here below:

**2.0 1993 MINIMUM RATES (EXCLUSIVE OF H/ALLOWANCE)**

CATEGORISATION	NAIROBI AREA AND MOMBASA MUNICIPALITY			ALL OTHER MUNICIPALITIES AND RUIRU AND MAVOKO TOWN			ALL OTHER AREAS		
	Monthly contract per month	Daily rate	Hourly Rate	Monthly contract per month	Daily rate	Hourly Rate	Monthly contract per month	Daily Rate	Hourly Rate
18 YEARS AGED AND OVER	Sh. 1,416	Sh.Cts. 68 10	Sh.Cts 12 65	Sh 1,306	Sh.Cts 62 65	Sh. Cts 11 60	Sh. 796	Sh. Cts. 38 30	Sh. Cts. 7 10
UNDER 18 YEARS	1,041	50 10	9 35	915	44 10	8 30	576	27 65	5 25

Source: Kenya Gazette Supplement No.26 of 30th April 1993.

This was to become effective from 1st May 1993. This minimum pay is, like salaries of other employees, not static. According to another Legal Notice No. 163 contained in a special issue of the Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 29 of 16th May 1994, these minimum rates were revised upwards by the Regulation of Wages (General) (Amendment) Order, 1994. Operational from 1st May 1994, the basic remunerations were stipulated as here under:

**Table 2.1 1994 MINIMUM RATES (EXCLUSIVE OF H/ALLOWANCE)**

OCCUPATION	NAIROBI AREA AND MOMBASA MUNICIPALITY			ALL OTHER MUNICIPALITIES AND RUIRU AND MAVOKO TOWN			ALL OTHER AREAS		
	Monthly contract per month	Daily rate	Hourly Rate	Monthly contract per month	Daily rate	Hourly Rate	Monthly contract per month	Daily Rate	Hourly Rate
MAIDS AGED 18 YEARS AND OVER	Sh. 1,70 0	Sh. Cts. 81 70	Sh. Cts 15 20	Sh 1,56 7	Sh. Cts. 75 20	Sh. Cts. 13 90	Sh. 955	Sh. Cts. 46 00	Sh. Cts. 8 50
MAIDS AGED UNDER 18 YEARS	1,24 9	60 10	11 20	1,098	52 95	9 95	691	32 20	6 30

Source: Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 29 of 16th May 1994.

Hardly does any employer observe these minimum remunerations for maids, and this could largely be due to the fact that maids would be the last lot of people to have the mildest idea of such legislation. In fact, even among the employers, this law is not really known. And when both parties are ignorant about the wellbeing of one party (the maid), this compounds the problem and the maid continues to receive "real peanuts".

### **2.2.3 Maids and Discipline**

It is widely believed that maids are used to taking orders, and that this is the only way they can function. It is also argued that if you try to be polite to them they do not understand you; it's a language and cultural difference. Thus a correspondent of *Now* magazine (12th June 1994:4) observes: "don't try to be friends. It will only confuse them. Don't give them anything extra, if you give once, they will keep asking".

This view is supported by a correspondent of *True Love*, (December, 1994:45) who points out a response from an employer that "I never let my housegirl and my husband share the sitting room. The housegirl's place is in the kitchen and my husband has no business going there".

And in an event of an employer having reservations about whether the maid is not having affairs with the man of the house, she may unnecessarily be harsh to pre-empt this eventuality. Such inhuman deeds can be instigated by either the housegirl looking very pretty or by a normal free association with the man thereby evoking the suspicion.

Such employers think, either correctly or wrongly, that "Some men have weird and insatiable sexual appetites and nothing, short of amputation of the male member will stop them from making advances to any member of female species within the vicinity" (*True Love*, Dec. 1994:45).

### **2.2.4 Maids' Ignorance on Rights and Privileges**

Maids are the so needed and yet so badly treated calibre of people (Mwakisha, 1991:iv). This can partly be a result of their ignorance on their own rights and privileges, worsened by the fact that most of them have very little educational achievements, if any.

Though there are several housegirl agencies some of which train maids on how to best deliver their services to employers, many potential employers have a bias towards the illiterate and the most ignorant lot of maids. "After all they demand less and as most women will put it, 'it is easier to train them when they know so little'" (Mwakisha, 1991:iv-v).

Such maids will certainly not be as effective as those who have gone through a training school. Child Welfare Society of Kenya, for example, has centres like Sunrise Baby Home which, according to Mwakisha, offers courses which include nutrition, pre-natal development, first aid, home nursing, cookery, child care, home management, budgeting, employer-employee relationship, family education, personal hygiene and awareness (self, social and spiritual). Trainees are, in this Home, also sent on attachment.

But it would be important to note that some employers do not only wish to employ the least informed maids, but that others also work hard to ensure that the maid remains at the same level of knowledge, which is detrimental to the maid's performance. Such employers do this, for example, by deliberate failure to introduce the maid to the employer's family, and by not letting her know even the full names of the employer in case of an emergency.

Such has been noted by a correspondent of *Baby Times*, February 1993, who notes that "the first thing to do when you get a new baby-sitter is to introduce yourself. It is not surprising to find that some baby-sitters do not know their employer's names. They only refer to them as 'Mama so and so'" (*Baby Times*, 1993:28).

Such an attitude only serves to instigate frictions between the maid and the employer when the former, either by omission or commission, is on the wrong in what she would have otherwise avoided had she been well informed. The maid's rights, just like the rights of any other employee, should be protected.

According to Mwakisha (1991:iv), "good relations can be created between a maid and an employer, but the latter has to recognise that a maid is a human being whose rights are as essential as the employer's".

It is pertinent that knowledge of rights by the maid or any worker for that matter has always posed a threat to the employer. In relation to domestic affairs therefore, with more untrained maids available, many families will always feel safer to employ an untrained one.

### **2.2.5 Maids' Dilemma and Emotional Insecurity**

Several factors work jointly to promote emotional insecurity of maids. Need for association for instance is a basic virtue common to not only the human race but also to non-human animals. As students of psychology would argue, expressing one's inner feelings to others in a free association helps unload psychological pressures. But not all maids have this opportunity. As Ndegwa (1987:75) contends, "a number of maids suffer from emotional cruelty by being denied friendship or association with any one other than the family they work for. They get lonely and isolated especially if they are despised by the employing family".

This may not present itself as a real problem but to the victim, loneliness may lead to serious emotional disorientation and at the peak of it all, suicide (Durkheim, 1968:241-276).

It is therefore punishment enough to coop up a person inside a compound whose gates are always locked as this serves to perpetuate a maid's already disarrayed emotional state.

A maid, unlike the rest of the family members, does not have an open escape mechanism and this is even worse as she is expected to be silent and submissive even when she is pulsating with almost-exploding pressures of the day's work. In explaining how the rest of the family members go about ventilating such hostility, Mckee and Robertson (1975:405) observe that "a woman who has tendered a houseful of children all day is almost expected to 'blow her stack' by early evening; a child who fails again and again to complete a particular chore is almost expected to 'throw a tantrum'; and an adolescent son who cannot make his parents understand his view of things is almost expected to 'storm out of the house in a fury.'"

But although maids can also be aggressive to young children in turn, this is not an obvious expectation. This is corroborated by the fact that the maid would receive a tighter punishment, if she dares unleash the same to any of the employer's children. Occasionally, the maid has instructions on what the children must not do. For example, she should make sure that they do not get out of the compound.

And now the maid's dilemma is this, and it is a serious dilemma; if she punishes the children



for breaking this employer-given rule, she too will be punished. If she leaves them loiter outside, she is in trouble. Emotionally, she is always insecure.

### 2.2.6 Maids outside the Kenyan context

The problem of baby-sitting is not confined to Kenya alone; it is found elsewhere in the global circumference. In fact, the phenomenon of employing domestic wage labour is more recent in Kenya than in some of the developed nations. For instance, according to the Historical statistics of the United States, series A225-257, in 1850 every middle and upper class household in the U.S. had at least one servant, usually a maid or househelper (Collins, 1988:283).

Almost all large households had a butler, valets, footmen, and other male servants. But the majority of house servants were usually female. In such countries, as more and more women abandon the enormously held traditional dogmatic norm of males as breadwinners while females work in the kitchen, baby-sitting becomes an issue of grave concern. But as Zanden (1988:353) observes, many working parents are unable to care personally for their children and they lack relatives or friends to whom they can turn for reliable baby sitting.

So, the only alternative left to them is day care centres which implies taking their children away from home for the whole day. In deed, day care centres have in such advanced countries taken over from maids.

Laslett (1977:35) confirms that the number of domestic servants "has been on the decline in the western countries like Great Britain and the United States since 1800's. As late as 1900, household servant was still the largest category of workers in Great Britain". Today, according to Collins, (1988:283), there are only 70,000 old fashioned live-in-household servants for the 88 million households in the U.S.; one out of 1,250 households has one.

Other than day care centres taking up what was formerly the work of housemaids, reasons adduced for this decline are not largely because the upper class which employs maids has disappeared but because of a general advancement from low to a higher economic status for all.

Collins (1988:283) concludes that "the servant class that used to surround it (the higher class) really has disappeared. The servants that are left tend to be recent immigrants or black".

Elsewhere within the Third World, Goonesekere (1993:10-11) reports in Sri Lanka that since it is more usual to employ girls as domestics, they are reported more commonly than boys as the victims of abuse.

Yet, problems that are associated with the institution of baby-sitting have apparently not warranted any need for a serious study to investigate them while offering tangible solutions. It is therefore hoped that this study will serve as a major break-through and hence a good background information that opens up new vistas for further scientific research into this area.

**2.3 THE LAW ON AGGRESSION AND GENERAL MISTREATMENT** Section 2.3 of this report sheds light on the penalty levied on individuals who contravene what is generally viewed as a crime within the circles of domestic interactions. It is prompted by the fact that despite law provisions, domestic aggression and violence seem to be escalating.

### **2.3.1 The Law on Overworking Maids**

It is a commonplace fact that maids are overworked not only beyond the provisions of the laws of the land but also beyond human ability.

According to chapter 229 which contains the General Regulations of Wage Order, section 11, 5(3) provides that no person under the age of 16 years shall be required to work for more than six hours in any day.

This includes domestic servants which, in this Order, mean "any person employed fully or partly in any private household or part of a private household in any of the following capacities namely, cook, houseservant (including bedroom and kitchen servants), ..., children's nurse... or watchman".

And just in case the maid is above 16 the law is not silent about that. Section 11, 5(1)

provides: "the normal working week shall consist of not more than 52 hours of work spread over 6 days of the week".

Yet, maids on average work from 6.00 a.m to 10.00 p.m. - sixteen hours a day with not more than 30 - minute meals break. They have absolutely no overtime emoluments. Employers therefore violate Cap. 229 section 11, 6 (1) which stipulates the need for overtime payments for any hour in excess of the normal hourly rate, if work is performed during the employee's normal rest day or public holiday.

Overtime payment should precisely be "not less than 1/225 of the employee's basic minimum monthly wage" section 11, 6(2). Further, section 11, 6 (7) provides that every employee shall be entitled to one whole rest day in each week. This is again hardly realised. If such days on mutual agreement accumulate to 14, the employee should take leave with full pay in addition to the employee's entitlement to annual leave. But "the weekly rest day of a person under the age of 16 years shall not be so deferred" 7 (ii).

### **2.3.2 What the Law Provides on Assault and General Negligence**

It is alleged that one of the most occurring and recurring forms of assaulting a maid is in the area of verbal abuse. This could be in the form of gossips or criticisms directly centring on her. This too may go a long way in explaining the constant and continuous dissatisfaction of maids in their efforts to achieve perfection in discharging their duties.

This kind of 'verbal abuse' may have even a greater negative effect on the victim than physical abuse. This leads to lack of self esteem and a feeling of 'worthlessness' which in effect adversely affects the maid's performance.

On prohibiting assault of any nature, Cap 63 section 250 of the Laws of Kenya stipulates that any person who unlawfully assaults another is guilty of a misdemeanour and, ..., is liable to imprisonment for one year. Yet assault of maids especially the young category is too rampant among some employers.

### **2.3.3 Food, Medicine and the Law**

It is intriguing that to some maids, such very basic necessities of life as food are not available, or are either available in insufficient amounts or she should otherwise not eat the same dish with the employer's family. To such employers, maids' dietary requirements are not an issue. This has been observed by scholars and non-scholars alike. For instance, Ndamuke (1991 p. XIII) writes that "...in some homes, the house-help is not allowed to eat the same dinner as the rest of the family even though she is the one who cooks it. But she has to prepare a separate less savory dish for herself".

But what prompts this attitude is what this journalist fails to indicate. Ndegwa (1987:83), shares the same view with this observer and in her own words, maids have "strict instructions on what they should cook for themselves - usually 'ugali' with 'sukuma wiki' or boiled maize and beans. Such maids are not allowed to share the eggs, fish, et cetera, or if they are, these foods are strictly rationed".

To any fair-minded person such behaviour is so snobbish an attitude that any effort to control it within possible and plausible boundaries should be emphasised. Unfortunately, Ndegwa does not go that far.

But Cap 226 section 11 warns that "every employer shall, ... ensure that every employee is properly fed ..., at the employer's expense", while section 12 of the same chapter provides that "... every employer shall ensure the provision for his employees of proper medicine during illness.

The Chapter further, in a subsidiary legislation of the Employment (Medical Treatment Rules) of 1977 revised in 1984, Paragraph 2 (2) states that medical treatment should be provided at the employer's expense unless the illness or injury was contracted during any period when the employee was absent from his employment without lawful cause or excuse, or unless the illness or injury is proved to have been self inflicted.

Additionally, Paragraph 8 (1) warns that where it is likely to be necessary for an employee to go to a hospital for medical treatment and some form of transport is necessary, his employer shall provide such transport as is reasonable.

Finally, an employer who fails to comply with any of the provisions of these Rules shall be guilty of an offense and shall be liable for a fine not exceeding two thousand shillings, concludes Paragraph 9.

#### **2.3.4 Provisions of the Law on Other Aspects of Maids' Employment**

Some employers take an instant action of sacking their maids on realisation that the maid is pregnant. This is irrespective of the nature of the contract entered into by both parties. But according to Cap 229 section 13 of the Laws of Kenya, "a female employee shall be entitled to two months maternity leave with full pay provided that she forfeits her annual leave in that year".

On annual leave, Cap 226 section 7, 1 (a) provides that every employee shall be entitled, after every 12 consecutive months of service with his employer to not less than 21 working days leave with full pay". An employee shall also be "granted sick leave, when incapacitated by circumstances that are not due to gross negligence on his behalf" Cap 229 (12).

But also some maids decide impromptu to resign and give an hour's notice, while some employers sack without notice. On this point both parties are on the wrong, as Cap 229 (17) authorizes a one month's notice by either party in writing or by payment in lieu of notice, of not less than one month's salary.

This is even worse if the employment of the employee is to be terminated on account of redundancy because he "shall be entitled to severance pay at the rate of 10 days' pay for each completed year of service" Cap 229, 15 (f). It is also common to hear some maids complaining of delay in payments, payment in piecemeal or a deliberate refusal of the employer to pay the maid her dues.

When such maids threaten to leave, such employers are known to confiscate the maid's

clothing to eschew this possibility, thereby forcing the maid to continue working. Cap 226 (Employment Act) section 4 (7) provides that "a person who wilfully fails to make payment of or to tender the wages earned or payable to an employee shall be guilty of an offence".

And on the said confiscation of the maid's clothes, Cap 63 section 266 provides that "any person who unlawfully compels any person to labour against the will of that person is guilty of a misdemeanour.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

In order to unravel the underlying factors associated with the phenomenon of maid's tribulations both in terms of mistreatment and exploitation, two theoretical models are employed in this study; the theory of Aggression and the Marxist Social Class Theory.

### **2.4.1 The Theory of Aggression**

This theory has received a lot of attention since the second quarter of the 20th century. While various scholars have come up with their own theories that seek to explain the root and nature of aggression, others have preoccupied themselves with offering constructive critiques to the already advanced theories. Others still have suggested that human beings are biologically predisposed to aggression (Zillman, 1978:163);(Buss, 1961:103). For example, in the theory of psychoanalytic approach to aggression, Freud (1930:211) argues that aggression instincts are lodged deep in the unconscious id and are kept from entering the consciousness by the superego. These instincts largely influence behaviour. He suggests that aggression is a manifestation of thanatos, the death instinct that is directed towards others. This has a biological orientation and Freud's hypothesis may serve to explain cases of individual deviance. However, it fails to take into consideration the social and environmental variables that are believed to elicit violent behaviour.

Freud believes that violence is linked to a human impulse to return to the inorganic state which he calls the death instinct centred in the id and controlled by both the ego and the superego.

Closely linked to Freud's theory is the Innate-Drive theory of aggression whose proponent was Lorenz, (1981), who argues that an aggressive instinct is the natural product of evolution developed for hunting, defence and competition among males for females (and among females for males). He observes that aggression is a genetically based instinctive behaviour.

Lorenz further attests that instinct in man builds until some external stimulus triggers aggressive action. This applies directly to our case of study in that in most instances, an abusive person/employer need not be disgusted by the victim. He may have been rebuked elsewhere by someone over whom he did not have influence. Harboursing this ill feeling all day long, the employer is likely to "burst" on the maid over very trivial issues which ideally would not deserve the punishment.

Lorenz also asserts that if the internal build-up is great enough, aggressive instincts can still explode into violence. This too applies to this study as it seeks to find out how maids react if they find themselves in such difficult situations. He advocates that people be encouraged to drain off these aggressive urges in socially acceptable ways. He made this conclusion after observing that although many animals kill for food, only rats and humans kill their own kind in anger.

Other biological theorists of aggression include Dollard et. al. (1939) who propounded the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis. They assert that frustration always leads to aggression and aggression is always the result of frustration. But this hypothesis was later modified by Berkowitz (1979) who came up with the Revised Frustration - Aggression Hypothesis pointing out that frustration leads to anger, not aggression. Anger can easily instigate aggression, if suitable aggressive cues exist.

Other factors, according to Berkowitz, that elicit aggressive inclinations are pain and odour, particularly unpleasant smells.

However, Lorenz as the principal advocate of instinctive aggression has met a very sharp criticism from a multiplicity of scholars, (Montagu, 1973).

For instance, Scott J.P., in Montagu, (1973:137), laments that "these ideas of instinct are

thus Pre-Mendelian and Pre-Physiological, and in this day and age such a classical theory of instinct forms a very incomplete and inadequate explanation of behaviour".

Hence, aggressive behaviour in man is not absolutely a function of instincts, otherwise humans would be compelled to perform violent acts by biological factors beyond their control. Given that these instincts are common and universal, Lorenz's argument would only serve to eradicate the whole of human population.

Lorenz himself in Montagu, (1973:144), concurs with this prediction when he observes that "looking upon man as he is today, in his hand the atom bomb, the product of his intelligence, in his heart the aggression drive, inherited from his anthropoid ancestors, which this same intelligence cannot control, would not predict long life for the species".

It is in realising this that Lorenz advocates socially acceptable ways of off-loading pressure. He recommends 'catharsis' which is the process of discharging dammed up aggressive feelings by ventilating hostility.

In the present case, for instance, catharsis to a furious employer takes the form of verbal expressions ranging from stating feelings, through swearing, yelling and primal screaming. This is not only healthy for the employer, but also gives the maid time and room to improve as this serves as a strong admonishment for an imminent punishment. It is also a good alternative to neurotic disorders consequent to dammed up aggressive feelings.

All these criticisms paved way for the coming up of another theory of aggression, the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1973; Zillman, 1978).

