

**T.R.**  
**ISTANBUL SABAHATTIN ZAIM UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

**THE EXPERIENCES OF UNDOCUMENTED FILIPINO  
DOMESTIC WORKERS IN TÜRKIYE: ACCESS TO  
LABOR MARKET IN THE CONTEXT OF PRACTICES  
AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Ph.D. DISSERTATION**

**Abdulhamid GUNDA**

**Istanbul**

**February- 2024**

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**Supervisor**

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## THESIS APPROVAL

This study has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ph.D. Degree in Social Work.

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## **DECLARATION OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS AND ORIGINALITY**

This is to certify that this PhD dissertation titled “The Experiences of Undocumented Filipino Domestic Workers in Türkiye: Access to Labor Market in the Context of Practices and Working Conditions” is my own work and I have acted according to scientific ethics and academic rules while producing it. I have collected and used all information and data according to scientific ethics and guidelines on thesis writing of Sabahattin Zaim University. I have fully referenced, in both the text and bibliography, all direct and indirect quotations and all sources I have used in this work.

Abdulhamid GUNDA

## PREFACE

First and foremost, I want to express my thanks to Almighty God, the All-Wise and All-Knowing, for bestowing upon me some wisdom and patience throughout my dissertation journey. The wisdom and patience He has blessed me with has been my main source of fuel and drive throughout the daunting process of not only my thesis-writing stage but also of my whole doctorate studies.

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Finally, I want to dedicate this work to my beloved parents, may God bless their souls, and to my siblings for their genuine love and inspiration. You all have been the main reason for my steadfastness to accomplish this work. Thank you for believing in me.

## **ABSTRACT**

# **THE EXPERIENCES OF UNDOCUMENTED FILIPINO DOMESTIC WORKERS IN TÜRKIYE: ACCESS TO LABOR MARKET IN THE CONTEXT OF PRACTICES AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Abdulhamid GUNDA**

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Migrant Filipino workers, popularly known as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are employed in over a hundred countries. About a quarter of them who are deployed overseas every year enter domestic work- a category of work which is generally undervalued, underpaid and poorly regulated. Due to the decent-work deficiency in the sector, providers of domestic or household work services are under precarious working conditions. In fact, the International Labor Organization (ILO), which is one of the frontrunners in the advocacy for decent-work for labor, has stated that domestic or household workers are among the most vulnerable and improving their working conditions is certainly a matter of social justice. In this regard, social work which champions service to humanity through its advocacy for socio-economic justice and as a watchdog of social policy and human rights has an essential role to play in this social phenomenon. This vital role stems from the mandate of social work profession which is to enhance the general well-being of individuals through promotion of social change, improving their problem-solving skills, and ensuring efforts for people empowerment and liberating them from exploitative human relationships. This study is the first, if not one of the few, social work research on undocumented household workers in Türkiye. It aimed to explore the experiences of undocumented Filipino household workers in Türkiye in the contexts of labor market access and working conditions. A qualitative research method, phenomenological research method, was employed to conduct the study. To generate the primary data, in-

depth interviews were conducted to a total of thirty undocumented Filipino household workers in Istanbul. The findings revealed areas and aspects of the participants employment practices and working conditions that must be evaluated and improved in order to promote their general well-being. Their experiences reflect the general status of domestic work as highly informal and poorly regulated. Apparently, the loopholes in the system of employment practices in the sector lead to the irregular legal status of the migrant household workers. Moreover, the findings show consistency with the domestic work literature in showing the general working condition of the migrant household workers in Türkiye as relatively more decent and better compared to their counterparts in other countries in the Middle East. However, this group of workers still face problems in terms of the lack or very poor legal protection, fight for employment rights and benefits, long working hours and vague job description and more importantly, the absence of any social work intervention in their experiences. Finally, to highlight the significant value of this research to the study participants and especially to the social work practice and education, the study presents a list of recommendation for future research works and policy development. Realization of such recommendations can surely contribute to the promotion of the general well-being of undocumented migrant household workers in Türkiye.

**Keywords:** Household Work, Social Justice, Migration, General Well-being, Social Work

## ÖZET

# TÜRKİYE’DEKİ BELGESİZ FİLİPİNLİ EV İŞÇİLERİNİN DENEYİMLERİ: UYGULAMALAR VE ÇALIŞMA KOŞULLARI BAĞLAMINDA İŞGÜCÜ PİYASASINA ERİŞİM

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Genellikle Denizaşırı Filipinli İşçiler (OFW'ler) olarak bilinen göçmen Filipinli işçiler yüzden fazla ülkede istihdam edilmektedirler. Her yıl yurtdışında görevlendirilen bu işçilerin yaklaşık dörtte biri ev işlerinde çalışmaktadır; bu iş kategorisi genellikle düşük değer biçilen, düşük ücret ödenen ve yetersiz düzenlemelere tabi olan bir iş kategorisidir. Sektördeki insana yakışır iş eksikliği nedeniyle, ev işleri hizmeti sunanlar güvencesiz çalışma koşulları altındadır. Nitekim emeğe yakışır iş savunuculuğunun öncülerinden olan Uluslararası Çalışma Örgütü (ILO), ev işçilerinin en kırılgan kesimler arasında yer aldığını ve çalışma koşullarının iyileştirilmesinin kesinlikle bir sosyal adalet meselesi olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bu bağlamda, sosyo-ekonomik adaleti savunarak, sosyal politika ve insan haklarının bekçisi olarak insanlığa hizmeti savunan sosyal hizmetin, bu sosyal olguda oynayacağı önemli bir rol vardır. Bu hayati rol, sosyal hizmet mesleğinin, sosyal değişimi teşvik ederek, sorun çözme becerilerini geliştirerek ve insanların güçlendirilmesi ve sömürücü insan ilişkilerinden kurtarılması için çaba göstererek bireylerin genel refahını artırma görevinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışma Türkiye'de belgesiz ev işçileri ile ilgili yapılan az sayıdaki sosyal hizmet araştırmasından biridir. Çalışmada Türkiye'deki belgesiz Filipinli ev işçilerinin deneyimlerinin işgücü piyasasına erişim ve çalışma koşulları bağlamında araştırılması amaçlandı. Araştırmanın yürütülmesinde nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomenolojik araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Birincil kaynaklardan yararlanmak için İstanbul'da toplam otuz belgesiz Filipinli ev işçisi ile

derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular, katılımcıların istihdam uygulamalarının ve çalışma koşullarının, genel refahlarını artırmak için değerlendirilmesi ve iyileştirilmesi gereken alanlarını ve yönlerini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Katılımcıların deneyimleri, ev işçiliğinin son derece kayıt dışı ve kötü düzenlenmiş genel durumunu yansıtmaktadır. Görünüşe göre, sektördeki istihdam uygulamaları sistemindeki boşluklar, göçmen ev işçilerinin düzensiz yasal statüsüne yol açmaktadır. Ayrıca bulgular, Türkiye'deki göçmen ev işçilerinin genel çalışma koşullarının Orta Doğu'daki diğer ülkelerdeki meslektaşlarına kıyasla nispeten daha iyi ve düzgün olduğunu göstermesi bakımından ev işçiliği literatürü ile tutarlılık göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, bu işçi grubu hala yasal korumanın olmaması veya çok zayıf olması, istihdam hakları ve sosyal yardımlar için mücadele, uzun çalışma saatleri ve belirsiz iş tanımı ve daha da önemlisi, deneyimlerinde herhangi bir sosyal hizmet müdahalesinin olmaması gibi sorunlarla karşı karşıyadır. Son olarak, bu araştırmanın çalışma katılımcıları ve özellikle sosyal hizmet uygulaması ve eğitimi için taşıdığı önemli değeri vurgulamak amacıyla, çalışma gelecekteki araştırma çalışmaları ve politika geliştirme için bir öneri listesi sunmaktadır. Bu tavsiyelerin hayata geçirilmesi, Türkiye'deki kayıtsız göçmen ev işçilerinin genel refahının artırılmasına kesinlikle katkıda bulunabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ev İşi, Sosyal Adalet, Göç, Genel Refah, Sosyal Hizmet

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CEACR	: Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CMA	: Center for Migrant Advocacy
DOLE	: Department of Labor and Employment
IFSW	: International Federation of Social Workers
ILC	: International Labor Conference
ILO	: International Labor Organization
IOM	: International Organization for Migration
LTO	: Land Transportation Office
OFW	: Overseas Filipino Workers
OWWA	: Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PDOS	: Pre-Deployment Orientation and Seminar
PIDS	: Philippine Institute of Development Studies
POEA	: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
TESDA	: Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
UN	: United Nations

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

The globalized world has witnessed the contribution and the vital role played by domestic or household workers in the care and welfare of millions of households around the world. Domestic workers assume the roles of significant numbers of women whose participations in various labor forces have stopped them from providing needed domestic services in their respective households. Emanating from this is another employment relationship which possesses both economic and social values that benefit both the recipients and the providers of domestic service. However, despite its undeniable significance, domestic labor remains undervalued, underpaid and poorly regulated. As a result, household workers around the world usually suffer from poor working conditions and are under isolation which makes any form of organization which could improve their condition difficult. Working conditions under such status implies unfair employment and exploitative working environment.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) stated that improving the working conditions for this category of worker- among the most vulnerable- is certainly a matter of social justice (ILO, 2003). In this regard, social work which champions service to humanity through its advocacy for socio-economic justice and as a watchdog of social policy and human rights has an essential role to play in this social phenomenon. This vital role stems from the mandate of social work profession which is to enhance the general well-being of individuals through promotion of social change, improving their problem-solving skills, and ensuring efforts for people empowerment and liberating them from exploitative human relationships. Therefore, genuine research such as this study is an essential step towards developing social change policies that are significant to vulnerable groups such as the participants of the study, the undocumented Filipino household workers in Türkiye.

The United Nation's ILO has distinguished the domestic labor sector as a gendered occupation which is highly dominated by female breadwinners from demographically disadvantaged groups in both labor market and social policy. Moreover, they are also

highly vulnerable considering the nature of their job which is highly personal and informal. These distinct characteristics attributed to this category of work stem from the fact that the work itself is provided within private households that are often beyond the reach of labor law enforcements in contrast to the usual workplace settings for most of the professional occupations. Therefore, through the lens of the knowledge base and values of social work, any social work practitioner can distinguish the sector to be a potential breeding ground for human rights violations and exploitation of employees.

The ILO estimates at least 67 million domestic workers globally. This number is composed of 80% females. Furthermore, research studies show that domestic workers, who provide their services across borders through international labor migration, suffer ‘structural discrimination’ in their host countries. The most relevant example is the scenario of migrant domestic workers employed in some of the Middle East countries under the famous *Kafala System*, a system that excludes migrant domestic workers from the national labor legislation (Amnesty International, 2019). Under this system, the general welfare of the workers as well as the protection of their basic human rights are to some extent dependent on the benevolence of their respective employers (Huda, 2006 as cited in Aoun, 2020); and the way these employers utilize in exercising their power and control is similar in many ways to labor force exploitations through smuggling and trafficking (Hamill, 2011: 25).

The household work or domestic work in the Philippines is dominated by women. This phenomenon also transpires in the number of Filipino workers deployed overseas from which a quarter of the total number enter domestic work. There has been a strong concern in regards to the protection and safety of these workers especially from different forms of abuse following the tragic fate of Flor Contemplacion who was a former Filipino domestic worker and was executed in Singapore in 1995 (Sayres, 2005: 2). The history behind the massive or structured exodus of Filipino migrant workers overseas began as a result of a labor law that permitted the implementation of a policy of labor force exportation in 1947. That specific law was an effect of the oil crises at the time which had caused destabilizing impact to the Philippine economy. Currently, the OFWs can be found employed in varying sectors in as many as 200 countries (Erncinas-Franco, 2015: 59). Oil-rich Middle-East countries like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait are the usual destinations. Other

countries popular among OFWs include Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, The UK, Canada and the USA.

Compared to the above-mentioned countries, Turkiye is not a popular destination among the OFWs. This is mainly due to the fact that there is still no existing bilateral labor agreement between the two countries. However, this does not stop the Filipinos from considering Turkiye as either a country of destination or a transit country to Europe. At the moment, there is still no official statistical data in regards to the total number of Filipino household workers in Turkiye. However, a community of Filipino workers claim that there are at least over a thousand OFWs based in Istanbul. This particular group of workers can be categorized according to their legal status. They can be residents, contractual and or undocumented. Such trait especially the heterogeneity of their legal status implies complexity in their employment practices as well as their general working conditions.

Moreover, amidst the non-existence of legislation on domestic work, Turkiye has already become a host country or destination country after being a transit country for so many years (Kırışçı, 2007: 93). Currently, the country is faced with different problems and challenges in migration administration. Amongst the challenges it faces is the management of irregular labor migrants and the dominant informal employment practices in its domestic labor force. The undocumented and informally employed migrant household workers in the country complain about experiencing problems inclusive of vague job description, long working hours, occupational health and safety and some degree of low wages. According to ILO, household workers in Turkiye are likewise vulnerable to harassment at work which can be psychological, physical, and sexual in nature; the informal employment practice risks the workers well-being as they get exposed to work-related problems such as overworking and usually the lack of social security coverage; despite being covered by the law of obligations, they are at present are not covered the scope of the nation's labor code (Erdoğdu, & Toksöz, 2013).

The mentioned general status of domestic work as poorly regulated, undervalued and underpaid manifests the decent work-deficit in the sector globally. It is also evident in the tragic stories of many Filipino household workers facing employment-related issues in

different countries. In Turkiye, despite being on top of domestic labor market hierarchy, the Filipino household workers are challenged by two legal issues- the absence of a bilateral agreement for labor between the two countries and the non-existence of legislation on domestic service in Turkiye. These legal issues can be a major source of structural discrimination against the migrant domestic workers in the country in general and can put the undocumented Filipino household workers easy targets for forced labor and human rights violations in specific.

Therefore, these problems are for one a significant subject of social work research as a part of the profession's mandate on service to humanity and pursuit of socio-economic justice and of Social Work Practitioners who are deemed as watchdogs of social policy and human rights. Advancing socioeconomic justice and human rights is a mandate of the social work profession. According to Popescu & Libal (2018), social work as a profession- in education and practice- has an important role to play in advancing the human rights of migrants and refugees. Therefore, the above-mentioned antecedents merit exploration as they affect the welfare of a highly vulnerable group of employees such as the undocumented Filipino household workers. Hence, the research study seeks to explore the lived experiences of the undocumented Filipino Household Workers in their labor market access in the contexts of employment practices and working conditions.

## **1.2. The Rationale and Significance of the Study**

Despite the decent work deficiency in this category of work, household work has both economic and social value that benefit both the country of origins and the receiving nations. It generates economic value through employment opportunities, increased personal income, tax revenue and remittances. On the other hand, its social values are gained through the promotion of gender equity, women empowerment, and poverty alleviation. Therefore, advocating for and promoting decent work for household work providers has also an essential role in reducing and or eradicating poverty and hunger as well as in promoting women empowerment and gender equality which are all parts of the UN's millennium Development Goals. In general, the availability of this category of work in households allows the participation of women in labor force as they get released from

the pressure stemming from their traditional responsibilities and accountabilities as caretakers of their respective households. This gives way to the achievement of a balanced work and family affairs. On the other hand, the migrant household workers are able to provide financial support to their own families through the remuneration and some other benefits they earned from their work. This employment relationship, if managed humanely and effectively, can result to decent-work for household workers, alleviation of poverty, and empowerment of women. Hence, the improvement of the mentioned groups' general well-being which is one of the main objectives of social change in social work practice.

*Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing (IFSW, 2014).*

Considering the definition of social work stated above, the main motivation underlying this research work is in line with the core values of social work- service to humanity and pursuit of social justice. Exploring the experiences of the study participants in terms of their labor market practices and working conditions will help identify the social problems faced by the undocumented household migrant workers in Türkiye which they represent. The specific data that this research study aims to generate can contribute to the consolidation of research findings that are essential in improving the working conditions of domestic labor, an advocacy described by ILO as a matter of social justice. They can also help find areas of social work practice, policy and research that need development and change. It is therefore, aimed to help in the empowerment of the vulnerable group of workers such as the undocumented Filipino household workers.

In addition to the above-mentioned general significance of the research study, this subject matter is specifically significant to the following:

### ***a) The Undocumented Migrant Household Workers***

Generally, undocumented migrant household workers possess complicating characteristics of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Their vulnerability stems primarily from the nature of their job and aggravated by their migrant status. Without legal permit to offer household work service in Türkiye along with their migrant status, they are in a disadvantaged position to claim or fight for their employment rights and most often ineligible to access social services. Moreover, the isolated nature of their working environment which is invisible to labor rights enforcements makes them vulnerable to violence and abuse. They, therefore, need comprehensive labor law protection and support system in order for them to thrive in the employment relationship they are in and to promote their general well-being.

However, helping them to increase their general well-being requires interdisciplinary approach. In this regard, this social work research which seeks to contribute to the development of new knowledge that can eventually help facilitate making of relevant policies and programs for migrant household workers will benefit the undocumented migrant household workers in Türkiye in the long run. Specifically, this vulnerable group of people will truly benefit from the services of social work practitioners who are capable of utilizing their knowledge and skill bases through linking the group to systems that provide resources, services and opportunities, ensuring that systems relevant to their status function effectively and humanely, and by contributing to the development and progress of social policies relevant to the undocumented migrant workers.

### ***b) Social Work Education and Practice***

Social work education contributes to the growth and development of Social Work knowledge base through its scientific social work research efforts. These research works are then utilized in the evaluation of the effectiveness of social work programs and methods which are implemented in practice by Social Work practitioners. In this connection, the data generated through this social work research are significant to the social work education and practice for two main reasons. Firstly, this study is, so far, the first social work research in Türkiye that tackles this vulnerable group of workers. Secondly, this research work seeks to fill a knowledge gap in the study of household work

or domestic labor. Therefore, the essential data that this research work has generated is significant to the extensive role of social work in empowerment and advocacy. Further, the accomplishment of the listed specific research objectives can serve as a reference guide for social work practitioners who may want to work with the undocumented Filipino household workers in Turkiye and with the undocumented migrant workers in the country as a whole.

***c) Domestic Labor and Labor Migration Research***

As indicated in the review of related literature and studies, most researchers have covered issues such as the incidences pertaining to abuse and violence towards labor migrants in domestic work, working hours and payment. Only very few have tackled the issues on occupational safety and health, the recruitment processes, as well as the nature of the contracts. Currently, there exists gaps in the literature in terms of the working and living conditions of the undocumented migrant domestic workers. In other words, there is an existence of information gaps on the labor market access practices and working conditions amongst the irregular or undocumented migrant household workers. Through the lens of social work which monitors the points where ‘the individual interacts with its environment’, change must be of optimum interest when existing systems cannot process and deliver the expected outcome humanely. To improve the general well-being of its clients, social work will always seek for improvements in the social delivery systems through social work research that aims to affect the micro, mezzo and macro level of practices. In line with this, this social work research can lead to a more comprehensive studies on irregular labor migration as well as domestic labor related studies in terms of employment relationship and work-related attitudes in domestic work.

***d) Migration Administrators and Policy Makers***

As a whole, this study is not only capable of informing labor rights advocates on the actual patterns of labor market access practices and working conditions of the undocumented migrant domestic workers but also may reveal the flaws in the migrant labor policies of the Philippines and Turkiye. This is significantly in line with the mandates of the social work profession as an advocate of human rights and watchdog of social policy. Therefore, the primary data that this research study will be able to generate can contribute to the base-

line data that are highly significant in informing social policy making efforts and to the informed discourse on how best to approach irregular labor migration among Filipino household workers. A one that ensures respect for their basic human rights while pursuing a productive employment as migrants.

The main motivation behind this research work is to explore the lived experiences of the undocumented Filipino household workers in terms of their access to labor market in the context of practices and working conditions. Specifically, this research study aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

- A. To determine the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents in terms of their gender, age, marital status, highest educational attainment, number of dependents, working and living arrangements, etc.;
- B. To distinguish the actual patterns of the employment practices of the study participants;
- C. To explore the general working conditions of the respondents;
- D. To identify the workers motivation for entering domestic service in Turkiye;
- E. To determine the coping strategies of the workers in overcoming their employment-related problems;

### **1.3. Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This research study covered the labor market access practices and working conditions of undocumented migrant workers in the domestic service in Turkiye. A category of work faced with challenges such as poor regulation, informality, legal and social issues among others. Specifically, the study investigated the lived experiences of the undocumented Filipino Household Workers in the country. This population is selected for this particular study because based on literature review, the Filipino household workers are one of the most sought-after domestic labor forces not only in Turkiye but around the world.

This study covered the lived experiences and issues of the respondents in terms of practices in their labor market access and their working conditions. For this purpose, the targeted respondents of this exploratory study were the undocumented migrant male and

female Filipino workers who are either currently employed or formerly employed as household workers in Turkiye. Former employee must be within maximum of six months since his or her last employment as an undocumented household worker in Turkiye.

In addition, only adult household workers were covered by this study. Since this particular group has received the least amount of attention in academic research and media interventions (ILO, n.d.). The content of this study was limited to what the research questions, mentioned in the purpose of study, sought to answer. Particularly, the study does not address issues such as employees' quality of life and the workers' subjective well-being like life and job satisfaction. Furthermore, since the study is exploratory it provides answers to the research questions to understand the issues involving the undocumented Filipino household workers in Turkiye to a certain level of depth. Therefore, it is not expected to provide a final and conclusive answer to this social phenomenon.

#### **1.4. The Research Questions of the Study**

This research study seeks to answer the main research question- What are the lived experiences of the undocumented Filipino Household Workers in their labor market access and working conditions in Turkey? Alongside the main research question, the study seeks to answer the following specific research questions:

SRQ1: What is the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents of the study?

SRQ2: What are the actual patterns of the respondents' labor market access practices?

SRQ3: What is the general working condition of the study participants?

SRQ4: What are the motivations and preferences underlying the supply of domestic work services?

SRQ5: What are the coping mechanism/strategies of the workers in overcoming employment-related problems and challenges?

## **1.5. Definition of the Key Terms**

### **1.5.1. Domestic Work**

Domestic Work is also referred to as Household Work or Domestic Service. It is defined as works performed in or for a household or households (ILO, 2011).

### **1.5.2. Household Worker**

Household Worker was the proposed replacement for the more common term, Domestic Worker. Nowadays, both terms are used interchangeably to mean a provider of domestic services as a wage-earner employed in a private household by one or more employers. Briefly, a household worker is someone who engages in domestic work under an employment relationship (ILO, 2011). Fraga (2009) has distinguished household workers into different types: resident, full-time, and charwomen.

### **1.5.3. Employment Practices**

ILO has defined employment practices in reference to the employer's practices regarding household workers. The practice is inclusive of probation, training, separation from employment, remuneration arrangements and the documentation of employment contracts (Hulme, 2014: 16). However, in this research study, employment practices refer to the practices employed by the undocumented Filipino Household Workers to access domestic labor market in Turkiye.

### **1.5.4. Working Conditions**

This refers to conditions under which a worker is employed. This includes the remuneration and working time arrangement, definition and organization of tasks, sanitary facilities, job security and social security benefits, exposure and protection from moral, physical and psychological harassment and violence (ILO, 2012). In this study, working conditions refer to workers working conditions in terms of their remuneration, scope of work, working hours and leaves, healthcare, and common grievances in their employment relationship with their employees among others.

### **1.5.5. Labor Market**

Investopedia defines labor market as a pattern of labor provided or supplied by employees and demanded by employers (Kenton, 2022). As for Economics Times, ‘a labor market is the place where workers and employees interact with each other. In the labor market, employers compete to hire the best, and the workers compete for the best satisfying job’.

### **1.5.6. Undocumented Worker**

The United Nation defines undocumented migrant worker as a person who is employed without legal authorization to work. It makes no distinction between employment status and residence status (U.N. as quoted in Reyneri, 2001: 3). In this work, undocumented worker refers to Filipino household workers who are employed or have been employed illegally regardless of residence status.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In the following review, the general literature and relevant studies pertaining to the subject matter are covered. As the title suggests, it tackles two main topics such as domestic work and international labor migration. Being one of the world's top exporters of human resource, the Philippines' cases and experiences of international labor migration has been a popular topic in the literature of domestic work. However, there are still knowledge gaps and areas of improvement about the country's experiences in dealing with specific strategies and approaches for labor migration management especially in countries where there is a lack of bilateral labor agreement such as Türkiye. Therefore, the following review of related literature will cover specific topics relevant to domestic work sector and international labor migration. In the review of domestic work literature, essential sub-topics such as the forms of domestic labor; the categories or types of household workers; the unpaid nature of domestic work; and the employment relationship in domestic work will be tackled. In addition, equally significant topics under international migration such as labor migration; irregular migration; and several approaches to international migration will also be covered. Finally, to link domestic labor and international migration, the review will also explore the concept of globalization, the Filipino Overseas Workers, and the domestic labor market in Türkiye.

#### **2.1. Domestic Work**

Domestic work or domestic labor is an old sector from which people around the world source employment. In 1951, ILO defined the providers of domestic work services as wage-earners employed in a private household by one or more employers. The services offered are generally remunerated in various methods and periods from which employers receive no pecuniary gain. The sector was then described by characteristics such as: with private homes or households as working sites; inclusive of works with domestic nature such as childcare, elderly care, care of sick individuals, traditional housekeeping duties

like cleaning, cooking, laundry and ironing. It also may include other home-based chores such as gardening, driving or patrolling (D'Souza, 2010: 9). It is generally undervalued and often poorly regulated and underpaid (Budlender, 2011: 1). These chronic issues associated with the sector is believed to have stemmed from its “unpaid nature” portrayed as “women’s job”. Consequently, domestic workers are not only underpaid and overworked but are also socially and legally unprotected. This current status of domestic workers is reflected in some descriptions of domestic work. It is described as a 3D job (dirty, dangerous, and degrading), wherein workers often have short or no contracts at all (Wolffers, et al., 2003 as quoted in Van der Ham, A. et al., 2015: 546).

In 2006, the term “household work” was proposed to be a replacement for the term “domestic work” by several organizations at an international meeting on domestic work. In line with this, some countries have made attempts to improve the status of domestic work by replacing derogatory terms with more respectful ones to refer to domestic work. For instance, the Filipino term ‘*Katulong*’ has been replaced by a more euphemistic term ‘*Kasambahay*’ in the Philippines’ Bill on Domestic Work. In Guatemala, the term ‘work in private households’ was introduced by the National Office for Women as an official replacement of the term ‘domestic work’. This change in terminology was one of the considered points of discussion in the 2010 International Labor Conference (ILC) (D’Souza, 2010: 9-10).

In Turkiye, the term “domestic services” is used in reference to “domestic work”. Labor legislation defines 'domestic services' as jobs that meet the daily and routine needs of domestic life, such as cleaning, cooking, laundry, ironing and childcare. It is stated that for any work to be considered domestic service, it must be directly related to the living conditions of the concerned household. Providers of domestic work perform different roles and functions for the household they serve. So, they can be housekeepers, butlers, maids, cleaners, cooks, babysitters, gardeners, drivers, pet sitters, etc. (Karaca & Kocabaş, 2009). In addition, when the employment status of private sector employees is defined as 'home-based', domestic workers are included along with other home-based workers. Also, if a person is engaged in economic activities like knitting sweaters, sewing clothes, repairing electronic equipment, childcare, etc. whether in his own home or in another’s,

he or she is included in this group. The same group includes those who do not have a regular or fixed workplace and go home for cleaning or childcare (Visel, 2013).

Currently, domestic work is broadly defined by ILO as ‘works performed in or for a household or households. On the other hand, domestic worker refers to ‘any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship’. The 2011 Domestic Work Convention (C189) emphasized that ‘a person who performs domestic work occasionally or sporadically and not on an occupational basis is not a domestic worker’. Domestic work is a sector that has long been situated within a highly informal employment practice. A phenomenon that continues to challenge the collective efforts toward the ultimate goal of decent work for domestic workers. The effort to minimize, if not eradicate, the human and labor rights violations faced by many domestic workers around the world is considered to be an urgent necessity in the advocacy of decent work for the marginalized groups in the labor sector especially the household workers. The complexity of the employment issues involving this group of workers necessitates comprehensive studies that focus to further investigate the main sources of the problems existing in the domestic work sector. For a more detailed discourse on the subject matter, the following sub-topics will shed lights on the forms of domestic work, the different categories of domestic workers, the unpaid nature of the sector and lastly, the employment relationship in domestic work.

### **2.1.1 Forms of Domestic Work**

Domestic work is regarded as mainly unskilled women’s work which is considered neither a formal nor informal occupation. It has been traditionally classified as such due to the popular knowledge that domestic workers do not necessarily undergo rigorous professional training nor are they required to complete a certain level of education to qualify for the work. In domestic work, the labor force is recruited among women, who generally come from poorer strata with lower schooling levels, characteristics overlain by a strong racial component (Brites, 2013). However, recognizing the complexity of tasks and responsibilities played by most of the domestic workers, the Committee of Experts on the Applications of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) has questioned such derogatory classification of domestic work.

The three main groups of domestic work activities are traditional housekeeping, childcare, and personal care. Activities such as cleaning, cooking, laundering and care of pets are identified under the traditional housekeeping. For privileged households who are capable of employing more than one employee may also include driving and gardening in this form of domestic service. Childcare can be defined as homeschooling insofar as it includes both the supervision of children's daily activities and the intellectual activity of teaching. In cases where both parents are actively busy with full-time employment and there are no other alternative providers from the relatives such as grandparents, such chores become indispensable even for families that cannot be considered privileged. Personal care workers assist elderly or disabled people who need personal services. The demand for such jobs is increasing especially in an aging society. Since the need for such services is not dependent on the well-being or reasonably comfortable economic situation of the service recipients, financial concerns will inevitably arise requiring solutions (Daubler, 2011).