Regardless of whether humans have an evolutionary history that predisposes them to aggression, social learning theorists point to how susceptible aggressive behaviour is to learning experiences. How to discharge aggression, to whom and whom not to and when it will succeed are all learned.

Thus, from a social learning perspective there is nothing inevitable about violence as in cultures that preach co-operation, this becomes the social norm instead of aggression. This goes a



long way in explaining why, under the same circumstances, some employers react more bitterly than others as dictated by what values each of them has learnt and chosen to adopt.

Additionally, according to Social Learning Theory, there is nothing inevitable about the Frustration-Aggression relationships. Through learning experiences, people can acquire a variety of other responses to frustration. Such would include constructive problem solving, depression/lethargy, self anaesthetization through drugs, or turning to religion which under these or similar circumstance would be a haunting realisation of powerlessness.

All these alternatives to aggression become the immediate solutions to a maid's frustrations in situations where she is not able to discharge her bad tempers to the employer.

But since drugs for self anaesthetization may not be readily available, the chances are that most maids would turn to religion and the weaker ones will be depressed. The study also attempts to provide other alternatives at their disposal. Although arbitration of house girl agencies may reconcile the two parties thereby solving the problem constructively, such arbitrators have a very minimal role to play as they do not monitor what follows again behind the scenes. Additionally, very few maids know about them.

Yet another patron of Social Learning Theory is Fromm (1981:178) who argues that human aggression is absolutely due to the character of individual personality as determined by one's experiences. Fromm points out three potentially aggressive personality types.

First, the sadistic who compensates for real or imagined incompetence by seeking absolute control over others. This drive to control the environment does not exonerate the maids. For example, certain limitations in the expectations of the employer may bring about aggression against the maid because she represents a potential female figure in the house.

Secondly, Fromm talks of necrophiliac, who is driven to destruction and annihilation by hatred for life in general. This indicates the peak of depression as a consequence of frustration and if not checked, it may lead to suicide. Such cases apply to this study because a necrophiliac does not spare her children either.

In most cases, they kill their own children moments before committing suicide. The maid would have long flown away, unless she is a close relative of the employer. Maids too suffer this psychological problem if they are subjected to very frequently occurring frustrations.

Fromm lastly points out the bored, who displays a general lack of interest in other people as well as him/herself. Such a character is potentially very aggressive when very slightly provoked.

So, although there is oversimplification regarding instincts in Lorenz's writings, it is difficult to give a clear demarcation between learned and inborn types of behaviour. But at best the instinct theory can argue that there is a certain underlying energy or potential present in all humans and that under some circumstances this energy is discharged in the form of aggression. However, how, to whom and when to discharge it are functions of environmental conditions and personality orientation. Hence, aggression is determined by two variables, nature and nurture.

#### **2.4.2 The Marxist Social Class Theory**

Karl Marx is the major patron of the theory of social classes. According to him, wage labourers, capitalists and land owners constitute the three big classes of modern society based upon the capitalist mode of production (Bendix & Lipset 1966:5 and Dahrendorf 1969:10).

Within this Marxian/Feminist tradition, there has been a debate over whether the basic issue is the economic exploitation of capitalism or an additional exploitation of women by a male patriarchy. Both sides agree that women are exploited economically. The question is, are they part of the working class in general or are they a separate class of unpaid household workers?

According to one argument, (Benston 1973:13-27) the household is usually a cog in the capitalist system. According to the other [Dallacosta & James (1972) in Collins, (1988:288); Sokoloff (1980:141-185)] the family is a little system of domination of its own in which husbands play the role of employers "hiring" women to turn their money (capital) into usable commodities (cooked food, a cleaned and livable house etc).

According to Marx, history may be divided into several periods each of which is characterised

by a predominant mode of production. Based upon it is a class struggle consisting of a ruling and an oppressed class, which he called the proletariat. The ignorant proletariat were under the absolute mercy of the ruling class which took every opportunity to exploit them.

One would therefore wish to equate the proletariat situation with the circumstances facing the maid under conditions which may occasionally be harsh from the employer. And although the proletariat would act jointly to defend their position due to their common interests, just as the lot of maids, they are also an unorganised mass. According to Marx, "this mass is already a class in opposition to capital but not yet a class for itself" (Dahrendorf, 1969:14).

This may explain the very low salaries paid to maids as they lack a collective voice to air their misery to what would be the federation of maids' employers. This follows Marx's sentiments that laws and governments serve more or less directly in the interest of the ruling class, in this case the maids' employers.

In the Kenyan case, some maids are so young that their tender age and their ignorance of the legislated wages and conditions of employment put them in a serious disadvantage. According to the Employment Act No.4 of 1976, the law regulating employment in the country defines a "child" as any individual, whether male or female, who has not attained the age of 16. A "young person" is any individual between ages 16 and 18. The law prohibits employment of a child except under verbal contract.

So, since such persons are still employed and in some instances badly underpaid, Marx's postulations clearly come true in Kenya. He points out quite lucidly that accumulation of wealth at one pole is therefore at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality and mental degradation at the opposite pole.

It follows therefore, he concludes, that in proportion as capital accumulates, the lot of the labourer, be his payment high or low, must grow worse (Marx., 1936:709).

Hence Marx provides a point to ponder as far as the circumstances facing the maid are concerned. The exploitation of the maid could be due to the consciousness of the class in which

the employer belongs. True to this word, Toennies (in Bendix & Lipset 1966:12) attests that consciousness of status is a characteristic feature of the ruling estates which is manifest in many different social forms. Pride is an especially noteworthy aspect of this consciousness ... though in a petty way such pride may appear as vanity. Employers may so treat maids because they have economic power over the maids, though this is of course limited as economic power is not identical to power as such.

Therefore, as long as the maid is ignorant of her rights and privileges, as long as she is ignorant of the law, she will be exploited by the unscrupulous capitalistic employer. Of course some employers are extremely honest and faithful and unto the maid, they give credit where it is deserved.

## **2.5 HYPOTHESES**

"Out of the literature review, the researcher formulates a couple of hypotheses or tentative statements about the reality to be observed" (Odegi-Awuondo, 1994:6). This section therefore outlines the major hypotheses as generated in the literature review, the respective dependent and independent variables and the operational definitions of these variables.

The four major hypotheses are as follows, marked H<sub>i</sub> (where i stands for 1-4).

**H1:** The maid's background determines the extent of mistreatment.

Isolated as the independent variables in H1 which comprise the maid's background are formal education level, religion, ethnicity, marital status and the relationship with the employer.

The dependent variable is the mistreatment of the maid, and the operational definitions of the independent variables in H1 are as follows:

- (i) Formal education level: This was taken to mean the highest standard, form or post-school certificate achieved.

(ii) Religion: The particular system of faith inclination based on the belief in the existence of a supernatural being. It was categorised as either the same or different for both the maid and employer.

(iii) Ethnicity: The particular cultural group which was classified as per the tribe. It was categorised as either the same as or different from the employer's.

(iv) Marital Status: This was taken to mean the maid's social position in categories of either single, married, or single mother.

(v) Relationship with the employer: This meant the bond that could exist between the maid and the employer in terms of marriage, blood or adoption. It was categorised as either related or not related.

**H2: The maid's characteristics influence her mistreatment.**

In this hypothesis, the dependent variable as in H1 was mistreatment of the maid. The independent variables in which the researcher was interested here included the age of the maid and her awareness of her rights and privileges. The operational definitions of the two were:

(i) Age: The period in years during which the maid has been living since her birth.

(ii) Awareness of rights: This was used to mean the extent to which the maid knew what she was entitled to and what was not her right. It was categorised as fully aware, partially aware or not aware.

**H3:** The social economic status of the employer has a bearing on the level of maid's mistreatment.

While the dependent variable in H3 as in H1 and H2 was mistreatment of the maid, the independent variables in the social economic status of the employer included age, marital status, formal education level, ethnicity, religion, income, family size, size of the house and occupation.

The operational definitions for age, formal education level, ethnicity and religion of the employer were taken to have the same meaning as in the case of the maid, in H1 and H2.

However, others were defined as:

(i) Occupation: This was used to mean employer's main work or professional job or activity from which income was derived.

(ii) Income: The amount of monetary returns valued in Kenya shillings earned or accruing to the employer per month, which may either be in the form of a salary, wages or business returns. Transfer earnings - money obtained from sons or daughters, was also categorised as income. It was categorised in brackets as  $\geq 999$ , 1000-2500, 2501-4000, 4001-5500,  $\geq 5501$ .

(iii) Family size: This was taken to mean the absolute number of children born to the employer.

(iv) Size of the house: was the absolute number of bedrooms in the house of the employer.

**H4:** Children and relatives of the employer play a major role in mistreating the maid. In this hypothesis, the dependent variable is still the same as in H1, H2, and H3. Children here refer to the offspring of the employer while relatives mean all those people who are related to the employer by either blood, marriage or adoption.

## **2.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

This section outlines the operational definitions of some of the technical terms used in this study. Definitions here are given in such a way as to suit the study objectives. Thus, where these terms may grammatically or otherwise carry other meanings but which are not pointed out in this section, such other meanings could not apply to this study.

### **2.6.1 MAID**

Ndegwa (1987:1) defines "Maids" as those "young girls (who) are employed in many houses to do house work and take care of children while parents are out at work or have gone to some social occasion". But in this study, the term "Maid" is used to refer to a female domestic servant who is paid either on monthly basis or in kind for the domestic services she renders which include baby-sitting, cooking, washing, cleaning, and any other duties at home as specified by the employer.

Other common names which are used synonymously with Maid are house girl, house help, baby-sitter, ayah, nanny, nurse, and hired help. The children served by the maid and especially in urban areas, refer to her as 'auntie'. This study has therefore adopted this name on a few occasions.

### **2.6.2 EMPLOYER**

The term employer is used in this study to mean the woman who has engaged the maid. Woman because she is the immediate supervisor of the maid while men stand aloof. However, in case of a family where the man of the house was single for whatever reason and had engaged a maid, he is, under this and only this circumstance referred to as an employer.

### **2.6.3 DOMESTIC**

The study uses the term "domestic" to mean anything that has to do with the home, family or household. Members of the family were assumed to include spouses, ex-spouses, parents,

children, persons otherwise related by blood, marriage, or adoption, or persons who were either living or had been living in the same household for specified reasons.

#### **2.6.4 DOMESTIC AGGRESSION**

This refers to any behaviour of a person intended to defame or hurt a member of the same family, either psychologically, physically, emotionally or otherwise.

#### **2.6.5 EXPLOITATION**

This is used to mean any wilful act(s) of capitalising on a person, either because of his/her ignorance, or because of his/her inability to defend him/her self against the act(s).

#### **2.6.6 MISTREATMENT**

In this study, this term refers to any deed(s) of unkind handling of a person by another through either omission or commission of virtues, leading to violation of the strongly held norms of society. Aggressive or exploitative actions in general are seen as mistreatment.



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## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

Research methodology can be defined as "systematic research procedures and techniques which help the researcher to avoid self-deception" (Prewitt, 1975:1).

This chapter addresses various methods and procedures that were used all the way from data collection to drawing of the final conclusions. It starts with a description of a sampling design, which is a systematic method of selecting actual respondents out of all the potential subjects. The chapter further describes the types of data collected and further still points out the methods used in collecting the said data.

Additionally, this chapter looks at the extraneous factors that influenced collection of raw data before finally looking at the types of statistics used in analyzing the data.

#### **3.1 SAMPLING DESIGN**

Sampling is unavoidable in any kind of scientific observation. It is "basic to science because the scientist wants to comment on broader patterns or more extensive social behaviour than he himself can ever hope to observe directly" (Prewitt, 1975:17).

This study was practical and so was for the most part carried out in the field. It basically employed the method of oral interview, in which the respondents were maids, employers and the children in the family.

The population was the absolute number of families living in Nakuru municipality and these were sampled out in terms of residential estates.

There are a total of forty three residential estates in Nakuru municipality,<sup>1</sup> which were

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<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.

divided into High class, Middle class, and Low class categories.

Those considered to be in High class category included Milimani, Section 58, London, Gilani, Ziwani Railway, Pyrethrum Board Housing, Ibrahim & Rehemtulla, and Bangladesh.

Middle class consisted of Race Track, Langa phases I, II, and III, Kenlands, Free Hold, Shabab, Kaloleni C, Free Area, Kivumbini I, II, and III, Kanyi, Ngei, Koinange, Ngala, Karama, Kiti Vile, Menengai, Station Area, Dozon Ville, Kabachia, Abong Leweya and Githima.

In the low class category were Bondeni, Centre (Phase II), Ronda, Mwariki, Lake View, Nagaria, Kampi Somali, Baharini, Ponda mali, Shauri Yako, and Kaptembwa.

A proportionate random sample of 10 estates was derived from the 43, and how many were chosen from each category, depended on the number of estates in it. Thus 2 estates were sampled out from the high class which had a total of 8 estates, 5 were derived from the middle class which had 24, and 3 from the low class which had 11 estates.

This was done by assigning a code to each estate and the codes were put together, mixed up and randomly picked to give each estate an equal chance of inclusion into the sample. This procedure was repeated for each of the three categories.

The rationale here was that time and resources could not allow for the whole population or even a bigger sample.

Then stratified random sampling was employed where the strata were the 10 residential estates and from each of them, a random sample of ten families was selected. To achieve this, the first household was purposefully selected on the basis that it had a maid. Then a regular number of houses were skipped depending on the size of the estate. The general practice was to skip three houses in case of very small estates and seven in case of big ones.

This produced a sample of 100 families. Interviews were administered on maids and employers in each of the 100 families, and children in some of them.

The assumption was that all the families so randomly selected would have maids. But where one did not, then the next family was considered. However, where it was possible to obtain



an extra respondent from any estate, this was appreciated as it helped augment the available data. This gave rise to an additional 4 respondents, hence a total of 104.

This method ensured total coverage of the area under study. Besides, it gave each estate/stratum equal chances of being included in the sample. However, families could not stand equal chances of inclusion because some estates were much larger than others, thereby consisting of more families. A family in such an estate certainly had lower chances than one in a very small estate with very few families in total. But at least every family had an equal chance relative to other families within the same estate. Moreover, the method ensured that the sample did not cluster around a particular class of estates.

Observations from this sample are assumed to apply to the general population under study, reminiscent of Prewitt's observation that "any statement made about the sample should also be true of the population" (Prewitt, 1975:18).

### **3.2 TYPES OF DATA COLLECTED**

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Qualitative information focused on the description of Nakuru Municipality which was chiefly obtained from the Town Clerk department, Nakuru Municipality. It also revolved around the area of what the law provides on cases of mistreatment of person by another, as well as the provisions of the penal code on such mistreating persons. This particular data was obtained from the Nakuru High Court library.

Other qualitative information was collected from University libraries around the country as well as private and corporation libraries which proved to have documentary sources.

Quantitative data focused on the various aspects of mistreatment and exploitation of maids in relation to their age, formal education level, religion, ethnicity, marital status, relationship with the employer and awareness of their own rights and privileges.

### **3.3 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

In order to establish parameters for assessing the extent of mistreatment of maids by employers, a baseline survey was necessary, in the form of data collection. Three main methods employed in this groundwork exercise were the following:

#### **3.3.1 Interview Schedule:**

Interview schedules are the most common technique of data collection in social surveys. They are "a set of questions (both closed and open ended) written out with spaces provided for filling in the answers" (Odegi-Awuondo, 1994:7).

The interview schedule was the principal tool of data collection. It comprised three scheduled questionnaires, administered to the maid, the employer and the children. The maid's questionnaire consisted of questions related to H1 and H2. The employers' questionnaire carried questions related to H3. The last questionnaire which was most simplified to suit the respondents was for the children. It had questions to do with age, sex and attitude towards maids as seen in H4.

The interview schedule was deemed appropriate because it made it possible to ask uniform questions of the same standard. Besides, where a question was not clearly understood by the interviewee, the face to face communication made it possible to elaborate or ask the same thing in a different language or wording.

Where the response given was seen as insufficient, this method also helped to elicit further information by posing more questions into the same area of interest.

The method also gave the interviewer a chance to record spontaneous answers which were hoped to be more informative and less normative because the respondent did not have plenty of time to think over and again on the same question.

### **3.3.2 Unstructured Questions:**

This method was applied whenever necessary as some questions arose during the interview, which were seen as helpful in attaining the study objectives.

Responses from such questions were recorded in a separate notebook, and the objective of this was to supplement the scheduled questionnaire.

### **3.3.3 Direct Observation:**

This method was used in observing occurrences that were deemed necessary in drawing conclusions. Non-verbal behaviour was observed here and the validity of the respondents' answers assessed. Some counter questions were rendered necessary on the basis of this assessment. Data were thus substantially augmented.

## **3.4 EXTRANEOUS INFLUENCES ON DATA COLLECTION**

Several problems were encountered in the field during the process of data collection, which were feared to produce adverse effects on the data collection.

This was mostly in the high class category of estates, especially Section 58 Estate which is predominantly inhabited by Asians. In this estate, the biggest problem was mostly to do with the inability of the Asians to communicate with the researcher. Almost all of them could not speak Kiswahili, and to a good number of them, English was not intelligible either.

This forced the researcher to hire an interpreter, whereby the researcher talked in Kiswahili while the interpreter talked in the same language but with a tinge of the Asian accent and occasionally with a few Indian words.

The interpreter was usually and always the gate-keeper of the particular Asian, as it was felt that he stood the best chance of knowing how to talk to her, having worked for her for some time. Of course the maid stood the same chance but due to logistics, she had of necessity to be separated from the employer during the interview.

Where this approach failed, the interview was administered to the maid only.

But even in cases where it was possible to talk to Asian employers, there was a very high degree of mistrust and suspicion among them. This again forced the researcher to skip a house occasionally and to consider the next one not because there was no maid, but because they were not fully convinced that the research was purely academic. Occasionally, the researcher was forced to literally memorize the questionnaire so as to administer it as a usual talk, only to go and record the responses immediately he stepped out of the respondent's compound.

Yet other Asians had difficulties answering a question on the number of children they had, and this, the researcher believed, was a result of their cultural inclinations. Under such circumstances, this information was obtained through the maid.

Due to these problems, it was not possible to obtain the targeted ten employer respondents from the Indian estate. But the few who were obtained were interviewed at length and in depth.

Since the maids very hardly knew spoken English, the researcher had to administer the questions in Kiswahili, obtain responses in Kiswahili and quickly get the English words for the same to write down. However, even Kiswahili was not fully intelligible to some maids.

Harassment by dogs especially in Milimani, also a high class estate, was a constant problem. Indeed, in one instance, the researcher escaped dog bites narrowly with passers-by going to his rescue when a multiplicity of dogs descended upon him from both the particular home and the neighbourhood.

The study was conducted during one of the hottest periods of the year in Nakuru - November 1994-February 1995. Travelling from estate to another was therefore hampered because it was not only very hot and scorching, but also dust was constantly "evaporating" from the ground. Hurricanes and typhoon-like highly dusty winds blowing across the estates, especially Race Track, Kenlands, Free Hold and Langa Langa rendered the atmosphere very unbearable for walking around.

Another unrelated problem but of a high magnitude was that of separating the maid from the employer during the interview. Yet, this had to be done as each of the two was answering questions to do with the behaviour of the other. This was precipitated more where the maid had freedom to sit with the employer even when visitors were around.

Other maids, suspecting that the employer was talking about them could emerge just in the middle of the interview with the employer thereby rendering it difficult to continue. However, strong intuition on the part of the researcher was employed in such circumstances to re-separate the two.

The problem was less pervasive while interviewing the maid as the employer, having given the researcher the okay to go ahead, could not interrupt. But where the interview with the maid was not conducted from a safe distance, this again forced the researcher to talk in extremely low tones for the discussion not to be overheard by the employer.

All these problems thwarted the researcher's efforts to hire research assistants, despite promises of handsome remunerations. In fact, five research assistants pulled out one at a time within the first two weeks, leaving the researcher single handed.

### **3.5. TECHNIQUES OF DATA ANALYSIS**

This section outlines various methods used in analyzing data, and the procedural events prior to these analyses. Maids' questionnaires were combined with those of their specific employers and the children for every particular family. This produced 104 questionnaires in all. Each of them was assigned a numerical number.

Information obtained through this method, whether directly quantifiable or not was coded. The codes assigned to various categories were put together in a code book. A code book serves to define the meaning of the numerical codes and to tell the location of the variable on the computer cards.

With the aid of the code book, a data sheet was prepared, whereby various codes excluding the narratives of what they represented were entered against particular columns that run up to 80.

The code book, together with the data sheet facilitated the computation and cross-tabulation of the data through a most suitable computer programme, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences, (SPSS).

The data were presented in contingency tables or cross-tabulations in the form of percentages. This highly facilitated the comparison of data.

By use of these SPSS results, data is first described fully as obtained from the field, by way of simple frequencies and percentages, as seen in chapter five, in which descriptive statistical methods are used. These help in describing data and they specifically include mean, modes, medians and percentages. They are measures of central tendency.

This description in chapter five deals with one variable at a time in preparation for comparison of various independent variables with regard to how they influence dependent variables.

Full data analysis and interpretation follows in chapter six, in which cross-tabulations are the principal tool of analysis. Frequencies of occurrence of various aspects of independent variables are cross-tabulated with frequencies of occurrence for dependent variables in a bid to establish how the dependent variables respond to this influence. The results of these cross-tabulations are produced in correlation matrices. Such matrices are important tools in showing whether there are inter correlations or not, and if there are, whether they are patterned and systematic or characterised by inconsistencies, discontinuities and erratic trends.

To facilitate hypotheses testing, inferential statistics such as Gamma coefficients are used towards the end of chapter six.

### **3.5.1 The Gamma Measure of Association**

The relationship of cross-tabulation is expressed in the form of a summary statistic, the Gamma coefficient. Statistics which measure cross-tabulation relations, according to Prewitt (1975:159), are often called table statistics or simply measures of association. Prewitt notes that "there are very many such statistics and the researcher normally chooses among them depending on his data and his research questions".

Thus the researcher in this study opted for the Gamma measure of association because it does not only fully illustrate the principle behind table statistics, but it is also comparatively easy to compute and to interpret.

The Gamma measure shows the direction and strength of association between two cross-tabulated variables. It varies between -1.00, indicating a perfect negative relationship and +1.00, indicating a perfect positive relationship. A Gamma of .00 or near .00 indicates the lack of any relationship between the variables.

Conceptually, the Gamma coefficient measures the extent to which the cases are concentrated in one diagonal minus the extent to which they are concentrated in the opposite diagonal. If the cases are equally distributed in each diagonal, then the Gamma measure would show a 0.00 relationship.

To illustrate the computation of the Gamma measure, assume a hypothetical cross-tabulation matrix as the one shown below.

A	B
C	D

$$(A \times D) - (B \times C)$$

Gamma =

$$\frac{(A \times D) - (B \times C)}{(A \times D) + (B \times C)}$$

A concentration of cases in the AD diagonal indicates a positive relationship while a concentration of cases in the BC diagonal shows a negative relationship.

However, the Gamma statistic has one major weakness:

it gives a -1.00 or a +1.00 if there is an empty cell, and this drawback is to be kept in mind when interpreting the Gamma measure of association.

It is important also to take cognisance of the fact that the Gamma measure does not only apply to a simple two by two matrix; it can be applied to much more complex tables, for example three by three, four by four, or any combination for that matter.

It also need not necessarily be a square matrix. The number of columns may be larger than the number of rows or vice versa, and yet the Gamma measure of association will still conveniently apply. In such complex cases, (A x D) is derived by multiplying any given cell frequency by the summed frequencies in all cells which are to the right and lower than the initial cell. (B x C) is equally determined by reversing this procedure. An illustration of how to compute A x D and B x C for such cases is offered below, with the resulting gamma coefficients.



6	10	10
10	13	13
14	11	6

$$(A \times D) = 6 \times 43 = 258 \quad (B \times C) = 10 \times 48 = 480$$

$$10 \times 19 = 190 \quad 10 \times 24 = 240$$

$$10 \times 17 = 170 \quad 13 \times 25 = 325$$

$$13 \times 6 = 78 \quad 13 \times 14 = 182$$

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696

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1227

$$696 - 1227 \quad -531$$

$$\text{Gamma} = \frac{696 - 1227}{696 + 1227} = \frac{-531}{1923} = -0.28$$

To be noted here is that where Gamma value is negative, and the variables under the test are non-directional, the said value will be viewed as an absolute figure and this will indicate the strength of association but minus the directionality.

By making use of the Gamma measure of association, it was thus possible to establish the significance in a particular relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

### **3.6 REFERENCE TO CHAPTER THREE**

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## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION.**

### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

After the field work, the mass of data collected by the various techniques has to be summarised and analyzed. The raw data are presented either in tables or in prose form. The general practice is to summarise the data in the form of frequency tables showing statistical distributions such as percentages, measures of central tendency and spread (Booth, 1992:146 ; Odegi-Awuondo, 1994:7-8,).

In any successful research report, orderly presentation of results is an underlying attribute. Though general statistics are useful in describing or summarising a characteristic, often only one characteristic at a time is described or summarised (Prewitt, 1975: 137). Statistics such as averages, proportions and ratios are effective in simplifying large amounts of data.

This chapter seeks, through use of frequencies and percentages, to describe the characteristics of the research sample. Focus here is directed to various aspects of the study hypotheses, whose distribution or frequency of occurrence of various categories will in the next chapter be cross-tabulated with other variables which are deemed important indices of mistreatment of maids.

Arising from this, it was found prudent to literally present these frequencies before embarking extensively on full data analysis and interpretation.

### **4.1 MAIDS' BACKGROUND**

The researcher endeavours, in this section, to present and appraise the salient features comprising the maids' background in the light of how they contribute to her tribulations.

#### 4.1.1 Maids' Formal Education

It was found out that majority of maids had gone up to the higher levels of primary education, and a negligible number had no education at all. A few of them had attempted secondary education but dropped out along the line, before sitting the KCSE examination.

This information is shown on Table 4.0 below.

TABLE 4.0 MAIDS' EDUCATION BACKGROUND

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STD 1 - STD 4	18	17.3
STD 5 - STD 8	66	63.5
FORM 1 - FORM 3	9	8.7
FORM 4 AND ABOVE	5	4.8
NONE AT ALL	6	5.8
TOTAL	104	100

$$\text{mean } (\bar{X}) = \frac{\sum fX}{N} = \frac{624}{104} = 6$$

Thus on average maids' education goes only up to standard six. Only 5 out of 104 had sat their form four examination.

Some of the major reasons that can be adduced for this trend include lack of financial resources that are attendant to schooling and parental negligence as far as education of their daughters is concerned. With no education, and yet the girl must earn a living, she opts to be employed as a maid.

### **4.1.2 Religious Background**

A disproportionately large number of maids belonged to a different religious background from the employer. This was 78 (74%) as opposed to 26 (26%) who were in the same religious faith.

It was observed that employers do not mind a lot about the maids' religious stand, because after all the maid will hardly get time to go to church. But what was not very clear at this point was whether denial of a chance to go to church was because of religious differences or other factors. This is because even among those whose faith coincided with the employer's, there were some who were denied the chance. Others belonged to different denominations but the maid was allowed to go to church, if only she would attend the employer's.

### **4.1.3 Ethnicity**

Employers had a bias towards employing maids from their own home areas or tribes. In the sample of 104 maids and the respective 104 employers, 66 maids (63.5%) had the same ethnic background as the employer while only 38 (36.5%) came from different ethnicities.

This could largely be due to the fear associated with "foreign" housegirls who are suspected of having intentions deeper than getting employed. Indeed, an employer lamented that some girls masquerade as housegirls, only for the employer to realise a week later that the girl wanted accommodation and a source of food for just a week as she organises her own things. She then disappears unceremoniously. Fear of the maid abandoning children in this manner explains this behavioral characteristic.

Secondly, employers fear that their children may not learn their mother-tongue properly, if nursed by different dialect-speaking housegirls. To be sure, a 44-year-old Asian employer in Section 58 estate lamented that after eight years continuous service by a Luhya maid, her nine-

year-old daughter was speaking better "Kiluhya" than her own Indian mother-tongue.

Other employers go for maids from their own tribes for cultural conformity. This was observed by a Kikuyu employer, a mother of four, who badly collided with a Luo maid who almost forcefully demanded to be served with fish, yet this was absolutely unknown in the dietary programme of this Kikuyu family.

#### **4.1.4 Maids' Marital Status**

Domestic workers who opt to be maids are predominantly single. A remarkable number, however, are single mothers who wish to work as maids to earn a living for their child(ren), while the smallest proportion of all the maids in the sample of this study was married.

Table 4.1 below illustrates this fact.

**TABLE 4.1 MAIDS' MARITAL STATUS**

MARITAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE	78	75
SINGLE MOTHER	21	20.2
MARRIED	5	4.8
TOTAL	104	100

Mode (MO) = 78. Thus maids at a general level are single.

Single girls are most mobile and can travel even across the country in search of a job. Single mothers are slightly held back by their children, and would therefore only work in the neighbourhood of where they live. However, a few of those in this category can travel with the

child, if they have only one, and this was a dominant feature.

But married maids are not only held back by their children but also by the husband and the general family obligations. A few of them can therefore work in this capacity and those who can, can only work within walking distances or so, for them to be able to return to their own families after work. They often work only during the day.

#### **4.1.5 Relationship with the Employer**

Maids were asked whether they were related to their employers or not. A landslide majority of those interviewed were found to have no relationship at all with the employer by blood, marriage or adoption. This is shown on Table 4.2 below.

**TABLE 4.2 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EMPLOYER**

RELATED WITH EMPLOYER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	8	7.7
NO	90	86.5
N/A	6	5.8
TOTAL	104	100

Mode (MO) = 90. Maids are by and large not related to their employers.

However, in 6 cases, it was not possible to establish whether a relationship existed between the two, owing to cultural complexities. In such circumstances one party felt that there was a relationship but this was dispelled by the other. It was therefore coded "not applicable". But this formed a very insignificant number.

Most employers argued that maids who are related to the employer assume too much and demand a lot. Once they are aware that they are relatives of the employer, they expect to be treated as such. High salaries, very little work with all possible favours are their expectations. Since this is totally discordant with the employers' views of a maid, prospective employers seek maids to whom they are not related.

## **4.2 MAIDS' CHARACTERISTICS**

This section seeks to present frequencies and distributions of various aspects which were deemed important components of the maids' characteristics.

### **4.2.1 Age**

It was found that the majority of maids, in fact 50% of them, were between 16 and 20 years and only 4.8% of them were more than 36 years of age. Such were the maids who worked only during the day and were therefore likely to be mothers themselves. A tabular analysis is offered below, on Table 4.3.



TABLE 4.3 AGE OF THE MAID

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
£ 15 YEARS	26	25
16 - 20 YRS	52	50
21 - 25 YRS	13	12.5
26 - 30 YRS	6	5.8
31 - 35 YRS	2	1.9
36 +	5	4.8
TOTAL	104	100

$$\text{Mean } (\bar{X}) = \frac{\sum fX}{N} = \frac{2039}{104} = 19.6$$

What this means is that maids are 20 years of age on average. Perhaps a partial explanation to this trend is the fact that girls under 20 years of age are still unmarried and would like therefore, in the absence of any good academic background to support themselves in getting better jobs, to work as maids.

But ladies of a higher age are likely to be married and would probably be getting support from their husbands. In the circumstances, such ladies would rather leave baby-sitting and concentrate on their own families. After age 30, even women (employers) themselves would not wish to employ them. This is because they would wish to have younger maids who can be "sent to collect slippers under the bed" (Field Respondent, 21/12/94) as opposed to older ones who cannot be rushed anyhow.

### 4.2.2 Awareness of Rights and Privileges

To be able to draw a valid conclusion on whether maids were aware of their rights and privileges or not, they were asked whether they knew any arbitration agency that would reconcile them with their employers in case of a dispute. They were also asked what they would advise a fellow maid who has been beaten unconscious by the employer, mutilated with a sharp weapon or sexually assaulted by the man of the house.

They were thirdly asked whether they knew how much they were entitled to in terms of salary. They too were asked to suggest recommendations on changes or adjustments on the part of the employer. After a combination of responses emanating from all these questions, it was found that the largest number of maids were dangerously ignorant of what they were entitled to. Just a few of them (13.5%), were classified "partially aware" while only 4.8% of them were aware, though not fully, of their rights and privileges. Below, Table 4.4 summarises these figures.

TABLE 4.4 AWARENESS OF RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
AWARE	5	4.8
PARTIALLY AWARE	14	13.5
NOT AWARE	85	81.7
TOTAL	104	100

Mode (MO) = 85. Thus generally maids are not aware of their rights. Those categorised as "not aware" had surprising answers on what steps they would themselves take if subjected to severe battering or sexual assault. Some suggested that they would borrow money from the

same abusing employer and go to hospital while others said that they would run away and go back to their parental homes. Still others harboured the idea that they would kneel down and pray. But on sexual harassment by the man of the house, almost all of them reported that they would report this to the employer (the man's wife).

### **4.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE EMPLOYER**

Under this section is outlined the various aspects of the socio-economic characteristics of the employer in the light of how they are distributed throughout the sample. These include age, education level, marital status, income, family size, size of the house and occupation.

#### **4.3.1 Employers' Age**

Majority of the interviewed employers lie between 26 and 35 years of age. This age group constitutes 32 cases (30.8%) and this decreased steadily with age up to 1% for the age group above 56 years. A tabular analysis of ages of employers is shown on Table 4.5 as here under.

TABLE 4.5 EMPLOYERS' AGE DISTRIBUTION

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
£ 25	13	12.5
26 - 30 YRS	32	30.8
31 - 35 YRS	29	27.9
36 - 40 YRS	16	15.4
41 - 45 YRS	4	3.8
46 - 50 YRS	3	2.9
51 - 55 YRS	1	1.0
56 +	1	1.0
N/A	5	4.8
TOTAL	104	100

$$\text{Mean (X)} = \frac{\sum f \bar{X}}{N} = \frac{3212}{95} = 32$$

An average employer was 32 years old. After age 35, an employer's children are mature enough not to need the attention of the maid. This could be an obvious answer or explanation to the very few employers above 56 years of age. Although such employers may also need a maid to help in other household chores, basically the expectation is that a maid is principally employed for baby-sitting.

An insignificant number of employers did not wish to discuss their ages and a few others were not available for interview. The reasons for this are explained elsewhere in this report under "extraneous influence on data collection". These were only 5 cases or 4.8% of the total number of employers in this sample.

### **4.3.2 Employers' Education Level**

Employers were asked to state their education achievements. Four categories of education level emerged and these were "O" level and below, "A" level, Middle level college, and University.

It was established that the four categories had frequencies of almost a similar magnitude. Those with education up to "O" level and below were 36 (34.6%) while those with "A" level were 14 (13.5%). Middle level college and University graduates were 29 (27.9%) and 20 (19.2%) respectively. 5 sampled respondents could not be reached, and all these totalled to 104 cases (100%).

Majority of people who got to "A" level entered a middle level college of some type while many of those who had gone up to form 4 were engaged mostly in business. This could explain why "A" level holders constituted the smallest category, while those with "O" level and below constituted the largest number.

### **4.3.3 Employers' Income**

Most employers considered the question on income a sensitive issue and were therefore not readily willing to offer this information. To minimise this sensitivity, income was grouped up into brackets and responses were obtained as shown on Table 4.6 below.

**TABLE 4.6 EMPLOYERS' INCOME**

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
1000 - 2500	8	7.7
2500 - 4000	31	29.8
4001 - 5500	17	16.3
5501 +	34	32.7
N/A	14	13.5
TOTAL	104	100

$$\text{Mean } (\bar{X}) = \frac{\sum fX}{N} = \frac{382534}{90} = 4250$$

This implied that the average salary of employers was Shs.4250 per month. But despite this effort by the researcher to categorise incomes in the manner shown above, still a few employers especially (in fact all of them) from the Asian-dominated Section 58 Estate concealed this information.

A few others were not available for interview and the total number of missing cases was thus 14 or 13.5% of the total number of cases. Only 8 respondents (7.7%) had incomes below Shs.2500/= a month and they were mostly those living in the low income estates and in the poorest conditions of single room or double room residential houses.

#### **4.3.4 Family Size**

Family size in this study is used throughout to mean the absolute number of children born to the employer's family. The largest number of respondents had two children each while only 1% was childless, though married for several years. Table 4.7 shows the full distribution.

TABLE 4.7 NUMBER OF CHILDREN

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1 CHILD	22	21.2
2 CHILDREN	26	25
3 CHILDREN	23	22.1
4 CHILDREN	19	18.3
5 CHILDREN	5	4.8
6 CHILDREN +	3	2.9
CHILDLESS	1	1.0
N/A	5	4.8
TOTAL	104	100

$$\text{Mean } (\bar{X}) = \frac{\sum fX}{N} = \frac{262}{99} = 2.6$$

On average, employers had a family size of 3. Pertinent to this table, it is observed that employers had a diminishing preference for children after the second child. It is also probable that employers with many children are not likely to have infants who would occasion the need for a maid. Others who had, say five or six children had hired and fired so many maids that they no longer fancied them. They may have retired from formal employment and so could take care of their families themselves.

This explains why 68.3% of all the employers in the sample of this study had three children and below. Indeed, this is the stage when almost all working women would need a housegirl.

#### **4.3.5 Size of the House**

Size of employer's house was considered to be a factor in mistreatment of maids. This was classified in terms of bedrooms in a house. The smallest in size was coded as a single room while second smallest was a double room, then one bed roomed, two bed roomed, three bed roomed, four bed roomed and finally a complex residence with servants' quarters.

It was found that two-bedroomed houses were most prevalent. They comprised 51 (49%) of all households involved in the study. Frequency distributions for various house sizes is given on Table 4.8 below.

**TABLE 4.8 SIZE OF THE HOUSE**

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ROOM	5	4.8
DOUBLE ROOM	13	12.5
1 BEDROOM	12	11.5
2 BEDROOMS	51	49.0
3 BEDROOMS	14	13.5
4 BEDROOMS	2	1.9
COMPLEX WITH SERVANT'S QUARTER	1	1.0
N/A	6	5.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>



Mo = 51 and so two bedroomed houses were the commonest. It was not however possible to establish the size of six houses or 5.8% of the total 104 because the owners were either uncooperative or failed to show up for the interview. These are coded "not applicable".

#### 4.3.6 Employers' Marital Status

This was grouped into four categories as married, never married, widowed and divorced. A landslide majority of employers were found to be married. These were 78 out of 104, or 75%. Those who were single because they had never been married were second in rank consisting of 12 (11.5%). Only 3.8% of the total number of respondents were widowed and 4.8% were divorcees. This information is shown in tabular analysis as follows.

TABLE 4.9 EMPLOYERS' MARITAL STATUS

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MARRIED	78	75.0
NEVER MARRIED	12	11.5
WIDOWED	4	3.8
DIVORCED	5	4.8
N/A	5	4.8
TOTAL	104	100

Mo = 78. Employers were thus married, by and large.