According to the definition of the ILO, domestic work covers a variety of work such as cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing, general housework, caring for children, the elderly and the disabled, as well as gardening, guarding the household vicinity and driving for the family (Albin et. al, 2012: 70). Furthermore, the ILO argues that duties and services vary among countries and variants may depend on several factors such as the age, gender, ethnicity and migration status of the workers involved. Domestic workers, as mentioned earlier, work in an invisible industry that often takes place behind private spaces and is beyond the reach of labor laws and enforcement authorities. Domestic workers, often isolated within the household, are expected to work continuously in long hours, but must remain as unseen as possible. Moreover, while there is little data revealing the scope and complexity of domestic work, the available information on the living and working conditions of domestic workers raises serious concerns in regards to employment-related violence, including forced labor, human trafficking and other forms of abuses. (Martin, 2007: 22).

The related literature and the existing data on the plight of domestic workers manifest the link between labor issues and social issues. It is evident that the nature of the labor issues, which mainly stems from weak or poor legal assistance, manifests correlation with

pressing social issues such as racial discrimination, gender bias, poverty and poor education. In other words, domestic work is not only faced with human and labor rights issues but also gender-related issues along with racial components and lack or poor educational attainment. The status and income of the worker depends on whether the worker is primarily responsible for household chores (cleaning, cooking, washing) or is also a caregiver. As the consequences of neglect are significant in the latter case, caregivers normally need to have higher qualifications as well as stricter duties and obligations (D'Souza, 2010).

In Brazil, 62% of Brazilian female domestic workers earn 15.6% lower wages than their black and white counterparts (Brites, 2013: 429). In addition, these black women also have lower levels of schooling – 6 years of education versus 6.4 for whites (Pinheiro; Fontaresa; Pedrosa, 2011; Fraga, 2013 as cited in Brites, 2013: 429). Durin, (2008) and Montemayor, (2008) described the close relationship between indigenous women and housework in northwest Mexico. Chavez Gonzales (2012: 22) perpetuates racial or ethnic discrimination in such types of work. Colen (1995) noticed that Caribbean nannies are valued in the country precisely because, unlike poor North American women, they accept long working hours, being away from their families, and even forging much-appreciated affectionate bonds with their employer's children. However, some researchers have pointed out that most of the gender studies conducted generally analyze ethnic, racial and gender distinctions and ignore the role of class determinant. Milkman, Reese, and Roth (1998) confirmed that domestic work is directly proportional to the level of social inequality in the country or region in which it is established. Discrimination based on racial and ethnic origin, the gap between none and poor education makes domestic workers vulnerable to abuse.

### **2.1.2 Categories/Types of Domestic Workers**

The types or categories of domestic workers generally depend on the works they perform, their working arrangements, and their demographic profiles in terms of their nationality and or citizenships. Some workers work on either full-time and part-time basis and they can also be stay-in or stay-out workers. These working arrangements allow other workers

to have more than one employer or households. Also, depending on the nature and place of their employment, domestic workers can be identified as national or non-national and migrant or non-migrant. This is a phenomenon that reflects the link between domestic work and migration.

Fraga (2009) has distinguished domestic workers into three types- resident, full-time, and charwomen. Resident domestic workers are those workers living at the workplace or household they work for during the period of employment. The full-time workers are those who earn salary as remuneration for their work but do not live or stay in their workplace. On the other hand, charwomen are the domestic workers who are paid on a daily basis and may render services to more than one employer or household. In addition, the ILO has divided domestic workers by types based on the nature of work they perform. Types include day workers who work continuously for a particular individual employer; stay-in employees working continuously for a particular individual employer; workers who provide weekly/monthly part-time domestic services to one/more individual employers; casual workers employed by cleaning firms and temporary casual workers providing occasional services (Visel, 2013).

Household chores such as childcare and personal care are full-time jobs that often require full-time workers that need to live with the family. This is true for the traditional maid (Daubler, 2011: 5). The work of employees living in their employer's home tends to take place in an isolated, largely unregulated and privatized environment. These workers are most exposed to physical and sexual abuse, long working hours and deprivation. Due to the informal nature of domestic work, many of these problems persist even in countries with adequate legal protection for domestic servants (Klemm, et. al. 2011: 3). In particular, boarding house workers work much longer than the legal 8 hours a day. Even the intermediary firm officials interviewed believed that in such cases it was necessary to bring a shift or to charge extra for overwork done with the consent of the worker (Erdoğdu & Toksöz, 2013: 13).

Residential or stay-in workers are usually immigrants from another part of the country or from another country. Inland workers are often hired informally and may not have employment contracts, while on the other hand, international migrants are often recruited

through formal processes by placement agencies. In countries where the demand for domestic workers is not reflected in immigration policies, the flow of illegal or undocumented workers continues and many are subjected for smuggling and trafficking for domestic labor (D'Souza, A. 2010). Other activities such as house cleaning, can be performed part-time without living with the family (Daubler, 2011). For workers who do not live with their employer and work with multiple employers, informal working arrangements and uncertain wage determination pose serious problems (Birte Klemm, 2011). Day workers complain about being tasked to perform other than housekeeping because of their vague job descriptions. In homes visited for full-time cleaning work, domestic workers may be asked to do things like walls cleaning; washing, ironing and re-fixing curtains; washing woolen beds and quilts, among others. These are usually extra tasks that require extra payments. They usually cause the worker to stay late. Again, due to vagueness in jobs descriptions, there are instances wherein a worker who is supposed to be hired for care work is otherwise assigned to do other household chores as well (Suğur et al., 2008).

Also, there are jobs for day workers on an on-call basis, which means that jobs are available as long as their employer calls them. It can be in the form of going to the same house for cleaning at regular intervals, or it can be irregular such that employers invite them when they need it. This naturally comes with uncertainties regarding the payment or the earnings of domestic workers. For monthly paid caregivers, their job may continue for several years until the child or children start attending kindergarten or school. Elderly and patient care continues until the death of the person concerned (Suğur et al. 2008). Full-time employees are preferred by employers due to various advantages such as security and savings for housing (ILO, 2013). Domestic workers with daily wages are preferred by families living in normal apartments. On the other hand, middle-upper class families with “safe site” type housing need migrant women who can stay with them. In villa type residences, immigrant women have their own rooms; are ready to serve when requested; therefore, it represents an employment relationship that “both constantly exists and disappears when not wanted” (Akalm, 2010).

### **2.1.3. Unpaid Nature of Domestic Work**

Caring mothers or mothers in general are socially constructed to be the 'Light' of every household. They have been seen as naturally inclined to perform unpaid domestic work through their traditional role as providers of household chores. This gendered association has been described as the 'cult of true womanhood' (Giles et. al, 2014). Domestic labor has been referred to as the "Feminine Mystery," a widely accepted idea that suggest women to opt and be happy for traditional chores of childcare and housekeeping. Friedan argued that as this mentality is widely accepted and imposing it on society has made the often-invisible domestic work at home as naturalized unpaid form of labor (Friedan, 1963). On the other hand, many Feminist theorists argued that patriarchy has resulted to the exploitation of women in the home in the households (Walby, 1990; Hartman, 1981). This gendered segregation of women for housework and men for outside jobs are believed to be a consequence of the patriarchal social structure. Despite the contribution of women to the reduction of subsistence expenses by their home-based free services, the productive labor is still predominantly associated to men who are accepted as breadwinners of households. Consequently, domestic services that are provided for free by women staying at home are considered to produce no value since they do not transform to exchange values, maintaining the invisibility of domestic labor.

In 1970s, feminist economists were concerned by the theorization of domestic work in relation to the capitalist economy. Gardiner (2000), reported that what prompted feminists to adopt the application of the Marxist economic theory on domestic work is the failure of the capitalist economy to recognize the role of domestic labor reproduction and maintenance of labor power. As noted in (Gürson, 2021), the domestic labor debate in the 1970s began to review Marx's economic theory through the support from women-led liberation movement and radical socialists on the new left. In spite of the persisting disagreements about the way and the possible contribution of domestic work to capitalist profits, it has been concluded that at the minimum the domestic labor earns bargaining power for lower wages for capitalists more than they would have if the domestic labor is purchased from the market by the working class (Gardiner, 2000). Gardiner concludes that according to the Marxist concept, the solution to theorizing domestic work can be sought in social reproduction.

Under the construct of social reproduction of domestic labor, households are ought to produce and sustain their members. Accordingly, an increase in the household's income results to their purchasing capacity to avail paid domestic labor which will then reduce the domestic labor of their own members. Glenn has listed the types of activities considered as reproductive labor. It includes purchasing household items, preparing and serving food, washing and repairing clothes, maintaining care for appliances and furniture, attending to children's socialization, providing and maintaining care along with emotional support to adults, and keeping kinship and community ties (Glenn, 1992). Furthermore, (Gursun,2021) argues that defining domestic work through the concept of reproductive labor has disclosed the marginalized aspect of domestic labor and that while this allows it to be more visible, it does not eradicate the fact that professionalization of domestic work remains to be problematic in nature.

Aside from the unpaid nature of the domestic labor, researchers have identified some problematic traits associated with the sector around the world. Examples of these traits include the informality of domestic work, the vague job description and the lack of social security in domestic work, and the use of private and public spaces in the same setting. Of all these mentioned characteristics of the domestic labor, the perceptions of the employers, who are described in the literature as the one of the two components of the supply and demand side, play a vital role in brokering the decent work for the supply side. In this connection, Lutz argues that the domestic relationship is problematic because employers do not consider it as a regular form of employment as it is often carried out in the private sphere, which leads to the invisibility of workers. Furthermore, he argues that neither low status nor wages change when done in a company or private household, as domestic labor is always linked to negative feelings and emotions such as 'disgust, shame and pain' (Lutz, 2016). Besides, it is deemed to be a commodity in low status, which privileged women buy and sell in the market (Parrenas, 2000). For this reason, domestic work continues to be devalued regardless of whether it is paid or unpaid, and the woman who does this work is humiliated (Anderson, 1990). These problems and challenges may stem from the unpaid nature of domestic labor. Putting them into context will give us further details on how the challenges may arise. So, the following section will tackle a significant aspect of domestic work in the context of employment relationship.

#### **2.1.4. Employment Relationship in Domestic Work**

Following the presented definitions of domestic, it is evident that the employment relationship in domestic work is made up of at least two primary parties- the employee and the employer. In this relationship, domestic work providers under a subordinate relationship are the employees. On the other hand, household heads are generally the employer. However, in many circumstances other than the household head, other party such as the recruiter or an agency can also be considered as co-employer according to the ILO. Acknowledging the fact that the determination of an existence of an employment relationship depends on the policies and different indicators imposed by involved parties, this type of relationship is defined as a subordination and economic dependence between the worker and employer, in contrast to self-employment or own-account work (Albin & Mantouvalou, 2012).

It is not based on family obligations but on a different kind of relationship that is supposed to require wages for the workers. Employment in a household tends to be seen as a private matter in certain respects, unlike the activities of other workers such as a salesperson, nurse, or office cleaner that are observed by all in daily life. Household workers live in a state of distinct personal subordination. Household members can give instructions at any time. This is unlike workers in factories or offices where the worker has to follow predetermined rules but only exceptionally receives an instruction. It can be described as a form of virtual subordination that exists in the background but is hardly enforced. The different situation prevailing in households can create many problems; the worker may be mistreated or even harassed (Daubler, 2011).

The 2006 Employment Relationship Recommendation (No. 198), provides suggestions for the specific indicators of the existence of an employment relationship. The 13th paragraph of the recommendation underscores the following: “(a) the fact that the work: is carried out according to the instructions and under the control of another party; involves the integration of the worker in the organization of the enterprise; is performed solely or mainly for the benefit of another person; must be carried out personally by the worker; is carried out within specific working hours or at a workplace specified or agreed by the party requesting the work; is of a particular duration and has a certain continuity; requires

the worker's availability; or involves the provision of tools, materials and machinery by the party requesting the work; and (b) periodic payment of remuneration to the worker; the fact that such remuneration constitutes the worker's sole or principal source of income; provision of payment in kind, such as food, lodging or transport; recognition of entitlements such as weekly rest and annual holidays; payment by the party requesting the work for travel undertaken by the worker in order to carry out the work; or absence of financial risk for the worker".

Moreover, ILO specifically refers to employment practices to mean employers' practices regarding recruitment of domestic workers. This practice includes probation, conducting of trainings, employee separation, wage arrangements, types of monetary and non-monetary benefits to employees in addition to wages, and documentation of the employment agreement via written contract, pay slips and record book for working time. On the other hand, working conditions refer to the wide range of conditions in which a domestic worker is employed. It includes the working time with rest and leaves schedules, payment of salary, tasks definition and organization, access to sanitary facilities, job security and terms and conditions in relation to turnover, social security benefits with maternity protection, exposure to and protection from risks to worker's health and safety, and exposure to moral, physical and sexual harassment and violence (Albin & Mantouvalou, 2012).

Domestic labor is informal work in most cases. It is often provided by migrant workers. The landlord-employee relationship may theoretically be subject to labor law, but in practice this aspect of the situation tends not to be relevant. There is a little to none existence of tax payments and the payment social security contributions; law enforcement is almost non-existent as labor inspectors or courts are not expected to intervene; hence, the activity does not usually appear in any official statistics. In some cases, household chores are hidden under the disguise of a family or neighborhood relationship. Workers can act as if they belong to the family or neighborhood wherein people do support one another. In reality, this type of "friendship" is a special type of informal work that is even more dangerous for the worker, as it normally excludes payment. Finally, housework may, in other cases, constitute a normal form of employment relationship that can exist between the head of the household and the worker. In other cases, it is the result of an employment

relationship with an agency that recruits domestic workers and sends them to households (Daubler, 2011).

The penetration of market relations into the private household can be a deeply disturbing experience for some employers. As homes are imagined as governed by interdependence and affective relationships, its values opposed the market values driven by self-interest and instrumentalism, where individualism is the rule rather than conforming to pre-existing social roles (Anderson and Davidson, 2003). Employers do not usually see the need to formalize their relationship with domestic workers. They expect home services to be exchanged out of respect, love, or duty, not on the basis of a contractual relationship. Thus, the private sphere is typically considered to be protected from State surveillance as well as from the mercantilist logic of the labor market (ILO, 2010). For example, in a survey conducted in four countries, namely India, Thailand, Italy and Sweden, 48% of employers thought that domestic workers did not have the right to contract, while 70% opposed the right to join a union, 52% opposed the minimum wage, and 45% said that fixed working hours should not be applied (Anderson & Davidson, 2003).

As explained above, employment relationship in domestic work is inherently different from the kind of relationship in other occupations. It does require to adapt particular regulation that fits to the specificity of the job. The committee of experts in the ILO has described this as an 'atypical' type of employment relationship and suggests utmost care be given to the workers so they are not put at the risk of being disadvantaged in the labor market (Fudge, 2006). While various aspects apply to all employees in private households, the specificity is more pronounced when it comes to the residential or stay-in workers.

Employment relationship in the sector is known for its invisibility feature. Being hidden behind closed doors, it usually falls outside the scope of labor inspection and other forms of dispute resolution since it is also often undeclared and not subject to a mutually agreed written contract. Migrant women workers, especially those undocumented or under irregular migration status and the child workers, are exploited on their own and are likely not willing or able to for their rights. The provision of adequate legal protection to these workers will remain to be challenging unless obstacles like its invisibility nature is resolved (ILO, 2010).

The second feature is the existence of wide gaps in terms power between the employee and the employer. While most job sites have one employer for several workers, this occupation has one worker for several employers often leading to conflicting demands on the worker's time and attention. Moreover, the job attributes such as low status and the inherent servitude do further weaken the bargaining position of the worker. In addition, women's lower status than men, social class and education level disequilibrium, and sometimes racial or ethnic factors further tilt the balance of power favoring the employer (ILO, 2010).

If there is a profession or occupation mostly dominated by feudal and paternalistic attitudes, it is definitely the domestic work. Most employers just cannot see themselves as employers in their own households. They tend to demerit the work done off remuneration in belief that they are actually doing so much favor to the poor and often and educated women by taking them into their household. Looking back in history, housework is seen not as a choice of profession, but as a stage in life, an apprenticeship (Kuznesof, 1989).

The lack of a precise job description and the expectation that the employee will always be ready to obey orders is another feature of domestic employment. The employer's household is the exclusive, direct and ultimate beneficiary of the work done. This means that under normal circumstances the employer does not receive any financial gain for the work done by the domestic worker. Therefore, the worker should not engage in any commercial venture of the employer. However, a few cases have been reported specifically of child domestic workers involved in generating an income for their employer (D'Souza, 2010).

## **2.2. International Migration**

Despite being viewed as a new phenomenon, migration of humans has a centuries-old history. Earlier migrations of people, by individuals or groups, were motivated by factors such as wars, conflicts, poverty and hunger, and religious and or political oppression. Nowadays, pull factors such as better economic and employment opportunities, trading and travel are new addition to the previously mentioned factors that have been pushing people to migrate. A brief history of migration is discussed below through some of the

different migration periods or events that have occurred in the last four centuries as described by Robin Cohen (1995).

From the 17th century onwards, people from across the world have taken different routes to migrate for various reasons. Religious-based persecution of Jews and the Huguenots as well as farmers' quest for better jobs in newly emerging industries have caused mobility within Europe. Seasonal or circular migration was the common routine in migration in the 17th and 18th centuries. Pre-colonial Africans followed this flow for hunting, agriculture, ways of escaping natural disasters and warfare and in pursuit for trading and pilgrimage. In Asia, trade was the main motivation in migration. Like for instance, traders from China and the Arabia took the established sea routes to the Philippine and Indonesian archipelagos and the then Malay peninsula. Furthermore, settlers from colonial Europe have paved the way to a large-scale permanent migration to their country's colonies in the North and South Americas as well as in the Asia Pacific starting in the 1500s up until the first half of the 19th century. Still in those periods, several countries in Europe such as Britain, Spain, Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands and France encouraged their citizens to settle in foreign lands abroad

Trading of African slaves led by the British Empire has been recorded as one of the largest mass migrations of labor that took route from Africa to America. An example of this was the first slave ship to sail from Africa destined to the West Indies in 1550 to serve the White Settlers who owned sugar and tobacco plantations requiring heavy field work. The trading of African slaves began to cease late 19th century after all the forms of slavery were abolished through legislation by a number of countries in the Americas and Europe as well as their respective colonies. However, from 1834-1917, the abolished slave trade was replaced by bonded or indentured labor. Under the new system recruiters recruit workers and they are, in return, paid for every recruitment. Also, fraudulent practices in misrepresenting job descriptions, wage rate, and most commonly lies about the distance of the relocation of workers in designated colony areas as well as forced labor and kidnapping of workers were so rampant. Subject to this new form of exploitation of the labor force were Indian and Chinese laborers. It was estimated that Britain alone has moved approximately two-million contract workers from India and placed them to their colonies in some parts of South America, South East Asia, Sri Lanka, and Caribbean

Islands among others (Tinker, 1993). On the other hand, transport-destination countries such as the Americas, the Philippines and the Caribbean Island had become receiving countries for contract or indentured laborers from China. Beginning from late-18<sup>th</sup> Century, opposition against this labor system erupted as the Great Mahatma Gandhi drew attention to suffering of Indian laborers as they faced exploitative and oppressive conditions under this new labor system. The application of this system in Britain's colonies eventually ended by the British government in 1917.

The change of status in former colonies with industrial power shifting to former colony such as the United States of America has led human migration to a new phase. It is estimated that approximately 48 million people left Europe between 1800 and 1930 (Massey et al., 1998). This estimate is attributed to the rising poverty rate and repressive governments in most of the core countries in Europe. Of these, nearly eight million people emigrated from the British Isles. In addition, more than a million moved from Ireland amidst the potato famine of 1845-47. The governments of New Zealand and Australian continued assistance in the transport European immigrants up to the 1970s. Moreover, the reconstruction efforts in the aftermath of WWII and the emerging economic boom created labor migration to Europe, North America and Australia. Immigrants from former colonies in the Caribbean and South Asia went to England to find work, migrants sourced from Turkey went to Germany, while those from former French colonies in North Africa were destined to France.

Post 1970s marked the beginning of contemporary migration. The number of migrants sending and receiving countries has grown. While the traditional immigration countries continue to attract and receive an increasing number of migrant populations, some other countries emerged to become new host countries. With the booming economy in the Gulf region and the industrialization in some countries in Asia, the demand for migrant labor in these regions also started to increase. This stage of migration has features that make it different from previous stages. A feature of this stage was the feminization of migration. In 2005, almost half of the world's immigrants were women: there were more female immigrants than male immigrants in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, Oceania, and the former USSR (Koser, 2007: 6). Furthermore, while permanent migration was more rampant in the earlier phases, the contemporary is more of the

temporary and circular bases. Migrants tend to migrate to different countries more than once in their lives and with the intention to return to home countries.

Human migration is an inevitable global phenomenon. It refers to the movements by people from a particular geographic location to another with varied reasons to either settle temporarily or permanently in the place of destination. Contemporarily, this movement happens locally or internationally. Internal migration is the term used for mobility within the country and while the people's mobility from a country to another is called international migration. The migration process involves a lot of factors which make it a multi-faceted phenomenon. The IOM uses "migrant" as an umbrella term to reflect the common lay understanding of a person moving away from place of residence locally or internationally, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. Moreover, IOM reports that the term migrant includes different categories of people such as migrant workers, smuggled migrants, and international students. These different categories of people are legally defined under international law.

Depending on the nature or the motivations to migrate, it can either be voluntary or forced migration. Among the diverse and complex reasons for migration are employment, family, study and in some cases forced migration as a result of conflict and natural disaster (ADB, 2016). Often, better human capital is associated with voluntary migration while phenomena such as natural calamities and civil disturbance force people to migrate to other places. People migrating on a voluntary basis are believed to be under the influence of their initiative and free will and compounding socio-economics and political factors. On the other hand, forced migration is considered as a consequence of either conflict and or natural disasters. Two of the most commonly identified groups of people under forced migration are the refugees and the asylum seekers. These groups of people leave their place of origin or country unwillingly. Refugees often migrate as a result of war or other forms of oppression by either government or non-government sources. Relocation under these circumstances is urgent and often undocumented. In contrast, asylum seekers are forced to migrate in order to escape degrading quality of life in the home country as a result of economic and political crises which result in a high crime rate. However, refugees and asylum seekers will not be tackled further as they are not part of the scope of the study.

### **2.2.1. International Labor Migration**

There is no single definition of international labor migration that can be used as a reference to a comprehensive understanding of this global phenomenon. However, as a better lens for understanding international labor migration, the ILO refers to migrant workers, which it defines as “all international migrants currently seeking employment, employed or unemployed in their country of residence” (Gallotti & Branch, 2015). In addition, the United Nations Statistics Division (UN SD) has supplemented the ILO's definition of migrant worker with the statistical definition of foreign migrant worker as "aliens admitted by the receiving State for a specific purpose to carry out an economic activity charged from within the receiving country". Their length of stay is often limited, as is the type of employment they can hold. If accepted, their dependents are also included in this category.” (UN SD, 2017).

As stated in the Migration Data Portal of IOM, there were over 169-millions of migrant workers in 2019. This number makes up 4.9 per cent of the global labor force in the respected host countries (ILO, 2012). In addition, they consist 69 per cent of international migrant working age population in 2019 (ILO, 2021). Seeking for employment has motivated millions of people to migrate. Contributing factors to the rise of this phenomenon includes problems arising from economic, political and environmental crises as well as significant demographic changes highlighted through ageing population and youth bulge (Özel et al., 2017).

The highly complex nature of international migration makes it a transnational issue not only for the states of origin and destination but also for the transit states. The long process of a migration cycle comes with legal issues which can be complied with or violated by migrants along the way. One of the most pressing issues involving this shared-concern is international labor migration. This employment-based mobility of people is governed by policies and agreements at a local and international level. Compliance to the regulation is an arduous task for labor migrants as these policies and agreements differ from one country to another. This explains why irregularity is a very common concern and is a shared-problem amongst parties involved. However, this type of migration can benefit both the sending and host countries. The contribution of migrant workers to the growth

and development of their country of destination has been repeatedly reported by many research studies particularly by the ILO. Whereas the countries of origin benefit greatly from remittances and the skills, their nationals have gained during their migration experience. Thus, the IOM argues that systematic and well-regulated migration process does maximize the benefits for all the stakeholders both in the sending and receiving countries.

The number of people employed in foreign lands is estimated to be over 86 million at present. Consequently, ensuring their security and safety throughout their migration cycle is a matter of interest that requires continuous effort from all the stakeholders relevant to labor migration. Such continuous effort to push for decent-work is essential to the general well-being of international migrant workers particularly those who are in the sectors that are considered low-skilled as majority of them are still experiencing problems and challenges in their work. Like for instance, migrant household works, despite the efforts made to ensure their protection are still experiencing numerous problems and still are vulnerable to exploitative employment. It is definitely true that job creation accessible in their country of origins is still the best alternative for their general well-being. However, most of these countries see exporting labor forces overseas as the most viable strategy in the promotion of national development. Their high reliance on foreign currency brought in mostly by overseas workers keeps these countries take advantage of global employment opportunities. Benefits of labor migration such as remittances, knowledge transfer, business network and trade networks help the country of origins alleviate the pressure on unemployment and contribute to development. On the other hand, host countries with labor force shortages can truly benefit from labor migration when it is well-managed. Therefore, well-formulated policies and strong legislative measures on labor migration are pillars of effective measures not only for migrant protection but also maximizing the gains and benefits for both the involved countries and the migrant workers.

There are more and more people looking for work abroad today. As noted earlier, migrant workers contribute to the growth and development of their country of destinations, while their countries of origin benefit greatly from their remittances as well as the skills gained during their migration experience. The IOM reported that in 2019, total remittances transferred globally by immigrants and the diaspora were US\$717 billion. Yet the

migration process presents complex challenges in terms of governance, migrant worker protection, migration and development links, and international cooperation. The ILO seeks to formulate policies that will maximize the benefits of labor migration for all concerned.

### **2.2.2. Irregular Migration**

Irregular migration has no universally accepted definition. It is, however, defined by the IOM as a “movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of sending, transit and receiving countries”, (IOM, 2011). Circumstances which can make a migrant fall to an irregular situation do exist. Among these are briefly described through the following instances: an irregular entry to a foreign country by the use of false documents or by crossing through an unofficial crossing point; residency in a country amidst violations of terms in a given entry visa and or residence permits; and through employment in the transit or host country without the required official permit. It is important to note that irregular migration refers to both the undocumented movement of people or irregular migration flows and the number of migrants whose status may be undocumented at any point (Vespe, et. al., 2017). IOM acknowledges that changes in irregular migrant stocks in a country can occur not only due to undocumented migrants entering or leaving the country, but also due to changes in status for migrants who are already residing within the country. Changes can shift from undocumented status to documented status or its reverse. This phenomenon makes the tracking of irregular migration difficult and thus, the knowledge on its levels and dynamics limited.

Most often, employee in the domestic labor particularly the household workers are not considered as workers entitled for remuneration. Their employment status is usually without legal protection and is in vulnerable states. Such conditions make them generally not completely reflected in statistical inferential. These circumstances will most probably aggravate the plight of household workers of irregular status. The truth be told, migrant household workers under such employment status experience problems in terms of remuneration, work schedules and scope, and security of tenure. Referring to the said problem is the research findings of Karaca & Kocabas, which reveal that irregular or

undocumented household workers face problems such as long working hours, heavy workloads, lack of privacy, low wages, lack of social benefits; job insecurity, limited opportunities for professional advancement, lack of nutrition and housing conditions, psychological and physical harassment (Karaca & Kocabaş, 2009:167). These issues are also important issues for those working in domestic services in Turkey. However, their precedence varies and depends on different factors such as the specific type of work undertaken, how their jobs are located and the nature of intermediary companies, etc. There is no doubt that for migrant women, their stay and work without legal permission makes them completely dependent on their institutions and workplaces, and this causes them to be isolated and aggravates their situation. In terms of women's employment, problems may arise in the provision of regular and quality domestic and care services due to the low level of education and skills of the employees (Visel, 2013).

While local domestic workers benefit from health services with their spouse's social security, if any, migrant domestic workers employed in the informal sector are completely deprived of health services (Etiler & Lordoğlu, 2010). Naturally, this situation brings with it many more problems if these women have a serious work accident. An evaluation made in the context of Labor Law purports that according to the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Family Members, ratified by Turkey, irregular migrant workers have the right to file a claim for compensation in case of any work accident or occupational disease (Civan and Gökalp, 2011).

### **2.2.3. Approaches to Migration**

This study is anchored on two of the most important theories in social work known as the Social Exchange and Rational Choice theories. Originating with Austrian sociologist George Homans, social exchange theory looks at the cost-benefit analysis of individuals as the basis or motivation in their relationships. Proponents of this theory claim that an individual seeks at maximizing benefits or gains from his relationships and is expected to reciprocate what he has received. Social workers use this theory in their practice to understand the relationships of their clients and their motivation to continue to maintain or abandon their relationships with others. On the other hand, rational choice theory which

was originated by Philosopher Adam Smith, claims that individuals look at the rationality of their choice before giving decision. They first consider the costs, risks and benefits in every choice they make. This theory is used in social work practice in understanding the decision-making processes and motivations of their clients.

Based on the two theories described above, social behaviors manifested by individuals or groups of individuals are output of decision-making processes motivated by the result of cost-benefit analyses. This is related to the case of the participants of this study who are currently or who have been in complicated employment relationships. First and foremost, the study participants are undocumented migrant workers. They do not possess legal permits to stay and work in Turkiye. This situation does not only limit their freedom of employment but also restrict their access to social services. Moreover, exacerbating their illegal status is their employment condition as household workers. This category of work is poorly regulated, undervalued and often underpaid. Furthermore, the work is isolated in nature. Such employment relationship can easily lead to pressing questions like what can be the factors motivating this type of relationship? What is it about household work in Turkiye that induces this group of workers to immigrate? Why do such employment relationships start and what make them end?

Exchange theorists provide one basic response to the concerns raised above. Social conduct is determined by the logical computation of an exchange of costs and benefits. In our social interactions, we choose to start or end a connection with another person, just like we do in economics when deciding if the value of a thing is worth its price. In the case of the study participants, the whole process or to some extent cycle of their employment experiences in Turkiye encompasses different mechanisms, systems, policies and legislations at multi-national levels. Understanding their employment experiences requires examining the different aspects of their employment practices and working conditions at micro, mezzo and macro levels. And this necessitates going through the course of international migration phenomenon. Through the lens of social work, it can be seen that all these systems have impact on the general well-being of the migrant household workers. It is a role of social workers to explore and identify the dynamics and the patterns of social problems arising from these different levels. It is now to the different approaches and concepts related to international migration that we turn.