The marital status of five respondents (4.8%) could not be established.

### **4.3.7 Employers' Occupation**

Employers were asked whether they were formally employed, self employed (involved in private money-generating business), or housewives. Responses out of this question revealed that majority of them were in formal employment. These totalled 64 out of 104 cases (61.5%). A further 27 cases (26%) were engaged in self employment while only 7 of them (6.7%) were housewives.

Six employers were either not available for the interview or were uncooperative for this purpose. However, this forms such a small percentage (5.8%) that it cannot affect the generalizations therefrom.

## **4.4 GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE STUDY**

Under this section, the researcher lays bare various aspects that were deemed to constitute maids' mistreatment. Frequency distribution of these aspects throughout the sample are presented in readiness for a thorough and intensive analysis and interpretations accompanied by explanations, which are all found in chapter five of this dissertation.

### **4.4.1 Employers' Method of Recruiting Maids**

Employers were asked how they got their current maids. 39.4% of them got their maids through friends and acquaintances, while 29.8% got theirs through their own (employers') relatives. Table 4.10 summarises various methods of maids' recruitment.

TABLE 4.10 METHOD OF GETTING THE MAID

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
THROUGH A FRIEND	41	39.4
THROUGH RELATIVES	31	29.8
THROUGH AN AGENCY	4	3.8
LOOKED FOR HER	23	22.1
OTHERS	5	4.8
TOTAL	104	100

Mo = 41. The implication here is that the majority of the employers got their maids through local arrangements with friends. Only 3.8% had courage to recruit maids from an agency. It is generally believed that maids who are trained as housegirls and who therefore are posted by housegirl agencies are likely to be well informed of their own rights and privileges. They therefore, would not condone any act(s) geared towards threatening their own survival. Potential employers dread recruiting such housegirls.

And because such employers therefore go for untrained maids, there is a high rate of maid turn over; they can be hired and fired at leisure without notice. Thus, asked whether they had employed another maid previously, 84.7% accepted that they had. Only 15.3% had not, and these were the young employers who had just engaged the first maid after getting their first child. Various reasons were advanced for firing the previous maid, for those who had engaged more than once. Table 4.11 summarises this information.

**TABLE 4.11 WHY PREVIOUS MAID LEFT**

CATEGORY	FREQ	Perc.	VALID %
WE DIFFERED	31	29.8	36.9
TO GET MARRIED	11	10.6	13.1
REASON		15.4	19
UNKNOWN	16		2.4
EMPLOYER		1.9	28.6
MOVED	2	23.1	MISSING
OTHERS	24	19.2	
N/A	20		
TOTAL	104	100	100

Mo = 31. Employers mostly differed with their maids as a prelude to dismissing them. From the table above, 20 were missing cases leaving only 84 cases for analysis with this particular respect. 36.9% of the 84 asserted that their previous maids left because they differed. Reasons behind these differences were that the maid stole from the employer, she was rude and unwilling to change, she used to beat children, she was lazy, dirty and all manner of accusations. But 13.1% of those who had employed another maid previously contended that the maid left to get married, while 19% of the maids were said to have gone away for reasons unknown to the employer. In only 2 cases (2.4%), the employer was transferred from her place of work and so could not go with her maid. They parted.

Other employers gave assorted reasons like: the maid got pregnant or she was very bothersome because she had her own children. Incitement by neighbours was also an answer to this phenomenon. A few employers were happy that the maid left for a business. All these constituted the "others" category, which were 24 cases (28.6%).

But asked whether or not the current maid was better than the former, 14 out of 104 employers lamented that they were the same. These employers have therefore lived in desperation because replacing maids did not seem to solve their problems. However, 60 out of 104 (57.7%) affirmed that their current maids were far much better than their previous ones.

#### **4.4.2 Favours Given to Maids**

Employers were asked whether there were any facilities or services they gave to their maids which they (employers) considered to be a favour. 71.6% of the valid cases accepted this while 28.4% declared that they only related with their maids purely on job-salary terms with no favours from either party.

Interestingly, what were seen as favours by these employers were necessities which maids considered part of what the employer should unreservedly offer. Table 4.12 below shows the frequency distribution for these "favours".

**TABLE 4.12. SPECIAL FAVOURS GIVEN TO MAIDS**

CATEGORY	FREQ	Perc	VALID %
ACCOMMODATION	11	10.6	16.2
FOOD	4	3.8	5.9
PERSONAL EFFECTS	6	5.8	8.8
ALL BASIC NECESSITIES	20	34.6	29.4
CLOTHES	13	12.5	19.1
TAKEN FOR A COURSE	4	3.8	5.9
OTHERS	10	9.6	14.7
N/A	36	34.6	MISSING
TOTAL	104	100	100

The 36 missing cases comprised those who did not answer this question and those who felt that they offered no favours at all. Valid cases in this case were therefore 68. Some employers gave clothes from their own children to maids who were parents themselves and this seemed a common gesture from Indian employers. Though this was a real favour even according to the maid, it was feared by employers that it would encourage theft of the same items as the employers would confuse stolen ones from those genuinely given out.

Other employers whose maids worked only during the day and travelled back in the evening offered them only lunch. The maid took other meals at her own home before and after work. Such employers considered this meal a favour.

Among employers who gave "other" forms of favour to their maids were reported such "favours" as time for going to church, and shopping for her as she goes home to see her parents.

#### **4.4.3 Physical Assault**

Employers were asked whether they had ever punished their current maids by way of spanking, slapping, kicking, whipping or other wise. The results were as here under.

**TABLE 4.13 PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT**

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	19	18.3
NO	76	73.0
N/A	9	8.7
TOTAL	104	100

Perhaps those who had physically assaulted their maids were more than 19; some employers would not wish to report this openly. Asked what the maid did when she was annoyed with the employers, responses were that she refused to talk, slammed doors around, refused to eat, mistreated children, cried, or talked alone when working, or simply expressed disappointment verbally to the employer.

Others were accused of going to narrate their ordeals to the neighbours who employers accused of inciting the maid.

It was further found out that some employers, after to punishing their maid deemed it necessary to smooth out things while others found it better to do nothing about it, but let the girl really feel the full weight of the assault-cum-punishment. 43 out of 104 (41.3%) were for smoothing out the matter while 45 (43.3%) were not. 16 cases (15.4%) did not apply to this question. Thus the largest percentage of employers did not care about both physical and emotional trauma on the part of the maid, for by so not squaring out the differences, they administered both.

#### **4.4.4. Employers' Opinion on Praising Maids**

Some employers held the view that a maid should never be praised under any circumstance whatsoever. While others felt that it pays to praise a maid quite a bit when she does a good job for this serves to motivate her, still others felt that it is only worthwhile to give credit where it is due. Table 4.14 shows the respective frequencies.

**TABLE 4.14 OPINION ON PRAISING MAIDS**

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
NEVER PRAISE A MAID	32	30.8
IT PAYS TO PRAISE	28	26.9
GIVE CREDIT WHERE DUE	38	36.5
N/A	6	5.8
TOTAL	104	100

Mo = 38, implying that most employers were for the idea that when a maid does a commendable job, she should be applauded but when she is on the wrong, she should be treated as such. But according to many maids, they only receive scolding however much they try to attract some praise. This is corroborated by the sentiments of a furious employer of a 13 year old maid who comments: "One thing you have to know is: never praise a maid: she will be big headed and never do anything without compliments. After all that is what she is paid for" (Field Respondent, 4/1/95).

#### **4.4.5 Maids' Previous Employment**

Majority of the interviewed maids had, for various reasons, chosen to be baby-sitters as a career. Out of the sample of 104, 60 maids (57.7%) had worked for somebody else previously, in the same capacity as a maid. Only 44 (42.3%) were trying their hand for the first time. The fact that this large majority had worked for more than one employer is a covert manifestation of dissatisfaction on the part of the maid, thereby occasioning need for resigning and seeking employment elsewhere. Others did not even wish to resign but were fired and in most cases without notice.



Thus, asked why they left their immediate former employer, the 60 maids offered reasons as shown on Table 4.15.

**TABLE 4.15 REASONS FOR LEAVING PREVIOUS EMPLOYER**

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SHE WAS TOO HARSH	6	10
LOW SALARY	8	13.3
DELAY IN SALARY	6	10
EMPLOYER MOVED	9	15
HARSH AND LOW SALARY	16	26.7
OTHERS	15	25
TOTAL	60	100

Maids therefore left their previous employers, whether ceremoniously or otherwise because of harsh treatment (10%) whereupon the maid was either sacked or she left on her own accord, or due to low and delayed payments (23.3%). Another 15% were found to have left because their employers moved while 26.7% parted because the employer was not only too harsh, but she was also paying very low salaries.

Unfortunately, quitting one employer for another did not spell a lot of hope for the maids, because problems of late payment and payment piecemeal are a perennial occurrence in this institution. Out of the whole sample of 104 maids, only 53 (51.0%) were paid promptly at the end of the month. 39 (37.5%) were paid late while a further 7 (6.7%) reported that they were usually paid very late. Five of them were missing cases. And on how the payment was delivered, 20 (19.2%) complained that it was done in instalments.

#### 4.4.6 Maids' Salary Scales

Despite the government legislated minimum salaries as indicated in chapter two of this report, most maids were paid between shs.400 and shs.600 a month. Out of 104 interviewed cases, 101 had valid cases of payment by salary whereas 3 were paid in kind.

Table 4.16 below shows the frequencies of various salary scales.

TABLE 4.16 MAIDS' SALARY LEVELS

CATEGORY (Shs.)	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
300 - 400	27	26.0
401 - 500	30	28.8
501 - 600	23	22.1
601 - 700	8	7.7
701 - 900	6	5.8
901 - 1200	5	4.8
1200 +	2	1.9
N/A	3	2.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>

$$\text{Mean } X = \frac{\sum fx}{N} = \frac{53302}{101} = 527.70$$

$$N = 101$$

The average salary for maids is therefore shs. 527.70 per month despite all the attached odds.

For those who were paid in kind, they were given materials which were mostly sent to their parents. Such included clothes, utensils, foodstuffs and a little money occasionally.

But clothing the maid was the dominant mode of payment in kind, although where the employer had the sole discretion over what the maid had to wear, it was generally observed

that the maid was poorly dressed. Such employers also considered food as part of the payment in kind.

#### **4.4.7 General Freedom for the Maid**

Maids were generally found to have rationed freedom in all spheres of their daily routines. 48 (46.2%) of all the maids in the sample were not allowed to go to church. This freedom was granted to only 50 (48.1%) while 6 others (5.8%) worked only during the day and were exempted from duty on sundays. Hence they could not be ranked.

Out of the 48 who were not granted permission for church activities, 3 cases reported that they did not know where the church was. Failure by the employer to orient the maid to the social environment is an effective weapon in cooping her inside the house for several months. However, it is likely that even with express permission from the employer, some of the house girls would still fail to go to church by choice. Others would go "elsewhere".

On whether the maids were allowed to entertain their own friends in the employers' house, while 56 (53.8%) had this freedom, it was lacking in 48 (46.2%) cases. But among the 56, there were restrictions on where to entertain such visitors. Table 5.17 gives a frequency distribution for various alternatives.

**TABLE 4 17 WHERE TO ENTERTAIN MAIDS' VISITORS**

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	Perc.
INSIDE THE HOUSE	34	60.7
OUTSIDE THE HOUSE	18	32.1
OUTSIDE THE COMPOUND	4	7.2
TOTAL	56	100

However, even among the 48 cases who did not have freedom, some of them may not have had friends to visit them. But it would not be established whether, if they had, they would be allowed to receive them or not. Hence it could effectively be said that only 34 cases out of 104 respondents were allowed full freedom of entertaining their own friends in their place of work. A huge majority of housegirls were not allowed to sit in the sitting room, especially when the employer had visitors. This amounted to 62 (59.6%) cases out of 104. Only 37 cases (35.6%) had this freedom while 5 (4.8%) could not be ranked because the houses were single rooms, and so it was not possible to establish whether the maid sits with the employer's visitors or not; she had nowhere else to go.

It was established that 56 maids in the sample were used to visiting family friends with the employer. Of these 56, 46 cases (82.1%) were always "requested" to help the visited family with household chores. They were not free to pose as visitors. According to the maids, employers did not "request" them to help but it was actually an order in disguise because the maid was never given room for more than one option. The maids reported that they felt out of place to start washing other people's children's napkins, simply because the child's mother was a friend to the maid's employer. But they had very little alternative which included quitting the job.

With all this freedom lacking, some maids improvise ways of attending to their own missions during the day in the absence of the employer. Such, it was found, include giving the young crying kid a small amount of piriton so the kid can sleep. Meanwhile the maid goes out only to come back long afterwards. Others who sleep in the sitting room were reported to have made a habit of escaping in the middle of the night, again only to creep back towards dawn and to pretend to be fast asleep as others wake up.

#### 4.4.8 Working Hours

The total duration of work per day was addressed according to when the maid wakes up in the morning and when she eventually retires again to bed at the end of the work day.

Maids were asked what time they woke up daily. Responses obtained indicated that 50% of maids in the entire sample woke up between 5.30 a.m. and 6.00 a.m. Table 4.18 gives frequencies of respective categories.

TABLE 4.18 TIME OF WAKING UP

CATEGORY	FREQ.	%	VALID %
BEFORE 5.00 A.M.	19	18.3	20.4
5.30 - 6.00 A.M.	52	50.0	55.9
6.30 - 7.00 A.M.	19	18.3	20.4
AFTER 7.00 A.M.	3	2.9	3.2
N/A	11	10.6	MISSING
TOTAL	104	100	100

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum fX}{N} = \frac{521.95}{93} = 5.61$$

So on average, maids normally wake up at 6.00 a.m.

There were 11 missing cases because of the maids who worked only during the day and were therefore not accommodated by the employer. So in this particular case there were 93 valid cases, hence the valid percentages are based on the total of 93.

It is important to note that while the normal work day begins at 8.00 a.m., only 2.9% of the entire sample were allowed to wake up after 7.00 a.m. and definitely not later than 8.00 a.m.

Although it may be understood that domestic work should begin earlier than 8.00 a.m. 20.4% of the valid cases of maids woke up extremely early. Indeed, some of them reported that they did not only start their day before 5.00 a.m., but they also woke up in the dead of the night to fetch water, which came at night with the taps dry all the day long. However, in just a handful of cases, it was reported that the employer woke up even before the maid to make the morning preparation for the day to take off.

Maids were also asked what time they went to bed. 66.7% of the 93 valid cases reported that their going to bed entirely depended upon the work load of the day. This implies that unless and until the maid cleared the day's expectation by the employers, she was not to go to bed. Household chores normally ended with washing utensils after supper and doing a few preparations for the following morning such as boiling milk, polishing shoes and mopping the kitchen.

But 18.3% of the valid cases reported that due to employers' instructions, they always went to bed after 10.00 p.m whether or not there was work to do. Only 12.9% responded that they were free to sleep at leisure as long as they did not fail in their duty.

#### **4.4.9 Maids' Medical Facilities**

Maids were asked whether they were allowed sick-off when sick. Only 49% of the entire sample enjoyed this freedom. Another 3.8% were allowed sick-off but their salary was deducted according to the total number of days the maid stayed out of work, though still at the station of work. Table 4.19 shows the breakdown of frequencies.

**TABLE 4.19 SICK-OFF PERMISSION**

CATEGORY	FREQ.	PER.	VALID %
GRANTED	51	49.0	58.6
NOT GRANTED	32	30.8	36.8
GRANTED BUT SALARY DEDUCTED	4	3.8	4.6
N/A	17	16.3	MISSING
TOTAL	104	100	100

But 30.8% were outrightly denied sick-off irrespective of the seriousness of the illness. However, 17 cases (16.3%) were not applicable to this enquiry as the maids reported that they had never fallen sick since they started the job. Hence it could not be established whether they would be allowed sick-off or not, in case they were to fall sick.

On whether the employers took care of the maids' medical expenses, responses were given as shown on Table 4.20.

**TABLE 4.20 MEDICAL CARE BY EMPLOYER**

CATEGORY	FREQ.	PER.	VALID %
GIVEN FULLY	35	33.7	40.2
GIVEN PARTLY	7	6.7	8.0
NOT GIVEN	45	43.3	51.8
N/A	17	16.3	MISSING
TOTAL	104	100	100

Since Mo = 45, it can tentatively be concluded that maids are generally not given medical care. From the table above, out of the 87 valid cases, 51.8% were not given any medical attention by the employer but were supposed to use their own pockets in case of an illness. And where the employer was said to have assisted, the maid had to surrender an equal amount of money at the end of the month as was spent on her medical expenses.

If the bill was higher than the maids' salary, the maid had to forfeit her full salary until such an amount was recovered by the employer. Perhaps an instance should be cited here to illustrate the magnitude of this aspect of mistreatment, as was witnessed by the researcher during field work: A 14-year old maid in Ponda Mali estate in Nakuru Municipality, whose salary was Shs. 350 per month - in fact the lowest recorded salary - contracted typhoid at her station of work.

The hospital bill for her full treatment was Shs. 1200 which the employer easily met. The maid narrated that for the previous two months, and for the following one month her "payslip" was reading nil as the employer was recovering the "loses" occasioned by the maid's sickness. Only 40.2% of the valid cases enjoyed medical attention at the expense of the employer, while a further 8% was assisted partly, with themselves meeting the other part. Seventeen (16.3%) cases had never fallen sick.



#### **4.4.10 Maids' Antagonism With Employers' Relatives and Children**

It was found out that in 91 families out of the total 104, employers' relatives were making regular visits. In these 91 cases, maids were asked whether they had antagonised any of these visitors. The results were that 21 cases out of 91 (23.1%) had clashed with the employers' relatives at least once.

It was a general observation that these frictions were caused by the conduct of the visitors and their attitude towards the maid. As the maid defended her position, she found herself in very bad books with the employers' relatives. Physical attack by such visitors was noted in a few cases.

Employers' children were indifferent, by and large, about the maid. 50% of all the interviewed children reported that they were getting on well with their maid while the other 50% reported dissatisfaction with their housegirls.

#### **4.4.11 General Treatment of the Maid**

A question on whether maids felt treated fairly or not by the employer was posed to the former. 55 of them (52.9%) felt that they were poorly handled. 49 (47.1%) were satisfied with the way they were generally treated. But it was feared that the number of those who were dissatisfied with the employer might have been higher, as some maids feared to report shortcomings of the employer.

Among those who were dissatisfied, reasons adduced for the dissatisfaction included quarrelling and wrong accusations, beating, being made silly in front of other people, low salaries, delay in salaries, overworking especially by way of allocation of more than one duty at the same time, rude children, denial of lunch for day-maids which according to them made the day very difficult, rationing food and others.

But when asked what changes they advocated for the employer a better working atmosphere, the majority of the maids wanted a salary increment.

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, an attempt was made to describe the characteristics of the research sample population. This was done principally through use of frequency distribution tables and where possible and plausible, measures of central tendency were employed. These include the mean, median and mode and they were used to locate the central point in a distribution

The chapter has addressed widely various aspects of the study hypotheses, including the maids' background, their characteristics in terms of age and awareness of rights and privileges, the socio-economic status of the employer and the general aspects of the study. With these frequency distribution tables, the chapter paves way for the subsequent chapter on data analysis and interpretations, which is based on the findings as tabled down in this current chapter.

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## **CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS**

### **AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher undertakes to analyze and interpret data that is presented in the preceding chapter. In a bid to show how various factors contribute or lead to mistreatment of or aggression against maids, cross-tabulations have been extensively employed. Factors that constitute the maids' background are cross-tabulated with factors that are good indices of mistreatment. Other factors which, in this chapter, are cross-tabulated with indicators of mistreatment are the maids' characteristics and the socio-economic status of the employer.

Cross-tabulations, among other feasible methods that could be used to analyze this data, were chosen because of the ease with which they show bivariate relationships, that is, whether or not such relationships exist, and if they do, whether they are linear or curvilinear. It is important to note that while frequencies in the preceding chapter were totalling 104 as this was the total number of cases, this is not to be expected with cross-tabulations. This is because cross-tabulations strictly analyze cases that are valid to both variables under study. Due to this lack of double coincidence, in no case does the grand total run up to 104. However, reasons for this shortcoming are pointed out from time to time under various sections as the chapter unfolds.

#### **5.1 MAIDS AND PHYSICAL ASSAULT**

Under this section is outlined physical assault on maids as dictated upon by various factors. In an effort to establish the extent of influence on physical assault by these factors, each of them is cross-tabulated with the frequency of physical assault and the ensuing trend of results facilitates interpretations.

### 5.1.1 Physical Assault and Maids' Education Background

Out of 104 respondents, there were 9 missing cases leaving only 95 of them as valid cases. Of the 95, 20% had been physically assaulted at various stages. A cross-tabulation of this with the education background of the maid revealed that the rate of physical abuse was inversely proportional with the maids' academic achievement. Maids who had gone up to standard 4 and below had the highest probability of having been abused by the employer. This drops steadily with the education achievement. Such incidences were unknown with maids who had reached form 4. Table 5.1.1 below shows the frequencies and the equivalent percentages.

TABLE 5.1.1 MAIDS' EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ASSAULT

ASSAULTED → EDUCATION ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
< STD 4	8 (47%)	9 (53%)	17 (17.9%)
STD5 - STD8	9 (14.5%)	53 (85.5%)	62 (65.3%)
FORM1 - FORM3	1 (11%)	8 (89%)	9 (9.5%)
FORM 4	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (2.1%)
TOTAL	18 (20%)	72 (80%)	90 (100%)

Gamma = 0.613

This could best be explained by the fact that maids who have gone up to form 4 are likely to be at least partially aware of their rights and would thus not condone physical assault. They knew where to report such.

### 5.1.2 Religious Background and Physical Assault

Maids who belonged to different religious faiths from the employer were found to be more susceptible to physical assault than those who proclaimed the same faith. Out of the 26 maids who belonged to the same religious background as the employers, only 19.2% had ever been physically assaulted by way of a slap or a more serious physical harm, while out of the 68 cases of maids who were different in terms of faith from the employers, 20.6% had been assaulted. Table 5.1.2 below shows these differences.

TABLE 5.1.2 MAIDS' RELIGION AND PHYSICAL ASSAULT

ASSAULTED → RELIGION ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
SAME	5 (19.2%)	21 (80.8%)	26 (27.7%)
DIFFERENT	14 (20.6%)	54 (79.4%)	68 (72.3%)
TOTAL	19 (20.2%)	75 (79.8%)	94 (100%)

Gamma = -0.043

Factors that may occasion need for physical assault as a way of disciplining the maid are expected to be fewer if both the maid and the employer proclaim the same faith. The religious bond that binds them eschews the possibility of a conflict that may lead to physical battering or even slapping.

### 5.1.3 Ethnicity

It was realised that maids with the same ethnic background as the employer were more prone to physical assault than those whose ethnic backgrounds were different. Twenty one per cent of all the maids whose ethnicity was the same as the employers' had been subjected to some kind of physical torture, as opposed to 18.2% of all those with different ethnic backgrounds from the employer. Table 5.1.3 summarises this information.

TABLE 5.1.3 ASSAULT AND ETHNICITY

ASSAULTED → ETHNICITY ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
SAME	13(21%)	49 (79%)	62(65.3%)
DIFFERENT	6(18.2%)	27(81.8%)	33(34.7%)
TOTAL	19 (20%)	76(80%)	95(100%)

Gamma = 0.088

Perhaps employers are freer to chastise maids whose origin they are aware of and therefore they are not apprehensive of any measures that the maid may take, whether legal or otherwise. But in cases where the employer is uncertain of the full maid's background, she may not freely resort to physical assault as a form of punishment, however serious the crime.

### 5.1.4 Marital Status

Physical battering was also found to be a function of the maids' marital status. Maids were grouped into three categories; the single, the single mothers and the married.

It was found that maids who were single were the most hit by the phenomenon of physical assault, followed by the single mothers. None of the married maids reported an act of physical assault. Table 5.1.4 below attests to this.

**TABLE 5.1.4 ASSAULT AND MAIDS' MARITAL STATUS**

ASSAULT → MARITAL STATUS ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
SINGLE	16 (21.3%)	59 (78.7%)	75 (78.9%)
SINGLE MOTHER	3 (18.7%)	13 (81.3%)	16 (16.8%)
MARRIED	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	4 (4.2%)
TOTAL	19 (20%)	76 (80%)	95 (100%)

Gamma = 0.232

Married maids were found to be elderly women, possibly of the same age as the employers, if not actually older. The oldest recorded case was a 42 year old maid who was serving a 38 year old employer. The maid was married and was working only during the day after which she was travelling back to her own home. But single maids are normally young girls and the youngest recorded in this study was 9 years old.

In such circumstances, an employer is freer slapping, kicking or whipping such a girl as opposed to an elderly woman who would quickly fend off the attack. Single mothers are also relatively young but those of them who are old and strong may not easily be assaulted.



### **5.1.5 Maids who are Related to Employers**

It was surprising that maids who were related to their employers by blood or marriage were by far more susceptible to physical assault than those who were not. 25% of such maids were physically assaulted while only 19.5% of unrelated maids were physically abused.

Probably this was due to the fact that maids who are related to their employers demand and expect more than those who are not. Such expectations spawn anomalies which build up misunderstandings from where grows assault of all types. Conversely, unrelated maids will strictly handle their employers for commercial gains with expectations that only revolve around payment for work done.

### **5.1.6 Age of the Maid**

It was pertinent that all physically assaulted maids were under 20 years. The land slide majority were precisely below 15 years. While only 16.3% of all maids aged 16 - 20 years had at one time been beaten up by the employer, 42.3% of all those aged below 15 years had been physically abused. Table 5.1.5 below illustrates these facts.

This analysis is given in Table 5.1.6 below.

Table 5.1.6 Awareness and Assault

Assaulted → awareness ↓	Yes	No	Total
Aware	0	3 (100%)	3
Partly Aware	1 (9.1%)	10 (90.9%)	11
Not Aware	18 (22.2%)	63 (77.8%)	81
Total	19	76	95

Gamma = -0.58

One of the features appearing from this table is that 22.2% of all the maids who were grouped as not aware of their rights had been subjected to some physical abuse of some nature. This percentage drops to only 9.1% for all the maids who were categorised as partly aware of what their dues were. But for the category that was aware, albeit not really fully, no case of physical attack was recorded. Thus physical assault as an underlying component of mistreatment is highly influenced by the level of awareness on the part of the maid, about what rights she should enjoy and what specific conditions she should not be subjected to.

### 5.1.8 Age of the Employer and Physical Assault

Out of the 104 employers, 19 accepted that they had slapped their maids at least once. A cross-tabulation of this figure with various age groups of employers revealed that the rate of physically assaulting maids was directly proportional to the age of the employer up to age 40.

Only 15.4% of employers aged 25 years and below answered the question of physically abusing their maids in the affirmative and this grew to 28% with employers aged 40 years.

**TABLE 5.1.7 ASSAULT AND EMPLOYERS' AGE**

ASSAULT → EMPLOYERS' AGE ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
£ 25 YEARS	2 (15.4%)	11 (84.6%)	13 (100%)
26 - 30	5 (15.6%)	27 (84.4%)	32 (100%)
31 - 35	7 (25%)	21 (75%)	28 (100%)
36 - 40	4 (28%)	10 (72%)	14 (100%)
41 - 45	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
46 - 50	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
51 - 55	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
56 +	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19 (20%)</b>	<b>76 (80%)</b>	<b>95 (100%)</b>

Gamma = -0.124

Nine employer respondents were either not available for interview, or were uncooperative. They constituted the missing cases leaving 95 cases for analysis. However, after age 40, the proportion of those accepting that they had beaten their maids dropped to 25% for ages 41 - 45, and touched the ground at zero from ages 46 upwards.

Possible explanations to this trend are that young employers lack courage enough to physically attack their maids, as the age difference between the two may be minimal. With one or two children characteristic of young employers, the maid may also not have so much work as to trigger off such conflicts.

Probably, the employer also has had no chance with another maid, so she has no frame of reference to declare the current maid a bad one. But with age, it would be expected that as more children are born into the family, the work load for the maid increases. Unable to cope with it, she is likely to receive a slap from the employer. The firing and hiring of maids by such employers give them a wide frame of reference on better maids than they may have had previously and this may invoke bad tempers, occasioning a kick or a whip.

But employers of ages 46 and above are likely to have no maid as their children are mature enough not to warrant need for one. Even those of them who still find it necessary to engage one are not likely to conflict with her because the work load is expected to be minimal, in a situation devoid of washing napkins and the general baby-sitting.

#### **5.1.9 Employers' Marital Status**

Employers' marital status was divided into four categories; the married, the never married, the divorced and the widowed. Results of this research survey indicate that women who had at one time been married but divorced from their husbands for one reason or another are the best known in mistreating maids and especially in the area of physical assault. 80% of all divorced employers in the sample of this study were found to have subjected their maids to some kind of physical torture.

This ranged from slapping through locking outside the house at night, snatching bedding from them at night, forcing them to sit in cold water for hours, outright denial of food under close surveillance so that they do not eat anything to proper beating. In some instances, the maid was found to have been made to kneel down in front of the very children she was employed to nurse, and to apologise to them for what the researcher found to be petty and trivial mistakes on the part of the maid. To be sure, a 14- year-old maid was found to have been locked out of the house for a whole night simply because of losing one piece of a pair of socks which dropped off from the foot of the child she was carrying by the back, without the least intention or awareness of the maid.

Employers who had never been married ranked second with respect to physically abusing maids, followed by the married. Not a single widow was noted to have caused any physical harm on the maid. The following table puts this information in summary form.

TABLE 5.1.8 ASSAULT AND EMPLOYERS' MARITAL STATUS

ASSAULT → MARITAL STATUS ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
DIVORCED	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5 (5.3%)
NEVER MARRIED	3 (25%)	9 (75%)	12 (12.6%)
MARRIED	15 (20.3%)	59 (79.7%)	74 (77.9%)
WIDOWED	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	4 (4.2%)
TOTAL	22 (20%)	73 (80%)	95 (100%)

Gamma = 0.557

The emotional insecurity and disorientation in the divorced employers, caused by circumstances leading to the act of divorce are likely to be largely responsible for mistreating the maid. The maid in the circumstances represents a valve through which the divorced employer vents her built-in hostility. The employer becomes readily irritated by the maid and takes extreme measures against her.

On the other hand employers who have never been married but who have children have most likely experienced abortive affairs with men. Such memories may render the subject readily irritable as well. But the magnitude in this category is much lower as there are many single mothers who are single by choice. They therefore relate quite well with the maids and other people.

The married are expected to be the most stable category of employers. But among them are those who mistreat their maids for a variety of reasons. The employer may for instance have been rebuked by her own employer in her place of work over whom she had no influence. She therefore over reacts to the maid's trivial and ordinary mistakes. The employer may also be frustrated by a souring relationship with her husband and the resultant aggressive tendencies are likely to be vented upon the weaker party, the maid. But with the widowed, the traumatic experience of losing their beloved husbands is not inkeeping with aggressive propensities.

#### **5.1.10 Employers' Income**

There was found to be no regular relationship between the employers' income and the possibility or intensity of physical abuse. However, those earning between shs. 2,500 and shs. 4,000 a month recorded the highest percentage of physically abusive employers. In this category were 32.3% abusers.

#### **5.1.11 Size of the House**

The size of the house was seen in the light of how many bedrooms there were in a house. The smallest unit was a single room and second smallest was a double room. Third in size was one-bedroomed and the largest was a complex with a servant's quarter.

The size of the house was found to be inversely proportional to the chances of physically abusing a maid. Employers who lived in single rooms mistreated their maids much more than those who lived in bigger houses. Those who lived in four-bedroomed houses and in complexes with servants' quarters did not record a single case of physical assault.

This information is shown on Table 5.1.9 as here under.

**TABLE 5.1.9 ASSAULT AND SIZE OF THE HOUSE**

ASSAULT → HOUSE SIZE ↓	YES	NO	TOTAL
SINGLE ROOM	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5 (5.3%)
DOUBLE ROOM	5 (38.5)	8 (61.5%)	13 (13.7%)
1 BEDROOM	3 (27.3%)	8 (72.7%)	11 (11.6%)
2 BEDROOMS	9 (17.6%)	42 (82.4%)	51 (53.7%)
3 BEDROOMS	2 (16.7%)	10 (83.3%)	12 (12.6%)
4 BEDROOMS	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (2.1%)
COMPLEX WITH SERVANT'S QUARTER	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (1%)
TOTAL	21 (20%)	74 (80%)	95 (100%)

Gamma = 0.372

It was found out that in small single-roomed houses where all activities took place including marital affairs between employers and husbands, the maid was more likely going to develop wild ideas which were not in the interest of her good relationship with the employer. In many cases where employers reported an attempted effort by the maid to win the employer's husband, the particular house was notably small. . With everything heaped up together in a single-roomed house, there were higher chances for the maid to cause accidents to utensils and this would invoke a heavy punishment. Also these are the low-salaried people who are likely to have economic stress. In such houses, the employer also has no room for any secret.

This probably causes a building up of hostility on the part of the employer. All these complexities do not take place in large, spacious and multi-roomed houses where the maid is always distant from the employer, whenever occasion demands. Enough space in the kitchen also lowers the possibility of breaking utensils.

Thus, 40% of employers with single-roomed houses were reported as having physically punished their maids. This percentage went down to 38.5% with double-roomed houses and further down to 27.3% with one-bedroomed self-contained houses. It went down further still to 17.6% with two-bedroomed self-contained houses, 16.7% with three-bedroomed houses and to virtually zero with large 4 bedroomed houses and complex dwellings which have separate servant's quarters.

## **5.2 MAIDS AND MONTHLY PAYMENTS**

This section is an analysis of the results obtained from cross-tabulating the frequencies of various salary brackets for the maids with factors that constitute the characteristics of both the maid and the employer. How these characteristics influence the maid's salary forms the core of this section. Maids' salary, if extremely low, is an indicator of mistreatment in general and exploitation in particular.

### **5.2.1 Maids' Education Background and Salary**

There was a characteristic arrangement of salary scales for maids depending on their education background. Maids were grouped into four education brackets, Std 1 - Std 4, Std 5 - Std 8, Form one - Form three and finally Form 4, or "O" level achievers. It was realised that the lower the education achievement, the lower the salary and vice versa. Salary levels were therefore directly proportional to the education level of maids. Of all the maids who had gone up to Std 4 and below, 62.4% earned between shs. 300 and shs. 400 a month.



For those of them who had reached Std 5 and Std 8, 37.9% earned shs. 401-500 per month. This is a category whose salary was tending towards shs. 500 while the former category was tending towards shs. 400 per month. The majority of form four-leaver maids earned 501- 600 shillings. This information is shown on Table 5.2.0 here under.

TABLE 5.2.0 MAIDS' EDUCATION AND SALARY

SALARY → EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT ↓	300 - 400	401 - 500	501 - 600	601 -700	701 -900	901- 1200	1201 +	TOTAL
Std1 - Std4	10(62.4)	2(12.5)	2(12.5)	0(0)	1(6.3)	1(6.3)	0(0)	16(16.8)
Std5 - Std8	13(19.6)	25(37.9)	17(25.8)	4(6.1)	4(6.1)	2(3)	1(1.5)	66(69.5)
Form1 - Form3	1(11.1)	3(33.3)	1(11.1)	2(22.2)	1(11.1)	0(0)	1(11.1)	9(9.5)
Form 4	0(0%)	0(0)	2(50)	0(0)	1(25)	1(25)	0(0)	4(4.2)
Total	24(25.3)	30(31.6)	22(23.2)	6(6.3)	7(7.4)	4(4.2)	2(2.1)	95(100)

Gamma = 0.481

From this table, it is clear that with respect to educational achievement, precisely 80.1% of all maids were paid shs. 300 - shs.600 a month. Low academic achievers are assumed to be the least informed and so employers pay them so little salaries with the least effort to retain them.

They are not likely to complain about low salaries, neither are they aware of how much they are legally entitled to. Some of them are also paid piecemeal with salary carry over to the following month, and they still seem to be complacent.

Such payment arrangements would certainly invoke a reaction on the part of a more educated maid and this explains why form 4 leaver maids have a minimum of shs. 501 per month, as indicated on Table 5.2.0 above.

### 5.2.2 Effect of Maid-Employer Ethnic Differences on the Maid's Salary

A question on ethnic background was posed to both the maid and the employer. It was found that most employers engaged maids from their own tribes, if not villages. These totalled 61 out of a possible 96 valid cases. 35 maids had a different ethnic background from the employers. This information was cross-tabulated with various salary brackets of the maid and the results are analyzed on Table 5.2.1 below.

TABLE 5.2.1 ETHNIC DIFFERENCES AND SALARY

SALARY → ETHNICITY ↓	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201+	TOTAL
SAME	18(29.5)	24(39.3)	13(21.3)	4(6.6)	1(1.6)	1(1.6)	0(0)	61
DIFFERENT	9(25.7)	6(17.1)	10(28.6)	3(8.6)	5(14.3)	1(2.9)	1(2.9)	35
TOTAL	27	30	23	7	6	2	1	96

Gamma = 0.319

As evidenced by the findings tabled on the above cross-tabulation matrix, maids whose ethnic backgrounds were the same as the employers' were the most lowly paid. Of this category, 29.5% were paid between shs. 300 and shs. 400 a month while 25.7% of maids with different ethnicities got the same amount. And while 39.3% of maids with the same ethnic background were

paid between shs. 401 and shs. 500 a month, only 17.1% of those with differing ethnicities received a similar amount.

By and large, maids whose total background was not well known to the employer were treated better in terms of payments. While 14.3% of this category received between shs. 701 and shs. 900 per month, only a meagre 1.6% of those with the same ethnicities were paid a similar amount. Overall, 20.1% of maids with different ethnic backgrounds received more than shs. 700 per month as opposed to only 3.2% of those whose ethnicities were the same as employers' and who received more than shs. 700 a month.

This trend is explained by one fact: that employers tend to mistreat maids who are most familiar to them while sparing those whose background the employer remains oblivious about. This is because there is some attendant fear over what measures the maid or the maid's parents/relatives is/are likely to take, and this may occasion a fair treatment on the part of the maid by the employer.

It is also possible that "foreign" maids look for the job themselves and therefore have a higher bargaining power. This is opposed to cases where a potential employer goes on a "hunting spree" to her village looking for a young girl, possibly a school dropout to employ. Such employers convince the girls' parents that the girl has fairer chances in life if she accepts the offer, to work as a maid, and that even the parents would also benefit materially from the urban based maids' employer.

Little do both the enthusiastic maid and the hopeful maids' parents know that the maid would soon come under heavy subordination by the capitalistic-oriented employer who would treasure the continuous and non-rest job done by the maid, without reciprocating with respect to payments.