There are a variety of determining factors behind human migration. They are collectively summed up under the four main motivations such as economic, political, environmental, and family reunion. Economically motivated migration takes place when the primary goal of a migration is to seek better economic opportunities in the country of destination. Under this migration cycle, movement usually flows from developing countries towards the more economically developed nations. It was quite a resemblance of the flow of migrants from colonies to the imperial power in the earlier phases of migration.

Political migration occurs when the main push factors are politically motivated such as civil war, and or the existence of government policies which discriminate against certain groups of people. Often, migrants forced by such factors expect no return to home countries due to security issues. In many instances, people preemptively migrate or are forced to due to the environmental disasters which pose adverse effects on their well-being and safety. Furthermore, migration can also be motivated by familial reasons. Family members or relatives of a migrant do also migrate for the sole purpose of family reunion. For a theoretical explanation of the motivations and deciding factors behind human migration, the micro and macro level approaches to understanding international migration are discussed in the following section of this paper. The macro level approaches are also collectively known as structural approaches to understanding migration. The structural factors that lead to migration of labor are the main focus in this level of analysis. The most common examples are the world systems approach, dual labor market, and the equilibrium approach. All these three will be further explained below.

In the Systemic Approach, otherwise known as the World System, labor migration tendencies are explained in the contexts of market creation dynamics and the global economy structure. This approach sees economic globalization, in which companies operate across national borders as an antecedent to international migration (Wallerstein, 1974). This means to say that international labor migration comes out of the politico-economic relationship between the source and host countries which are exploitative in nature. The formation of capitalist economy penetrating the developing countries has forced this relationship in the developing world. World system theorists (Goss & Linguist, 1995; Brochmann, 1993) conceptualized international migration of labor as a “class phenomena”. Based on this concept, the status of a country in the world economy can be

classified either as core/peripheral or semi-peripheral countries. Those that are highly industrialized with various economic productions are classified under the core or center. On the other hand, the ones that are considered weak nations which specialize in the export of primary goods and the location of surplus labor specializing in the export of primary goods and the location of surplus labor are classified as periphery countries.

Since the colonial regimes, core countries have been entering and expanding influences in the periphery countries searching for new potential consumer markets besides labor, land and raw materials. With manufacturing production shifting overseas, the management of the world economy has been centered in number of small urban centers from the core countries. As rightful avenues for administration, banking, finance, high-tech production, professional services, and service sector these urban centers are tagged as the 'global cities'. Therefore, highly educated domestic and foreign workers who are well-abled to occupy the mentioned services are concentrated in these places. As a result, the demand for low-wage services that require unskilled labor such as busboys, gardeners, housekeepers, hotel workers, among others, has created demand for migrant workers.

On the other hand, the Dual Labor Market approach sees the rise of international migration as a result of economic structures in developed countries that require permanent demand for migrant labor. Proponents of this approach see the individual's decision to migrate not as the determining factor, but as the internal labor demands of modern industrial societies (Priori, 1979). According to Priori, it is current pull factors in host countries that drive people to migrate, rather than push factors in sending countries, such as low wages or high unemployment. The dual labor market approach characterizes two different categories of work in a capitalist economy. The first are so-called primary sector jobs. Theorists in this approach describe these types of jobs in terms of the levels of skill-sets, remuneration rate, as well as the security of tenure. For them, employment under this category is generally well-paid, permanent, secured and requires higher level of educational attainment. In addition, as these types of jobs require capital-intensive methods, the workers who are employed for these jobs are usually unionized and contract professionals. For these jobs, employers invest in workers by providing education and specialized training that is often too costly to idle. The second category of work is labor-intensive- jobs here are short-term, underpaid, of very low status and can be unpleasant. They are collectively described

as challenging, dangerous and dirty. Also, workers who aspire for transitioning to better paying jobs are not attracted to these types of jobs due to the fact that there are none to too little opportunities for growth and professional advancement in the jobs under this category. Furthermore, as they lack protection through legal rights and labor standards enforcement, local worker finds no interest in these jobs, giving way for migrant workers to take over.

Some researchers point to characteristics of secondary sector such as low wages, unstable conditions and most importantly the lack of reasonable mobility prospects as the key reasons why native or local workers are not attracted to such jobs. While on the other hand, migrant workers whose main purpose in employment abroad is to better off their poor quality of living in their home countries make up for the labor shortage in this sector, without taking into consideration the occupational status of their employment (Massey et al., 1993). They also noted that traditionally, women and teenagers have been occupying these jobs in trying to generate additional income for their families even though they are not their respective household's primary source of livelihood or breadwinners.

The third macro approach is the Balance approach to migration. It is derived from the Neoclassical approach that studies labor migration resulting from wage differentials between countries. This approach looks at the individual as the unit of analysis. In here, labor mobility across borders is an eventual consequence accumulated from rational cost-benefit calculation of individuals (Broachmann, 1993). The equilibrium approach, as the term suggests, sees international migration as reliant to the supply and demand economic law working to eliminate imbalance or disparity amongst sectors through the distribution of human capital from low equilibrium market wage to high equilibrium market wage countries. Therefore, this labor market mechanism is the triggering primary mechanism for international labor migration. As a result, migration ensures development by providing supply and demand balance in the labor market and eliminates imbalances in economies (Broachmann, 1993). Massey et al. (1993) argues that in this particular scheme, the approach suggests that eliminating wage differentials through migration flows will end labor migration.

There are also other approaches under micro level. These approaches to understanding migration take on the cost-benefit analysis taken by individuals, family or a community as a basis for migration decision. Two of these approaches, the neoclassical economics approach and the new economics of migration, are explained further in the following section of this thesis.

The first is the Neoclassical economic approach, which examines the phenomenon of migration at a micro level. This takes as rational actors the individuals who decide to migrate after finding the income available following migration after cost-benefit calculation. In other words, mobility or migration is considered a personal decision to seek a better life for a greener pasture, manifested by better employment opportunities, security and wages or salaries. Michael P. Todaro studied the income gap factor, which he believes is crucial to individuals' decision-making about immigration. They argue that workers tend to make comparisons between expected incomes at a certain period in the possible destination areas and the prevailing average incomes in rural areas. Migration takes place if net incomes abroad exceeds that of the one in local or place of origin (Todaro and Smith, 2003). Therefore, better or higher income in receiving countries is an attractive factor in the decision-making process of individuals.

Later models included specific factors like the availability of opportunities and the severity of obstacles to the push-pull factors of previous models. Massey et al. also state that individuals bear other important dimensions of migration, such as financial care costs while on the move and looking for a job, effort to learn a new language and culture, difficulty in adapting to a new labor market, and psychological costs involved in cutting old ties and establishing new ones (Massey et al., 1993). Neoclassical models have been targeted and criticized for the narrow focus on wage differences between countries and on the economic motivations of potential immigrants. Developed in the industrial era of migration from Europe to the Americas, Australia and New Zealand, they seemed inadequate for a comprehensive understanding of migration patterns and forms in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Still under the micro level approach is the so-called New Economics of migration which purports that rational family deciding to migrate to maximize income under controlled or

minimal risks in chosen host country. After its emergence in the 1980s, the approach magnified views of international labor migration as a family or group decision (Stark, 1984). These approaches claim that decisions to migrate are based on an analysis of the costs and benefits made by a family or community seeking to maximize income and minimize risks such as risks from crop shortages. Also, just like neoclassical models, this micro-level analysis uses push-pull factors to understand the decision-making process undertaken by individuals or families.

Lastly, the evident complexity of the whole migration cycles, proved the inadequacies of the above-mentioned micro and macro level approaches to human migration. Consequently, more dynamic contemporary approaches to better understand the human migration phenomenon have begun to emerge. They are collectively known as the contemporary migration approaches. These approaches were new and do not seek to find applicable rules or principles to the multi-faceted and varied migration situations. Not even for the belief in the possibility of such explanations. The complexity of migration from the 1970s has led to greater attention to the contexts in which certain migration decisions are made. Contemporary explanations focus on immigrants and their micro-level decision-making processes. They also seek to understand the role played by macro-level factors such as economical and socio-political structures throughout the whole process.

The cost-benefit analysis and related information are no longer assumed as the deciding factors when people make their rational decision for migration purpose. At the micro level, new approaches include in-depth research into specific communities, immigrants and their stories – how immigrants interact with their environment, how they face restrictive government policies, and the differences and similarities between immigrants and non-immigrants in similar contexts. However, these contemporary migration approaches also examine related decisions and processes in the context of larger macro-level factors that constrain and shape decisions and actions at the individual/family level. They question the push-pull explanation of neoclassical to migration as a way to strike a balance between labor supply and demand in different regions. For example, much of the current migration to Western countries takes place in the context of the need for migrant workers to take on

secondary sector jobs, including care work, while the political context is becoming more and more restrictive towards immigration.

### **2.3. Migration and Domestic Work**

Literature on migrant domestic workers show the disadvantaged position of workers in terms of judicial and legislative procedures. Judicial regimes in Latin America established unfavorable patterns for the domestic labor in relation to the rest of the workers (Pereira & Valiente, 2007); some countries like Türkiye lack legislation and any types of regulation (ETUC-CES, 2012) for this category of work. Human rights advocates and researchers have documented cases of migrant domestic workers who have faced discrimination, arbitrary detention and abuse not only from their employers or household where they work but also from the authorities in their host countries. Migrant workers are frequently stripped of their rights and denied adequate legal recourse. In GCC countries, domestic workers are not protected under labor laws as domestic work is not covered by such legislation. A report by Amnesty International (2006) exposed the discrimination and exploitation faced by domestic workers in GCC countries. The report documented cases wherein identity documents of migrant domestic workers are confiscated by their employers and their pay is often delayed if not withheld. Further, to that date Amnesty International reiterated the absence of all GCC countries in the group of signatories to international laws that deal with the specific situation of migrant domestic workers.

There are studies on household work tackled within international migration context. The common themes of such discourse highlight the fueling factors in the demand for domestic work amongst developed nations. ILO for an instance examines the entrance into different fields of women professionals from different background but mostly from the middle and upper class of societies. This opens up the need for both part-time and full-time workers offering domestic services such as caregiving and domestic work. Provision of such needs by local labor force seems not to be sufficient in some countries. The shortage or labor gap requires migrant domestic workers to fill the increasing demands (ILO, 2013). Furthermore, some segment of the employers does not only see this type of employment

as a response to the evident service needs but also as a factor that consolidate their identities and their preferred lifestyle which they want to demonstrate.

Like for instance, the domestic labor literature in Turkiye shows that one justification expressed by employers when it comes to their preference for migrant domestic workers to their local counterparts is the presumed 'European' and 'civilized' status associated with employing migrant women who are highly educated compared to the local ones. This supports the perception of migrant workers' better job performance. Added to that is the difficulty to find live-in local domestic workers who are willing to work for the same salary rate (Demirdirek, 2007: 17, Keough, 2003 as cited in Erdoğan & Toksöz, 2013: 6). This scenario is similar to the case of some Middle East countries wherein the demands for migrant domestic workers is very high despite the fact that women's participation to labor market in those countries is very limited. Such demands for domestic workers is motivated by social status symbol. Such constructs lead to the claim that there are other existing factors that fuel the globalization of domestic labor. To prove the points expressed in the discussion on the approaches to migration and to shed light on the factors that link migration and domestic work, the following sections will tackle a) the factors that paved the global demands for domestic labor providers within the context of globalization, b) Feminization of Labor Migration c) the overseas Filipino household workers and d) the domestic labor market in Turkiye.

### **2.3.1. Globalization and Feminization of Labor Migration**

Profiling the migrant domestic workers as mere gap-fillers for the class of women who freed themselves from the unpaid domestic work by participating in the labor market within the highly developed countries is tantamount to an incomprehensive approach to understanding this category of work. The literature on domestic work shows the varied factors that precede high demand for migrant domestic workers both in the supply and demand sides. These factors are evident consequences of the globalization phenomenon. Common factors in the demand side stem from the restrictions on welfare state practices, demographic changes, and global restructuring. On the supply side, varying factors that push for international labor migration flow are inclusive of unemployment rate, wage differential amongst countries and the state-led industrialization of labor migration.

Globalization has pushed developing countries like the Philippines to integrate into the global market. As a widely accepted concept, it has been being examined for in the context of international labor migration for its economic aspect. Moghadam (1999) defined globalization as a system of highly integrated and interdependent capital-labor flows in the form of capital investment, technology transfer, financial exchanges and increased trade between regions and states through transnational corporations, international financial institutions as well as the various forms of labor distribution in which global accumulation takes place. This definition highlights the mobility of financial capital and labor force of the global economic activities. In other words, economic globalization can be defined as a closer integration of economies in the forms of increased goods and services, capital and labor flows between countries (Stiglitz, 2006). These international trade, capital flows and international production processes lead to greater economic interdependence among countries (Thorin, 2001).

Global restructuring highlighted by the changes in economy and the market competition have had adverse effects to the developing countries otherwise known as the semi-peripheral countries under the World System Approach to migration. Following the international debt crisis, which led to high unemployment rate in the developing countries, the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) were implemented in low-income level countries to cope with international competitiveness. In other words, due to the economic crisis in 1973, an innovative and a more flexible production system and neoliberal economy were needed to solve economic problems (Atatimur, 2008). The new neoliberal economic programs implemented at that time were based on terms and conditions such as cutting public spending, privatization, and low unit labor costs brought about by excessive mechanization that does not require much labor (Gürson, 2021). These initiatives aimed to cut expenditures, liberalize the labor market, open new markets to foreign direct investment, privatize enterprises and remove government subsidies (Chang, 2000).

What was seen as a savior in dealing with international competitiveness has exacerbated the situation in developing countries implementing economic programs under the SAPs. Eventual outcomes of such policies were not sufficient to cover the growing international debt (Gürson, 2021). Moreover, the shift to a more explicit “export-oriented” production instead of an “import substitution” (Pyle & Ward, 2003) adopted by more developing

countries appears to have caused more losses on the part of the implementing states. Instead of curbing the crisis, these policies created huge costs for the economy and while they were not helpful for debt reduction, they created more damage which came out from the high increase in the unemployment rate resulting from export-oriented production (Sassen, 2000).

The SAPs have caused economic-related problems within nations where they are being implemented. For instance, Mexico increased foreign investment after the SAPs, and this move left the country with less wages, unresolved unemployment problems and more national debt (Kefferstan, 2017). Mexicans living in poverty were the most affected following the budget cut on public expenditures in health, education and welfare programs. In Ghana, poverty rates fluctuated after government's cutbacks on public expenditures (Kefferstan, 2017). Similar impacts brought out by the SAPs were reflected in other African nations (Kawewe & Dibie, 2000; Musa & Muhammed, 2021). In Zimbabwe, problems such as decline in income, underemployment to unemployment, foreign debt increase, export rate decrease, as well as worsening refugee crisis were all linked to the failure of the structure of the SAPs (Kawewe & Dibie, 2000). Furthermore, growing dependence to imported products, commodity price hike, low production level and declining investment opportunities further harmed unemployment as well as the economic growth in Sudan (Musa & Mohammed, 2021).

As discussed earlier, the SAPs have evident negative impacts on poverty alleviation and income distribution. The SAPs version of export-oriented policies and the direct foreign investment promotion are believed to have worsened income levels disparity in Türkiye (Şenses, 1991). The post-SAP foreign debt and recession caused half of the Philippine's population to live below the poverty line. This is the consequence of high rate of unemployment which caused changes in the patterns of international migration (Bello, 1999). These reverse effects of the SAPs were implied by O'Connor's (2010) argument that neoliberalism creates new freedoms for capital and creates new constraints on labor. Although the nature of capital accumulation prevents the free movement of labor and the neoliberal reorganization of capitalism makes capital more mobile than labor, there are some special cases, particularly in Third World countries, where high unemployment rates resulting from an export-oriented production have only been resolved through the

promotion of labor migration like the service sector to First World countries. Under these endeavors, involved countries moved to facilitate safe and legal migration flows for their citizens by entering bilateral labor agreements (Gürson, 2021). These are critical to promising economic development promotion (Chilton & Woda, 2021).

In the preceding sections, it has been clearly stated that global restructuring manifested in the SAPs is a major factor in the rise of the demand for migrant domestic services. Simply put, it has inevitably imposed limits and restrictions on the welfare state practices in several countries. Most importantly, those policies have relegated the provision of care services encompassing child and elderly care, the care for patients and persons with disability to the labor market. These services are now within the scope of paid labor (Yılmaz & Ulukan, 2010). These particular structural modifications have aggravating impacts on the demographic change phenomenon. Like for instance, countries facing demographic change through aging population are badly affected by the removal of elderly care under welfare state services. Consequently, households under this circumstance have to resort to domestic labor market. Like for instance, the aging population of Western countries created the need for care workers in the households (Anderson, 2000). In addition to globalization, a look at the feminization of labor migration is deemed relevant to this study. When labor migration patterns were largely dominated by men, women's movement was frequently handled under the guise of family reunions even while they did participate in work. Nowadays, not only have women's contributions to labor migration increased since the 1960s, but so has public awareness of these contributions. In as varied journeys as that of the 'Cape Verdeans to Italy, the Filipinas to the Middle East, and the Thais to Japan', women workers now make up the majority (Castles, de Hans Heir & Miller, 2014: 16). In domestic work, the prevalence of part-time employment opportunities and the informal nature of domestic work has made it feminized (Gursön, 2021: 13).

Feminist theorists (Walby & Baggul, 1990 and Treiman & Harmen, 1981) look at the feminization of service sector and domestic service in light of the rigidity of occupational gender segregation. They pointed out that gender segregations prevalence in the capitalist

market promotes the notion in which men have more human capital than women which place them in the labor hierarchy in the higher than women. Other theorists such as (Beechay, 1997 & Braegel, 1979) point to the labor army reserve concept in Marxist Theory. They reiterate that women's preference for informal and part-time employment make them a part of the reserved labor force.

The notion mentioned-above reflects the concept of 'double burden' for women in their position to balance work and home. In this regard, Ecevit claimed that women's participation to informal employment is an obligation and not just a mere choice. Their inability to land on regular and secured employment force them to accept low-skilled and informal jobs with contractual practices that deny their rights to negotiate wage, security of tenure and pensions (2011: 31). So far, the discourse on the globalization has helped in establishing the framework for the main factors that led to the increased demand for domestic services. To put these constructs in context and to lay down its relevance to the research study, the next section will cover the overseas Filipino household workers.

### **2.3.2. Overseas Filipino Household Workers**

The Philippines is one of the world's top exporters of labor human resource. The international migrant workers from the country are collectively known as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). The long history of emigration in the country is "as colorful as the country's past" (Ang, 2006). The first ever recorded history of Filipino migration is believed to have happened in 1417 in a trade mission to China under the leadership of Paduka Batara, a then royalty from the island of Sulu. However, the country's modern migration started several centuries later and is summarized below under three different waves.

The first wave started in 1906 through the migration of agricultural labor to Hawaii which was also a colony of the United States. During this period, Filipinos arrived on the US main islands as government scholars, fruit pickers and migrant workers. This mobility of Filipino migrants to USA highlighted the scholarship grants provided by the US colonial government to the Filipino elites with the main goal to establish a Commonwealth run by the Filipinos. Following the World War II, the second wave of Filipino modern migration

started. This witnessed the migration of Filipino veterans who served under the U.S. military. The administration led by Lyndon Johnson had an immigration policy that allowed the dependents of the said veterans to follow their loved ones in the U.S. to promote family reunification. Furthermore, during this period, Europe introduced the so called “Guest Worker Program” to help professional Filipino migrants.

Finally, the third-wave was characterized by the formation of “contract labor” in the 1970s. Filipino professionals suffered from severe unemployment phenomenon during this period. Moreover, the oil boom in the Middle East sparked infrastructure building programs in countries like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This development opened doors of opportunities for desperate Filipino workers. This wave of Filipino migration continues up to this day with the majority of human resource flow moving to the East and the Southeast Asian countries. It is significant to note that the occupational categories have shifted from the traditional contractual and engineering works to domestic jobs, tourism, service occupations, healthcare, information technology and a host of other expertise.

The Philippines serves as one of the model nations in the administration of labor migration. Its state-led policies in promoting labor migration is described as a way “to cope with unemployment and external imbalances” by (Rosewarne, 2011). Furthermore, as the country is embattled with excess labor force, it resorted to enforce the “manpower export policy” (Paul,2011). The literature of Philippine migration manifests these claims. Philippine president late Ferdinand Marcos has launched an export-oriented labor code to curb the unemployment in the country in 1974. The measure was aimed to solve unemployment problem through promotion of overseas work (Guevarra, 2014). This significant labor code eventually gave birth to the establishment of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) which is “responsible for the monitoring of the supply and demand for Filipino workers abroad” (Santos,2005). In fact, the country was recognized as one of the world’s providers of nurses and physicians (Gunda, 2017). As specifically cited in (Gunda, 2017), researchers revealed that the Philippines is the top country in sending nurses abroad (Aiken, 2004) and second only to India in exporting physicians (Bach, 2003).

Currently, the Philippines holds the largest number of short-term contracts deployed around the world as government-sponsored. Migrant Filipino domestic workers take most of these jobs under bilateral relations between the Philippines and other countries (Gürson, 2021). Moreover, it is worth mentioning that most of these workers are women and employed as care workers in private homes. In the year 2020, the Philippines was the 4<sup>th</sup> top remittance recipient country following India, China and Mexico respectively based on the 2022 world migration report by IOM. Although many migrant Filipinos work in health, construction, entertainment and service sectors, most of them enter domestic service. Filipino household workers are currently being employed all over the world. Their most common destinations are Eastern Asia (Hong Kong), Middle East (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), Europe and Northern America.

After the brief review of the history of the Philippine emigration and its prominent role in promoting labor migration through its supply of state-sponsored contract labor, the following sections will shed lights on the capital and assets possessed by the Filipino domestic workers. The discourse is aimed to explore the image of this group of workers in the international domestic labor market. In general, the OFWs are considered as ‘Modern-Day National Heroes’ in the Philippines. This accolade was declared by the Philippine government in 1988, in recognition of the OFWs’ vital role in nation building particularly by providing the country the foreign exchange it badly needs. However, the state was criticized for this technique in promoting labor migration. Such approach makes the Philippines as reterritorialized state (Solomon, 2009) and as labor brokerage state (Guevarra, 2009). So, how are the OFWs particularly the Filipino domestic labors are marketed internationally?

For starters, the Filipinos have certain characteristic traits that emanate from the general Asian culture such as the attitudes manifesting kindness, helpfulness, being caring and easygoing. They are projected in the world market as workers who are “docile, dexterous, always-ready, and cheap woman” (Salzinger, 2003). Complementing these characteristic traits are their decent educational attainments. Filipinos entering the unskilled or low-skilled industries such as domestic work are better educated than their counterparts from other countries. Their status as “well-educated laborers” is manifested in a statistical data. Some research studies about Filipina workers reported educational attainment of Filipina

workers tallying 80 percent as college graduates and while the remaining 20 percent are high school graduates (Ayaydin, 2020). This is not a matter of coincidence that eventually gave the Filipinos an advantage in the labor market. It is rather a fruit of the country's institutional adjustments in promoting the OFWs in the global market.

Nowadays, completion of at least a secondary education is one of the pre-requisites for international migration flow from the Philippines. Setting the minimum requirements higher for Filipinos seeking work overseas dates back to the 1970s and it was aimed to produce qualified and competent labor force. In fact, the Philippine has aligned its educational reforms to its export-oriented labor policy. Recognizing its feasible contribution to the Philippine economy, English proficiency has become prominent in the Philippine educational curricula which have evidently shifted to a work-oriented approach. Moreover, Lorente (2007) stated that a bilingual education in the country purposely put preference for English to be the instructional language for major school subjects including Science and Mathematics. These reforms in the educational system in the country accounts for a vital role in the branding of quality domestic workers from the Philippines to the global stage.

The image of OFWs in the labor market is magnified by their dignified cultural traits and educational assets. The “symbolic power” in Pierre Bourdieu’s capital concept explains how this portrayal is able to position the OFWs in the upper ladder of market competition. According to him, the economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capitals have the ability to provide power. However, he further argues that economic capital alone does not translate to the so-called “symbolic power”, which is unequally distributed in society. Rather, the cultural capitals encompassing titles, language and education “guarantee upward mobility” (Swartz,2015). Based on these constructs, it is fair to claim that their English proficiency, make the OFWs not only highly employable but as one of the most preferred employees in the labor market. However, despite their dominance in the global market thanks to their magnified image, OFWs are still challenged by the devaluation and poor regulation of global domestic labor. Some of them to say the least are still highly vulnerable to human rights violation. To gauge the extent of their vulnerabilities, the following section will tackle the motivation of employers in employing Filipino workers and their general working status around the world.

Because of the competitive advantage possessed by Filipino household workers in the domestic labor market, employers go beyond expectation in labor production and look at the symbolic gain associated with employment of Filipino workers. While they are branded as one of the bests at all around housekeeping and in providing childcare services, they are also “scarce and luxurious” (Redlova, 2013). They are employed for the status reproduction that can be gained on top of the expected high-quality labor reproduction (Lan, 2003; Redlova, 2013; Yeoh & Huang, 1999). In Turkiye, the preference of hiring Filipinos are correlated with their housekeeping performance, English proficiency, sense of modernity in clothing, and their round-the-clock availability in the household (Weyland, 1994).

With its prosperous economy and its need for workers more than any other country, Hong Kong is one of the countries that has opened its door to migrant workers in the mid-1970s. About 90% of migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong are from the Philippines. Households in Hong Kong to whom these Filipino workers serve take the opportunity to utilize the language skills of these Filipinos to improve their English communication skills. Workers serve their employers beyond the traditional housekeeping activities and teach English to their employers’ children (Erino, 1997). In Hong Kong, Filipino household workers sign a two-year legal contract granted through standard employment and are renewable for additional two years. The agreement entitles each worker for a weekly day off and a special vacation. Employers pay the salary according to the country’s minimum wage standards. Workers claim their salary regularly including their annual paid vacation. The employers are obliged to provide the basic needs of their employees including meals and private restrooms. However, despite the standing operating procedure on domestic work employment in the country, some Filipino workers still experience work-related problems such as the employer's abandonment of the contract signed. Other employers who pay their workers less than the minimum standard especially if the worker is recruited illegally (Erino, 1997).

In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is the most common country destinations for OFWs under the Kafala System. It continuously welcomes and provides job opportunities for Filipinos in its different economic and occupational sectors (Johnson, 2010). As of 2007, more than one million Filipino migrant workers are employed in the Middle East, mostly

as laborers and domestic workers. In general, although most Filipino workers have professional credentials, they are still stigmatized as domestic workers or servants of globalization. Although they work well and are well paid, they are underestimated as migrant workers and for the domestic services they provide.

Their migration to Europe has become easier after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Filipino workers were purposely recruited into the health and construction sectors to help rebuild Europe in the aftermath of the World War II. From 1980s to 1990s, large number of OFWs were imported into the labor forces of the UK, Switzerland, Vienna, Italy and Greece (Hoegsholm, 2007). Greener pasture and comparably higher salary make the Filipinos aim for work in Europe. However, behind good salaries, there are also many barriers such as racism, language, weather, culture and traditions. Despair drives many Filipinos working in Europe. *Tago Ng Tago* (TNT) is the term used to mean smuggled Filipino workers who keep hiding in Europe due to expired visas. Although their working permits or visas have expired, TNTs are still hired by some employers, but are underpaid, uninsured and often working long hours. Migrant Filipinos, who face many problems such as discrimination, work-related illnesses, depression, abuse, are seen as heroes who help the Philippine economy grow (Hoegsholm, 2007).

In the USA, millions of Filipino migrant workers work as permanent residents, not temporary contract workers. Moving to the United States is the most frequent choice for migrant workers as they can earn more money. They work in different sectors such as agriculture and healthcare. They are also employed in the informal sector. Studies of Filipino migrant workers in the United States claim increasing occurrence of problems such as racial discrimination, high incidence of substance use, depressive symptoms, cardiovascular problems and other health problems. They have also been found to have poor access to healthcare, poor perceptions of health, and other distress compared to other Asian nationalities in the Americas (De Castro et.al,2008). Some studies also show that what they experience in America is not only racial discrimination, but also wage discrimination (Gee et al., 2007).

### **2.3.3. Domestic Labor Market in Türkiye**

The employment of household workers in Türkiye has a long history. It has, however, evolved throughout centuries ranging from the early years of the Ottoman Empire. The current form of domestic labor market in the country is still tied up with the traditional aspect passed on from the common phenomenon of domestic helper ownership practice by the middle and upper-middle classes of the societies since the Ottoman times (Gürson, 2021). In her discourse on the historical transformation of domestic labor in Türkiye, Özbay, F. (2019) gives a glimpse of particular characteristics that distinguish earlier practice involving domestic workers from its current or modern forms. She reports that in periods prior to the 1960s, the nature of domestic work was exhibited in the deployment of slaves and foster children to volunteer works in some industries that demand unskilled labor. She cited the laborers, who were mostly slaves and children, in volunteer services in Pistachio Industry. Instead of labor wages, workers received some little amount as stipend (Özbay, 2019: 293). She also mentioned an aspect of domestic labor in Türkiye. This additional aspect features employment of a household worker as a symbol of high social status and influence in the society (Özbay, 2019: 301). It is a very important status symbol for elite in the ottoman reign. This perspective continues to the present time, as employment of laborers from Russia and some countries in Europe has been tagged as magnifying families' class (Özbay, 2019).

The charwomen are distinguished from maids for their employment is highly dependent on the approval of their husbands and relatives. For this, Özbay argues that charwomen, unlike traditional maids, are not working as personal servicemen for their employers (Özbay, 2019: 314). Further, most of them are self-employed and work with multiple employers or households (Kalayıcıoğlu & Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2001). In the early 1960s, boarding became a problem for workers employed in early childhood home and care services. Most of these workers are foster children. This situation has led to the existence of Charwomen as a new and cheap alternative in home service (Özbay, 2019). This was popularized by local migrants from the urban poor class in 1965 (Gürson, 2021). These charwomen were defined as inexperienced and uneducated who entered the domestic labor market to support their families in the study of Gürson, (2021). They are generally used for other related works that do not require a boarding work, such as cooking,

cleaning, washing, ironing. The apparent reason is that care niches that require personal interaction and exceed the limits of intimacy are contrary to the already established conservative approach in the sector (Akalin, 2007). Moreover, the popularity of charwomen is in a way stems from those gatekeepers who share the same space with the upper middle classes in Turkey. They usually allow their spouses to work as long as it is within the parameters or vicinity of their residence to ensure better security (Ozyegin, 2010).