### **5.2.3 Maid's Religious Stand and her Salary**

Maids were asked which particular faith they subscribed to. Employers were similarly asked this question. When cross-tabulations were made regarding this information and the maid's salary, 9 cases of questionnaires were invalidated leaving 95 for analysis.

Out of the 95, 24 maids belonged to the same religious faith with the employer while 71 differed. Results are tabled down below.

TABLE 5.2.2. RELIGION AND SALARY

SALARY → RELIGION	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201 +	TOTAL
SAME	6(25%)	13(54.2%)	3(12.5%)	2 (8.3%)	0	0	0	24
DIFFERENT	21(29.5%)	16(22.5%)	20(28.2%)	7 (5)	6 (8.6%)	2 (2.8%)	1 (1.4%)	71
TOTAL	27	29	23	7	6	2	2	95

Gamma = 0.259

Although there was no consistent relationship between the maid's religious stand and her salary levels for the first few salary brackets, it was observed that 12.8% of all the maids whose religious faith differed with that of the employer were paid above shs. 700. This was simply computed as a sum total of 8.6%, 2.8% and 1.4%. Conversely, all the maids who shared the same religious background with the employer were paid between 300 and 700 shilling per month.

The religious background of the maid also adds to the level of familiarity by the employer about the maid and as observed earlier, this precipitates the incidence of mistreatment. Hence the deeper the information the employer has about the maid, the higher the chances of mistreatment because then the employer is able to identify possible ways of fending off any retaliations by the maid.

### 5.2.4 Maid's Marital Status and her Salary

A disproportionately high number of maids receiving shs. 500 and below per month was found among the "single" category. This comprised 69.3% of all single maids. Only 23.8% of single mother maids were paid shs. 500 and below. Not a single married maid received less than 500/= although this did not imply that the married category was the best paid on average. Table 5.2.3 below shows this more lucidly.

TABLE 5.2.3 MAIDS' MARITAL STATUS AND SALARY

SALARY → MARITAL STATUS ↓	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201 +	TO TAL
SINGLE	27(36%)	25(33.3%)	14(18.8%)	4(5.3%)	4(5.3%)	1(1.3%)	0	75
SINGLE MOTHER	0	5(23.8%)	8(38.1)	1(4.8%)	1(4.8%)	4(19%)	2(9.5)	21
MARRIED	0	0	1(20%)	3(60%)	1(20%)	0	0	5
TOTAL	27	30	23	8	6	5	2	101

Gamma = 0.713

One feature appearing against this background is that single maids are the most vulnerable group as regards exploitation by way of low salaries. The fact that this category includes the youngest class of maids is a possible explanation to this occurrence. Though there is no directionality in this association, the high Gamma value of 0.713 shows a strong relationship between the maid's marital status and the amount of money she is paid.

**5.2.5 Payment for Maids who are Related to their Employers.**

There was found to be no significant statistical relationship whether directly or negatively between the maid's salary and whether or not she was related to the employer as the table below indicates.

**BLE 5.2.4 MAIDS RELATED TO EMPLOYERS**

SALARY → RELATED ↓	300-400	401-500	501 -600	601-700	701-900	901- 1200	1201+	TOTAL
YES	2(28.6)	2(28.6)	2(28.6)	1(14.2)	0	0	0	7
NO	25(28.4)	27(30.7)	21(23.9)	6(6.8)	6(6.8)	2(2.3)	1(1.1)	88
TOTAL	27	29	23	7	6	2	1	95

Gamma = 0.022

While the highest paid maid of the category that was related with the employer received shs. 700 a month, it should be noted that some maids who were not related to the employer by either blood or marriage were paid higher than this figure. In fact 10.2% of this category received shs. 700 and above. This is the sum total of 6.8%, 2.3% and 1.1%. As reported and proved elsewhere in this dissertation, maids whose backgrounds were fully known to employers were more vulnerable to mistreatment than those whose backgrounds the employers remained oblivious of.

Attesting to this, all the maids in the sample of this study who received more than shs. 700 per month did not tell about any relationship with the employer by way of either blood , marriage or adoption. They were total "strangers" in the eyes of the employer.

### 5.2.6 Maid's Age as a Factor in her Salary Level

The age of the maid was seen to have a characteristic influence on how much she earned per month. 91.6% of all the maids aged 15 years and below were paid between 300 and 500 shillings per month, and none in this category earned beyond shs. 600 per month. These figures are displayed on Table 5.2.5 below

TABLE 5.2.5 MAID'S AGE AND SALARY

SALARY	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201+	TOTAL
AGE ↓								
5 YRS	14(58.3)	8(33.3)	2(8.3)	0	0	0	0	24(23.8)
6-20	12(23.5)	17(33.3)	5(29.4)	4(7.8)	1(2)	2(4)	0	51(50.5)
21-25	1(7.7)	2(15.4)	4(30.8)	2(15.4)	3(23)	1(7.7)	0	13(12.8)
26-30	0	3(50)	0	0	1(16.7)	2(33.3)	0	6(5.9)
31-35	0	0	1(50)	0	1(50)	0	0	2(2)
36+	0	0	1(20)	2(40)	0	0	2(40)	5(5)
TOTAL	27	30	23	8	6	5	2	101

$$\text{Gamma} = 0.673$$

However, with age, salaries increased in the following order. 13.8% of all the maids aged 16 - 20 years received payments in excess of shs. 600. This percentage increased to 41.6% for maids aged 21 - 25 years. The percentage for maids with payments beyond shs. 600 a month aged 26 - 30 was even higher, - 50%. At 31 - 35, it stood still at 50% while it went up sharply to 80% for maids aged 36 years and above.

Below is a tabular presentation of the figures, that is, the percentage of maids whose salaries are shs. 600 and above per month. But it is important first to note here that the percentages are derived from the total number of maids in the particular age groups and not from the general total number of maids in the sample.

**TABLE 5.2.5.1 MAIDS' AGE IN RELATION TO SALARY IN EXCESS**

**OF SHS. 600 PER MONTH.**

MAIDS' AGE	PERCENTAGE RECEIVING 600+
< 15 YEARS	0 %
16-20	13.8%
21-24	46.1%
25-30	50%
31-35	50%
36 +	80%

Thus there was a positive relationship between the age of the maid and how much she earned per month, implying that at a general level, the older the maid the higher the salary and vice versa. If the balance of these percentages is obtained, each from 100% for maids with salaries below shs. 600 per month, again a characteristic trend downwards would still confirm the same positive relationship between the age of the maid and her monthly pay.

Elder maids are not only mature but are also likely to be married and would therefore not accept a payment that would not make sense to their own families. Figures like shs. 400 per month would definitely not be acceptable to them, as opposed to very young maids who only wish to earn a living for themselves alone, and who therefore would be complacent with such low payments. So, the few maids whose ages are tending towards 40 years have the best salaries, lest they quit the job and do other things in life.



### 5.2.7 Maids' Awareness and Their Salary

Very low salary figures, it was found, were known to the category of maids who were completely not aware of what they were entitled to. 30.5% of this category were paid between shs. 300 - 400 a month while this dropped to 14.3% of all the maids who were seen as partially aware of their rights and privileges. None in the "aware" category received less than shs. 400 per month. In fact 40% of this category were paid in excess of shs. 900 per month, according to the results of Table 5.2.6 below.

TABLE 5.2.6 MAIDS' AWARENESS AND SALARY

Salary → Awareness ↓	300- 400	401- 500	501- 600	601- 700	701-900	901- 1200	1201+	Total
Aware	0	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	0	0	1 (20%)	1 (20)	5
Partly aware	2(14.3%)	3(21.4)	4 (28.6)	3(21.4)	0	1(7.1)	1(7.1)	14
Not aware	25(30.5)	26.(31.7)	17(20.7)	5(6.1)	6(7.3)	3(3.7)	0	82
Total	27	30	23	8	6	5	2	101

$$\text{Gamma} = 0.448$$

Conversely, only 3.7% of the "not aware" category were paid more than shs. 900, but not in excess of shs. 1200. But 14.2% (7.1% + 7.1%) of all the maids categorized as partially aware were paid above shs.900 per month. From these findings, it is observed that the level of awareness of rights and privileges by the maid highly influences her salary level.

### 5.2.8 Employers' Age and Maids' Salary

Elderly women rarely engage the services of maids. But the few who do pay pretty well. 91.7% of all the interviewed maids were serving employers whose ages were 40 years and below. Yet, the maximum salary paid by a less-than 25 year old employer was shs. 600 a month. Table 5.2.7 below illustrates this.

**TABLE 5.2.7 EMPLOYERS' AGE AND MAIDS' SALARY**

SALARY → AGE ↓	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901- 1200	1201 +	TOTAL
<25 YRS	6(46.2)	2(15.4)	5(38.4)	0	0	0	0	13(13.5)
26-30	19(29)	14(45.2)	6(19.4)	1(3.2)	1(3.2)	0	0	31(32.3)
31-35	8(28.6)	8(28.6)	5(17.9)	4(14.3)	2(7.1)	0	1(3.5)	28(29.2)
36-40	5(18.7)	3(31.2)	4(25)	2(12.5)	1(6.3)	1(6.3)	0	16(16.7)
41-45	0	1(33.3)	1(33.3)	0	1(33.3)	0	0	3(3.1)
46-50	0	0	2(66.7)	0	0	1(33.3)	0	3(3.1)
51-55	0	0	0	0	1(100)	0	0	1(1)
56+	0	0	0	0	1(100)	0	0	1(1)
TOTAL	26	30	23	7	7	2	1	96

Gamma = 0.370

However, the cross-tabulation analyses of employers' age and maids' salaries reveal that a direct relationship exists between the two, that is, the higher the employer's age, the

higher the maid's salary.

This is particularly manifest for salaries that stand above shs. 600 a month. The table below, which is a derivative of Table 5.2.7 above summarises this information.

TABLE 5.2.7.1 EMPLOYERS' AGE IN RELATION TO MAIDS' SALARIES IN EXCESS OF shs 600

EMPLOYERS' AGE	% PAYING 600+
≤ 25 YEARS	0 %
26 - 30	6.4%
31 - 35	24.9%
36 - 40	25.1%
41 - 45	33.3%
46 - 50	33.3%
51 - 55	100%
56 +	100%

It is therefore clearly evident that the percentage of maids whose salaries were shs. 600 and above increased with the age of the employer. Young employers are new not only in family life but also in the job market. They are not likely to have received a salary increment, in case of those who are in formal employment. This is the category that employs very young girls who probably will not demand a lot.

But elderly women who have worked for several years and possibly who have hit the ceiling in salary increments would not find problems in adjusting maids' salaries upwards, as long as they themselves are satisfied with the maid's work performance.

### 5.2.9 Employers' Marital Status and Maids' Salary

Marital status was found to be a strong factor in influencing the level of a maid's salary. Different employers with different marital status had different attitudes towards how much they should pay their maids.

In an overall assessment, married employers pay at the highest rates. Under this category of employers, 11.8% paid their maids well above shs. 700 a month. On the other hand, employers who were widowed or divorced for whatever reason as well as those who had never been married, all employed their maids with a maximum pay of shs. 700 a month. But not even one widowed employer paid a maid less than shs. 400 a month, although 72.7% of all employers who had never been married paid between shs. 300 and shs. 400. Characteristically 100% of all divorced employers paid between shs. 300 and shs. 400 per month. The table below puts this information in summary.

TABLE 5.2.8 EMPLOYERS' MARITAL STATUS AND MAIDS' SALARY

SALARY→ EMPLOYERS' M/STATUS ↓	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201+	TOTAL
MARRIED	14(18.4)	28(36.8)	20(26.3)	5(6.6)	6(7.9)	2(2.6)	1(1.3)	76
NEVER MARRIED	8(72.7)	1(9.1)	(9.1)	1(9.1)	0	0	0	11
WIDOWED	0	1(25)	2(50)	1(25)	0	0	0	4
DIVORCED	5(100)	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
TOTAL	27	30	23	7	6	2	1	96

**Gamma = - 0.512**

By implication, happily married people get fewer problems with their maids because they have less familial stress. They thus treat their housegirls better, including the area of monthly payment.

Widowed employers rank second because they have little time for wrangles with the maids. The very fact that they have lost their spouses is a holding factor and they had better chase away the maid than condone recurring problems.

The third rank in the payment list are the never married category, whose highest percentage (72.7%) paid their maids between 300 and 400 shillings a month. The fact that they have not been identified for marriage by any man - assuming that they are not single by choice which is also possible and common - may produce aggressive tendencies. These are extended to the maid by several ways, one of which is low payments and if the maid dares complain about it, she risks further aggression, this time physically.

#### **5.2.10 Employers' Education Level and Maids' Salary**

Employers were asked how far they had gone in school. It was realised that there were four major levels of education among them and these were "O" level, "A" level, College and University levels. These four categories were cross-tabulated with how much a particular employer of a particular academic achievement paid her maid. The results are shown as here under with percentages of the total number of cases in the particular education achievement category.

TABLE 5.2.9 EMPLOYERS' EDUCATION AND MAIDS' SALARY

SALARY → EDUCATION ↓	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201+	TOTAL
TOP LEVEL	16(45.7)	10(28.6)	7(20)	0	1(2.9)	1(2.9)	0	35
"A" LEVEL	5(38.5)	4(30.8)	3(23.1)	1(7.7)	0	0	0	13
COLLEGE	4(14.3)	9(32.1)	9(32.1)	3(10.7)	2(7.1)	1(3.6)	0	28
UNIVERSITY	2(10)	7(35)	4(20)	3(15)	3(15)	0	1(5)	20
TOTAL	27	30	23	7	6	2	1	96

Gamma = 0.412

The employers' level of formal education was found to be a strong factor in determining maids' salary. Low education achievers among employers were the low paying category and the higher the education level, the higher the salary for the maid.

This feature may not be easily observed overtly from the table above, but a derivative of the table as seen below helps bring forth the observation. Among the "O" level academic achievers, 74.3% paid their maids between shs. 300 and shs. 500 a month. This is obtained as a sum total of 45.7% who paid between 300 and 500 shillings, and 28.6% who paid between 400 and 500 shillings. But "A" level employers had a lower tendency to pay such low figures. Only 69.3% (38.5% + 30.8%) paid between 300 and 400 shillings a month.

As the employers' education background increased to college level, the propensity to pay shs. 500 and less went down. Only 46.4% (14.3% + 32.1%) of all college employers paid between shs. 300 and shs. 500 per month. This percentage even went further down to 45% (10% + 35%) for employers who had university degrees. The trend is best visualised from the derivative table below.

**TABLE 5.2.9.1 EMPLOYERS' EDUCATION IN RELATION TO MAIDS'**

**SALARY BELOW shs. 500**

EMPLOYERS' EDC. BACKGROUND	% OF THOSE PAYING LESS THAN shs. 500 PER MONTH
< O LEVEL	74.3%
A LEVEL	69.3%
COLLEGE	46.4%
UNIVERSITY	45%

The major reason that can be adduced for this trend has largely to do with the employers' salary herself. Though not universally so, a common observation in this survey was that employers with higher education achievements were the same category of employers with high incomes. This may pave way for the maids' higher salaries as the employer does not strain financially to meet it. But "O" level achievers, most of whom had meagre monthly incomes, save for a few of them who ran some business, had an inclination to pay salaries that were commensurate with their own earnings.

Thus the conclusion that employers' education background has a relationship and a positive one, with how much she paid the maid per month, is a valid conclusion.

### **5.2.11 Employers' Income and Maids' Salary**

Employers' incomes were divided into four categories or salary brackets in Kenya shillings as 1,000 - 2,500; 2,501 - 4,000; 4,001 - 5,500 and 5,501 and above.

It would be expected that the higher the employer's income the higher she pays the maid. Indeed, this was corroborated by the results of this survey.

An analysis of how many employers in each salary bracket paid their maids above shs. 500 a month, revealed that no employer whose salary was less than shs. 2,500 a month paid her housegirl more than shs. 500. A summary of these facts is given by Table 5.2.10 below.

**TABLE 5.2.10 EFFECT OF EMPLOYERS' INCOME ON MAIDS' SALARY**

Maids' salary →	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1202+	Total
Employer's income ↓								
2500 - 2500	8(100%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
2501 - 4000	8(25.8%)	13(41.9)	8(25.8%)	2(6.5%)	0	0	0	31
4001 - 5500	3(18.7%)	6(37.5%)	6(37.5%)	1(6.3%)	0	0	0	16
5501 +	6(18.2%)	8(24.2%)	7(21.2%)	3(9.1%)	6(18.2%)	2(6.1%)	1(3%)	33
Total	25	27	21	6	6	2	1	88

$$\text{Gamma} = 0.504$$

But among employers who earned shs. 2,501 - shs. 4,000 a month, 32.3% paid their maids more than shs. 500 per month while 43.7% of the employers earning between shs. 4,001 and shs. 5,500 paid their housegirls in excess of shs. 500 per month. Finally 57.6% of the employers whose income was above shs. 5,501 a month paid their housegirls more than shs. 500 per month. Thus the employers' income was found to be directly proportional to the maids' salary.



### 5.2.12 Employers' Family Size

Employers were asked how many children each had. This constituted what in this study is termed throughout as the family size. Responses to this question were grouped into seven categories from one up to five children, then six and above and finally the childless category. This information was cross-tabulated with the amount of money paid to maids by all family size categories.

The data so obtained showed that there was no real statistical relationship between the employer's family size and the amount of money paid to the maid. Table 5.2.11 below gives the figures and the respective percentages.

TABLE 5.2.11 Employers' Family Size and the Maids' Salary

maid's salary → family size	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201+	Total
Child	8(38.1%)	8(38.1%)	4(19%)	0	1(4.8%)	0	0	21
Children	9(34.6%)	6(23.1%)	6(23.1%)	3(11.5%)	1(3.8%)	1(3.8%)	0	26
Children	3(14.3%)	10(47.6)	5(23.8%)	1(4.8%)	1(4.8%)	1(4.8%)	0	21
Children	5(26.3%)	4(21.1%)	4(21.1%)	3(15.8%)	2(10.5%)	0	1(5.3%)	19
Children	1(20%)	2(40%)	2(40%)	0	0	0	0	5
Children +	1(33.3%)	0	2(66.7%)	0	0	0	0	3
Childless	0	0	0	0	1(100%)	0	0	1
Total	27	30	23	7	6	2	1	96

Gamma = 0.214

From this table, the distribution of values or scores seems a normal distribution - from which a normal curve can be plotted. Low payments are offered by the largest family size employers, while the highest salaries are given by medium family size employers. Perhaps employers with medium family sizes give high salaries as an incentive to hold the maid while large size family employers are those whose children are already mature and who therefore would be quite indifferent about maids' salaries; the maid may leave without any major dislocations in the family.

### **5.2.13 Size of the House as a Factor in Maids' Salary**

It was hypothesized that the size of the house contributes to the level of maids' mistreatment, mistreatment which is itself seen in the light of several aspects, one of which is economic exploitation by way of very low salaries. Thus various categories of house sizes were cross-tabulated with various salary levels for maids. The results are shown on Table 5.2.12 below.