Local domestic workers in Turkiye perceive caregiving jobs as culturally unsuitable, they are poor, uneducated and inexperienced (Akalin, 2007: 214). They are mostly employed as live-out workers with no requirement for unscheduled or additional tasks. They give so much importance for their insurance and prefer secure and fixed income jobs (Kalaycıoğlu & Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2000). As a result, the gap in domestic service requiring live-in workers is filled by the migrant workers. In the mid-1990s the country has become a hotspot for female workers originating from the nearby countries. Research studies report that pull-factors such as high wage rate, geographical proximity, affordable & convenient travels, & flexible visa policies (Akalin, 2004; Dinçer, 2014; Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020) have been attractions for female household workers the nearby regions. The demand for migrant household workers arose amongst the middle-upper class family who have become responsible for their domestic service needs such as childcare, elderly and sick care after Turkey started the implementation of the transfer of this responsibility from being a welfare state service into the free market in compliance to the mandate under SAPs. The general image of migrant domestic workers as more obedient, hardworking and better educated compared to their local counterparts has strengthened their advantage over the locals. This can be explained through the Dual Labor Market (Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020). Accordingly, local workers' preference of stay-out to stay-in work arrangements is mainly due to the patriarchal family structure of the society (Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020: 71). Moreover, employing migrant workers has a better consolidating power in demonstrating the identity and lifestyle the employers want to project. They justify this preference based on the “European” & “civilized” status of the migrants compared to the lower class, uneducated, & essentially the rural nature of domestic women (Erdoğan & Toksöz, 2013: 6).

For a more comprehensive understanding of the local labor market in Türkiye, it is also necessary to provide a summary of the country's labor law on international migrant workers. In general, the labor code in Turkey does not favor levelled playing field between local and migrant workers. In fact, there are many labor markets which are not legally open for foreign workers. However, as part of the EU accession negotiations, Law No. 4187 Work Permits for Foreigners (LWPF) was issued in 2003. Under this law, the management of processing work permits issued to foreigners was centralized and delegated to the Ministry of Labor and Security. It was one of the basic regulations for foreign workers in Turkey, prepared in accordance with the European Union acquis (Kaşka, 2006). With this law, it is aimed to ensure harmonization with the EU acquisition, and at the same time facilitating the issuance of work permits to EU citizens (Bayram, 2007 as cited in Kaşka, 2006). Moreover, it allows the employment of foreign workers in domestic service which was previously forbidden in the preceding laws and regulations. However, being the first regulation focusing on migrant workers, Law no. 4817 mainly was criticized for its evident weaknesses. It mainly regulates the employment of professional/qualified labor force and does not pursue the goal of legalizing informal employment of migrant workers (İçduygu, 2010). Specifically, it did not bring any changes in the conditions of domestic workers, textile workers and other irregular labor migrants (İçduygu, 2010).

Generally, Türkiye has set of rules and strict regulations when it comes to migrant workers employment. It is legal for migrant workers to take jobs where competition with local labor force is possible (Toksöz, Erdoğan & Kaşka, 2012: 23). It has enacted many laws and directives which prohibit migrant employment in many areas of disciplines. The term used in reference to migrants is foreigners as 'migrant' does not exist in legislation. In the country's legislative system, Law no. 4187 in particular, tackles foreigner in reference to individuals who are non-Turkish based on the existing Citizenship Law of the country. Moreover, although the employment of migrant workers is permitted under Law no. 4187 upon acquisition of official work permit, there is lack of centralized management of the issuing of the permits. It is rather delegated to several public institutions that are equipped with official authority to issue work permits to migrants in their respective field or areas of operation (Bayram, 2007: 158; Alp, 2004: 33-36). In 2012, a new law numbered 5683

which allows non-Turkish citizens to apply for a work permit directly after arrival in Turkey was enacted. This takes into consideration those who want to work and who arrive with tourist visa. Furthermore, this law allows the tracking of the overstaying migrants which resulted to job losses among migrant women (Yalçın, 2015). In response to this phenomenon, amnesty program was implemented by the national government to pull back irregular migrants to the system and lead them to apply for work permits (Akalin, 2016). In compliance to Law no. 5683, employers are required to pay for insurance premiums, that is 56.5% of the standard minimum wage, in order to be granted with work permit (Yalçın, 2015). In short, the new law has paved the way for the acquisition of at least a minimum wage for migrant workers. It can be considered a development in terms of working conditions. However, those whose employers abstained from paying the required insurance contribution, have fallen to the status of irregularity.

Following the discourse on the legal framework of domestic labor market, an overview of the working conditions of the migrant domestic workers in Türkiye will be presented. Research on this concern reveals that one of the determinants in the worker's preference for Türkiye is housing. They deem it so important due to the fact that they are mostly in demand for stay-in work arrangement. In many parts of Türkiye, room intended for an employee is added to the design of the modern villas. Providing them their own room makes the domestic workers readily available to attend to employer's labor demand (Akalin, 2010). The separate space intended for migrant domestic workers is relatively bigger in comparison to the ones provided in the Europe. It is considered as advantageous on the parts of the workers. However, cases of sharing space or room with ones to whom they provide care also exist (Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020). Although there are some workers who may not have that privilege of having their own private space exclusively used for their resting times, it is fair enough to claim that in general migrant domestic workers in Türkiye have decent personal space in the households where they are employed.

Another aspect of the employee's working conditions that seems to be the most crucial determining factors in brokering employment deals is the salary rate. In Türkiye, salary or wage rates differ according to nationalities. The general rate is from 400 to 800 USD (Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020). Accordingly, one of the key determinants for salary rate negotiation is the language capital. Inexperienced and non-Turkish-speaking immigrants

earn lower wages than experienced and Turkish-speaking immigrant women (Akalin, 2014). However, this finding cannot be generalized as there is no evidence whether this applies to all categories of domestic workers. In fact, Filipino household workers in Türkiye receive an average of 1,000 USD as monthly salary. It can be said that the Turkish proficiency may be essential in elderly and sick care services but not as much in childcare. Moreover, apart from the agreed upon regular salaries paid by the employers, they also receive extra amounts as weekly stipend during their day off and or pocket money for religious holidays (Kaşka, 2006; Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020; & Akalin, 2014).

As in other countries, employment contract is commonly done verbally in Türkiye. This results to the existence of vague job terms and conditions as well as job description itself. This apparently worsen their vulnerable condition. As live-in workers, they are ensured of work, lodging & free meal. However, their constant presence in the household vicinity puts them on an on-call or stand-by workers condition. They are often over-worked without any additional incentives in the form of overtime pay. In their research study, they found that 47% of their research respondents reported working for 24 hours and 17 of the 47% talked about having less than 12-hour weekly leave. Such unfortunate situations are not surprising. Employers and workers initially reach a verbal agreement on what work will be done and how they will be supervised, but this tends to be set aside later on by employers (Erdöđlu & Toksöz, 2013: 13).

The local labor market in Turkey, which is developing as both a transit and a host country, is struggling with the employment of illegal or irregular migrant domestic workers. This unregistered employment practice is a major concern in this informal economy (Ekin, 2001). Employment agencies are utilizing the network of immigrant women to bring workers to Türkiye. These agencies help to expand in both formal and informal network systems by bringing friends or siblings of migrants to Türkiye (Deniz, 2018). Many of these informal or unregistered workers lack protection. Being employed as temporary and poorly paid labor force make them structurally disempowered without sufficient ability to claim rights brought about by the lack of residence permits. Their employers impose threats on reporting them to authority, thus the risk of deportation. To evade these threats, they are dying their hair black to resemble the locals, go for rare meetings with friends, practice thriftiness for saving, undertake even the least valued works despite possessing

decent educational attainments (Kümbetoğlu, 2005). In addition, their irregularities force them to be exposed to risky sexual violence and prostitution after their arrival (Ege, 2002 & Coşkun, 2016). As irregular migrants, they are included in the informal economy and mostly do not have any insurance or guarantee to protect their rights (Gürson, 2021).

Finally, the discussion on the domestic labor market in Türkiye will not be complete without a section that specifically tackles the migrant domestic workers from the Philippines. An informant from one of the Filipino communities in Istanbul shared that he was the first male OFW who arrived in Türkiye in the late 1980s. He reiterated that the migrants to Türkiye from the Philippines started in the early 1990s. His statement was reflected in the literature showing that Filipinos first joined labor market in the country in some of the rich households in Istanbul in 1990s. They were the fillers for the demands for childcare services while migrant workers from post-Soviet countries preferred elderly care services. This eventually resulted to the nationality-based specialization in caregiving services (Deniz, 2018). The migration flow from the Philippines to Türkiye has consistently increased from then on.

The lack of labor agreement between Türkiye and the Philippines is still of the structural challenges that faced the flow of labor migration between the two countries. However, the history of labor migration from the Philippines has common modes. Arrival of diplomats accompanied by their Filipino workers marked the earlier arrival of Filipino workers in Türkiye in 1990s; the second route was opened up resulting from the conflicts in Gulf States which forced Filipino workers to escape through Türkiye; the third route and the most common one in recent times is through the Philippine-based recruitment agencies (Akalin, 2014).

Filipina workers were brought to Türkiye by the employers of multinational companies in 1990s (Özbay, 2019; Weyland, 1997). Türkiye was also being used as a gateway to other countries in Europe by the migration flows from the Philippines and Gulf States. Türkiye is seen as a bridge country to Europe especially to Italy where most of the Catholics live. It is also considered to be safer than countries in the Middle East and the general working conditions are relatively better than in countries like Kuwait, UAE, and Qatar (Paul, 2011; Sabban, 2014). There are also Filipina workers who arrived in Türkiye to evade

exploitation and abuse and after deportation from former host countries (Akalin, 2014). He added that it is still possible for OFWs to get employment in the country upon acquisition of work permit which can be issued through the support of employing parties such as the employer himself or through a recruitment agency. Another viable option is application of a tourist visa valid for a few weeks. Should they wish to continue to stay without a work permit for a period exceeding their validity, they will eventually enter the status of "undocumented" or "irregulars" (Akalin, 2014).

As noted in Gürson (2021), (Ayaydin, 2020; Weyland, 1997; & Deniz, 2018) argue that Filipino household workers in Türkiye are portrayed in literature as well-disciplined, industrious, hard workers, docile and task-oriented. As reflected in earlier sections of this research, the proficiency of Filipino workers in the English language is one of their most attractive assets. This asset also accounts for the Filipino workers under domestic work. However, Ayaydin claims that proficiency of the English language alone is not enough to land this group of Filipino workers at the top of the hierarchy of Türkiye's domestic labor market. Instead, he further claims, it is their prestige as 'ideal nannies' and 'more expensive global goods' which they believe add to the status symbol of their employers who are mostly concerned about their reputation and social status (Ayaydin, 2020). Other studies claim that Filipino workers are prestigious because of the high cost of the service they offer which is valued by employers (Gürson, 2021); and Turkish employers benefit from some of Filipinos' cultural traits, modern lifestyle, language proficiency, and the class symbol they possess (Weyland, 1997).

The general image of Filipino migrant domestic workers in Turkey helps them land on better paying employment more than their competitors from other nations. This is manifested by the recruitment agencies through their profiling of this group of workers. Deniz (2018) shows the role of the intermediacy agencies hiring Filipino workers. Based on her work, the profile attributes to the Filipino workers who are considered as sought-after in Turkey's domestic labor market are summarized as follows: a) the age along with the number of children of the workers, b) their knowledge of both English and Turkish, c) their general appearance, d) the workers' health status, and d) the status of their morality.

The systematic review of related literature was conducted to set a theoretical and conceptual framework for the employment practices and working conditions of the undocumented Filipino Household Workers in Turkiye. In particular, the dynamics of domestic work sector was tackled in terms of its nature, forms, and complicating characteristics. The reviewed related literature revealed that the sector is still poorly regulated and undervalued. The stated current status of the sector mainly stems from the legal and social issues attributed to household work. Social issues such as the dominant patriarchal societies, gendered-segmentation of household work as purely women's role, and devaluation of domestic work do not only impede the efforts to raise the economic value of domestic work but also slow down other key developments especially in terms of better legal regulation as well as the professionalization of domestic work sector. Moreover, aside from the issues and challenges stemming from the nature of domestic work, the literature review has also shed lights onto relevant issues stemming from the international migration phenomenon. Key challenges such as international labor migration and irregular migration are migration issues aggravating the situations Filipino migrant domestic workers based in Turkiye.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHOD**

This chapter presents the methodology of the research. It describes the research method, research design, research setting, the population and sample, and research instrument. Moreover, it also covers the data gathering procedures such as the sampling strategies, selection of respondents and in-depth interviews. Finally, the last section of this chapter tackles the data processing and analyses inclusive of audio recordings, transcriptions, translations, data coding, and the data analysis itself.

#### **3.1. Research Method**

This research applied the qualitative method of research to gather, describe, understand and interpret the necessary data required to answer the specified research questions of this study. Specifically, a qualitative research method, in-depth interviews, was utilized for the gathering of the primary data. This research study called for a qualitative method due to the following reasons: firstly, the experiences and perceptions of undocumented Filipino household workers regarding their labor market access practices and working conditions are qualitative in nature and capturing them through pre-structured questionnaire would be very difficult; finally, as undocumented or irregular workers, their perceptions about their working conditions might be well set in their consciousness and may also include such sensitive and distressing feelings and experiences which merit delicate and responsive questioning.

#### **3.2. Research Design**

This study utilized one of the most common qualitative research designs which is the phenomenological design. This specific research design tackles the so-called lived experiences of humans through the descriptive accounts of the individuals involved. It involves collection and analysis of human experiences through interviews. The researcher seeks to understand and disclose the meaning behind every descriptive datum uttered by

the respondent(s). Themes and patterns are then drawn from the data. This design was chosen for this study due to its deemed appropriateness in the study of the lived experiences of the study respondents. This appropriateness is implied by Donalek (2004: 411), who claimed that “Phenomenological research is used to area where there is a very little knowledge”. Furthermore, Streubert and Carpenter (2002) referred to this research design as rigorous, critical and systematic.

### **3.3. The Research Setting**

The locale of the study was the metropolitan city of Istanbul. The city is the home for areas which have the highest concentration of the Filipino household workers in Turkiye based on the data provided by the Philippine Embassy in Ankara and the Filipino Community in Turkiye.

### **3.4. Population and Sample**

The study participants were composed of thirty (30) interview respondents. They are Filipino household workers in Turkiye who were undocumented and were currently employed irregularly as household workers. Due to the lack of sampling frame for this population, the respondents were sampled through the snowball sampling method. The sample of the study was subjected for in-depth interviews which were administered in the mentioned research settings.

### **3.5. Research Instruments**

The key instrument used in the collection of the primary data was a topic guide prepared by the researcher and was based on the generic topic guide drafted by ILO. This Topic Guide set the topics and sub-topics for the in-depth interviews in order to ensure consistency across the interviews and also to help the researcher cover all the topics systematically, and at the same time giving the respondents chance to be open not only on the topic purposely asked by the researcher but more importantly on their other concerns

that are not covered by the topic guide. Moreover, for the coding and thematic analyses, Delve Tool was used.

### **3.6. Data Gathering Procedure**

#### **3.6.1. Sampling Strategies**

In deciding for the most appropriate sampling method to be applied, key considerations on the critical characteristics of migrant Filipino household workers such as the irregularity in legal status and their live-in work arrangement were factored in. These specific characteristics often result to the lack of a sampling frame which is essential for a probability sampling. Particular group of domestic workers like the undocumented and the live-in domestic workers are difficult to locate.

With this lack of sampling frame compounded by the difficulty of locating domestic workers, the study utilized a non-probability sampling strategy. The snowball sampling, also known as chain referral, was utilized in the study. However, this method possesses some extent of vulnerability as the process of contact with potential respondents may begin mainly by convenience means. To reduce the convenience and the subjectivity in the selection of interview respondents and as well as to enhance the reliability of the sample, the specific types of snowball sampling strategies such as the spatial sampling method and the targeted sampling method was used. Chain-referral was purposely utilized as a gateway to the main target sample of the study.

#### **3.6.2. Selection of Respondents**

The respondents of the in-depth interviews were selected according to the criteria set for the selection of respondents. Key informants from different Filipino communities in Istanbul were the key contacts to reach potential respondents of the study. Furthermore, social media platforms such as Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp, and Telegram were utilized to reach and contact the potential respondents referred by informants. The interviews were done face-to-face and via online depending on their convenience. Specifically, they were administered in places like houses of worship, community assembly areas, as well as day-off go to places.

### **3.6.3. In-depth Interviews**

In-depth interviews as the data gathering method were administered mainly to explore in a detailed manner the labor market access practices and the working conditions of the respondents. This method facilitates focused and detailed inquiry on the individual respondent's thoughts and experiences which are impossible to be elicited through a mere survey questionnaire. Interviews were conducted considering the safety and convenience of the respondents. The ideal places were premises away from the presence of the employers or the household members to assure privacy and to avoid pressure from the employers which can limit the openness of the respondents. It also helped prevent frequent interruptions throughout the interview process.

Prior to the administration of in-depth interviews, informed consent was being explained to each participant clearly before they were asked to sign the consent form as a symbol of their voluntary participation to the study. The interviews were recorded on a recording device. The average duration of the interviews was 45-60 minutes.

## **3.7. Data Processing and Analysis**

The preparation of the collected data for analysis is a process that took different phases. This process was handled according to the types of data to be analyzed. The qualitative data gathered through the in-depth interviews were handled accordingly. The processing of qualitative data included the audio-recordings, transcription, translation, coding or labelling and analysis.

### **3.7.1. Audio Recordings**

Given the consent of the respondents, the interviews were recorded properly. Recording trial is conducted before the actual an interview is administered to make sure there were no audio problems which could affect the clarity of the participants' statements. Moreover, each recording was reviewed not too long right after the session to allow enough time for necessary follow-ups if needs arise.

### **3.7.2. Transcription**

The audio recordings of the interviews necessitated transcription before they were processed for analysis. For this purpose, additional brief notes were taken during the interviews sessions for the purpose of future data verification during the transcription process. Furthermore, simultaneous transcription was required for those respondents who did not give consent for audio recordings.

### **3.7.3. Translations**

Translations of the key research instrument was prepared for those who preferred to respond and participated using the Filipino language instead of English. Thus, the necessity of translating the transcribed audio-recordings to English before they were processed using the Delve Tool software for the analyses of the data.

### **3.7.4. Data Coding**

Coding is a necessary tool for the processing and analytical treatment of primary data gathered in the form of narratives from the interviews. It provides a systematic way of analyzing the data in text form. In this study, the set of qualitative data generated through in-depth interviews were transcribed, translated into English, and then coded on the Delve Tool software respectively to facilitate the thematic analysis process.

### **3.7.5. Data Analysis**

Analyzing qualitative data, in the absence of visual aids through the common ways of ticking boxes and counting figures, is not as precise as that of quantitative data being run on statistical software. So, the process started during the interviews by identifying the themes, issues, and interesting patterns of the data from interviews using Delve Tool. Further, taking down notes was a prerequisite for the possible emergence of new themes and issues in the course of individual interviews and that which requires follow-up interviews and analyses.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

Chapter four presents the findings of the study. The presentation of the findings is based on the order of the research questions. Specifically, main themes along with their corresponding sub-themes are presented accordingly. Analysis and interpretation of the data are discussed in detail in the form of thematic analyses.

#### **4.1. The Socio-demographic Profile and the Employment History of the Respondents of the Study**

This part of this research describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the study participants. Basically, such information provides a basis in understanding the present status, experiences, and the probable direction of certain communities. In other words, they can be a significant guide to trace changes in the community over the years and for the determination of the strengths as well as the needs of a community. All these are some factors to consider in the guidelines for community planning and policy development. Hence, the following section describes the characteristics of the study participants in terms of their socio-demographic profiles and employment history.

##### **4.1.1. The Socio-Demographic Profile of the Study Participants**

As shown in table 4.1, over 83% of the study participants are female. This number is an expected outcome since the literature on domestic labor has consistently shown that it is generally gendered and dominated by women. Clearly, this has been an ages-long status quo that requires attention of the influencers of social change and policy development including the social work profession. From this specific demographic data, it can be said that the over 80% of the respondents who are female are risking their lives as breadwinners of their families by working under dire situations as undocumented or irregular migrant workers. Given this situation, a social work practitioner would recognize that beyond the arguably indecent working conditions of the respondents, there are most of them who have

left behind broken families in which they are supposed to be traditionally serving as mothers and wives.

Relevant to this phenomenon is the civil status of the study participants categorized into four, it is composed of 30% single, 30% married, 7% widowed, and the remaining 33% as separated. This data shows that there can be around 70% of the respondents who may have children that are denied of the direct-mother-care and instead relegated to the supervision or guardianship may be of their father and or their grand-parents and immediate relatives whose service can either be paid or unpaid.

**Table 4.1: The Socio-demographic Profile of the Participants**

Socio-demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	25	83%
	Male	5	17%
Age	Under 30	1	3%
	30 to 39	13	43%
	40 to 49	12	40%
	50 and up	4	13%
Civil Status	Single	9	30%
	Married	9	30%
	Separated	10	33%
	Widowed	2	7%
Highest Educational Attainment	High School Graduate	9	30%
	Incomplete Undergraduate	6	20%
	Bachelor's Degree	15	50%
Religious Affiliation	Roman Catholic	24	80%
	Protestant	3	10%
	Born Again	1	3%
	United Methodist Church	1	3%
	Islam	1	3%
Number of Dependents	1 to 3	14	47%
	4 to 6	12	40%
	7 and more	4	13%
Hometown	Luzon	20	67%
	Visayas	8	27%
	Mindanao	2	6%
Residence Address	Kağithane	24	80%
	Others	6	20%
Employment Status	Employed	30	100%
	Unemployed	0	0%
Work Arrangement	Stay-in	20	67%

	Stay-out	10	33%
Workplace Address	European Side	23	77%
	Anatolian Side	7	23%

Adding to the painstaking under this family relations are the broken union and or marriages. As is indicated in the table above, there are 33% of the respondents who categorized themselves as separated. Those who categorized themselves as separated are still officially married but are already separated from their partners. It reflects the lack of law on divorce in the Philippines. Their only way to get separated from them legally is through annulment. However, this process is both long and expensive. So, many couples don't go through the process and stay separated from their spouses.

In the statement of the study significance, it was reiterated that domestic labor has a role in poverty alleviation in some class of the societies. That is indeed true for the respondents of this study. The socio-demographic profiles of the respondents reveal that there are over 80% of the participants who have at least 1 to 6 number of dependents. Specifically, there are 47% who have at least 1 to 3 dependents, 40% with at least 4 to 6 dependents, and 13% with at least 7 number of dependents. This reflects their role as breadwinners of their respective families. The above-mentioned complex situations obviously call for the relevant social work actions both in the micro and macro practice levels.

The age distribution of the participants shows that the majority is between the age of 30 and 50. While there is only 3% under the age of 30 and only 13% over 50, there are 83% of them aged 30 to 49. This shows that given the inexistence of any serious physical and mental problems among this group of respondents, their maturity validates the reliability of their narratives in regards to their lived-experiences as irregular household workers. Furthermore, this shows that majority of them are still in the productive years of their lives. It is a valuable trait that they can use in their journey as migrant household labor providers in Turkiye. In addition to this characteristic, the respondents of the study are categorically 'well-educated'. The highest educational attainment of the study participants ranges from high school graduates to higher education graduates. While half of the study participants hold bachelor's degrees, there are 20 % of them who have stepped into university but have not completed or graduated and the remaining 30% are high school graduates.

These demographic characteristics, their age and higher educational attainment, of the respondents validate the descriptions for the Filipino household workers in the literature of domestic labor as ‘productive and highly educated’. In micro social work practice, these are considered as assets that can be utilized in implementing empowerment and strengths based social work intervention. On the macro level, migrant social workers will probably look into consideration the ‘brain drain phenomenon’ in this considerably highly educated groups of migrant workers. However, this specific trait can be utilized by social work practitioners or any change agents as a form of essential strength in mapping up field interventions for community organizing.

The next set of demographic data are the respondents’ religious affiliation, hometown and residence address. In terms of religious affiliation, the majority are Roman Catholic. They account for the 80% of the respondents. This number is also expected since the country is considered as the biggest Catholic country in Asia. As for their home of origins, the majority of the study participants are from the Northern region of the Philippines. While there are 27% from the Central region, there are only 6% from the Southern region. This reflects the reality of networking as one of the modes of job search practices among the participants. Furthermore, most of them (80%) currently reside in the Municipality of Kağıthane. Finally, all of the participants were currently employed during the interviews. The 67% of the employers are stay-in and the rest are stay-out. Moreover, almost 80% of them work in the European side and 23% in the Anatolian side.

#### **4.1.2. Employment History**

In general, tracing the employment history of the study participants is deemed significant as it can help provide insights into the magnitude of their migration journey. The phenomenological nature of this research work requires establishment of all the necessary information relevant to the lived-experiences of the respondents and that clearly includes their employment history. In particular, as a social work research, it is believed that the career history of this group of workers can help provide additional information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the respondents. Such data are essentials in developing appropriate social work interventions both in the micro and macro levels in the long run.

The gathered data on the employment history of the study participants is highly diverse in terms of sectors. Most of them have worked in varying sectors or industries prior to their employment as household work providers. In fact, only three of them have reported ‘no experience’ in other sectors. The sectors from which they have previously worked in includes the service industry, corporate sector, security sector, manufacturing and even maritime business industry among others.

*I have worked in different places in the Philippines for different positions. My first ever work was as a waiter for a fast food chain. There, I developed my passion for cooking. I have also worked as a security and a driver before I decided to work overseas (P30). Only as a factory worker back in the Philippines (P12).*

*Actually, I was a government casual worker for Land Transportation Office (LTO). It was a contractual. I was in Stradcom- the IT provider of LTO. I was there for 8 months. Then, I moved to Laguna for the same job before I applied for work in Turkey (P10).*

*I have worked for Astron Philippines, as I am a graduate of broadcast technology. I was hired during my internship. I have also been a Liaison officer for a travel agency. After that, I applied for a restaurant in Saudi. It was a one-year contract. When I went back to the Philippines, my God’s father referred me for a work as a sea man. I was employed as a cook. I have had a 7 contract. Each contract was 6 to 10-month. I had to leave my work because my wife was pregnant and she needed me around before giving birth. After 4 years, I decided to apply for employment overseas and I got employed for Turkey (P25).*

Aside from their experiences working in non-household work locally, some of the study participants have also experienced overseas employment for non-domestic labor jobs.

*I have worked in Iraq as a receptionist for a US-based company. I was there for one and a half years. It was my first employment overseas. I did not really plan working abroad until I was involved in a problem*

*that made me wanted to avoid many people I know (P15). Aside from working for an air conditioning company for three years in the Philippines, I have also worked as an English teacher in Thailand for 9 months (P3).*

*I worked in Dubai for a food company for three years. I was a receptionist for 2 years and became a sales coordinator on my third year. Thereafter, I transferred to another company, which is a textile company. I was there as a sales coordinator, I was doing purchasing and became an assistant secretary to the managing partner. After four years there, I moved again to another company, a paper company this time. I had the same work as a sales coordinator. Then, another textile company recruited me and brought me here in Turkiye (P4).*

The brief employment history of the study respondents gives a gist of their employment evolution. It is evident that not all of them were leaning to domestic labor as a primary or starting point of career employment. It can, therefore, be claimed that their loyalty or commitment to the ideals of their current careers are not affective in nature. It may be more of 'rational' choice. All those factors which they might have put into consideration in their decision-making process may not be the main focus of this phenomenological study. However, some hints or potential evidence of such might be revealed in the study through their narratives on their preferences and motivations.

#### **4.2. The Actual Patterns of the Respondents' Labor Market Access Practices**

This research study explored the employment practices in terms of labor market access and the working status of the respondents of the study. The findings of this research revealed two main themes corresponding to the labor market access practices of the respondents namely- employment practices and contractual practices. The two main themes and their corresponding sub-themes are discussed in details in the following sections of this thesis. On the other hand, themes pertaining to the working conditions of the study respondents which are generated in the in-depth interviews are presented and discussed in detail in the succeeding sections respectively.

#### **4.2.1. Employment Practices**

The main theme, employment practices of the study participants, covers wide range of processes or practices of the study participants from pre-deployment to post-deployment. All these practices are categorized under the two sub-themes named pre-deployment practices and post-departure activities respectively. Under the pre-deployment or pre-departure practices are the activities they undertook such as trainings and or seminars for qualification upgrading, labor market access practices such as job search practices and tourist visa acquisition. These are generally taken before they fly abroad for overseas employment. As for post-departure activities, it includes their employment activities abroad such as cross-country practices for employment in different foreign countries, re-employment job search practices for those who get unemployed, part-time employment practices and their regularization experiences. The two sub-themes under employment practices are discussed below in detail.

##### **4.2.1.1. Pre-deployment Practices**

This sub-theme refers to the practices of the study participants back in the Philippines and prior to their departure. They are further categorized into pre-deployment trainings and job search or recruitment practices for overseas employment abroad.

###### **4.2.1.1.1. Pre-deployment Trainings**

The Philippine government puts prime value on equipping its citizens with the essential knowledge and skills as they embark on their journey as Overseas Filipino Workers. Their pre-deployment trainings do not only enforce knowledge and skills readiness but more importantly, they help enhance the safety and security awareness of the prospect migrant workers. In general, prospect Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) undergo trainings to upgrade their skill sets and qualifications. The trainings are usually administered by Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) of the Philippines. Thus, submission of certification of competencies for certain jobs is one of the standard operating procedures for overseas employment.

*Yes. I trained in a TESDA-accredited training center. We were trained for different skills like basic household chores, table setting, language and culture etc. It was a two-week intensive training and stay-in. We*

*were given an examination after the course before we could be given our certificate. I had my certificate for bedding. I paid for everything (P26).*

*Yes of course. It is mandatory. You really have to undergo trainings before being employed overseas. We were taught about table setting, mannerism in handling table, bed making. It was like a training for hotel staff and services (P27).*

Though TESDA Certificate is a standard operating procedure for overseas employment, the experiences of the study participants highly differed in terms of their payment capacities and the actual training experience itself. Some of the respondents reported borrowing money from their relatives and friends for the payment of the trainings. Furthermore, there were also some incidences of exploitation of the trainees.

*I did not (pay anything) because it was a government project. When you apply for work abroad legally, it is part of the process (P3). I had (training). I attended the TESDA course and passed the exam. There was written exam and practical. My employer paid for that. They paid it to the agency (P12).*

*I had training. It was a whole week intensive training. I paid for everything which is supposed to be free as the employer paid the agency for it. We trained for cleaning, childcare, basic things. We just go there to comply as we need certification to apply for overseas (P28).*

*Yes! I paid on my own. It was my investment. I actually borrowed some money from my relatives and friends to pay for my trainings (P7). They made us clean their office. They took advantage of us. It was not a skill upgrade training (P15).*

Aside from the skill-up trainings provided by TESDA, there is also a Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) for the prospect OFWs. This orientation seminar is mandatory for all the Filipinos who are going to work abroad. Although the contents of every pre-departure orientation are country-specific, it does covers seven general topics such as migration realities, profile of the destination country, employment contract, health

and safety, financial literacy, government programs and services available for OFWs, and some travel procedures and tips. The one-day seminar is given by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA). This specific aspect of the pre-deployment trainings provided to overseas Filipino workers before departure is highly significant in enhancing the safety and security of the migrant workers.

*Just a seminar in OWWA about basic rules in Saudi. It was more on culture, language and religion (P20). In PDOS, I had a language course. Furthermore, they gave us seminar on the Dos and Don'ts through videos presentations. For TESDA, they teach skills like general housekeeping, childcare, table arrangement and stuff like those (P8). Yes, with OWWA and TESDA. We were taught on how to communicate with the Arabs, their culture, language and stuffs like table setting and all (P7).*

However, due to the fact that some of the study participants left the Philippines through tourist visa acquisition, not all of them have undergone the pre-departure trainings and orientation seminar. In fact, there were seven (7) of the respondents who reported having no pre-deployment trainings. This is considered a loophole of the migration process and therefore is an issue that needs to be addressed both in the sending and host countries. Leaving it unresolved is tantamount to keeping a room for exploitation that risks the safety and security of the migrant household workers.

*I did not undergo any training. I left the Philippines with a tourist visa (P29). I did not go to any trainings since I was hired directly in Singapore (P17). I didn't undergo any training. I am an OWWA registered but I did not have any trainings in TESDA or the other trainings for certificate (P9).*

The findings revealed that Filipino household workers undergo pre-deployment trainings and orientation prior to their overseas employment. Government agencies such as TESDA and OWWA are mandated to administer and regulate such crucial pre-deployment practices. The experiences of the study participants varied in terms of their training payment methods and their actual training experiences.

#### **4.2.1.1.2. Job Search and Recruitment Practices for Overseas Employment**

Legally, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) is the first contact of prospect Filipino migrant workers to connect to the world of migration destinations. It partners with different stakeholders to facilitate the generation and preservation of decent jobs for overseas Filipino workers and at the same time to protect them in their migration and advocate for their reintegration to the Philippine society after migration. Included in its mandates is the facilitation of employment by accrediting foreign principals and employers hiring Filipino workers. It also takes part in the evaluation and processing of employment contracts.

The research findings revealed the actual job search and recruitment practices employed by the study participants to access labor market abroad including the one in Turkiye. Before deployment abroad, they reported using different media in their search for overseas jobs. The most common ones include recruitment websites, agency, and their network. The networks are usually composed of their relatives and friends. Generally, those who found their jobs on recruitment websites are being directed to the involved recruitment agency for the detailed process of migration. On the other hand, the ones who get hired through network take either agency for the processing of their employment documents or process their travel documents on their own by acquiring for tourist visa for Turkiye. It is through the latter method utilized by some of the aspiring migrant workers which makes the labor migration more complicated on the part of migrant workers.

*Through an agency in the Philippines. My employers are from Qatar. They employed me and brought me to Qatar and then here. I had my papers in my first year here. After one year, they decided to bring me with them to Jordan but I did not want to. I did not like my working conditions there. And the salary rate was too low. I am in Turkiye but my working condition was similar to the ones in Saudi (P19).*

*It was actually through my wife. Her employer has purchased a new property, a house to be specific. They needed a care taker and she referred me to her employer. I used some documents given by my wife's*

*employer to acquire a visa in the Philippines. It was an invitation for me to visit my wife here (P23).*

*Actually, I have a friend who is already a citizen. Since I wanted to work abroad, she recommended Turkey as a better destination. So, I came through an agency in the Philippines (P10).*

Another common medium is through acquisition of a tourist visa for Turkiye. Those who can afford, apply for a tourist visa and upon arrival, that is the time they begin their search for employment through referrals and or agency. Even this particular method is connected to the recruitment process undertaken through networking led by their own relatives and friends abroad. This process is not completely independent from employment agencies. Some prospects acquire the services of some recruitment agencies to help them out in their search for employment upon arrival to country of destination.

*My ex-husband was also here. My in-laws were the one who invited me here through an agency. I came with a tourist visa from Manila. That was the usual way before. People come with tourist visa. I did not have any agreement with the agency. What they did was that they gave me some fake documents. They showed me as a secretary for a company and that I was just a tourist. They arranged everything (P1).*

*With tourist visa in 2018. My partner referred me to her employer. So, we work together. So, now in my current work, it was through friends' referral. I came with a tourist visa and I applied for residence permit upon arrival. It was accepted (P20).*

The findings of the study show that there are different entities involved in the job search and recruitment practices of the study participants. While networking under the influence of their relatives and friends is a common medium in their access to domestic labor market overseas, the use of social media platforms and recruitment agencies is still a very common practice. Moreover, it is significant to note that while majority of these practices warrant or require the involvement of government agencies, the tourist visa acquisition which some of them utilized to access the labor market abroad let them skipped some of

the standard operating procedures such as the pre-deployment trainings and the pre-departure orientation.

#### **4.2.1.2. Post-deployment Practices**

This sub-theme covers the employment practices of the study participants after their initial overseas deployment. Specifically, it is composed of their re-employment practices, part-time employment, and their regularization experiences.

##### ***a) Re-employment Practices***

In the preceding section, it is mentioned that the participants of this study access the domestic labor market in Türkiye through recruitment agencies which they find through employment websites and networking. Moreover, there are also those who skipped the legal process of labor migration by acquiring tourist visa as their ticket first to Türkiye and eventually to its domestic labor market. However, there are also those who access the domestic labor market after their previous employments both in Türkiye and from other countries. According to the data gathered, the ones who seek for re-employment utilize several methods such as referencing by either former employers or friends and through cross-country methods for those who were former employees from other foreign countries.

As mentioned above, those who are already in Türkiye but have lost their employment for varying reasons, they employ mainly referencing- the term they used to refer to re-employment job search practices through referrals by former employers and or friends.

*Actually, I was unemployed from November 2019 until July of 2020. I was jobless for a long time and in the beginning of the pandemic until my friend referred me to an employer and then I got the job. It was through a friend's referral. Actually, that is the common practice here. There are many agencies but I have not tried so far (P8).*

*Through referral. The most common path for us. It is also safer. We do not sign any contract unlike in the agency where if anything happened, the employer can get back at them and in return the agency can get back at you too (P24).*

*So, with my current employer, I got hired through referral. That is the reality out there. We usually get employed without going to any agency. Friends and former employers can serve as referee. After I left my first employer, my housemate's employer has a friend who was looking for a household worker. They referred me to my current employer. I was with them for five years. This is now my 3rd employer. I came in 2016. In my first, I stayed for 6 months, my 2nd was for 5 years. I have been with my current employer for 6 months. My 2nd employment was elderly care. But I was all around (P27).*

In the in-depth interviews, it is revealed that the study participants have varying reasons in preference for referrals and for agencies as re-employment job search methods. While majority of them prefers referral to agency method, there are also some who choose to be employed through recruitment agencies.

*Actually, I am just new to my current employer. It is more of referral. Sometimes by a friend and often times by my employers. My former employers themselves would help me find a new employer. Actually, in my former employment, I had 5 employers who are friends. They used to be six but the one left for good. That has been the pattern, when I leave an employer I get re-employed through my former employer's referral. No more agency (P7).*

*I always ask my friends. I depend on their referral. I don't go to any agency. I have learned my lesson after being scammed by a recruitment agent for Italy. I have had enough (P29).*

*Just through referral. I don't go to agency anymore because if you go to agency, you have to compete with many other applicants. So, it is much better to be referred by friends or by a former employer like my case now. Referral is built on trust. I also don't like the new method employed by agencies. You have to send a video of yourself talking about credential. I really hate that one, I prefer the old practice of*

*personal interview or appearance. It is really difficult through agency (P6).*

*This is what I do. I apply through the agency or with some agents. I send videos for application. So, education is an advantage. We really need to send videos and give reference from previous employers. So, I am more of agency or agent. But I started not going to the agency as their employers are toxic (P28).*

*I had friend's referral once. But that friend of mine became an enemy at the end. I had a problem with my employer she referred. I was involved in an accident. It was still my day off that day but I came home early to avoid becoming late the following day. I was in my room and the child kept calling my name. To not risk the child's safety, I went down to say hello because I was thinking that if I would not, he would come to my room and he might fall from the stair. The child was on the stair when I came down. He was in front of me, 1 step under me when he accidentally fell off the stair. My employer blamed me her carelessness and my then friend stood with my employer. As a result, things between us got bad and we lost our friendship (P14).*

Another re-employment method employed by the study participants is the so called cross-country method. This method is employed by those who were previously employed in other foreign countries but want to move to Türkiye for domestic labor. This happens in several methods. One way is by applying for a job in Türkiye through an agency in their previous host country. Another one is by applying for tourist visa to Türkiye and then apply for household work upon arrival. The third and the riskiest one is by escaping from their employers who brought them to Türkiye for varying purposes such as tourism, short-term work, and for health treatment purposes.

Based on the in-depth interviews, twelve (12) of the study participants were former employees in other foreign countries before they came to Türkiye. They took the cross-country method from different countries in Middle East and South Asia in order to access the domestic labor market in Türkiye. The most common motivations behind their

crossing to Türkiye from their respective previous host countries include the perceived higher salary rate and more decent working conditions for migrant household workers in Türkiye compared to their former host countries. While these motivations can benefit them as workers, the varied paths they took to get to Türkiye can be considered dangerous and vulnerable. As can be seen in the excerpts provided below, while some of them took the legal approach by applying for positions in Türkiye through agencies in their previous host countries and or by acquiring tourist visa to enter Türkiye, others chose to take more dangerous path by running away from their former employers during their visit in the country.

*In 2016, I have already had problems with my employer in Hong Kong. I did not want to become illegal in Hong Kong. My friend who was also my neighbor invited me to apply to an agency recruiting for Russia and Turkey. I chose Turkey because the placement fee was cheaper. That is how I came here. I came with a working visa. It was called a cross-country process. I actually came with a Tourist Visa and upon arrival here, the working permit was processed here and was given to me within 20 days. But I have never seen it. My employer did not give it to me. I was employed as a nanny. I found the work through my friend but it was via agency (P26).*

*Seriously, I was supposed to apply for Russia. But I got scammed. Then I saw my friend's post, who was a secretary of an agency back then. I applied and got accepted fortunately. It was a tourist visa. Upon arrival, I went directly to an agency. They found me an employer in Izmir. I worked there for three months. But I left due to sickness. They were forcing me to drink antibiotic drugs daily and I did not want it (P22).*

*I was actually previously employed in Kuwait. My boss brought me here with them from Kuwait. We actually came for the treatment of the child I was handling. After few months, my employer's sister followed. I had a problem with the sister. They accused me of stealing some money and gold and even threatened me that they would report me to the police for*

*me to get deported. Fortunately, I was able to take refuge with a Filipino family. They welcomed me to their home and helped me get through my situation. To cut the long story short, I stayed there for months until I found an employer (P2).*

*My employers in Qatar used to bring me with them in their trips abroad. I have reached as far as Germany. So, in our last visit to Turkey, I met some Filipinos who guided me to escape my employers. They were the ones who helped me relocate here. I was convinced by their stories telling me they were earning 1000 USD. It was way better than what I was earning in Qatar (P16).*

#### ***b) Part-time Employment***

Another aspect of the participants' post-deployment practices is part-time employment. Working on a part-time basis is very common among the study participants. However, only a few of them chose to work as part-timers for a long-term. For most of them, part-time employment is only a short-time basis. Their irregular status has allowed them to access such labor market. This usually happens on periods like the interval between unemployment and re-employment, when they are on vacation, and when their employers go out of the country and were forced to leave them behind due to legality issues prompting restricted mobility of the household workers.

In between employments, Filipino household workers take on part-time jobs while waiting for their full-time employment. Most often, they take on jobs as relievers for their friends who are either on vacation and or on leave. On the other hand, they find temporary short-term jobs when they are on their annual paid leave as they cannot go home for their annual paid vacation due to their legal status. Another common instance that gives them a chance to take on short term employment is when their employers are on a vacation abroad. On these occasions, they are supposed to be with their employers but their legal status hinders them and to make use of their time, they look for a part-time employment.

*They went abroad and while they were away I worked part-time. I was in Bodrum with my temporary employer. I just came back. They called me and I said I wanted to have a break and if they cannot wait for me,*

*they can look for my replacement. But they did not approve, they are waiting for me (P19).*

*The scheduling is every other day and a maximum of one employer a day (P16). I have 8 hours a day, a 4 hour a day. I also double sometimes, 4 hours per employer. Before pandemic, I also was doing babysitting at nights. So, maximum of two employers a day (P7).*

*For my regular one, that is five hours five times a week. The baby sitting is three times a week. So, if I need to go for my part time, I ask my employer for permission since I need to leave early because I also have to travel. I just make up for the lost time the next day. Fortunately, my employer is very understanding regarding that matter (P6).*

*After resignation, I decided to take some rests and rented a bed space in a flat shared by some OFWs. I tried to reflect on what has had happened to me. I also needed some rests and I stayed unemployed for 2 months. I only took some part-time jobs. It was all through friends' referral (P26).*

### ***c) Regularization Experiences***

If there would be one central theme for the migration issues facing the study participants, it would definitely be their regularity issues. As the research title depicts, this group of migrant household workers are irregular workers based on their legal status. Although their irregularity issues unfolded post-deployment, the complicated issue encompasses the whole process of their migration cycle starting from pre-deployment stage. Their narratives on their labor market access practices such as job search practices, give implications of loopholes in the migration administration in both the sending and host countries. However, due to the complexity of the regularization, only the lived experiences of the study participants are given emphasis in this discussion.

*Through an agency in the Philippines. My employers are from Qatar. They employed me and brought me to Qatar and then here. I had my papers in my first year here. After one year, they decided to bring me with them to Jordan but I did not want to. I did not like my working*

*conditions there. And the salary rate was too low. I am in Turkiye but working condition is similar to the one in Saudi (P10).*

*It was quite a long story. When I left Philippines, what I knew was I was going to Italy. I was actually recruited in Manila for a work in Italy. Turkey was just a transit country. Then, to make the long story short, when we arrived in Turkey, we were told we would have to wait for a few days before we would leave for our final destination which was Italy. They kept us in an apartment and they would not let us roam around outside freely. We kept waiting and after few months, we discovered the truth. That we were actually smuggled (P19).*

*I actually came with a Tourist Visa and upon arrival here, the working permit was processed here and was given to me within 20 days. But I have never seen it. My employer did not give it to me. I was employed as a nanny. I found the work through my friend but it was via agency. I did not undergo any training. That is actually a standard operating procedure for every overseas Filipino worker employed for household work(P25).*

*I decided to move to Turkey instead of going back to the Philippines. Their system in Israel is different, when your client passed away, you need to go back home and re-apply because you cannot transfer your working visa/permit. So, yeah instead of spending so much money, I decided to exit to Turkey via tourist visa. For that, I only spent 100 dollars for my flight ticket. It was more practical (P30).*

This section of this thesis presents the experiences of the undocumented Filipino household workers, in terms of their regularization experiences. In the in-depth interviews, they were asked of their perspectives on regular migration status. Furthermore, they talked about the relevant issues which made them undocumented and how they tried to overcome the consequences as well as their attitude to regular migration status. Despite the fact that all the thirty participants of this study are irregular in status, most if not all of them entered

Turkey with legal documents. However, varying circumstances have made them fall to irregularity along the process.

In the following excerpts sampled from the in-depth interviews, the study participants narrated how they have fallen to irregularity after arriving in Türkiye with legal documents. Generally, the common practice is that work permit can be transferred to new employers. Depending on the agreements of the parties involved, employees ask their employers to transfer the working permit if they are not willing to continue and or renew the existing employment contract. Common reasons that call for the necessity to transfer work permits includes the inability of the current employer to pay for the insurance contribution mandated by such contracts. Other reasons reported by the study participants includes the inability of the employers to honor some of the key aspects of the employment contracts inclusive of the following - agreed salary rate, job description, day offs and the place of deployment. For those who previously hold legal residence permit, they eventually become illegal or irregular workers after rejection of residence permit renewal application and or after employers broke their promise to apply work permit for their employers.

*I applied in an agency in Hong Kong and I got employed by an employer from Turkiye. That is how I came to Turkiye with legal papers. My working permit was transferred to my next employer. However, problems started when my new employer failed to pay my insurance until it got cut and I became undocumented (P11).*

*Yes, I was legal. But the arrangement was I would come to Turkiye with a tourist visa for 90 days and would go back to Saudi upon my male boss's request. Then, on my second return to Turkiye I decided not to go back to Saudi anymore. After, one year with them I called the embassy and asked them for advice. I asked if I would be haunted with my contract in Saudi. They told me the contracts in two countries are different. Better to stay in Turkiye. So, I decided to stay. I still had legal documents that time. When I got an employer, my resident permit application was accepted. I wanted it to be changed to a working*

*permit. However, since the working permit is so expensive because of the insurance contribution and all, my employer could not afford. So, they gave up on the working permit application until even my residence permit expired and I became undocumented (P12).*

*Actually, I did. One of my previous employers whose child I took care of let me go back to the Philippines in 2018 to process my papers. I came back with all the documents. The problem was my new employer who initially wanted to transfer my working permit broke the agreement. She decided not to transfer the work permit until it expired and was not renewed. So, I was documented for a year and then became undocumented again until now. But I am still hopeful to become documented again (P8).*

*After a year with my 1st employer in Turkiye, while we were on a vacation, they talked to me. They said they could not afford my salary anymore due to crisis. They lowered my salary. I started with 700 dollars and they wanted to make it 300 dollars. They talked to me about it because they knew I have kids to support back home. They said I could stay but my salary was going to be 300 from 700. Because I came here to work and support my family, I asked them favor not to cut my working permit until I find a new employer. They agreed. They also suggested that I can stay with them until I find a new employer. But they live in the Asian side and the agencies are based in the Europe side, it would be more difficult for me to find a job if I stay with them and it is hard to travel. So, I decided to leave them. I rested for a month. When I found a new employer, and I let him talk to my former employer. They talked and they agreed for the transfer of my working permit. But when they called, we learned that my working permit has already been cancelled. I did not know they had it cancelled. I asked them about it because we have already talked about it. They told me it was due to the agency's advice. I think they were brainwashed by the agency since they were*

*also not so familiar with the system since I was their very first employee from abroad (P13).*

Despite their indecent experiences, most of the study participants were still hopeful and were still looking forward for the opportunity to become documented or regular employees. They try everything they can to upgrade their legal status and be able to roam around Turkey and work without fear of being reported and or caught by the authority.

*Yes, I think everyone wants that. It is very difficult to be undocumented. You always have the fear of being caught by the authority. It is better to be legal because you are better protected. You can enjoy roaming around freely when you are legal. I tried talking or looking for employer who wants to legalize my status. I also even applied for residence permit but it got denied (P11).*

*I had plan before in our first arrival in Turkey. I tried to get married to a Turkish lady to acquire a working permit. Also, I attempted to work as a construction worker (P24). Yes, because it is way better to be a regular employer. I am still hopeful of finding an employer who will be willing to regularize my status (P14).*

The dedication of some of the study to participants to become documented and be able to upgrade to regular employee status has led them to take risks by spending their hard-earned money to agents and agencies alike who promised them working permit grants. Furthermore, they sacrificed their standard salary-rate in exchange for working permit application as promised by some employers. Unfortunately, they paid the bitter price of losing their guard at the hands of scammers. Several of them have experienced being scammed for working permit issuance and lost some amounts of their hard-earned money.

*Actually, the main reason I accepted the job for my current employer was because they promised they would apply for my working permit. However, after 6 months with them, I asked for any progress but they said there is none. That is my current source of frustration. It is another broken promise. Moreover, I got scammed along with my friend. Her employer found an agent to work on her application. She included me*

*for the application only to find out we were in for a scam. So, I lost some money and ended frustrated as well (P27).*

*Of course, I have always wanted to be regular again. Actually, two years ago, the reason my salary rate was 800 USD was because I had an agreement with my employer about acquiring working permit. I showed them the documents required for working permit from the immigration. So, I did not mind my below average salary-rate. They were in contact with an agency who we believed processing working and residence permits. What happened was that the agency made us believe that after a month, my working permit will be ready. So, because of my excitement, I paid all the necessary expenditure not minding my agreement with my employer that she will be the one to pay for it. I paid for everything instead of my employer because I was thinking of myself getting a working permit. So, months passed and the working permit did not arrive until it reached two years of waiting. Then I was really convinced it was just a scam (P26).*

*I have already tried, but I got scammed several times. There was a time, along with 49 Filipinas, we tried our luck with a Kurdish agent who was accordingly working as an agent. We paid and lost our money. He gave us complete documents that we needed to comply. Then, we were saddened to learn that he was no longer working as an agent during our application. He was so good at deceiving us. We waited for more than three months. Then I decided to go to immigration myself to check for update. There I learned that all those documents he has given us were fake (P22).*

*Yes, of course. I tried applying for a residence permit but I got scammed twice. First by a Filipino and the last one by a Pakistani. We were not able to get back the money. We could not hunt or report them because of our legal status (P17). I was actually got scammed two times by fellow Filipinas. They said they will apply for residence permit and I*

*paid. I gave money. But after waiting for long, we learned it was only a scam (P13). If there is a chance, why not. I tried filling up forms, but I met only fixers who charged too much. Sometimes, some of them are scammer. So, it is tough without the support of your employer (P16).*

As a result of the above-mentioned experiences of falling victims to fixers and scammers, there are some of the study participants who expressed their frustration and hopelessness for a possible regularization measure.

*At my age, not anymore. I will go for good anyway. Now, I prefer being undocumented because I do not want to become strictly under my employer who would boss me around. When you are on a working permit, your employer can terminate you any time they want. And that can lead to illegality. I know some friends who were documented but because of disagreements with their employer, they ended up as undocumented ones when their employers had their working permit cut (P15).*

*I used to have but not anymore. I am actually thinking of going back home for good after this year. I really want to spend time with my family and my son. I never attempt to apply since I have heard of many Filipinas who got scammed by scammers. I cannot afford to be scammed once again (P29).*

*I tried before but mostly unsuccessful. I have had a residence permit that expired in one day. I never made an attempt again. I will go home for good within the year (P25).*

The regularization experiences of the study participants have shown a glimpse of their complicated situation. Given the high informality of the sector, there is evidently an urgent need for changes in the existing mechanisms and systems employed by the different stakeholders. Basing it to the mere reports of the study participants, it is definitely difficult to gauge the whole magnitude of violence and exploitation experienced by undocumented migrant workers exposed in such situations. However, it is enough of a starting point to further investigate the extent of the bad impacts of such issues. One thing is certain. There

is a need for change. Using the lens of social work practice, it is safe to say that there is a need to further explore and evaluate the existing policies and systems employed in the regularization or issuance of work permits to migrant household workers in Türkiye.

The need for change is urgent but bringing it through the amendment of certain laws or policies can take a long time. The whole process will be daunting. In this connection, there is a need for micro level social work interventions. Concerned social work practitioners can impart some extent of change by dealing with the individual or group of stakeholders. Social work roles as educators and facilitators can be applied at this level. By coordinating with the leaders of several Filipino communities in Türkiye, social workers can lead programs such as domestic labor administration literacy seminars and workshops. This way, migrant workers can be taught of their existing rights as migrant workers and be oriented of how employment practices such as work permit application and transfer are legally administered. This can reduce their susceptibility and vulnerability to exploitations propagated by local and foreign scammers. Furthermore, the various Filipino communities they represent can consolidate necessary measures to prevent the exploitation of individuals and groups who try to scam their respective members.

Under the main theme employment practices discussed above, there are several corresponding sub-themes tackled. Firstly, the pre-deployment programs participated by the study participants were presented. The study participants claimed that they have to participate some skills upgrading trainings and workshops and later on submit certificates of completion of the given trainings during application for overseas employment. In addition, they were obliged to attend a pre-deployment orientation and seminar. Such programs are parts of the standard operating procedures for labor migration in the Philippines. However, a significant number of workers were able to skip that legal procedure by leaving the country for touristic reasons. Such case can be considered a huge loophole of the entire migration administration in the country. Secondly, the job search practices of the study participants were presented. Such practices refer to the recruitment activities taken by the study participants back in the Philippines.

The study revealed that the study participants utilized both formal and informal practices or methods in finding overseas jobs. The POEA is an agency that is mandated for the

secured labor migration process. It presents to the prospect migrant workers the list of choices for licensed recruitment agencies. However, informal methods such as direct hiring through family and friends' networks are still commonly practiced. This can be a manifestation of perceived corruption and unjust procedures practiced by some government agencies. Whether this perception is a mere misconception or not, there is definitely a need to evaluate the effectivity and the efficiency of relevant agencies.

The remaining sub-themes such as the re-employment practices, part-time employment practices, and the regularization experiences of the study participants can be categorized as practices during and post-deployment. The issues they face at this phase of their migration cycle concern both the sending and host countries. The research findings revealed that the study participants practice several methods to re-access the domestic labor market both in their current host countries and target new destinations. This can get more complicated than their pre-deployment job search practices. At this stage, employment seekers have already been stripped off their legal status or about to lose one. The former refers to those who try to seek re-employment after ending an employment. On the other hand, the latter refers to those who were currently employer or unemployed in other host countries and were seeking employment in Türkiye. Both groups employed either formal or informal methods of job search practices.

However, the paths taken by those who were previously employed in other foreign countries were more risky and complicated. Most of them took the cross-country method to gain access to the local domestic labor market in Türkiye. The last sub-theme termed regularization experiences detailed the personal experiences of the study participants in terms of how they have lost their work permits and of how they tried to regain legal status. Furthermore, specific experiences in relation to the regularization process they took were also presented. Overall, the experiences of the study participants in regards to their employment practices imply existence of formal and informal practices, loopholes in the system concerning the labor migration administration, and some forms of exploitation incidence in their attempts to regain legal status.

#### **4.2.2. Contractual Practices**

The second main theme generated from the research findings is the contractual practices of the study participants. It covers the employment agreements, termination experiences and their work separation practices. One of the key issues explored in this study are the contractual practices of the study participants. It is believed that one of the effective ways to better understand the whole picture regarding the employment practices of the research study correspondents and to some extent their working conditions is by tackling their experiences in reaching employment agreement. Considering their legal status, it is deemed essential to explore the pattern of their contractual practices. In the in-depth interviews, the study participants narrated their experiences in the process of reaching employment agreements and other related aspects of such agreements like termination and work separation.

##### **4.2.2.1. Employment Agreement**

Generally, employment contract is one of the most important aspects of every employment relationship. This ensures that both the employer and the employee understand their respective obligation during the term of employment. Moreover, it also informs both parties of their rights provided by the employment. However, for irregular or undocumented group of employees just like the participants of the study, such law binding contractual agreement does not exist. Most often, employees in such employment relationship mainly depends on the moral obligation of their employers to honor the verbal agreement.

The gathered data revealed two types of employment agreement hold by the study participants. These are verbal agreement and written agreement. Surprisingly, four (4) of the research participants claimed having a written agreement while the majority relies on their own verbal agreements with their employers. The possibility of a written form of employment agreement exists when employment is acquired through a recruitment agency and that is the case of the four of the study participants. However, it lacks one of the essential aspects of an employment agreement such as insurance.

*As undocumented worker, I have a written document with the agency but no terms about insurance (P9). Yes, both written and verbal. But I*

*am so stupid not to read the content of the contract (P5). In Turkey, once you get employed through an agency you always sign an agreement with your employer (P11). We had. Here in Türkiye, every time you get employed through agency, you get to sign a contract between you and your employer (P11).*

The verbal form of employment agreement is the most common type amongst the undocumented Filipino household workers in Türkiye. The general content of such agreements is inclusive of terms and conditions regarding their salary rate, job description, day offs and vacation.

*In my condition as undocumented, we only have verbal agreement. It covers conditions about my salary, schedule, day offs. Just those things since I am undocumented (P8). Just verbal. We talked about the salary rate, day off schedule. We also talked about my annual leave (P30). We had verbal agreements. No black and white (P25). There was none. During the interview, the employer would just verbalize everything (P22). There was none. Just plain verbalization of my job description, salary rate and day off (P20). since she was referred by my former boss, we did not have any written agreement. Only verbal. We didn't actually talk about terms and conditions in detail (P6).*

Furthermore, in the in-depth interviews, the study participants shared their experiences in terms of agreement violations committed by their employers and their perceptions in terms of the fairness of the terms and conditions agreed upon in the employment agreement. Many of the study participants expressed that the terms and conditions of their employment agreement are 'conditional' fair. The conditional status stems from the fact that their agreement to the fairness of the terms and conditions depend on their legal status and the compliance of the employers to the agreed terms and conditions.