TABLE 5.2.12 EMPLOYERS' HOUSE SIZE AND MAIDS' SALARY

SALARY → HOUSE SIZE ↓	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201 +	TOTAL
SINGLE ROOM	5(100)	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
DOUBLE ROOM	8(66.7)	4(33.3)	0	0	0	0	0	12
1 BEDROOM	3(27.3)	5(45.5)	1(9.1)	1(9.1)	1(9.1)	0	0	11
2 BEDROOMS	9(17.6)	18(35.3)	18(35.3)	4(7.8)	2(3.9)	0	0	51
3 BEDROOMS	1(7.7)	3(23.1)	4(30.8)	2(15.4)	1(7.7)	2(15.4)	0	13
4 BEDROOMS	0	0	1(50)	0	1(50)	0	0	2
COMPLEX DWELLING QUARTER	0	0	0	0	0	0	(100)	1
TOTAL	26	30	24	7	5	2	1	95

Gamma = 0.671

Evidently, there was a direct relationship between the size of the house and the tendency to pay high salaries. 100% of all employers living in single rooms paid their maids the smallest salary brackets, 300 - 400 shillings per month. As the house became bigger, the number of employers paying between 300 and 400 shillings declined to 66.7% for double rooms. It declined further to 27.3% for employers living in one bedroomed self contained houses. Among the employers living in 3 bedroomed houses, only 7.7% paid their maids less than shs. 400 per month. Such low payments were completely unknown to employers living in 4 bedroomed houses and complex dwellings with servant quarters. In fact, 100% of all

employers living in such complex residences paid their maids well above shs. 1,200 a month.

Perhaps the explanation to this trend could be that since employers living in single-roomed houses exhibit characteristics of severe financial constraints inhibiting them from living in bigger houses, it follows "mutatis mutandis" that they cannot afford better rates for housegirls. In fact if such employers were compelled to pay any higher rates, they would easily relinquish the housegirl and substitute her services with one member of the employer's family. Put differently, whether or not such employers will continue to keep a maid depends to a large extent on whether or not the maid will be willing to receive such low payments.

The opposite side obtains in case of employers in large and posh residences. The problem to them is not money, but a good maid. To the extent that they live in such high-rent houses is a manifestation of absence of financial stringencies. Such are also the category of employers who have a bias for mature and basically educated maids who can sharply handle emergencies. They employ maids who can handle complex household items which are unknown to "small house employers". Such maids can telephone the fire brigade in case of fire, call police in case of an attack or an ambulance in case of an accident, ask for an arrest warrant if police invade the employer's home, or ring the alarm bells if thugs strike in the dead of the night. Thus the size of the house as one of the employer's socio-economic status has a direct influence on the maid's monthly remunerations.

#### **5.2.14 Employers' Occupation and Maids' Payments**

Employers were asked whether they were formally employed or involved in personal business. Three occupation categories were formed out of this question. An employer was either in formal employment, self employed or a housewife. A cross-tabulation of these occupation categories with maids' salaries revealed that there was no statistical relationship between the two variables, as Table 5.2.13 reveals.

Table 5.2.13 Employers' Occupation and Maids salary

Maids' salary →	300-400	401-500	501-600	601-700	701-900	901-1200	1201+	Total
Employer's Occu.								
Employed	11(17.5)	21(33.3)	20(31.7)	6(9.5%)	4(6.3%)	1(1.6%)	0	63
Business	14(53.8)	7(27%)	2(7.7%)	0	1(3.8%)	1(3.8%)	1(3.8%)	26
Housewife	2(33.3%)	2(33.3%)	0	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	0	0	6
Total	27	30	22	7	6	2	1	95

Gamma = -0.376

The scores were almost evenly distributed among the three categories. Once again, the level of maids' salary was seen to be a function of factors constituting employers' socio-economic status other than occupation.

### 5.2.15 Employer's Relatives and Children

Employers' relatives in this study include people who are related to the maid's employer by either blood, marriage or adoption, though no case of adoption was realised in the field. Maids were asked whether employers' relatives visited the employers' home. Out of the 104 possible cases, 90 maids answered this question in the affirmative, 13 answered in the negative and only one did not answer it.

Those who answered "yes" were further asked whether they had antagonised any of them. The results were that 21 out of 90 responded that they have had conflicts with the employers' relatives, and some of these conflicts resulted in major dislocations in the way the maid related with the employer.

The maids attributed this conflict to several reasons accusing the employers' relatives of making the house dirty and therefore forcing the maid to keep on mopping it time and again, throwing dirty clothes to the maid for washing while she already had a lot more to wash, oversending her and generally becoming harsher than even the employer herself. The maids complained that such employers' relatives become so bothersome as they too assume an equal position with the employer, sometimes giving orders that are discordant with the employers'. The maid is left in a state of cognitive dissonance, unable to know who to serve first. In the circumstance, there is seen to be a lot of work with idle labour while only one hand is very active.

Other maids lamented that the trouble between them and their employers began with the coming of the relatives to live with them. The relatives levy wrong accusations on the maid and are said to be sometimes making vitriolic comments to visitors about the latter, and such comments are extremely disgusting, the maids reported. The relatives therefore only served to create hostility between the maid and the employer.

Male relatives were in two cases reported to have had attempted sexual assault without success. In one of the two the maid was contemplating quitting the job. In the other, she had already left. Employers' children were also found to contribute to the tribulations of the maid. But since the study was conducted during the day when children were in school, and owing to hostility by some employers as far as interviewing their children was concerned, it was finally possible to interview only 14 children. Elsewhere, children were available but too young for any meaningful interview. But verbal informal views were all the same sought from them.

The 14 children in 14 different houses with maids were asked whether they were ever bitter with the maid. Ten of them answered in the affirmative while four answered in the negative. Those who accepted that they had at least been annoyed with the maid were further asked to state the reason(s). Below is a frequency distribution for the responses to that effect.

**Table 5.2.14 FRICTION BETWEEN MAID AND CHILDREN**

REASON FOR FRICTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
RUDE	4	40%
BEATING CHILDREN	2	20%
STEALING	1	20%
UNTIDY	1	10%
LAZY	2	20%
TOTAL	10	100%

From this table, it was found that 60% (40% + 20%) of all the maids who were not in good books with the children they served were accused of either arrogance or beating them. According to Mwakisha J.( 1991: V) "the maid gives the same treatment she receives to the baby. This is because the child is seen as an extension of its parents". Such accusations by the children may spark a very hostile reaction by the employer leading to severe suffering by the maid. In fact elder children occasionally are known to physically chastise the maid in the employers' absence. This only occurs with very young maids who are inexperienced in serving as housegirls.

However, out of the 14 interviewed cases of children, 8 (57%) observed that they would do better with the maid than without her, due to household chores. But generally the children had mixed reactions of equal intensity on whether or not their current maid was better than their former one, or whether or not theirs was better than their neighbours'.

### **5.3 MAIDS' WORK DAY**

Under this section, the researcher seeks to show how the total number of hours for which a maid works per day is affected by the maid's background as well as the socio-economic status of the employer. Thus various features that constitute the maid's background and the socio-economic status of the employer are cross-tabulated with mistreatment of the maid, which, in this case, is seen only with regard to excessively long work days.

In order to realise this objective, maids were asked what time they woke up daily. They were also asked what time they usually went to bed and the difference between the two gave the length of the work day.

#### **5.3.1 Maid's Education as a Factor in the Length of Work Day**

Time of waking up was divided into four major categories; 5.00 a.m. and earlier, 5.30 a.m. - 6.00 a.m., 6.30 a.m. - 7.00 a.m. and after 7.00 a.m. A cross-tabulation matrix of the maids' education background and time of waking up, and therefore beginning of a work day, revealed major erratic shifts, inconsistencies and discontinuities. The education achievement of the maid was seen to have no influence on when she was expected by the employer to start working in the morning. It was thus concluded that there was no relationship between the two variables.

However, majority of them (55.9% to be precise) woke up between 5.30 a.m. and 6.00 a.m. Only 3.2% were allowed freedom of waking up after 7.00 a.m. but this had no statistical relationship with the maids' educational background. On what time they went to bed, this was divided up into three categories; depending on work, depending on choice, and after 10.00 p.m. Although 68.5% of the sample averred that their time of going to bed depended entirely on work, and although only 13 percent had own discretion on when to go to bed, this particular item was also not affected by the maid's education background. The distribution of scores did not indicate any pattern to this effect.



Thus maids, whether educated or not, were by and large subjected to almost a similar length of work day. And looking at this analysis of maids' work day and her education achievement, it would be in order to provisionally conclude that maids' length of work day is not a function of her background, neither is it a function of the employers' socio-economic status.

#### **5.4 MAIDS AND MEDICAL CARE**

According to Cap 226 of the Laws of Kenya in a subsidiary legislation of the Employment (Medical Treatment Rules) of 1977, revised in 1984, paragraph 2 (2) states that medical treatment should be provided at the employer's expense unless the illness or injury was contracted during any period when the employee was absent from his employment without lawful cause or excuse, or unless the illness or injury is proved to have been self-inflicted.

Further to this, paragraph 8 (1) stipulates that where it is likely to be necessary for an employee to go to a hospital for medical treatment and some form of transport is necessary, his employer shall provide such transport as is reasonable. To this end, maids were asked whether their employers took care of their medical expenses. Their responses are, under this section, cross-tabulated with a few selected aspects of maids' background and employers' socio-economic status in an effort to establish the relevant factors responsible for the employers' line of action as far as maids' medical care is concerned.

##### **5.4.1 Maids' Education Background and Medical Care**

Following the survey responses, it was evident that maids' educational achievement was an important tool in bailing them out of imminent negligence by the employer during the most needy time of illness. Below is a cross-tabulation matrix for maids' education background and whether or not she was medically taken care of by the employer.

**TABLE 5.4.1 MAIDS' EDUCATION AND MEDICAL CARE**

Taken care of → Educn. level ↓	Yes	NO	Partly	Total
std 1 - std 4	1(6.7%)	10(66.7%)	4(26.7%)	15
std 5 - std 8	25(44.6%)	29(51.9%)	2(3.6%)	56
Form 1-Form 3	6(85.7%)	1(14.3%)	0	7
Form 4	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	0	3
Total	35	45	7	87

Gamma = -0.745

One important aspect to note from table 5.4.1 is that the percentage of maids whose medical care was given fully by the employer rises with maids' education achievement by a magnitude of 74.5%, holding the Gamma value in absolute terms. This proportion was only 6.7% for maids whose educational background was std. 1 - 4, while it was highest (85.7%) for form 1 to form 3 achievers. Perhaps it was lower (66.7%) for form 4 leaver maids because of the paucity of the total number who had reached this level. In this case, N = 87. The remaining 17 cases had never fallen sick.

#### **5.4.2 Maids' Religious Background and Medical Care.**

Religion was also examined as a way of showing the extent to which housegirls are mistreated. It was addressed in the light of whether it was the same as or different from the employer's.

It was found out that only 35% of all the maids whose religious background was the same as the employer's were taken care of in terms of medical expenses. Fifty five per cent were not, while 10% were only helped partly with themselves meeting the balance.

But for those who did not share the same religious faith with the employer, 45.9% were taken care of while a similar percentage were not. Only 8.2% were partly given this right. The table below presents these frequencies.

**TABLE 5.4.2 MAIDS' RELIGION AND MEDICAL CARE**

Medical care given →	Yes	No	Partly	Total
Religion ↓				
Same	7 (35%)	11(55%)	2 (10%)	20
Different	28 (45.9%)	28(45.9%)	5 (8.2%)	61
Total	35 (43.2%)	39(48.1%)	7 (8.6%)	81

Gamma = -0.190

Perhaps, as further corroborated by the findings in other parts of this report, employers are freer mistreating maids whose background they know than those who are strange.

### **5.4.3 Maids' Age and Medical Care**

When maids' age was cross-tabulated with the scores on whether they were given medical care or not, there was no overtly discernible relationship between the two but the Gamma measure of association indicates a weak negative relationship of -0.224.

But since the responses were not directional, this figure stands as an absolute value (0.224), implying that the age of the maid determines the chances of receiving medical care from the employer by a magnitude of 22.4%. Table 5.4.3 shows this relationship.

**Table 5.4.3 MAIDS' AGE AND MEDICAL CARE**

Medical care given → Age ↓	Yes	No	Partly	Total
< 15 years	6 (27.3%)	12 (54.5%)	4 (18.2%)	22
16 - 20	18 (43.9%)	20 (48.8%)	3 (7.3%)	41
21 - 25	7 (63.6%)	4 (36.4%)	0	11
26 - 30	2 (33.3%)	4 (66.7%)	0	6
31 - 35	0	2 (100%)	0	2
36 +	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	0	5
Total	35	45	7	87

Gamma = -0.224

However, as the table shows, there was no systematic flow of occurrences to make it possible to classify further how each particular age group relates to chances of receiving medical care.

### 5.4.4 Maids' Awareness and Medical Care

On whether or not employers took care of maids' medical expenses, there were three response categories from the maid; fully taken care of, no medical assistance at all, and partial assistance.

The cross-tabulation analysis for these categories with whether or not the maid was aware of her rights and privileges showed that most maids were ignored in the area of medical attention. Table 5.4.4 below shows this relationship clearly.

Table 5.4.4 Maids' Medical Care and Awareness of Rights

Medical care given → Awareness ↓	Yes	No	Partly	Total
Aware	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	0	5
Partly Aware	5 (45.5%)	6 (54.5%)	0	11
Not Aware	28 (39.4%)	36 (50.7%)	7 (9.9%)	71
Total	35	45	7	87

$$\text{Gamma} = 0.169$$

It was realised that 40% of all the maids who were classified as aware of their rights, were fully given medical attention at the expense of the employer. But 39.4% of those who were not aware of their entitlements were given this right.

So, since the difference between these two figures is very small (only 0.6 precisely), the correlation between maids' level of awareness and whether or not she received medical

care at the expense of the employer was very low. This was given by a low Gamma value of only 0.169.

## **5.5 HYPOTHESES TESTING**

The aim of any scientific survey is to come up with findings that are useful in solving the problems of the day and for planning future strategies. Such strategies are either in furtherance of research interests in the field of academics, or for enforcement of moral law.

In order to realise this end, the researcher has an obligation to provide, or rather to have in mind, tentative or provisional statements in response to his very objectives of carrying out the research. Such statements are called hypotheses. For the researcher to tell, at least in a fool-proof language, whether his hypotheses are at the end of the research work still valid or invalid, he sets forth to test such hypotheses statistically. This is done with empirical evidence gathered in the course of the study (Odegi-Awuondo, 1994:6).

Thus, in this thesis under this section, the researcher undertakes to test the four hypotheses which were generated in the literature review (chapter two) of this study, in response to the objectives stipulated in chapter one. The sole statistical tool for this test of hypotheses here is the Gamma measure of association. This was chosen because of its unlimited ability to measure or to show the direction and strength of association between two cross-tabulated variables (see chapter four).

It is important first of all to point out that in order to clearly discern the effect of the independent variables on mistreatment, only three aspects of the latter are evaluated against all the independent variables.

## 5.1 HYPOTHESIS ONE

H1 reads that the maid's background determines the extent of mistreatment, and the independent variables here included formal education, religion, ethnicity, marital status, and relationship with the employer. The cross-tabulation matrix on maid's education and physical assault (Table 5.1.1) gives a Gamma value of 0.613. This shows a very strong relationship between these variables. This confirms that the incidence of physical assault reduces tremendously with higher education of the maid. This partially endorses the hypothesis.

A cross-tabulation of maid's education with salary levels (Table 5.2.0) further confirms that education of the maid has a bearing with mistreatment with regard to low salaries; the Gamma value between the two is 0.481. This is a strong positive relationship indicating that the lower the education level of the maid, the lower the salary and vice versa. H1 is further confirmed as true.

However, as shown under sub-section 5.3.1 on whether or not maid's education affects the length of the work day, there were major erratic shifts, inconsistencies and discontinuities leading to a tentative conclusion that there was no statistical relationship between the two variables. This section only serves to invalidate and therefore to reject H1.

On religion and physical assault, Table 5.1.2 produces a weak Gamma value of -0.043 confirming that maids with different religious faiths from the employers' are more prone to physical abuse. Though the Gamma value is weak - showing an almost equal chance of physical assault for maids irrespective of their religious stand - this also confirms that religion, as part of maid's background, to some extent determines the level of mistreatment. This endorses H1.

Scores on maids' religion, in the light of the employer's, were also cross-tabulated with scores on her salary, the results of which are reproduced in Table 5.2.2. The Gamma value obtained here is 0.259 revealing a positive relationship, though not strong, between the two variables. This serves to further accept H1 as true.

The religion of the maid was further still addressed with respect to medical care and the Gamma measure of association from Table 5.4.2 was -0.190. But since religion is not directional, holding this value as an absolute figure means that to an extent of 19%, the religion of the maid dictates whether or not she will be supported by the employer in case of sickness while at her place of work.

According to the findings in Table 5.1.3 where responses on ethnicity are cross-tabulated with responses on assault, the Gamma value equals 0.088. Since this is positive, it proves that maids with the same ethnicity as the employer are more subjected to physical assault than those with different ethnicities. However, this is a weak Gamma value but since it is higher than 0.00 which would otherwise show no relationship between the two variables, it further validates the hypothesis.

Also examined as a way of indicating the extent to which maids are mistreated was the measure of association between maid's ethnicity and her salary level. Results of this association are given on Table 5.2.1, whose Gamma value was 0.319. This positive relationship further confirms that maids whose ethnic background was the same as the employers' were paid lower than those whose ethnicity was different from the employers', by a magnitude of 31.9%. This aspect accepts H1 as a true statement.

On how maids' marital status influenced mistreatment by way of physical assault, it was found that maids who were single were the most hit. The second in rank were the single mothers followed by the married. Table 5.1.4 gives a Gamma measure of 0.232, confirming a positive relationship between a maid's marital status and the possibility of physical assault. Results of this table therefore prove H1 as true.

Looking at the analysis of the maids' marital status as cross tabulated with her salary levels, Table 5.2.3 shows a Gamma value of 0.713. This very strong positive relationship between these two variables lucidly tells that marital status of the maid has a strong influence on how much she earns.



Low salary levels were known among single maids. Hypothesis one is therefore endorsed further as true. All these Gamma measures are corroborated by the findings on maids who were related to employers, as shown under sub-section 5.1.5, where it was proved by way of percentages, that such maids were more susceptible to physical assault than those who were not.

And on how much a maid is likely to earn as dictated upon by whether or not she is related to the employer, Table 5.2.4 produces a Gamma value of 0.022. Though positive, this value is so weak that it would be safe to conclude that there is no statistical relationship between these two variables. Thus overall, the results of this study accept as true the hypothesis that maid's background determines the extent of her mistreatment.

## **5.5.2 HYPOTHESIS TWO**

According to H2, in this research report, the maid's characteristics influence her mistreatment. To be tested under this hypothesis are two independent variables; age of the maid and awareness of her own rights and privileges.

Thus these two items were cross-tabulated with the key components of mistreatment and the statistical relationships sought. According to the findings on Table 5.1.5, age of the maid was found to be a very strong factor in the incidence of physical assault. All the maids who accepted that they had been victims of physical assault at any one time were below 20 years of age. The Gamma coefficient computed from this Table was 0.748, showing a very strong relationship indeed. From age 21 upwards, no maid was subjected to physical abuse. Hypothesis two therefore is partly confirmed as a true statement.

When age of the maid was related to her salary, it was found, as in Table 5.2.5, that age also contributes to her monthly remuneration, and in fact to a very large extent. With a Gamma measure of 0.673, it was found that low figure salaries were dominated by young maids, and the highest earning maid was also the oldest as the table depicts.

H2 is secondly endorsed as true. Additionally, age was viewed with respect to medical care, evidenced on Table 5.4.3. A weak Gamma value of 0.224 was found between these two variables. Holding this figure in absolute terms means that the age of the maid influences her salary, but to an extent of only 22.4%. H2 is further still accepted in this respect. The other item comprising the maid's characteristics was awareness of rights and privileges. This was divided as either aware, partially aware, or not aware. This too was cross-tabulated with mistreatment and statistical results obtained as follows.

With respect to physical assault as shown on Table 5.1.6, the strength of association between awareness and assault was given by a Gamma value of -0.58. This confirms a strong inverse relationship between the two variables, and since awareness influences the level of mistreatment in this regard proves H2 a valid statement. Though weak, a positive relationship exists between maids' level of awareness and whether or not she received medical attention at the employers' expense. This is given by a Gamma measure of association to the value of 0.169, as derived from Table 5.4.5. This serves further to validate H2.

Finally maids' awareness extent was tested against her salary level, and as the figures on Table 5.2.6 indicate, the Gamma measure is 0.448 which explains a strong association between the two variables and H2 is further accepted. So the hypothesis that maids' characteristics influence her mistreatment is an acceptable statement.

### 5.5.3 HYPOTHESIS THREE

H3 states that the socio-economic status of the employer has an influence on the level of maid's mistreatment. The independent variables under this hypothesis, which are cross-tabulated with various aspects of mistreatment are employer's age, her education level, occupation, income, family size, size of the house and marital status.

In order to test statistically whether employer's age influences the extent of mistreatment of the maid, the former was cross-tabulated with various attributes of

mistreatment and the Gamma measure of association sought in each case.

Between employers' age and maids' incidence of physical assault, Table 5.1.7 gives a Gamma value of -0.124. What this means is that although overtly from the table the rate of physically assaulting maids was directly proportional to the age of the employer up to age 40, at a general level, there is an inverse relationship between the two variables.

By implication therefore, the higher the age of the employer, the less the chances of physically abusing a maid, by a magnitude of 12.4%. Since this observation is commensurate with H3, then the hypothesis is partly accepted as true.

With respect to employers' age, elderly ones were found to be paying better than the young category. The cross-tabulation matrix between employer's age and the maid's salary in Table 5.2.7 showed a Gamma measure of association equalling 0.370. This statistical observation confirms that there is a direct relationship between the two variables and so H3 again still holds as a true statement. Other than employer's age, in order to test this hypothesis exhaustively, other factors constituting employers' socio-economic status were also addressed.

The statistical association between employers' formal education level and maids' salary (Table 5.2.9) is given by a Gamma value of 0.412. This positive measure of association shows that formal education level of the employer is a strong factor in determining maids' salary. Put differently, there is a positive correlation between the level of employers' education and the maids' salary level. As the employers' education achievement goes up, the maids' salary increases. H3 is therefore validated, in this respect.

Marital status of the employer was also seen to precipitate maid's physical assault. The divorced were the best known in this area followed by the never married and then the married. Thus Table 5.1.8 shows a Gamma coefficient of 0.557. This means that there is a strong statistical relationship between these two factors. The widowed had a 0% level of physical mistreatment of the maid. H3 is therefore accepted as true by these standards.

Employers' marital status was cross-tabulated with the maids' salary and the results presented on Table 5.2.8 show that there is a strong correlation between the two. The Gamma value so obtained was -0.512. But this cannot be viewed as a negative value as such because marital status is also non-directional. It is therefore taken as an absolute value, (0.512).

Thus employers' marital status as part of the wider socio-economic status influences the maids' salary, by a magnitude of 51.2%. H3 therefore is validated. According to the findings on Table 5.1.9 where size of the employers' house is cross-tabulated with maids' physical assault, the bigger the house, the less the chances of physical mistreatment; Gamma value was 0.372.

But a direct relationship between the size of the house and the tendency to pay high salaries was discovered. Table 5.2.12 attests to this, with a Gamma value of 0.671. Therefore, size of the house in this respect contributes to maids' mistreatment; small houses increase this phenomenon. H3 is further still supported as valid.

But according to sub-section 5.2.12, there is no statistical relationship between the employers' family size in terms of the number of children, and the amount of money paid to the maid. Since there was no systematic alignment of scores on either side, it was concluded that none of the two variables influenced the other. H3 is proved a wrong statement and therefore rejected.

On whether employers' occupation has any significant association with the maids' salary, sub-section 5.2.14 reveals that a statistical relationship between the two variables does not exist. The scores were almost evenly distributed among the three categories of occupations, leading to a Gamma value of almost 0.00.

A final aspect of employers' background was her income level. According to Table 5.2.10 a direct relationship was found between the employers' income level and the maids' salary. Statistically, this was established by a Gamma value of 0.504.

The higher the employer's salary, the higher she paid her maid and vice versa. Overall, the hypothesis that socio-economic characteristics of the employer influence maids' mistreatment is proved to be true.

#### **5.5.4 HYPOTHESIS FOUR**

The fourth and final hypothesis in this study, states that children and relatives of the employer play a major role in mistreating the maid. Under sub-section 4.4.10, it was found that in 91 families out of the entire sample, employers' relatives were common visitors. But in all these cases, only in 23.1% were there antagonism between the visitors and the maids.

Apart from the employers' relatives, 50% of all the interviewed children reported total dissatisfaction with their maids. Maids too were not happy with this state of affairs. But due to paucity of valid cases in this hypothesis, inferential statistics were deemed unfit. The hypothesis was therefore treated descriptively and the conclusion therefrom was that employers' relatives and children played a very limited role in mistreating the maid, given these proportions/percentages. Thus the hypothesis that these individuals play a major role in this respect is invalidated.

# **CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **6.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the post-independent Kenya, women have continuously engaged themselves in job achievements and career pursuits that are socially ranked highly and financially very rewarding. This has prompted need to engage housegirls to take care of children while mothers work during the day.

But in spite of their high demand, these housegirls are heavily exploited, the government's legislation of minimum wages for domestic workers notwithstanding. Apart from this, these girls are physically assaulted by all manner of attacks possible, ranging from slaps, kicks, whips to severe battering. In some cases, dousing with paraffin and setting ablaze, as well as mutilation particularly of private areas, have been reported in the local print media.

The rationale of this study therefore lies in the need to understand the conditions and circumstances that stand behind this phenomenal trend and to investigate the relationship between these factors and the socio-economic backgrounds of both the victims and the perpetrators. Thus the researcher, in this chapter, attempts to give a summary of all the identified factors that prop up mistreatment of maids, plus an outline of recommendations for future lines of research and planning.

## **6.1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The study examined the mistreatment of maids with regard to low and delayed salaries, physical assault, denial of basic freedom, denial or extreme rationing of food, overworking far beyond the ability of an average person, denial of medical assistance and constant scolding.

This was done with a view to identifying, among the hypothesised factors, those that are real in bringing about the said mistreatment of maids by employers. One of the major objectives was to find out if the level of formal education of the maid, her religious background, marital status, ethnicity and her relationship with the employer influence the extent of mistreatment, and if so, how and why.

The evidence assembled and discussed in the preceding chapters showed that the level of formal education of the maid is inversely related to the level of mistreatment. But although it was found that maids who belonged to different religious faiths from the employers' were more susceptible to abuse, this was to a very small extent.

A second issue that was observed from the findings of this study was that maids' marital status was a key factor in mistreatment. Maids who were single were the most hit, followed by the single mothers. None of the married maids was subjected to any act of physical abuse. High salaries were also recorded among the married maids. However, general freedom was denied to all categories of maids.

Maids with the same ethnicity as the employer were, contrary to commonplace expectation, more prone to acts of mistreatment than those who were different. On the same note, maids who were related to their employers recorded more cases of mistreatment than those who were not.

It would be important at this point to divert attention to the second major task of this study. This was to investigate whether the characteristics of the employer have a correlation with how she treats her maid. Such employer's characteristics included her age, marital status, education level, occupation, income, family size, and size of the house.

To this end, a working hypothesis was formulated and subjected to statistical analysis. The results of this study revealed that age of the employer is a factor in mistreatment of maids, with younger employers being more hostile. This is with respect to all aspects of mistreatment, as spelt out from time to time in this report.

Women who had been married but divorced for whatever reason were found to be the worst in maid mistreatment. The never-married employers ranked second, followed by the married. Widowed employers are the best in treating their maids. They do not physically abuse, they give freedom to some good extent and they pay fairly well.

Although there was no well discernible statistical relationship between employers' occupation and the level of maids' mistreatment, employers' education was found to be a strong factor. Low education achievers were the low paying category. In other words, the higher the education level of the employer, the higher the salary level for the maid. Employers' income was also found to vary directly with the maids' salary. Most exploitative employers were the low-earning category.

Size of the house as an underlying characteristic of the employer was found to be inversely proportional to the chances of physically abusing a maid, while there was a direct relationship between the size of the house and the tendency to pay high salaries. But there was found to be absolutely no statistical relationship between the employers' family size and the incidence of mistreatment.

The study also sought to identify the interactions between the employers' children and relatives on one hand, and the maid on the other. The evidence adduced in the preceding chapters shows that employers' relatives and children play a very limited role in mistreating the maid.

## 6.2 CONCLUSIONS

An overview of the whole study shows that there are multiple factors that explain conflicts arising between a maid and the employer, almost always rendering the former the loser.

The study therefore concludes that different backgrounds of maids bring about different levels of mistreatment, and that the socio-economic characteristics of the employer constitute a major factor in mistreatment. Further, the study concludes that children and relatives of the employer play a fairly good role in prompting cases that were conceived as mistreatment.



### 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the results of this study, it is evident that mistreatment of maids entails a formidable problem whose consequential effects cannot be eliminated by addressing them in scholarly pursuit only; it calls for concerted efforts by all the interested parties.

Based upon these findings and conclusions, the researcher hopes, under this sub-section, to stress a few highlights that may reveal important socio-economic indicators necessary for initiating and sustaining good relations between the two 'warring' parties. Thus the following recommendations were made in order to alleviate these phenomenal propensities.

1. It is recommended that an employer should orient the maid with various duties and the entire house before entrusting her with it. This would help integrate the maid wholly into the mainstream of the family, and this would boost her performance.
2. Employers are advised to give the maids more freedom so as to eschew possibilities of wanting to know what lies beneath the surface and beyond the scenes; locked doors and wardrobes create anxiety. Besides, this freedom ensures a friendly atmosphere and the incidence, for instance, of the maid putting on the employer's clothes in the absence of the latter will come to an end.
3. If employers pay their maids better, this will produce satisfaction on the part of the maid and performance will be boosted. Friction will be minimised as she would not wish to be sacked. The government should also devise a method of ensuring that the legislated minimum wages for domestic workers are adhered to.
4. Some domestic chores should be restricted to the employer and not the maid. Such should include washing of the husband's clothes, cleaning the master bedroom and serving the husband

with food while the employer is around. These are some of the activities that bear intimacy between the maid and the man of the house and this inevitably invokes violence by the employer.

5. Most maids are badly overworked. Their common daily routine starts with mopping the house, feeding the child, ironing clothes, going to the shop, making lunch for the family, picking the elder children from school, and so on until she is dog tired. It is then that naturally, both effectiveness and efficiency are no more and the maid collides with the employer. It is recommended that the maid be assisted as much as possible in household chores so that she remains effective and efficient.

6. Some employers just hate maids for the very fact that they are maids, holding a view that a maid cannot be trustworthy whatsoever. Such employers even teach their children to avoid contact with the maid as much as possible. The maid will surely take up that position and behave as such. A change of attitude towards maids is highly recommended.

7. Finally, stern legal actions against employers who ruthlessly subject their maids to physical torture which occasionally produces life-long incapacitation, should be deterrent to such tendencies.

#### **6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This research work is a major break-through in the study of mistreatment of maids by their employers. But to reinforce these findings, the following areas are suggested for further research.

1. An analytical study on the effectiveness of increased salaries on maids' performance and duration of work with a particular employer paying special attention to those with the same religious and ethnic backgrounds as the employer.

2. A thorough analysis of levels of satisfaction and performance of houseboys, watchmen and gardeners with a view to establishing whether domestic misunderstandings are common to all domestic workers.

3. Most employers allege that the cause of all domestic misunderstandings between maids and their employers emanate from the general misconduct of the maid. Some maids even threaten to resign when the employer is expectant. Others target the employer's husband for a lover, hoping one day to "overthrow" the employer. It was observed that such maids succeed in their ill intended missions if the employer falls sick and is admitted to hospital or is too sick for a wife, or, if she is in college and so does not reside at home, or further still, when she has a very young infant. Further research is therefore suggested on mistreatment of employers by their maids.

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## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### Introductory Remark

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am a second year Masters Student at the University of Nairobi. During this second year of study, we conduct individual research based on student's area of interest. I am therefore conducting a study on the relationship between maids and their employers. This information is valuable both for planning and for scientific research.

Your household is very important to this study because it represents hundreds of others which are not in this sample. Everything you tell me will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your name will be in no way connected to the findings of this vital study, the results of which will appear largely in form of statistical reports. Although the questionnaire looks rather long, it will in fact take about thirty minutes of your precious time.

#### FOR THE MAID \*

Schedule Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Estate \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Educational background \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Origin \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Background \_\_\_\_\_

Where you served in this capacity elsewhere? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why did you leave your former employer?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you decide to work in this capacity yourself or was it decided for you by your parents?

\_\_\_\_\_

Either way, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you go to worship? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you entertain your own visitors when they come along saying 'hi' during the day in the absence of the employer? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where do you entertain them from?

\_\_\_\_\_

How many blankets/ bed sheets do you use? \_\_\_\_\_

Are they yours or given to you by your employer? \_\_\_\_\_

How many rooms are there in the house? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have one of your own or do you share with others? \_\_\_\_\_

With whom do you share with? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you cook your own food or do you eat what the others are eating? \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you eat? In the kitchen \_\_\_\_\_ dining table \_\_\_\_\_ outside the house \_\_\_\_\_

Elsewhere (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

When employer's visitors come, do you like to sit with them and be introduced to them? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what name do they use for you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When visiting other family friends, do your employers go with you? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, do you like helping the family you visit during the time you are there? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If no, do your employers request you to help them? \_\_\_\_\_

At what time do you go to bed? \_\_\_\_\_

What time do you wake up? \_\_\_\_\_

How are your terms of service? Salary \_\_\_\_\_ In kind \_\_\_\_\_

If salary, how much do you earn? \_\_\_\_\_

If in kind, what do you receive and how is it given to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

At what time of the month are you paid? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you always paid in full or sometimes in parts?

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you go out to visit friends? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you buy your own clothes yourself or are they bought for you by your employer?

\_\_\_\_\_

Does your employer ever criticise your tastes in clothes? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What happens if you disagree with your employer over what you should wear?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When tempers flare between your employer and the husband, what do you do?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What about when they fight? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are there ways you have felt your employer has treated you unfairly? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how? \_\_\_\_\_

When this sort of thing happens, what do you do/say?

\_\_\_\_\_

Suppose your employer gives you too much work or tells you to do something you feel is unreasonable, do you express your feelings about this?

\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, what do you do/say? \_\_\_\_\_

What duties do you resent doing for the employer?

Suppose you come across a maid who has been very severely punished, for example abused sexually, unconscious or mutilated with a "panga"/ knife, what would you advise her to do? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know any arbitration agency? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

When you do something your employer does not like or you fail to do something you should have done, has she ever slapped you? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

taken something away from you? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

stopped you from what you wanted to do? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Made you look silly in front of other people? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Refused to speak to you until you did as she wanted?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Told you that you are ungrateful and reminded you all she has done for you? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

What was the biggest punishment ever administered to you? Has it ever been repeated? If yes, how often?

I guess everybody gets annoyed with the employer sometimes. What sort of things make you annoyed with her? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there things you especially like with your employer which make you happy in her company?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

c) How do you go about showing her that you are happy?

\_\_\_\_\_

d) In general, would you say you get along with your employer very well \_\_\_\_\_ well \_\_\_\_\_ not well \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

21. What changes would you advocate for your employer to strengthen your relationship?

\_\_\_\_\_

22.a) How do you relate with children? - very well \_\_\_\_\_ well \_\_\_\_\_ not well \_\_\_\_\_

b) Do you ever disagree with the children?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, over what? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If no, suppose you disagree, what would you do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

23.a) Do you fall sick? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, do you get sick off? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

b) During such a time, do you buy drugs or do you go to hospital? \_\_\_\_\_

If you go to the hospital, how do you get there? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c) Have you ever had a sleepless night? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4.a) Do relatives of your employer visit this home?

Yes \_\_\_ No-----

b) Have you ever antagonised any of them? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, over what? \_\_\_\_\_

\* And other probe questions arising during the course  
of the interview.

Thank you very much and may God bless you abundantly.



**FOR THE EMPLOYER \***

(Same introduction as with the maids' questionnaire applies)

Schedule Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Estate \_\_\_\_\_

l. a) Age \_\_\_\_\_

b) Marital status \_\_\_\_\_

If single, are you divorced \_\_\_\_\_

widowed \_\_\_\_\_ or never married \_\_\_\_\_

c) Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_ d) Education level \_\_\_\_\_

e) Family size \_\_\_\_\_ f) Size of the house \_\_\_\_\_

g) occupation \_\_\_\_\_ h) Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Salary bracket Ksh. (1000 - 2500) \_\_\_\_\_ (2501 - 4000) \_\_\_\_\_

(4001 - 5500) \_\_\_\_\_ (>5501) \_\_\_\_\_.

Are you related to your maid either by blood marriage or adoption?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

a) How did you get your maid? \_\_\_\_\_

b) How often does she ask for time off-duty and/or leave?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) In your opinion, is it necessary? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. a) In your assessment, does she save part of the salary? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

b) If yes/no, how does she spend it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. a) Have you employed any other maid in the past? \_\_\_\_\_

b) If yes why did she leave? \_\_\_\_\_

How did she leave? \_\_\_\_\_

d) Do you consider your current maid better than the former? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes/no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the biggest complaint by the maid? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

a) Are there any services or facilities you offer to the maid which you consider to be a favour? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which one(s) and how much does she appreciate them?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c) If no, does she ask for any? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. a) Some employers expect their maids to obey immediately when they tell them to do something; others

think it is seriously important for a maid to obey right away.

What is your feeling about this? \_\_\_\_\_

b) If she does not do what you ask, do you ever drop the subject or do you always see to it that she does it?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) (i) When she gets angry at you, what does she do?

\_\_\_\_\_

(ii) How much of this sort of thing have you allowed?

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you do about it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(iii) How often have you found it necessary to grumble at her or to slap her? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you find you have to keep on nagging at her until she does things?

\_\_\_\_\_

d) (i) Do you think she resents being punished? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Does she get over it quickly? Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Some employers, after having to punish their maid deem it necessary to try and smooth things out while others think it better to do nothing about it but let the girl get over it alone. What is your opinion?

\_\_\_\_\_

e) When she has to be disciplined, and assuming that both you and your husband are present, who usually does it?

\_\_\_\_\_

11. When your maid is in difficulties, does she ever come to you to talk things over?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

a) What kind of things has she come to you about? \_\_\_\_\_

---

What do you do/say? \_\_\_\_\_

b) Are there any other ways in which she asks you to help her out? \_\_\_\_\_

(specify).

c) How much have you encouraged her to come to you for help in things like these?

---

12. Some employers praise their maids quite a bit when they do a good job; others feel that maids should take duty performance for granted, for that is what actually they are employed for. Please, comment.

---

\*

And other questions arising from the discussion.

Thank you very much and may God bless you abundantly.

**CHILDREN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Schedule Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Respondent \_\_\_\_\_

Estate \_\_\_\_\_

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

2. a) How do you relate with your auntie? \_\_\_\_\_

b) Do you sometimes get bitter with her? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If yes, over what? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How do you compare the present auntie with the former? \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Would you do better with or without her? \_\_\_\_\_

Either way, why? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you know any of your friends' auntie? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

How do you compare her with yours? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much and may God bless you abundantly .