*I think yes, since I can't demand more as undocumented worker. If I were documented, that condition is unfair (P8). I think it is fair. I really appreciate her offer to increase my salary at 10% every after 3 months (P6). Given my legal status, I think it is fair (P30). given our legal*

*status, I think and I believe it is fair enough (P23). it is fair if the follow or comply with it (P14). For me it is fair because they comply with the agreement (P3).*

Another issue revealed in the in-depth interviews was concerning the violation of the terms and conditions specified in their employment agreements. Based on their narratives, the most commonly violated terms of the agreement are their day off schedules, job description, annual vacation and the application for work permit.

*Just the one with an employer who promised to transfer my working permit but broke it eventually. That was all (P8). sometimes about my job description. There are instances when she brings in some changes and introduce new tasks. So, I would talk to her nicely and remind her about the terms and conditions (P6). Day off scheduling. Sometimes, they change it especially when they have some visitors (P30). with one of my employers, they paid me 800 instead of 900 USD in the agreement (P19).*

#### **4.2.2.2. Termination Experiences**

In employment practices, terms and conditions for termination is usually an essential aspect of the contractual process that should be addressed prior to the signing of employment agreement. The study participants of this research work have reported varied experiences in terms of their termination practices. Surprisingly, many of the participants reported that there was no discussion about termination conditions between them and their employers in their verbal agreement.

*We have not discussed that in our agreement (P6). This has never been discussed in all my employments (P29). No, we did not talk about that (P23). We have not discussed that in our agreement (P6). In my condition, we didn't talk about that. I only tell them when I want to leave. (P7).*

Moreover, with the absence of a law-binding employment contract, the instances of premature or forced termination of employees is an expected issue. In the in-depth interviews, some of the study participants revealed experiences of being terminated on the

spot, due to reasons such as inability of their employers to pay salary. Although majority of them reported having no experience of termination due to health issues, there were a few of them who got terminated from work due to health conditions.

*On the spot, they send you home (P4). That already happened once. Like last year, she told me she could not afford to pay me anymore and that she had to fire me. I left them for 5 months. I worked in Ümraniye during those times. But they called me back after 5 months (P5).*

*Yes, in one of my previous employments I was terminated because of my asthma. I was initially given a one-week leave from work to allow healing and recovery from my illness. Unfortunately, after a week I still did not get well. So, I guess they were left with no choice but to fire me and looked for someone new (P8). I was fired by my employer when I had covid-19 (P30). Yes, due to my diabetes. It was with my German employer (P16).*

#### **4.2.2.3. Work Separation Practices**

Another interesting finding of this study is regarding the work separation practices of the study participants. There is already an established operating procedure implemented by involved recruitment agencies, the employers and the employees. Due to the high rate of turn-over in the sector, employers have introduced the requirement of reference of good conduct given to employees by their former employers. This is a measure to reduce the incidence of workers leaving their employers without due process or giving prior notice. In practice, new employers ask prospect employees a reference from former employers. Furthermore, prior to resignation household workers must give their current employers a prior notice of at least a month before the date of their preferred resignation day. This is to give the involved agency and or the current employers to look for their replacements if necessary. As a result, most of them considers parting ways with their employers in a nice way. They are aware that they need to leave a decent impression for future reference from former employers.

*Prior notice is necessary (P19). We give 1-month prior notice (P17).*

*The agency will have to find a replacement. Or a prior notice is needed*

*(P14). The condition is that I have to wait until a replacement is found. I also have to be considerate about their situation (P9).*

*I have experienced that. I frankly talk to them if I am not happy. But I talk to them nicely. I want to part ways nicely. I am avoiding getting sued for running away. In that way, you do not only prevent burning bridges, you also leave a good impression which is good for reference (P12). If I consider leaving or resigning, I would act accordingly because I will need their reference anyway upon seeking new employment (P27).*

However, the mentioned operating procedure does not always come into place. As expected from a highly informal employment relationship, there are instances where household workers would just run away from the household without observing proper work separation procedure and without giving prior notice. According to the data gathered through the interviews of the participants, this is common among those who consider their employers as heartless and inhumane. This usually depends on the attitude and the treatment shown by employers to their employees. It is one of the consequences of an employment relationship that is highly informal and with irregular legal status. Such practice, employers resigning from work without prior notice, is a potential breeding ground for rights violations, exploitation and violence. Concerned employers in such instances can surely be affected badly especially if their household is highly dependent on the domestic services provided by the resigning household workers. On the other hand, household workers may not possibly get their rights such as unpaid salary and other benefits. Moreover, they can be at risk of different threats such as physical and mental violence from former employers. This situation can put them into great dangers.

*It depends with the employer. If they are good, I would give them prior notice to give them time to look for my replacement if they want to. But with heartless employers, like the one who let me go despite my unstable health condition, I would not necessarily inform them ahead of time (P15). It depends on my employer. If they are so problematic, I just run away from them by not returning back after my day off. But if they have*

*been so good to me, I would talk to them and explain my concerns and my reasons to leave (P11).*

### **4.3. The General Working Condition of the Study Participants**

The invisibility of domestic work both socially and economically along with its low social status makes the occupation often exploitative. The most common major problems the domestic service providers face in their work place includes long working hours, heavy workloads, lack of privacy, in-decent accommodation and limited food for stay-in workers, job insecurity, lack of benefits generally provided to workers from other occupation, and high tendency of exposure to violence and abuse. Moreover, particular vulnerability is worse for the study participants due to their condition as undocumented labor migrants.

From the in-depth interviews, four main themes regarding the working conditions of the study participants were identified. These are remuneration methods and practices, salary protection issues, the scope of their work, and the actual employment relationship between the household workers and their employers. These main themes with their corresponding sub-themes are discussed in the following sections of this research study.

#### **4.3.1. Remuneration Methods and Practices**

Considering the general status of domestic labor being underpaid, the remuneration for the domestic service rendered by the household workers in this research study can be considered as one of their top motivations in their journey as household workers in Turkiye. Migrant Filipino work force employed in household labor in Turkiye is ranked higher in the hierarchy of domestic labor in Turkiye. As a result, they get paid higher than most of their counterparts from several countries. However, due to the high informality of employment practices in the sector and the legal status of most of these household workers, they still face some issues in the context of remuneration methods and salary protection.

#### **4.3.1.1. Salary Rate**

The salary rate of the household workers in Türkiye can differ according to their working arrangements, scope of work or job description. The average monthly salary rate of the Filipino workers during the period of interviews was one-thousand US dollars for stay-in workers and not less than seven-hundred US dollars for the stay-out workers. This rate is considered to be the highest rate for workers from Asian countries.

*As a stay-in worker, my starting salary was 1000 USD. It has increased to 1300 USD. It is much higher from the salary of my co-worker from Uzbekistan. Her salary is equivalent to the minimum wage in Türkiye (P2). I receive 800 USD monthly because I am a stay-out worker. When I was a stay-in worker my starting salary was 1000 USD. I was receiving higher salary but I am happier as a stay-out worker (P5).*

#### **4.3.1.2. Payment Methods and Schedules**

The paying methods and schedule vary among the workers. The work of the study participants is generally remunerated in US dollars. The payment method is generally by cash. However, a few of them who holds residence permit enjoy the luxury of getting paid through bank transfers. As for the schedule of salary payment, it depends on the nature or type of their working arrangement. The full-time workers are mostly paid by monthly. Those who work on part-time basis are paid according to their arrangement with their employers. The common schedules are by weekly and per hourly or right after working time is done. Moreover, despite their irregular status, some of them reported satisfaction with their employers who allow them to have advance payment. For them, such attitude shown by their employers is a manifestation of mutual trust and sense of humanity that exist in their employment relationship.

*In cash. For part-time basis it is usually by hourly but for full-time basis, it's monthly (P29). Cash. It is always advance. Monthly in dollars. No problem when it comes to payment of salary (P26). It depends with the employment. It can be daily, weekly or monthly (P16). Cash. In dollars if agreed upon. If Turkish Lira, they have to compute it based on the*

*current exchange rate (P14). Yes, I get paid after my work by cash (P7). In cash, and per hourly. I get paid every two weeks (P8).*

*With my current employer, it is bank transfer. The computation is by monthly (P3). Bank transfer and the calculation is per hourly (P4). We are remunerated by US dollar monthly through bank transfer (P23). Through bank transfer in dollar monthly (P24).*

#### **4.3.1.3. Perceptions on Remuneration**

The average salary rate of the study participants is considered high compared to most of their counterparts from other foreign countries. However, when asked about their honest perception regarding their average salary rate, they expressed mixed perceptions of the average salary rate. Most of the participants considered their salary rate as ‘fair and reasonable’. Interestingly, some of them mentioned their irregular status as a determinant of their judgement of their salary rate as fair and reasonable. On the other hand, ten of the participants described their salary rate as ‘unfair’ considering their job description and the number of working hours.

*Given my legal status, I think it is fair enough (P21). I believe yes. Given my condition yes (P13). As a stay-out, I think it is fair. Like I am now paid with 800 dollars. I am stay out but regular job (P11). Considering my legal status, it is fair (P14). It depends on the scope of work and the workload. Sometimes, you get to take care of two kids, sometimes just one. The problem is the salary rate is the same, regardless of the work demands. So, it is not always reasonable. Employers are also varied, there are generous ones too. So, you are lucky when you get to work for them (P4). with my work load and working times, I don't think it is reasonable. I should be earning higher even if am a stay-out worker (29). Actually no. It should be higher since my work is normally for two workers (P25). I am paid in cash monthly. I think is unfair, it was quite low because there were two kids. But as undocumented, there is nothing I could do. I do not have the rights to demand more (P10).*

### **4.3.2. Salary Protection Issues**

This theme covers the experiences of the study participants in the contexts of salary protection issues. The issues are inclusive of the lack of pay slips, payment problems such as delay, cut and non-payment, and salary safe-keeping methods.

#### **4.3.2.1. Lack of Pay Slips**

One of the main issues raised by the study participants during the in-depth interviews was the lack of pay slips or any document showing proof of salary payment or non-payment. As stated previously, payment through bank transfer is the other payment method existing among the study participants. Among the study participants only those who hold residence permits are able to enjoy this practice. There are four of them among the participants of the study.

*We do not have salary receipt or pay slips. We get paid in cash (P2).  
None. My employer sends me a message on WhatsApp, so no more problem would arise. Because we have had a problem about payment before about payment schedules. So, her message indicates payment of the salary for the month (P26). No pay slips. It is stated anyway on a bank transfer receipt (P3).*

#### **4.3.2.2. Payment Delayed, Cuts and Non-payment**

Given the irregular status of the study participants, issues such as delayed payments, deduction and to some extent non-payment of salary are non-surprising. The majority of the study participants are at risk of experiencing salary protection issues due mainly to the method of payment which lacks the practice of issuing payment receipts. A few exception are those who are paid via bank transfer. Findings of the study revealed that some of the respondents talked about their experiences of delayed payment of salaries and non-payment of the salary.

*Not with my current employer. But in one of my former employers, I experienced delayed payment of salaries. Sometimes it reached 3 weeks delayed (P12). Yes, I have experienced non-payment. If with agency, they can get it paid. But if referral it is difficult (P14).*

*As for salary issue, I have an experience with a Russian employer. It was a part-time work for one week. On my day off which was a Sunday, I went to Church but they did not let me come back without explaining the reason behind. They asked me to come to get my salary for one-week work. When I arrived there, the security did not let me in saying they did not know about me. I cried a lot of anger and the feeling of being treated unjustly (P15).*

#### **4.3.2.3. Safe-keeping of Salary**

They are also concerned in the safe-keeping of their money since they do not own personal bank account where they can deposit their savings. The incidence of stealing or losing money is a concern for those who share accommodation and even those who have co-workers in the household where they provide domestic service.

*I have had an employer who was a Filipina like me. I started with her as a part timer and then she offered to make it a full-time so that I did not need to have multiple employers. I worked for her for more than two years, we agreed she would pay me 400 USD monthly. However, she was only paying me half of my salary because she said, she is saving the other half for my savings. She was trying to act like an elder sister to me. But when I asked for my salary she made up lies and accused me of being ungrateful and she did not give me my salary. That is my worst experience (P29). It is also difficult to safe-keep our cash since I have my co-workers who is also undocumented. I don't have a bank account where I can deposit my savings (P2).*

#### **4.3.3. Scope of Work**

This theme covers varieties of issues involving the scope of work of the study participants. The said issues includes problems in their job descriptions, workload and schedule, day off, and leave. All these are discussed below in order.

#### 4.3.3.1. Job Description

In general, the Filipino workers are employed to provide childcare to households. They are widely known as Filipino Nannies on different recruitment platforms. That is probably because of the general description of the job they provide which is mainly childcare. In the reviewed related literature, their English proficiency and education levels are considered some of their assets in the labor market for childcare service in Turkiye. Expectedly, childcare top the job description of the undocumented Filipino household workers who participated in this research study. Moreover, aside from childcare, they also provide general housekeeping services such as general cleaning, ironing, and cooking. The providers of domestic services in this type of arrangement are also known as ‘all-rounders’. Some of them are also hired for other household services such as gardening, elderly care and pet care.

*I am actually hired as a nanny. My main task is childcare. But depending on situations, I sometimes do work beyond my job descriptions. Like when I have time and I see there is no food or some places need to be cleaned, I would do them if possible since I know they will affect my main work anyway (P27). My work is mainly childcare. I also do ironing clothes, feeding the kid, and bringing the kid to school (P2). My job description is purely childcare. They hired me to look after their child. They even hired a cleaner for me. She comes weekly. That's the best thing with foreign employer, the scope of your work is just the job description which was agreed upon during the interview. They follow it (P1). It is purely childcare. You are usually in the hotel. So, you give tutorial. You teach them. You accompany them playing in the park and to the swimming pool. Bath them and feed them. You generally watch over them (P4).*

Two of the most repetitive concerns mentioned by the study participants regarding their job description are the incidences of vague job description and assignment of non-household tasks. Some of the research respondents reported experiences of changes in the job descriptions which contradict the terms of employment agreement and instances of

being assigned to work in other households and for non-household tasks. These issues are manifested in some of the interview excerpts below.

*During the interview, my job description was cleaning. But after two weeks, they also included childcare, I have now become all around employee (P26). I have had bad experience with a Turkish family. I was hired as a nanny. I was with them for 3 years. When the baby grew up, they brought me with them to Bodrum. There they also let me cleaned the house of their parents. When her mom has a visitor, I would be the one in charge for the service. Moreover, I was sleeping in the balcony and I have been bitten by mosquitoes. We stayed there for two months. So, I left them right after we came back to Istanbul. They liked me and did not want to let me go. But for me, the damage had been done (P1).*

*Being brought, to the workplace, the office or the hotel of the employer to clean (P14). No yet. Just one time, I was asked to clean my boss' office. But only once (P2). I have experienced being asked to work for his brother on a day that I was not working for him. But it is still household work. He is wise and making use of what he pays for (P5). I only experienced being tasked to clean for another household(P28). With my current work none so far. But with my previous employer, the Filipina, she would ask me to clean her spa, the association she was leading and would ask me to look after her furniture shop. Sometimes, I felt like I was also a laborer who had to carry furniture to transfer (P29).*

#### **4.3.3.2. Workload and Schedule**

Based on the related literature review, the incidence of overworked household workers is pretty common. Long working hours and heavy workloads are among the major problems faced by domestic workers especially those who are stay-in. Compared to other category of workers, household workers especially the stay-in ones have limited rest and leisure time. In this study, the workload, working schedules and the job description of the study participants are presented and explored to determine incidence of overworking.

The finding shows that the workload of the study participants highly depends on their job description and their working arrangement. Like for instance, workers whose job description is mainly childcare have changing workload and schedule. It is usually highly dependent on the daily schedule of the child they take care of. The child's sleeping time can serve as the worker's breaktime too. Another instance is if the child goes to school, this gives the worker more breaktime. The same thing for gardeners or those whose main job description is outdoor cleaning. Their busy time is usually in the morning until noon. By afternoon, they get to enjoy more relaxing working pace.

*I just know my daily routine and manage my time well. I don't think I am over worked. I have enough time for my tasks (P3). It is just normal. Sometimes it gets busier and sometimes not (28). No because I have times for break. Like for instance, if my child is asleep, I also sleep (P17). I am okay. I don't feel being over loaded. I have enough time to complete or perform my tasks properly (P9). I have enough time. I do not think I was over worked since most of the times the kids were at school (P10). Not at all. I clean in the morning. I am usually free in the afternoon (P23). I only work for an hour in the morning and I rest in the afternoon. So much time to relax (P20).*

On the other hand, employees whose main job description is all around gets to be busier and have shorter breaktime especially if they are stay-in. Another instance is when an employer is tasked to clean a huge house every day. It can be so tiring for workers. Furthermore, another factor that affects the working load of the employees are the seasons. In general, summer season is their busiest season.

*Yes, I am over worked. The house is too big. Sometimes I only have 15 minutes break when I can sit down and relax (P8). Not with my current. But in my former employer, I would get sleepless and so much stressed because of too much work (P12). I can't say but it is difficult to be a stay-in work. You get to be over worked. Your break time is non-fixed. What will you do with your salary if you are unhealthy (P11). Only in*

*summer. But it is not paid (P26). In the summer, we are over worked. But in the winter nope (P24).*

Furthermore, the working schedules of the study participants vary and depend on factors such as their job description, work arrangement, and the seasons. Childcare workers have also varying schedule pattern. Like for instance, those who take care of very young children have schedules that are compatible to the wake hours and sleeping pattern of the children. They have to wake up and be ready to attend to the children even before the kids wake up and their work finish during kids' bedtime at night. For those care takers of school aged children, their schedules also depend on the kids' school hours and their after-school hours.

*It is not overload because I can manage my time well. It's actually more of working time period. I think it is beyond normal. It is more than 12 hours sometimes. The duration of working hour is irregular (P27). Actually, yes. Since I am supposed to work for 8 hours but as a stay-in worker, I have to be always with the baby most of the time (P22). Yes, especially when the kids can't sleep at night or one of them is sick. I have to stay with them and even stay late at night. Because, the younger kid wants only me to take care of her (P2).*

*If its school days, I wake up at 6 am. But I sleep at 9 pm. I sleep early and wake up early. No more work beyond 9 pm (P3). I start at 8 am so I have to be there before that. I usually leave at 5 to 6 pm. Sometimes I work overtime especially in summer (P30). If it is school days, I have to wake up early (P21). It depends if it is school day or not? If school days, I go at 10 am and leave at 3 pm because I have to bring my daughter to school first and pick her up. On the other hand, I start at 8 am and finish at 1 pm (P6). I usually wake up at 8:30 am. But on school days, I wake up earlier to wake up my employer's daughter who goes to a high school. But I go back to bed thereafter (P19).*

Some of the study participants experience issues with overtime. It is common among the stay-in workers and occur frequently during summer or holiday seasons. Their frustration

stem from the fact that in spite of their extended working hours and additional workload as demanded by the season, they generally receive no extra compensation or overtime payments.

*Yes, but not paid. Whenever they have visitors (P10). Sadly none. Our salary rate is fixed. Some extra compensation highly depends on employers and it's very rare. Sometimes, when some members of the household like their relatives, they sometimes give money as a gift and in return for goodness they see in you (P27). Generally, none. That is the main problem with stay-in work arrangement (P14). There is no overtime pay (P29).*

#### **4.3.3.3. Day off**

One scope of work that concerns the study participants is about their day off. The scheduling and the frequency of day off are variant. Day off is actually one of the most commonly discussed terms and conditions in their employment contract. Although it is expressed only verbally, workers are serious about this particular aspect of their work. The schedule of the day off are generally on the weekends and is fixed.

*As for my day off, I have two days day off in a week which is on Saturdays and Sundays (P3). One is our agreement that my work starts at 9 am and ends at 9 pm. Day offs are on Saturdays and Sundays(P9). Once a week and that is fixed (P12). Two days a week and that is fixed (P8).*

Others have flexible day offs. Some employers control the scheduling of day offs according to their own programs or schedules. Due to this practice by some employers, some of the study participants have expressed their experiences of foregoing weekly day off and instead have an extended number of day offs on another days. The new schedules are determined by employers and the length of extension does not exceed the number of day offs missed by the workers.

*Twice a month. It is not fixed. But it must be weekday. It is flexible (P2). Day off scheduling. Sometimes, they change it especially when they have some visitors (P29). I have a weekly day off. It is generally on*

*Sundays but it can change also (P27). We have a weekly day off but the scheduling is not fixed (P23). Once a week but not really fixed. Sometimes she would ask me not to go on a day off and have a 2-day day off the next time (P19). Once a week generally. It is fixed, but sometimes, they request if necessary. Like no day off in a week but you have 2 days off the following week (P14).*

There are also instances wherein employers deny their employee of their rights to go on a day off especially if the term is missed out in the verbal agreement. There is also an incidence of having a shortened day off.

*What happened was that I left or resigned from my first employment because I did not have day offs. The child I was taking care of had a complicated health conditions, he needed me 24/7. I felt like the work arrangement was like a Saudi-style. I did not like it. That is why I never worked nor apply to any Arab country because I don't like their system. I had no day-off, no internet connection after a month of staying with them (P26).*

*With my second employer. We were two employees. Our agreement was we had 24-hour day off. But when it comes to they would keep calling me back even before my 24-hour day off finishes. And my salary often gets delayed. And I worked overtime a lot without pay (P12).*

#### **4.3.3.4. Leave**

Given the highly informal nature of their employment, the study participants do not enjoy the paid leave which can be granted to employees in different sectors. They also have no non-working holidays. Their only chance to go on a paid leave is during their annual leave if agreed upon in the verbal agreement. The other occasion is in the case of sickness. They consider it as a paid leave since they don't receive salary deduction when they cannot perform their duties due to sickness.

*Our agreement was that they would give me two-week paid break in the summer. I work even on official holidays (P29). It depends, with my current employer, I have two weeks leave annually (P17). We have a*

*paid vacation yearly (P23). We have annual vacation (P24). Yes. We have to bring it up during the interview. We have to be open or honest about it so they can prepare themselves if they can afford. So, in my case I have a two-week vacation annually. Some employers would give it by parts. Like one week and then the next one week will be on a different schedule (P27).*

*Yes, not paid because they don't deduct it from my salary. Like when my dad passed away, they gave me a break for a week (P3). Just the annual vacation and when it is due to sickness (P23). Once a year, still working on non-working holidays. Leaves are valid if sickness or important trip (P5). When I got COVID-19, they allowed me for a 10-day leave. And I received my whole salary without any deduction (P2). None so far. The problem is that some employers would keep their employee home even if they are sick (P29). Just in case of sickness. Sometimes, I still have to be there even I am sick (P27).*

However, the study participants expressed an aspect of their irregular employment condition which they call 'a blessing in disguise'. For some of them, their inability to accompany their employers in their trips to other cities and especially overseas due to their legal status is a form of 'fortune'. In reality, when their employers travel abroad, they are left behind because of their travel restrictions as undocumented workers, and they still get paid.

*Only my Pakistani employer, they even pay me when they leave fearing that I may work for a new employer (P16). Just the yearly vacation. When they are in Australia, I still get paid (P12). Because I am illegal, I am given 2-week paid vacation once a year. On holidays, I also don't go to work if they go somewhere. But if they stay at home, I also stay (P12). We do not have agreement for that. But if they are on vacation, that also counts as my vacation and I am still paid (P6).*

#### 4.3.4. Accommodation

Another main theme generated from the research findings refers to the accommodation of the study participants. Generally, this aspect of their working condition is connected to several factors such as their working arrangement, whether stay-in or stay-out, and also whether they live in a shared flat or solo. The UN has described access to decent housing as one of the endangered rights of migrants. In this research study, the accommodation of the migrant household workers who participated in the study were explored. The data revealed two types of accommodation of the study participants. The first one is their accommodation as individuals. This refers to the accommodation of the stay-out workers and the housing acquired by the stay-in household workers intended for their day-off and break from work. The other type is their accommodation in the household where they serve as stay-in household workers. This type of information regarding their accommodation is a significant aspect not only of their working conditions but of their general well-being as a whole.

The reviewed related literature cited that the availability of decent accommodation to migrant household workers is said to be one of the factors that attract migrant household workers to work in Türkiye. The finding of this research study has confirmed this claim to some extent.

In this study, majority of the participants have described their accommodation to be generally decent. Most of the stay-in workers have described their accommodation as comfortable, secured and safe. They cited enjoying privacy in their private rooms and the absence of restricted areas within the household where they work. However, there were also a few numbers of participants who described their accommodation as in-decent. They mentioned problems like having no privacy, sharing toilet with some members of the household, sleeping in the sofa, being provided with bed space in rooms where they usually iron and hang clothes. Furthermore, some of them described their bedroom as office during daytime and being converted to as bedroom at night.

*I feel comfortable, safe and secure. I have my room for my privacy.  
There is no restriction aside from when my employer's BF is around  
(P3). I am satisfied. I have my room with privacy. They give me that*

*(P28). It is really good, because we have our own house inside the compound of our employer. The house where we stay is well-furnished. We have our own kitchen where we are free to cook whatever we want. We have our own private space. Sometimes, we bring our kids there (P23). I am very comfortable staying with them since they do not treat me as a mere helper. I have a small room, but it is ok for me. I feel safe and secured. I am comfortable (P2).*

*In my current job, I sleep on a foldable sofa and it is in the office of my employer. I sleep there at night and it is an office in daytime (P14). I have my own room, but it is also my work station for ironing and for drying laundry. It is a bedroom and a stock room at the same time. But I have my privacy. They never enter my room without my permission. They even ask permission to open the bag of their kid (P27). I have a room. But I am not comfortable because the bathroom is shared with my male employer. Their house is 3 plus 1. The closet of my employers is in my room. I don't actually call it a bedroom because there is a big closet, it also serves as an ironing area at the same time. But the most uncomfortable thing is I am sharing the toilet (P26). We sleep in a playroom. No privacy at all (P18).*

Another aspect of housing issues revealed in the study is the kind of accommodation of the stay-out workers and the place where the stay-in workers stay during their day off and leave. Just like the accommodation of the stay-in workers, these housings have also weak and strong points. They described as usually safe, secured and comfortable. All these mentioned attributes are dependent on the number of people sharing the accommodation. For most of them, these houses are their free-zones. It is where they feel like home and away from work-related stress. However, problems like crowd, noise and sleeping pattern disturbance were reported by those who shared accommodation with fellow OFWs who are married and with children.

*I live with five other OFWs. We live in an apartment. It is safe and secure. I am satisfied with our accommodation (P7). I had decent*

*accommodation. Not fancy but I was comfortable (P9). I am not so satisfied. I share a flat with some Filipinos. One of my housemates has her son with us. Their sleeping pattern is different from ours. When we are asleep they are awake. But the house is decent. It is safe and secured but it is crowded based on the Turkish standard. It is ideal for three occupants but 6 of us live there (P29). I just moved here with my daughter. We were force to vacate the old house because the owner asked for rental fee increase. So, nowadays it is very challenging to find house for accommodation (P6). live in a flat with my partner. We shared it with her aunt. It is quite crowded. Her aunt has her two kids and a cousin. It is secured and safe. We have our own room that gives us privacy (P30).*

Furthermore, in addition to the privacy, security, and comfort aspect of the accommodation of the study participants, it is noteworthy to mention a good aspect of their accommodation in regards to their access to communication to the outside world. The study participants have unanimously praised the availability of internet access in their accommodation as well as the permission given to them by their employers to have their mobile phone readily available. These services allow them to communicate to their loved ones and significant others even amidst their busy working hours as stay-in workers. They can utilize this opportunity to improve their social interaction and activity.

*Yes, there is no problem. I can readily use my phone as long as it does not destruct me from my work. No problem about it (P9). I have access to internet, mobile phone and TV (P3). My phone is readily available. There is no specific ruling. I also have internet connection. I can use it when I need it and when I am free (P28). I have internet access. I can use my phone whenever I need to. The only restriction is when I have to work and if it's busy day (P21).*

#### 4.3.5. Employment Relationship

Another theme identified from the research findings refers to employment relationship. Under this theme, there are identified sub-themes such as the authority in the household and the common causes of disagreements between the employees and their employers. One of the main objectives of social work profession is to promote the general well-being of individuals. While it recognizes the personal factors that can affect the well-being of certain individual, it also looks at the factors that are relevant to group of individuals from the macro level. Taking into consideration the existence of exploitative work conditions such as in domestic labor, social work practice pushes for genuine research in order to formulate a research-based approach to understanding a particular problem. Furthermore, research findings are also utilized by social workers to affect needed change through the development of social policies.

In this connection, the employment relationship between the employers and the undocumented Filipino household workers were examined to complement the general status of their employment. Themes that reflect the existing relationship of the employers and the undocumented Filipino household workers were generated from the gathered data. These are the participant's description of their relationship with their employers, the chain of commands in the household, the common causes of grievances between the employers and their employees, and their healthcare expenditure.

Specifically, the findings of the study show that the majority of the study participants described their relationship with their employers as good since they are able to live harmoniously. They narrated accounts of their employers treating them like real members of their families.

*It is excellent. We are fine. No arguments. We co-exist harmoniously. She treats me like a sister. I just know her mood and acts accordingly (P3). It is generally good. They treat me well. Even the grand parents are so good to me. They usually give me extra money whenever they visit us (P27).*

*It was not so difficult job as there was only one child and they were very kind to me. They did not treat me as an employee but as a friend. I did*

*not have any problem with them (P8). We were good. When they have problems. We were open and they can talk to me about everything. They treat me like a family (P10). It is good. They treat me like a member of the family. We are able to talk (P11).*

Those who are not so satisfied with their relationship with employers associate the situation to the lack of open communication or language barriers as well as the ongoing economic crisis in the country which affects the mood of their employers.

*Generally, it is fine with me. It is only recently, due to the economic crisis that the mom and the grandpa are always arguing. And I am absorbing all the bad vibes (P25). Yes, and it was difficult for me due to language barrier. They could not speak and understand English. My female employer knew only “what is your name”. So, I needed to learn their language for communication (P8). Just fine. We get along but not that closed. My female boss doesn’t understand any English so we can’t talk to each other that much since I also don’t speak Turkish despite being here for several years (P29).*

#### **4.3.5.1. Authority in the Household**

On most occasions, in households where both the male and female employers are present, the female employers are the one who are usually in contact with the household workers for the delegation of tasks. The obvious reason is the fact that they are the ones who are more knowledgeable in regards to the daily tasks that need to be accomplished on a daily basis. However, the ability to communicate in the English language also determines who deals with the household workers since communication skill is really important in this kind of employment relationship and the English language is the most common medium of communication used by Filipino household workers when speaking to their employers and other members of the household. Another determinant factor of the pattern depends on who pays the salary for the household workers.

*Mostly my lady boss. It is very rare for the husband (P11). Mostly the female employer. They don’t actually have to ask me to do anything as I know my job (P26). With Turkish employer both husband and wife.*

*With Foreigner employers, they don't have to. They let the job description dictates (P1). My male boss because he pays for me and he speaks better English (P12).*

#### **4.3.5.2. Common Causes of Grievances/Disagreements**

To dig deeper into the employment relationship that exist between the employers and the Filipino household workers, the study participants were asked to describe the most common causes of conflicts and misunderstandings between the workers and employers. These types of information do not only give hints of the possible actual relationship between the study participants and their employers but also provide additional information regarding the employment practices as well as the working conditions of the study participants. Furthermore, they help to trace potential exploitative behaviors of the employers and possible problem-solving skills of the study participants. These can later on be helpful in the planning of social work interventions.

The study revealed common reasons of arguments or grievances between the household workers and their employers. Accordingly, it generally involves issues such as dishonoring of what has been agreed upon at the beginning of the employment such as day off schedule, job description, and working time. However, the most common issue or source of argument is regarding childcare. This is concerning the childcare methodologies or approached employed by the workers while attending to the care of their employers' children.

*Mostly it's the employers who create problems especially if they already want to get rid of their employee. Especially with Turkish employers (P12). Based on my experience, usually it's about work itself, your performance (P8). About working time. Especially, with the Turkish employers (P16). They do not have open communication between employee and employer. Sometimes, they would immediately terminate the employee (P17).*

*In one of my employers before, it was regarding task. They sometimes keep changing their minds which affect the work or task itself (P6). There is. But sometimes you get annoyed when employers don't follow*

*the schedule. 24-hour day off is usually not followed. Sometimes, the day off is not fixed (P22).*

*With my current employer, the usual cause is childcare. It is more on cultural differences like the way we take care or nurture our children. Sometimes, I try to correct her ways (P27). Usually it is all about the kid. We sometimes clash when it comes to childcare (P14). They care for their kids that is why whenever they cry, they immediately think they are being hurt by their nannies (P1).*

#### **4.3.6. Healthcare Conditions and Expenditure**

As a profession that aims to promote the general well-being of individuals, groups and communities, social work practice takes healthcare as an integral part of its fields of practice. In this research study, the generated data revealed health-related theme referring to health conditions and healthcare expenditure of the study participants. This aspect of the working conditions of the study participants is deemed significant mainly due to the legal status of the participants. Except for the one participant who benefits from the insurance of his wife who is a documented household worker, all the participants of the study were not insured. Therefore, their healthcare expenditure is funded out of their pocket. Fortunately, most of them revealed receiving support from their employers in paying for their medical expenses. This, to some extent, gives an implication of the kind of employment relationship they have with their employers.

The study participants talked about their healthcare in the contexts of expenditure and stress. Due to their irregular status, most of them spend out of pocket money for their health expenditure. However, majority expressed their gratefulness to their employers for always helping out in their healthcare expenditure despite their legal status.

*I always pay for them since I don't have an insurance (P29). As undocumented, it is all from my pocket. But sometimes, employers help (P14). It depends on the employer. If you are fortunate to have generous and understanding employers, they would usually help you out on your health expenditure. Otherwise, undocumented workers pay for their*

*Medicare out of pocket (P11). Of course, as an undocumented worker, it all comes out of my pocket (P9). I paid for them. It is out of pocket (P5).*

*Generally, I pay for them. But there was an instance when I had a minor surgery and my employer that time helped me pay for expenses (P8). I don't have health insurance. But my employer helps when necessary (P26). I have not experienced yet. But sometimes, they include me for their check-up routine and they pay for it all (P25). They help me with it. They give money or they pay for my medicine and or check-ups (P21). When I had cataract surgery. They helped me pay for the operation. So, it depends with the employer (P15).*

In regards to their health conditions, most of the study participants talked about stress. They do not see their employment condition as the only source of their stress but also some other issues they have related to their family back home. Furthermore, they verbalized some psychological or mental health issues they have experienced in addition to physical health issues.

*I sometimes feel over fatigue and get stressed over some issues with work. My illegal status makes me stressful sometimes. It is hard to keep hiding from men in uniform for years (P30). I think I have already been immunized to work-related stress. The only thing that really affect me badly are my family problems back home. I sometimes feel guilty for giving my all by working for other's household while keeping my son away from me. You know I have been here for years and I still feel homesick (P29). I became anemic, hair fall due to stress and the type of food I eat (P28). I sometimes become stressful but usually not due to my work but my family back home (P21). Sometimes, the problems with employers can affect your self-confidence. It makes you demoralized and feel disempowered (P1). Problems with employers can affect your self-confidence. It makes you demoralized and feel disempowered (P26).*

#### **4.4. The Motivations and Preferences Underlying the Supply of Domestic Work Services**

This research study aimed to explore the experiences of the undocumented Filipino household workers in terms of labor market access practices and working conditions. It argues that given the status of domestic labor as poorly regulated and highly informal, it is a potential ground for human rights violations and exploitation. Looking at it through the lens of social work practice, it is not unreasonable to claim that there can be systems and practices existing in the sector which need change to ensure the safety and security of the migrant workers in the sector. Such goal is essential to advancing and promoting the general well-being of the concerned group of migrant workers. However, social work research is not only intended to identify problems that need immediate solutions but more importantly directed to the formulation of solutions based on the strengths of the clients. It is for that rationale that the motivations and preferences of the study participants are given significant focus in this research work.

The information about the main motivations, extrinsic and intrinsic alike, and the preferences of the undocumented Filipino household workers can be utilized to determine the key strengths and weaknesses of the study participants. Social workers do not work for their clients. Instead, they work with their clients to promote change and increase the problem-solving skills of their clients. Determining the strengths of the clients, the study participants, allows the application of strength perspectives approach to social work practice. Therefore, the motivations and preferences of the study participants were explored and are discussed below.

##### **4.4.1. Motivations**

The socio-demographic profiles of the study participants show women household workers as the majority. This reflects the description of the domestic labor market as 'gendered'. Moreover, this group of workers is dominated by women with heterogenic civil status. There are married, divorced, separated and single individuals. However, they are all breadwinners for their families and loved ones back home. They have dependents who

rely on their ability to send financial support back home. Therefore, exploring their motivations and preferences underlying their supply of domestic work in a foreign land is essential in ensuring their general well-being.

This section of this study presents the motivations of the undocumented Filipino household workers in providing domestic service in a country too far away from the comfort of their homes and loved ones. According to the gathered data, family is the main motivation of the study participants in deciding to enter household work employment overseas. Regardless of their civil status, they are all motivated to work as breadwinners for their respective families. The families are generally composed of their parents, own kids and spouses, and their siblings.

*My family. I do not have parents anymore and I am a single mom. I sometimes support my elder brother and my younger sister is the one taking care of my kid (P18). My kids or family. I always think of them, even after having 12 employers since I arrived, I still fight to be able to help my family (P28). To save for my three kids. I am married but I am the breadwinner of the family (P22). I had my in-laws as inspiration. Seeing them being able to provide for their family, buying parcels of land and being able to buy whatever they want has motivated me to do the same for my own family (P1).*

Further analysis of their narratives revealed some push-factors that brought them to come to Turkiye for household work. Some of these factors include the economic crises in the Philippines, the tight competition for employment or worsening high unemployment rate, the low salaries in the Philippines and some personal issues that affect their lives back home.

*I was really disappointed at that time. After giving birth to my son with my ex-partner, I have lost my motivation to finish my studies. The only feasible option was to work and start earning for my family. I am not saying my main motivation at the beginning of this journey was my family. It was not. I went abroad at that time because I was frustrated*

*with my failed relationship with my partner. It was only after years of healing that my family became my main motivation to keep going (P26). However, my mother-in-law kept telling me of what I want for my kids' future. So, I was convinced to leave and follow my husband here (P1). I want to strive to achieve some goals which I believe I can't achieve if I just stay in the Philippines. The situation in the Philippines is so hard (P14). The competition in the Philippines is so tight. It is very hard to find a job. So, I tried here in Turkey to be able to help my parents (P10). I wanted to leave but I have debts. If not for it, I could have left already (P18). the competition in the Philippines is so tight. It is very hard to find a job.*

On the other hand, some pull-factors such as better salary rate and more decent working conditions have attracted them to pursue and continue working in Turkiye as household workers. Some of them revealed that their quest for greener pastures, have helped them to choose Turkiye due to the decent working conditions and much higher salary-rate compared to the Philippines and their former host countries.

*My employers in Qatar used to bring me with them in their trips abroad. I have reached as far as Germany. So, in our last visit to Turkey, I met some Filipinos who guided me to escape my employers. They were the ones who helped me relocate here. I was convinced by their stories telling me they were earning 1000 USD. It was way better than what I was earning in Qatar. I was an Avon franchise manager. I decided to go abroad due to the fact that what I was earning back then was not enough to sustain the needs of my family (P16). I was in Hong Kong for three years. I decided to leave Hong Kong because I wanted to earn more to be able to buy properties and to sustain my support to my families. As a single mom, I really need to work harder (P27).*

#### 4.4.2. Preferences

In addition to motivations, the study participants have also shared their personal preferences as undocumented migrant household workers. The list ranges from work arrangements that is either stay-in or stay-out, the nationality of prospect employers, job search methods as referral or agency, and some character traits of employers.

##### 4.4.2.1. Character Traits and Attributes of Employers

The study participants have different sets of specific criteria when it comes to employer preferences. On top of their list is the character traits of the prospect employers. For the majority of them, prospect employers should possess character traits such as being understanding, considerate, open-minded, respectful, fair, and a sense of compassionateness to subordinates by treating them humanely.

*Yes, that is why I look for an employer who is an open-minded because he understands the situation and he will be considerate. Unlike the close-minded ones who thinks only of their personal interest (P6). Yes of course, they should be respectful of my will as a human. I don't have any certain conditions, as long as they can afford and respectful (P5). Those who treat their employee humanely, understanding or considerate and kind. I should feel they are God-centered, understanding (P28). They just have to be fair. Treat me as a human. Their treatment to us will be one of our motivations to work hard. I also look for someone who pays decent enough. It doesn't matter whether foreigner or Turkish (P20).*

*Actually, I look for someone who watch his/her words. Those who don't say painful words tow their employees. Because when you work, you always do your best. And it is demoralizing on our part, when an employer belittles us and our efforts through bad mouthing. As long they are kind, I don't really mind if they are not super rich. In fact, I prefer those who are middle class, I mean enough to afford my salary because*

*they can better sympathize and understand our feelings as compared to those who are really up there with their riches (P8).*

They also are keen to considering the track-record of the prospect employers based on their experienced with former employees. They look for referees who can attest for the good record of the employers through referencing. In addition to that, they also factor in their safety and security as undocumented workers. They are always looking for potential employers who are willing to get them documented by applying for work permit and at least those who can ensure their safety and security by understanding their travel restrictions.

*Nowadays, I have become choosy when it comes to employment. Firstly, they should have good record based on their former employees. If they require a reference from our former employers, I also look into the feedbacks from their former employees. They should be considerate and understanding. I also make sure that they are really capable to pay my salary (P30).*

*Yes. Their willingness to get me documented. Those who treat me like a family. Who can provide my personal needs like vitamins, so I can work well (P10). I look for an employee who is willing to apply for my working permit (P2). To ensure my privacy and security as an irregular employee. I make it sure that they understand my travel restrictions as undocumented worker (P27).*

Other criteria that they value so much are the nationality of the potential employers and the job description. Although most of them do not really make the nationality of the employers as a deal breaker, there are a few of them who expressed preference of a foreign employers to Turkish employers. They are so very careful with the job description due to personal preferences when it comes to job description.

*With foreigner, they apply their holiday. Their holiday is your holiday as well. It is with pay (P1). Not really, it doesn't matter for me. But All my employers are foreigner. I have not had any Turkish employer so far (P7). But I prefer other nationality to Turkish nationals. I have had bad*

*experiences with Turkish employers. The difference is really evident between the two. I really make sure that my employer is non-Turkish. That is one of my criteria (P1). As long as it is babysitting, I am fine with it. I do not want cleaning because it is very difficult (P4). They just have to be fair. Treat me as a human. Their treatment to us will be one of our motivations to work hard. I also look for someone who pays decent enough. It doesn't matter whether foreigner or Turkish (P29).*

However, there are also some of them who don't strictly follow or observe any specific set of criteria and preferences. For them, as long as there is work offered and the prospect employer has the ability to pay their salary, they are willing to enter employment relationship with anyone. Such perceptions are a manifestation of their resilience and selflessness. That can be considered as one of their strengths considering the general socio-economic status of the category of work they are employed in. However, despite considering such traits as forms of individual strengths, a social worker may address such aspect of individual strength through a transformative approach. A transformative awareness campaign can be organized to prevent the group of workers from becoming blindfolded behind that motivation and continuously stage heroism in a system that keep the reality of exploitation behind the misconception of resilience and selflessness.

*I am the kind of a person whose mantra is "work is work", as long as there is work for me that is fine. I start to get to know about my employer and judge them when I already started working for them. So, I really do not have any pre-judgement criteria. I don't look for it. I don't really choose, once get employed, I do my best to get along with my employer (P7). I have no specific set of criteria. As long as we can get along well, that's fine with me (P25). I do not choose employer. Whatever the agency finds for me (P18). No specific traits, as long as he can pay my salary then I am fine. I don't discriminate whether he is local or a foreigner too (P9). This is what I do. I apply through the agency or with some agents. I send videos for application. So, education is an advantage. We really need to send videos and give reference from*

*previous employers. So, I am more of agency or agent. But I started not going to the agency as their employers are toxic (P28).*

#### **4.4.2.2. Recruitment Method Preferences**

Job search practice method of referencing is of a great importance for the study participants. As what have already been mentioned, most of them find employment through the referrals of their friends and through recruitment agencies. Both these methods are common among this particular group of household workers. However, the data has revealed that finding jobs through friend's referral is more common and the most preferred by many. Based on their narratives, agency practices and trust issues lead most of the study participants' preference of their friends' referrals as a form of recruitment practice.

*Just through referral. I don't go to agency anymore because if you go to agency, you have to compete with many other applicants. So, it is much better to be referred by friends or by a former employer like my case now. Referral is built on trust. I also don't like the new method employed by agencies. You have to send a video of yourself talking about credential. I really hate that one, I prefer the old practice of personal interview or appearance. It is really difficult through agency (P6). I always ask my friends. I depend on their referral. I don't go to any agency. I have learned my lesson after being scammed by a recruitment agent for Italy. I have had enough (P29). Through referral. Because in agency, the age matters. I prefer face to face interview than sending video (P15). Through friend's referral. Because if through agency, they will kickback some amounts either from my employer or from your own pocket unlike if it is referral. And it does not require interview (P12).*

It has already been mentioned previously that among the participants of the study, more employment seekers preferred referral from friends and former employers to recruitment agency as an employment seeking practice. The specified reasons behind such employment practices has something to do with existing 'trust issues' and some types of

recruitment practices employed by recruitment agencies. Such issues are not among the particular coverage of this research. However, due to their significance to the general well-being of the study participants, this research suggests inclusion of such issues as topics to cover for further research on the subject matter. That can give a more comprehensive outlook on how domestic labor recruitment agencies in Türkiye operate. In this area, social workers are concerned of possible inhumane practice by the recruitment agencies.

#### **4.4.2.3 Working Arrangement Preferences**

Equally significant preference of the study participants is in regards to the working arrangement. Some of them resort to stay-out work arrangement because of reasons like having their own kids living with them and their extrovert nature. However, others choose stay-in work arrangement due to practical reasons such as finance, safety and security. This actually implies their awareness of the threats and their vulnerability as undocumented migrant workers.

*I prefer stay-in because it is more practical. Staying out is more expensive and it is very difficult to wake up and travel to work in winter (P13). I don't want because it is way too expensive especially nowadays. I work in Beyköz and transportation fare has become very expensive. Also, if I stay-out I will have more time to buy drinks. I will cook everything I want to eat. Others prefer to stay-out because they are paying a house. So, they want to make full use of it (P12).*

#### **4.5. The Coping Mechanism/Strategies of the Workers in Overcoming Employment-related Problems and Challenges**

The study participants have disposition that make them susceptible to human rights violations and exploitations in their work places. One of the main reasons for such vulnerability is their status as undocumented migrant workers. Another equally key factor is the general status of domestic labor market in Türkiye in which they are deployed. Recognizing that the mentioned risk factors have impact to the general well-being of the undocumented Filipino household workers in Türkiye, this social work research aimed to explore the coping mechanisms and problem-solving strategies of the said study participants. Such information is essential in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of

the study participants; determining the key areas that need social work interventions; and in classifying which concerns can be addressed in micro and macro levels.

#### **4.5.1. Personal Coping Mechanisms**

Due to their working conditions and legal status, the study participants are evidently aware of their need for strong support systems and coping mechanism to survive the stressful, tiring and often risky employment conditions as irregular migrant household workers. They identified their personal coping mechanisms which help them get through the challenges and hurdles they have to face in Turkiye. On top of their list is their connection to divine being through prayers. They seek refuge in God through performing individual prayers and whenever possible attending weekly masses in Church.

*First is through prayer. I reflect and think of the many reason of my being here. I also keep myself socially active. I hang out with our friends and join some of the activities organized by different Filipino communities (P30). Prayers. I pray to God for more patience and wisdom. To be able to understand my employers. I clean up. Meet with friends over coffee. And talk about issues with employers (P1). I just focus on working, take medicines. I usually pray when I am stress. But I don't talk to friends when I am really stressed (P2).*

Aside from the spiritual dimension of their coping mechanism, they also cope through entertainment and fitness. They tend to meet up with their friends in karaoke sessions, shopping and workout activities. Most of them has talked about their favorite past time activity which is singing as their most common destressing activity. That always happens as a staple of their small gathering after sharing Filipino cuisine which they always serve in their get-together.

*I go out with friends. We shop, eat and hangout (P26). Being patient. Bonding with friends. Sing along during day offs (20). So, I drink coffee, I watch Netflix. I usually just stay home. For prayers, you do it every time whenever wherever possible. Not only when you have problems (P8). I pray and I keep writing my feelings down on a small paper. I just*

*talk to friend or smoke cigarette. I am the type of a person who does not share much about my personal problems (P12).*

The above description of the study participants' personal coping mechanisms revealed an extent of their religiosity and their fondness to entertainment. These two are some of the factors that shape their personal coping mechanisms. Based on their demographic profiles, they are affiliated to different religious beliefs particularly Christianity. This can be considered as one of their strengths that spiritual social workers can utilize as a guide in planning social work interventions aimed to motivating and empowering this type of social work clients. However, further research on this aspect needs to be conducted to explore further this aspect of their strengths. Doing this will lead to exploration of their lived experiences in terms of their religious activities. Such initiatives can actually help reveal their empowerment levels in practicing religious freedom in a country with a dominant Muslim population. One manifestation of such empowerment would be their access to religious facilities. On the other hand, there evident fun nature manifested by their subscription to entertaining ways of overcoming challenges is another form of strength that can be utilized not only on personal level but also on a community level. This leads to the discussion of the following subthemes, community affiliation.

#### **4.5.2. Community Affiliation**

The socio-demographic profile of the study participants shows that despite the distance between their work places, which are located in different parts of Istanbul, their residence addresses are consolidated in one geographical area. Most of them are residing in the Municipality of Kağıthane. This implies the need of the study participants to locate in a community that can serve as an alternative to their main support system which they cannot enjoy in a foreign country. Moreover, the study participants find solace within their chosen communities or association. For most of them, in the absence of their immediate family, they source their support systems from the different Filipino communities in Turkiye. With the exception of the few, who have trust issues with their fellow OFWs, most of them try to be active by becoming members of different Filipino associations of their

choice. Through this kind of practice, the fire within them to sacrifice for the sake of their families' well-being are kept at forefront of their support base.

As mentioned in the previous chapters of this research, Filipino migrant workers around the world are collectively known as Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). They generally connect to their roots through organizing communities and association among themselves. There are different communities, organizations or groups of Filipino workers in Türkiye. In Istanbul, the largest and most popular ones are The Filipino Community Istanbul (FCI) and the Filipino Community in Turkiye (FCT). There are also smaller groups existing to consolidate members who hold the same interests and hobbies. However, these groups come together for shared causes under the mentioned two large communities and in many instances in coordination with the Philippine Embassy in Ankara and the General Consulate Istanbul.

*I try to fight it by focusing on work. Reminding myself of the reasons why I am here working. My friends in moms and kids are a big help to. I watch my favorite K-dramas. Actually, with all that I went through, you can write a book about it. I just keep fighting and trying to stay healthy for my family (P6). I just focus on working, take medicines. I usually pray when I am stress. But I don't talk to friends when I am really stressed. They usually have the tendency to gossip about it (P2). I know only about some Filipino communities. I used to be an active member of a certain association but I don't trust them anymore. I know of many people who were members of the said organization and they left too (P29).*

Surprisingly, though they recognize the significance of the Philippine Embassy and the Consulate General based in Istanbul, most of the participants consider the different active Filipino Communities as the first avenue to take refuge in when problems arise. They see them as quicker and more easily available compared to the former.

*I know the embassy. It is now better since we have the general consulate here in Istanbul. I also consider the Filipino communities. Not heard about international organizations (P1). The Philippine Embassy, The*

*General Consulate in Istanbul and of course the FCT (P27). FCT. It is actually the most active organization (P22). The FCT or the community. They are active and responsive to our concerns (P21). FCT. They are quicker. Embassy is too slow, there are so many processes to follow (P20). Generally, the FCT. They seem to be quicker than the embassy (P11). The Philippine embassy or the FCT. Filipino Community or FilCom has always been there ready to help. Actually, FCT is faster than the embassy. So, more on FilCom (P8).*

Identified above are some of the strengths of the study participants. It is noteworthy that most of them possess faith-based belief systems which can be used as a guide in formulating social work interventions through social work approaches such as empowerment and spiritual social work. Moreover, the existence of different Filipino organizations is one avenue that social workers can utilize to help bring social change in the sector through community organizing. This is a great asset that can possibly be tapped to forge social work interventions such as motivational social work and counselling activities in the micro level and more comprehensive and genuine social work research at the macro level. However, the trust issues that persist among the study participants towards the Filipino officials in the Philippine embassy needs to be addressed through collaborative approach by all the stakeholders. In this connection, social workers can lead such prime move using their professional assets of knowledge, skills and values. Moreover, they can use their key roles such as facilitators, link-agents, policy development advocates.

#### **4.5.3. Rights Awareness**

Social work is a profession that promotes social change. Significant aspects of the profession's approach to achieve such social change lies in its human rights advocacy. This mandate of the profession stems from one of the core values of social work premium value in respecting the inherent dignity and worth of individual. To sustain the gains from such advocacy, social work practitioners do not only bring attention to the existence of human rights violations but more importantly help educate clients of their basic human

rights and for this specific group of migrant workers, their rights as migrant domestic workers. Awareness of the rights they possess as human beings can help the study participants in their decision making. Their knowledge of their human rights can make them remain hopeful and be motivated and continue to have positive outlook of what lies ahead of them as migrant workers. Furthermore, awareness of their restricted mobility and rights as undocumented workers can guide them in becoming extra careful throughout their migration journey.

In complementary to the above-mentioned coping mechanisms and support systems, the knowledge of the study participants in regards to their basic human rights and rights as migrant workers, are significant for their general well-being. Based on the gathered data, while most of them are knowledgeable of their rights, there are some of them who are partially aware and some who are non-aware at all. Those who left the Philippines with proofs of overseas employment documents have gone through orientation and seminars which tackle about their rights, while those who left as tourists depend on what they have learned from school regarding basic human rights. Further, some of them see them as valueless and of no benefits due to the fact that their drive to fight for them is restricted by their undocumented or legal status.

*I am. We were taught in our training about those stuffs (P8). Yes. I am. They are even thought about it during orientation (P3). I am aware of them, my OWWA training covered that topic (P11). Yes, of course. That was part of our OWWA training. They taught us about our rights as OFWs (P7). Yes of course, that is actually taught by OWWA during orientation pre-departure (P5).*

*Actually no. Since I left Philippines as a tourist so I did not receive the usual orientation. But in Dubai, I know my rights because I signed contracts. But here in Turkiye no I do not know (P4). I am not really aware. I just know what I have to do, my duties as a household work (P28). We just talk about it nicely (P22). I know some. But even when they are wrong as long as they don't physically hurt me I am fine (P12). I just know some of them not all (P6).*

*I am aware of my human rights and my rights as an undocumented worker (P1). Yes, of course. But given my condition, I don't really fight for it (P25). Yes, I am. It makes me sad that they seem valueless given the situation of my legal status. I cannot stand up and fight for my rights (P30). We can't do anything since we lack the legal documents to fight for our rights (P17). I remember we were taught about it before we flew abroad. But to be honest I forgot most of them since becoming undocumented. I feel like I have no single right that I can fight for. I don't think it matters anymore given my legal status (P29).*

The significant numbers of the study participants who are not aware of their basic rights call for the attention of all concerned stakeholders and most especially of the defenders of social justice, the social workers, to lead in the rights education and policy awareness of the study participants or such category of worker as a whole. Such finding is a manifestation of the labor migration practice through tourist visa acquisition. That also validates the recommendation of this research study to provide a version of pre-deployment training programs to be provided firstly to those migrant workers who initially left their home country as tourist, hence skipping the mandatory pre-deployment trainings and orientation.

#### **4.5.4. Problem-Solving Methods**

Throughout the discussion above, it has been repeatedly emphasized that household workers are under a work category that is disadvantaged and vulnerable. In other words, they are exposed to a precarious employment condition. In that instance, the study participants who are undocumented migrant household workers have precarities that arise from their undocumented status, precarity within the local domestic labor market, precarity brought out by their social isolation and the absence of effective union voice at work, in community as well as in the political processes.

In line with that, this research study included the identification of the specific problem-solving methods of the study participants in recognition to one of the main objectives of the social work profession which is to increase people's problem-solving, coping and

development capacities. These types of information have somewhat revealed what study participants already know and what more they need to know to ensure their well-being as migrant household workers. In short, it can help social workers identify what needs to be strengthened and what is to be avoided.

The analysis of the common causes of grievances and disagreement between household workers and their employers reflected the common attitudes manifested by the workers in response to the conflicts they face.

Firstly, they compose themselves by reacting in a humble, patient and considerate manners. They usually show humility by owning to their mistakes and use them as a motivation to get better the next time around. They are usually patient amidst the tension and wait for the right moment to get time from their employers in order for both parties to be able to talk things over and resolve any existing issues. They also try to be considerate enough to be open-minded and showing empathy by understanding the factors such as work-related stress which probably affect their employers. If such approach doesn't seem to be working to resolve their issues, that's the time they consider calling for support from the Filipino Communities and their recruiting agency for those who get employment through recruitment agencies. Furthermore, if none of those methods and channels work to resolve the issues, they resort to breaking from the employment relationship by leaving the household usually without prior notice to the employers. In most cases, they only seek help from the Philippine embassy if none of their chosen methods are effective enough to solve the issues they experienced.

*Actually, their complaints were just simple things regarding the kids. And we usually get to solve everything by talking it over. Just matters about cleaning and time with the kids (P10). I always talk to my employer whenever there is an issue (P30). They just talk to us. We actually sit down and talk things over (P20). Whenever I have a complaint or an issue that needs to be addressed, I request for a time with my employer to talk about it (P30). I try to be patient and considerate enough. However, if it gets way too late, that is the time I start approaching them and remind me because just like them I also*

*have significant others to feed. I have bills to pay. At the beginning of our employment relationship, we made it clear that whenever we have complaint for each other we would talk about it. We would keep reminding each other about how we feel for each other's performance. So, we both agreed on that (P6).*

*I just keep silent and talk things over when she is calmed (P3). I open up and talk to them in a nice approach. Being humble is the key (P28). Be humble and ask for apology and learn from my mistake (P24). Nothing, since I could do anything even if I wanted to (P22). Better communication. Everything can be solved through communication (P13). Hmm, they just remind me. They always talk to me in a nice way and I make up for that the following days. I also make sure I do my task in the best way I can. No corresponding punishment at all (P7). When they have a complain, they would talk to me directly. They cannot complain to the agency since I was a direct hired with no agency or third party involved (P1).*

The excerpts mentioned above reflects the general character traits of the study participants. It is not surprising that they would manifest them in the way they face and solve the problems they experience in their work employment relationship. However, there are issues that they could not help solve by just manifesting such character traits and by being submissive to the will of their employers. Doing so will just make them victims of the exploitative employment relationship. In those instances, they need the support of their communities and social workers who are fighters of social injustice. Some specific examples of such issues are reflected in their experiences as victims of scamming in their attempt to get regular employment status. The call to address such issues and bringing the perpetrators to justice are issues that require the collaborative approach of all the stakeholders. This research argues that a more comprehensive genuine social work research on the subject matters will be an essential element of an integrative approach to address such issues.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

This final chapter presents a summary and discussion of the research. It examines the socio-demographic profiles of the study sample, their experiences in terms of their employment practices and their general working condition. It also highlights the limitations of the research study. Finally, the study implications for social work practice, policy and research are tackled and ended with the conclusive remarks.

#### **5.1. Summary of the Socio-demographic Profiles of the Study Participants**

The sample used in this study consists of 30 undocumented Filipino household workers. The majority of them aged from 30 to 50 years old. This age range is so close to employers' preference of young workers revealed by some studies. Employers of Filipina workers prefer the age of employee to be lower than 45 (Deniz,2018). Over 63% were officially married but more than 52% of them identified themselves as separated. The 87% of the study participants reported having at least 1 up to 6 number of dependents. Significantly, there were more female respondents than male respondents. More than 83% of the participants were female. This is consistent with the finding of Toksöz, et al. (2012: 23) which has revealed that gender-segregation of labor intensive category of works has seen more female workers in care and domestic services while most male workers participate in food-restaurant sector. This finding is also reflected in the literature of Philippine labor migration. Between 60-80% of these migrants are women (Asis et al., 2004) and it is fair to say that Filipinas have assimilated migration into their culture (Asis, 2006).

In terms of educational attainment, the lowest educational level of the participants is high school and 50% are Bachelor's Degree holders. This reflects the description of this group of workers having decent level of education. Currently, completion of high school has become a requirement for prospect migrant Filipino workers (Gursön, 2021). Moreover, such finding was also reflected in some previous research. Filipina workers reported educational attainment tallying 80 percent as bachelor degrees while the remaining 20

percent are high school completers (Ayaydın, 2020). Further, studies on Filipina workers describe the group with decent level of education who found their calling in domestic work in order to transform into wage labor on international level the unpaid labor in their own households (Tolentino, 1996).

Interestingly, except for one Muslim revert, all of them are Christians. In addition, the majority of the respondents trace their regional origin from the Northern parts of the Philippines accounting for 67%, while those who originated from the Central and Southern parts of the country accounted for 27% and 6% respectively. At the time of the in-depth interviews, all the study participants were currently employed with 67% stay-in and 33% stay-out. The majority of their workplaces, that is 77% were located in the European side of Istanbul, and the remaining 23% were in the Anatolian side. Moreover, the 80% of the participants were residing in the municipality of Kağıthane and the remaining 20% were residents of the nearby districts such as Beşiktaş, Şişli and Üsküdar. Their being concentrated in one residential district implies their bonds to their fellow countrymen and their being not too open to other communities. These three variables can be considered as a probable measure of social support among the respondents. There exists some extent of homogeneity in terms of their belief system, home of origins, and their geographical locations in their current residential addresses. These are essentials in developing camaraderie and social solidarity among the respondents through union, organizations and networks. In other words, they can be considered to have strong bonds and solid social network based on their commonalities or shared systems. However, some researchers have described such attitudes as a form of self-identity management system. Accordingly, it results to the development of their self-identity system by using their strengths inclusive of their decent level of educational attainment and their better English proficiency compared to other migrant workers from other countries (Vargas & Garabiles & Halls, 2019).

The employment history of the study participants revealed that the study participants have previously worked in non-household work categories both in the Philippines and abroad. In fact, except for the three who reported having not experienced employment in other sectors aside from domestic work, most of them had been previously employed in different

categories of work ranging from service industry, corporate sector, security sector to maritime business industry before their employment in the domestic labor sector. This is consistent with the findings of D'Souza (2010: 35) which has revealed that the number of professionals in countries who migrate for household service work is significant. Furthermore, the brief employment history of the study respondents gives a gist of their employment evolution. It is evident that not all of them were leaning to domestic labor as a primary or starting point of career employment. It can, therefore, be claimed that their loyalty or commitment to the ideals of their current careers may not necessarily be affective in nature. It may be more of 'rational' choice. These migrant workers are well aware of the self-sacrifice they were into since the beginning of their migration journey. They still choose to take the risks in order for them to climb upward in the ladder of economic mobility (Bolante, 2014).

## **5.2. The Labor Market Access Practices**

The patterns of the labor market access practices of the undocumented Filipino household workers were traced through their long labor migration process. This process covers every step of the way in different phases of the migration cycle. The initial phase is the pre-deployment period. This generally covers practices such as trainings, job search or recruitment practices, and visa acquisition. The other phase refers to the period during and after the deployment. This covers the practices of the participants after the first deployment ended. Specifically, it includes their re-employment practices within Turkiye or from their previous host countries.

Filipino domestic workers joined the labor market in Turkiye particularly in Istanbul following the demand for domestic service providers in the country since the 1990s (Özbay, 2019). As mentioned above, the study participants have accessed the domestic labor market in Turkiye through different methods. The first way is through a formal labor migration process. Those who took this way started the legal process by attending pre-deployment programs such as trainings and pre-departure orientation and seminars conducted by official agencies in the Philippines. The result of this study has revealed varied experiences of the participants in terms of trainings administration and regulations. This is consistent with the findings of the study conducted by the CMA which revealed

the need to address certain gaps in the administration and regulation of the mentioned pre-deployment practices in terms of placement and training fees, document authentication, and rights awareness (CMA, 2019: 2). Moreover, they used recruitment channels consisting of recruitment agencies recommended by POEA, recruitment websites and family or friends network to find Turkish household work employers. According to İçduygu & Aksel, (2012: 18), migration expectations and motives are affected by the prior knowledge possessed by immigrants about migration destinations.

The second way took by some of the participants was through a semi-formal method. This is done through the tourist visa acquisition policy. They applied for tourist visa and then later on sought household employment upon arrival in Türkiye. In relation to this is the study of Toksöz, Erdoğan & Kaşka (2012) that hinted about a certain level of tolerant approach by some government officials of Türkiye, for those who entered the country through the shuttle migration (İçduygu & Aksel, 2012), depending on some factors which include pursuing employment in the care and domestic services. The semi-formality of this method stemmed from the fact that though they took the legal process by acquiring tourist visa legally, they have skipped formal processes such as attending mandatory pre-deployment trainings and orientation seminars and the use of tourist visa for employment purposes.

The narratives of the study participants in regards to their pre-deployment trainings revealed some key points in relation to their strengths and weaknesses. It can be said that their pre-deployment trainings, when administered effectively and humanly, can be considered as a form of strength as they do not only upgrade their knowledge and skills but also enhance their safety and security measures in their journey as migrant workers. However, in addition to the mentioned loopholes in the system in terms of payment and incidence of exploitation, there is obviously a need for the replication of such programs in their respective country of destinations. Such will not only help refresh the undertaken pre-deployment trainings of the workers but more importantly will serve as a remedial program for those who have missed the pre-deployment training program by departing with tourist visa. Furthermore, having such replication as a part of refreshment and or remedial program will surely help increase the problem-solving, coping and development

capacities of the migrant household workers which is one of the main objectives of the social work practice.

Based on the narratives of some of the participants in regards to their job search practices, it can be noticed that the existence of networking as a form of job search or recruitment practice is still very rampant among the respondents of this study. This is quite the opposite of the findings of the IOM surveys in 1995 and 2003 which have revealed that a significant number of the immigrants decided to migrate to the country on an individual basis and not necessarily with the support of Turkiye-based social networks (Içduygu & Aksel, 2012: 8). This aspect of domestic labor market practices of the study participants gives an implication that the high tendency of irregular employment is not a surprising consequence. Migrant workers who arrive to Turkiye via tourist visa are usually the ones who skipped the legal process of labor migration by setting aside the role of the POEA in their migration cycles. Without the legal functions of the said agency, the migrant household workers are at risk of falling victims to employment issues such as vague job descriptions and lack of employment contracts among others.

In this connection, social work practice can contribute to preventing the negative impacts of such phenomenon by employing measures through its roles in advocacy, coordination, and counselling. On a macro practice level, further social work research on the subject matter can be employed to generate supporting data for appropriate policies in enriching the mechanism of labor migration which guarantees effective and humane systems. Furthermore, social work practitioners can use their knowledge and skills to link the undocumented household workers to systems that provide resources and services to clients that are in need of assistance in their quest for decent employment opportunities and practices.

The third way is known to the study participants as ‘cross-country’ method. This is the process taken by the participants to access the domestic labor in Turkiye from other foreign countries in which they were formerly deployed or granted tourist visa. The motivations behind this process vary among the participants. Some of them have taken this process to seek employment in Turkiye following the end of their employment in the former host countries. Others used this path to access the domestic labor market in Turkiye

following most often the premature ending of their employment contracts in other foreign countries. There were also some of them who purposefully made a choice to transfer to Turkiye due to a perceived 'better employment conditions' and for a greener pasture. However, some of them took a detour to Turkiye to skip war in former host countries and as a gateway to run away from employers who brought them along to Turkiye for short term visits for purposes like tourism and medical treatments. In general, the study participants seek re-employment through recruitment agencies and referencing by former employers and referral from friends.

The cross-country experiences of the study participants imply several issues on labor migration such as employment termination and separation and transfer of contract between countries. One of the ways to solve such complexities is proper coordination and strict monitoring by the involved official agencies between countries. For such situations, social work professionals can contribute by sharing their knowledge and skills both in the macro and micro levels of practice. Like for instance, they can utilize their research skills and policy development proficiency to provide essential measures to address the problems on the macro level. On the other hand, they can help empower the involved migrant workers through providing intensive counselling and coordination with individual and group clients. On the micro level, social work professionals can utilize their wide range of knowledge to link the client with institutions or systems that provide opportunities and services to their unique needs as migrant workers.

The finding of this study on the different modes of migration flows from the Philippines to Turkiye reflected some research findings in the past. One example is the study of Akalın which identified the modes of such migration flows through three different routes. The first was the arrival of diplomats accompanied by their Filipino workers which marked the earlier arrival of Filipino workers in Turkiye in 1990s; the second route was opened up resulting from the conflicts in Gulf States which forced Filipino workers to escape through Turkiye; the third route and the most common one in recent times is through the Philippine-based recruitment agencies (Akalın, 2014).

The study participants were all irregular labor migrants. Except for the one who holds a residence permit as a dependent of his wife, who is a registered household worker, all the

rest hold neither a residence permit nor a work permit. This is consistent with previous study that claimed that most of the migrants coming to Türkiye hold neither residence permits nor work permits (Içduygu & Aksel, 2012: 19). However, all of them entered Türkiye with either short-term residence permits for those who came with tourist visa and work permits for those who arrived as household workers upon entering the country.

The reasons that caused them to become undocumented vary. Identified reasons of losing their work permit were mostly because of employers' fault. This includes inability of the employers to pay for the mandatory monthly contribution and their negligence to transfer the work permit to new employers after ending the employment relationship with the household worker. Part of that factor also is their failure to apply for work permit for their employees who were holders of residence permit during the recruitment process. On the other hand, there were also instances wherein migrant household workers lose their work permit after they intentionally resigned from their work without due process and that often results to employers having the permit cut by the concerned agencies or institutions. These reflect study findings such as employers' preference of migrant workers for a lower labor-cost (Toksöz, Erdoğan & Kaşka, 2012: 23); and the lack of legal protection for domestic workers (Brites, 2013: 435).

Even as undocumented migrant workers, they are still able to access the domestic labor market and find employment using highly informal employment practices in Türkiye. There are actually existing recruitment agencies that cater services for employment-seeking migrant household workers. In addition, direct hiring of migrant household workers is also very common in the country's domestic labor market. This is formed through networking or referencing. The majority of these migrants enter the Türkiye through recruitment agencies. They typically make advantage of the network of employed immigrant women (Gursön, 2021). Through the help of these agencies, networks such as siblings and or children of those who are already in the country are brought in and that expands both the formal and informal network systems for employment (Deniz, 2018).

In other words, employment seekers depend on the referral of their friends and or from their former employers for new employment opportunities. The forms of employment generated through these practices are either full-time or part-time bases. They can also be

either stay-in or stay-out arrangements. Full-time employments are usually on a long-term basis while part-time employments are generally short-term based. Specifically, they seek for part-time employment during their waiting period or while looking for a full-time employment. This is also a common practice when a friend or an acquaintance is seeking for a reliever who will temporarily replace them during their annual vacation.

Searching for job overseas appears to be the first and simplest process of the migration cycle. Furthermore, with the easy access to information such as job offerings around the world made easier by the development of internet and social media, prospect migrant workers are actually clicks away from their desired jobs in their preferred migration destinations. However, along with these developments and easiness are issues on safety and securities brought out by the bulks of platforms and recruitment websites, both legal and illegal, mushrooming online. All these factors combined, it is not difficult to claim that users of such platforms are at high risks of falling victims to illegal recruitment agents, scamming schemes, smuggling and human trafficking to mention a few. Social work practice has a significant role in combatting the mentioned risks through its role of research, human rights advocacy and policy development. Social workers can utilize these roles in the different levels of social work practice. The findings of this research study, is surely a reference which can be utilized to gauge the magnitude of deficit decent-work opportunities for migrant workers who are disadvantaged and vulnerable to exploitation.

Contractual practices such as the formulation and provision of employment agreement keeps the undocumented migrant household workers at a disadvantage. Even though there is still a possibility of a written contractual agreement for those who get employed through recruitment agencies, the majority of the study participants depend on the verbal agreement with their employers. However, both the two forms of employment agreement do not provide a term for insurance to employees and are usually just for formality purposes as they are mostly not followed. This aspect of this employment relationship reflects the study of Anderson & O'Connell (2003) which claimed that a survey in four countries 18% of interviewed employers do not think that household workers are entitled for employment contracts, 70% opposed their right for unionization, 52% were against standardizing minimum wage, & 45% were not in favor of applying fixed working hours (Anderson & O'Connell, 2003: 33 as cited in D'Souza, 2010: 18).

Generally, the participants' employment agreements consist of employment terms and conditions containing the job description, salary rate, day off schedules and annual leave arrangements. Interestingly, terms such as employment termination and work separation practices are commonly missing in the employment agreement. With the absence of a law-binding written employment contract, the study participants are susceptible to employment-related exploitation and violence. Examples of such includes vague job descriptions, forced work termination, and inability to demand and fight for some of their employment rights. These often results to systemic human rights violations and structured social injustice. These socioeconomic issues are considered as social work issues requiring social work interventions in line with some of the objectives of social work in ensuring that systems or mechanisms governing labor migration work effectively and humanly. Like for instance, social worker practitioners can help this group of workers by collaborating with different stakeholders inclusive of the recruitment agencies, recruitment agents, leaders of Filipino communities and the Filipino household workers in order to come up with some standard operating procedures which can at least minimize, if not totally eradicate, injustices and abuses in their employment practices aggravated by their illegal status. Collaborative efforts by these stakeholders can lead to the strengthening and promotion of employment through recruitment agencies to ensure better contractual practices and more accountable employers.

### **5.3. The General Working Conditions of the Study Participants**

The research findings revealed several themes pertaining to the general working conditions of the study participants. The identified themes include the remuneration methods and practices, salary protection issues, scope of their work or jobs, accommodation, employment relationship, and the health conditions and healthcare expenditure of the study participants. The general working conditions of the study participants vary. The variance generally depends on their work arrangements and their job descriptions.

The average salary of the study participants is generally high because of their higher status in the hierarchy of domestic labor market in Turkiye. Globally, Filipino domestic workers

are projected as docile workers, readily available and cheap (Weyland, 1997 & Salzinger, 2003); well-educated (Ayaydın, 2020); with better English language proficiency level (Weyland, 1994; Erino, 1997; Lorente, 2007; & Swartz, 2015); & they are scarce and luxurious (Redlova, 2013). In Türkiye, they are described in literature as hard-working, industrious and task-oriented (Ayaydın, 2020; Deniz, 2018; & Weyland, 1997). In Türkiye, the wages provided to migrant laborers vary according to their nationality, although they typically range from 400 to 800 USD. (Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020). That is lower than the reported average salary of the Filipino household workers which ranges from 800 to 1,500 USD at the same period of time. Many of the participants are verbalized satisfaction with their salary rate despite their irregular status. The perception of most of the study participants regarding the fairness of their salary rate might not be completely genuine. There seems to be a certain level of hesitancy in their judgement. That can be an implication of some extent of suppression within themselves. There is a clear manifestation that their legal status makes them suppress their pure perception of how they feel about the actual salary rate they receive. However, there is a need to reiterate that the heterogeneity in their perceptions could be affected by factors such as their work arrangements and job descriptions.

Moreover, while the majority is satisfied with the rate and the paying methods, there were some of them who have experienced issues like delayed payment, salary cuts, and non-payment. This is consistent with the findings of a study of Toksöz, et al, (2012). Accordingly, migrant workers report of incidence of despair due to their inability to assert their rights in cases like employer's refusal to pay their hard-earned salary. In addition, there were also voiced out concerns about the lack of pay slips and issues in safe-keeping of their monthly income. The existence of such issues proves the advantage of employment through recruitment agency over the direct hiring through referrals. With an agency, an employee can file a complaint and seek support from the agency to fight for their rights. Same privilege is not accessible for those who were direct-hired. Most of them are hired for childcare, elderly care, and general housekeeping chores.

The above-mentioned salary protection issues faced by the study participants give a specific area of vulnerability. Although they are some expected consequences of the absence of legal regulation and protection, they are also related to their employment

practices preferences. Like for instance, their illegal status makes them unable to apply for bank account which can help them to keep their salary safe and secure. In addition, they cannot file complaint in cases of non-payment of salary due to legal constraint. However, based on their narratives, there are some existing alternatives which can help decrease, if not completely prevent, the issues of salary protection. It seems that employment through recruitment agency gives the workers some mechanisms to fight for their rights. For such conditions, they need to keep communication and or affiliation with communities and organizations which can provide guidance and support in dealing with such affairs. In such instances, social workers can play their roles as facilitators and community organizers in order to help such types of clients. Social workers can work with some of the communities to organize social policy awareness campaign among the migrant household workers. For example, a seminar about the advantages and disadvantages of the existing recruitment and job search practices existing in Turkiye can be organized collaboratively. In this way, migrant household workers will have better guide in their employment seeking process.

Another aspect of this type of employment relationship is the nature of the work itself. The most common domestic service provided by the study participants is childcare. This what makes them known as ‘nannies’. From the lens of social work, the issue of vulnerability is considered to be of higher intensity in this specific context. On the one hand we have the unprotected undocumented migrant household workers and on the other are little children left at the hands of foreign entities in their respective households. It can be argued that this arrangement is an innate nature of this type of employment relationship. However, there needs to be measures to ensure the safety and security of the children under the care of these undocumented migrant workers. Although there is no evidence of such incidents in this work as it is out of the coverage of the research study, there is obviously an implication of probable threats in terms of the security and safety of the receivers of the domestic services. Such conditions rationalize the need to strengthen and improve the policies on domestic labor market in the country. Although it is not an absolute guarantee, improving the working conditions of the migrant household workers by ensuring the entire systems to be effective and humane can lessen the security and safety threats to which the children under care are at risk for.

Based on the findings of the study, Job description is one of the most commonly violated employment terms and conditions not only among the study participants but the whole domestic labor sector in general. Such is an actual consequent of the domestic labor that is describe as isolated and highly informal. In the case of the study participants, they have both structural obstacles and personal preferences affecting their problem of having vague job description. The wide practice of job search via referrals and without the involvement of a third party like recruitment agency causes them to lose the privilege of having a written form of employment agreement. The findings of the study revealed that those who are recruited through recruitment agencies sign employment agreement. The agreement has the involved recruitment agency as the third party which is positioned to mediate between the two parties, the employer and the household worker. In cases of any complain, both the employers and the employees can address it to the concerned agency. On the other hand, those who were directly hired through informal channels such as referrals by friends or former employers, they generally depend on the moral conscience of their employers to comply with the terms agreed verbally. This attitude of the workers to prefer friends' job referral to recruitment agencies which took part in the process of necessary migration processes (Solomon, 2009) but later on caused problems inclusive of illegal recruitment and placement fees as well as contract substitution among others (Asis, 2017).

There was no major complaint regarding heavy workload but stay-in workers complained about longer working hours. The number of regular day offs and its schedules vary among the participants. While the majority has one day weekly day off, some has less frequent like those who only have once in two weeks day off. The scheduling is flexible but mostly on the weekends. Yılmaz & Özaydın reflected this condition in their work which found that 47 % of migrant women who participated in their study, work for 24 hours, and out of this 47%, 17 of them said they had less than 12 hours weekly leave (Yılmaz & Özaydın, 2020). The issue on long working hours especially for stay-in household workers is consistent with the research findings of Toksöz, et al. (2012: 23), Klemm, et al. (2011: 3) & Grumiau, S. (2007).

Another complicated aspect of their working condition is the terms for leaves and vacation. As irregular employees, they do not enjoy the privilege of non-working holidays. They are allowed a sick leave for a limited period, if not they usually get replaced.

Moreover, the standard practice of all-paid annual vacation grant is not usually followed due to their legal status. The excessive practice of verbal agreement has made the domestic workers to have no clear job description or annual leave, which makes them more vulnerable to exploitation (Gürson, 2021). However, some of them negotiate and bargain. Depending on their agreement with their employers, they sometimes get cash instead of the all-paid annual vacation or two-week paid leave. All these must be raised during the formulation of employment agreement individually or with the participation of an agency involved.

In the above discussion and analysis of the scope of work of the participants, all the determined issues are considered 'common and expected' in the domestic labor sector. However, using the social work approach to identifying social problems, it can be argued that the said status quo does not negate the claim of incidence of human rights violations present in this type of employment relationship. Furthermore, as a social work approach it is shown by the research finding mentioned above the need for change in which the social work profession plays a vital role. Initiatives such as this type of social work research as well as promotion of human rights protection through leading in the advocacy of socio-economic justice by pushing for comprehensive policy reform and development in domestic labor must be one of the key recommendations to come out from this research study. It is through this way that social workers can contribute to bringing much needed change in this work category.

As mentioned above, work arrangement is one of the factors that affect the general working condition of the study participants. This aspect is inclusive of the living condition in the context of the accommodation of the participants. According to Içduygu & Aksel (2012: 19), the lack of residence permits and to some extent low income make accommodation or housing a problematic issue among undocumented migrants. In their work, they have revealed that 50% of the interviewed migrants live in rented shared-accommodation. In this study, the stay-out workers live in rented apartments which they usually share with fellow overseas Filipino workers. On the other hand, stay-in workers also rent a room or bed space intended for their day off. They generally described their accommodation as decent, comfortable, secured and safe. For the stay-in workers, they have varied perceptions about the type of their accommodation within the household

premises. While some are satisfied, there were also some who complained of privacy issues and uncomfortable sleeping area within the house of their employers. This finding is quite consistent with previous studies claiming decent housing attracts migrant women to Türkiye (Gürson, 2021; Toksöz & Erdoğan, 2013; and Akalın, 2010) but a study by Yılmaz & Özyaydın (2020) has revealed instances of migrant domestic women sharing space with the elderly or sick dependents. However, they appreciate the availability of unlimited access to internet connection and the ready access to their own mobile phones while inside the house of their employers. These serve as their outlet and source of entertainment amidst their isolation in the workplace.

Most of the study participants described their relationship with their employers as good. They cited some examples of their employers' attitudes which they believe are manifestations of their harmonious relationship. Some employers treat their household workers just like a member of their family, talk to them nicely to address some concerns, give them gifts and bonuses during holidays, and by supporting them financially through advance payment of salary and paying for their healthcare expenditures. Occasions that imply decent relationship between the household workers and their employers were revealed in previous studies. Most of them have private space (Gürson, 2021), received gifts for religious holidays (Kaşka, 2006); stipend given on day offs (Yılmaz & Özyaydın, 2020; Akalın, 2014). That for them is a consolation they actually need as undocumented migrant workers.

However, there were also expressed frustrations in regards to the usual causes of grievances and disagreements especially in terms of their childcare practices, abuse of the flexible day off schedule and long working hours without overtime pay. More importantly, they complained about the lies of promising work permit application as well as salary increase after a certain period of time. Most of the workers get to have their own health insurance only if it is supported by their employers and since it is not compulsory in the country, many employers prefer not to do so (Gürson, 2021).

The gathered data revealed the most common causes of disagreements between employers and their household workers. On top of the list is about childcare. Firstly, this is expected in the sense that majority of the study participants are childcare service providers. The

occurrence of disagreement in terms of method or techniques is a consequence of cultural differences. This is supposed to be addressed in the pre-deployment training program. However, it has already been emphasized that there are some members of the study participants who did not undergo the standard operating procedure of acquiring pre-deployment trainings as they left the country skipping the regular process of labor migration by acquiring tourist visa to be able to fly overseas. Other causes are related to the terms and conditions of employment agreement such as job description and day off schedule. More than anything, this reflects the status of household work as poorly regulated and the imbalanced negotiation power between the employers and their employees due to the lack or poor legal protection on the side of the migrant workers. This surely calls for the intervention of social workers who can help in the realization of policy development and change at the states level, both in the Philippines and in Turkiye.

#### **5.4. Motivations and Preferences Underlying the Supply of Domestic Services**

Family is said to be the main motivation of the study participants in deciding to enter household work employment overseas. Regardless of their civil status, they are all motivated to work as breadwinners for their respective families. The families are generally composed of their parents, own kids and espouses, and their siblings. Some of the push factors include the economic crises in the Philippines, the tight competition for employment or worsening high unemployment rate, the low salary rates in the Philippines and some personal issues that affect their lives back home. Considering the poor pay and scarcity of employment prospects in their place of origin, many Filipinos believe that working overseas is a preferable choice than remaining in the Philippines (Dolaman, 2010). In the same manner, Içduygu & Aksel (2012) revealed that among the crucial motives behind migration are the relative poverty and the lack of opportunities for employment in home of origins. Moreover, but there were also cases of migration to Turkiye by mistake and were due to smugglers deceiving promises for other country of destinations. That is a case of human smuggling (Içduygu & Aksel, 2012: 18).

The study participants are actually the breadwinners of their respective families. Therefore, there are many people back home who depend on their salary. They basically send money to their families to bring food to the table, pay for house rents and monthly

bills, spend for the education of their children, and also to pay family debts. The fortunate ones who are able to save some of their monthly income invest in buying parcels of land, building their own houses, buying domestic animals for farming etc. Pull factors such as comparatively better working conditions and higher salary rate attracted some of the workers who were previously employed in other foreign countries. These pull factors specifically the notion of 'better working conditions' in Turkiye has been also purported in previous researches. Turkiye is considered safer than many of its counterparts in the Middle East as it also arguably provides better general working conditions than those countries like Kuwait, UAE or Qatar (Paul, 2011; Sabban, 2014).

The study participants have different sets of specific criteria when it comes to employer preferences. On top of their list is the character traits of the prospect employers. For the majority of them, prospect employers should possess character traits such as being understanding, considerate, open-minded, respectful, fair, and a sense of compassionateness to subordinates by treating them humanely. They are always looking for potential employers who are willing to get them documented by applying for work permit and at least those who can ensure their safety and security by understanding their travel restrictions. This can be in relation to the usual norms or attitude of some employers who preferred migrant household workers due to 'cheaper' cost of labor force (Toksöz, et al. 2012: 23). Accordingly, migrant workers accept the offered working conditions such as the lack of social security coverage, long working hours without overtime payment, and no regular leaves. Such conditions do not attract local workers Other criteria that they value so much are the nationality of the potential employers and the job description. Although most of them does not really make the nationality of the employers as a deal breaker, there are a few of them who expressed preference of a foreign employers to Turkish employers.

In terms of recruitment methods, friend's referral is more common and the most preferred by many. Based on their narratives, agency practices and trust issues lead most of the study participants' preference of their friends' referrals as a form of recruitment practice. Equally significant preference of the study participants is in regards to the working arrangement. Some of them resort to stay-out work arrangement because of reasons like having their own kids living with them and their extrovert nature. However, others choose

stay-in work arrangement due to practical reasons such as finance, safety and security. Specifically, the stay-in option generally warrants security of tenure, decent accommodation, and most often food provision, so it is mostly preferred by migrant domestic workers (Gürsön, 2021).

### **5.5. Coping Mechanism and Strategies to Overcome Work-related Problems and Challenges**

The study participants identified their personal coping mechanisms which help them get through the challenges and hurdles they have to face in Türkiye. On top of their list is their connection to divine being through prayers. They seek refuge in God through performing individual prayers and whenever possible attending weekly masses in Church. Aside from the spiritual dimension of their coping mechanism, they also cope through entertainment and fitness. They tend to meet up with their friends in karaoke sessions, shopping and workout activities. Most of them revealed their favorite past time activity which is singing as their most common destressing activity. Akalın's research on Filipinas in Türkiye has found the pattern of their living and entertainment arrangements. They tend to rent houses where their circle can gather together on special occasions like Christmas, birthday parties etc. On Sundays right after church-time they tend to reflect their true identities by making their own food, karaoke sessions, and to the extent of drinking alcohol for some of them (Akalın, 2007). Akalın viewed such attitudes as revelation of 'true identities'. However, that can also be a reflection of their coping mechanism or strategies to cope with work-related problems as household workers.

Moreover, as mentioned in the previous chapters of this research, Filipino migrant workers around the world are collectively known as Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). They generally connect to their roots through organizing communities and association among themselves. There are different communities, organizations or groups of Filipino workers in Türkiye. In Istanbul, the largest and most popular ones are The Filipino Community Istanbul and the Filipino Community in Türkiye. There are also smaller groups existing to consolidate members who hold the same interests and hobbies. However, these groups come together for shared causes under the mentioned two large communities and in many

instances in coordination with the Philippine Embassy in Ankara and the General Consulate Istanbul.

In complementary to the above-mentioned coping mechanisms and support systems, the knowledge of the study participants in regards to their basic human rights and rights as migrant workers, are significant for their general well-being. Based on the gathered data, while most of them are knowledgeable of their rights, there are some of them who are partially aware and some who are non-aware at all. Those who left the Philippines with proofs of overseas employment documents have gone through orientation and seminars which tackle about their rights, while those who left as tourists depend on what they have learned from school regarding basic human rights. Such findings are somewhat related to the study conducted by the Philippine Institute of development Studies (PIDS) which has revealed that most of their study respondents were not aware of their basic rights. Further, they indicated the existence of gap between some of the government's regulations and the knowledge of the migrant household workers in relation to such regulations. In fact, there was only 12.9% (PIDS, 2011 as cited in Klemm, et al., 2011: 6) of their respondents who were aware of the existing no-placement-fee policy by the government.

Furthermore, when faced with problems with employers, they compose themselves by reacting in a humble, patient and considerate manners. They usually show humility by owning to their mistakes and use them as a motivation to get better the next time around. They are usually patient amidst the tension and wait for the right moment to get time from their employers in order for both parties to talk things over and resolve any existing issues. They also try to be considerate enough to be open-minded and showing empathy by understanding the factors such as work-related stress which probably affect their employers. Such character traits by the study participants resemble the traits, revealed in previous studies, associated with certain traits found in Asian culture, the first thing that sets Filipinas apart is their laid-back disposition, kindness, and helpfulness (Gursön, 2021). They are also obedient while also being tolerant (Ayaydın, 2020).

If such approaches don't seem to be working to resolve their issues, that's the time they consider calling for support from the Filipino Communities and their recruiting agency for those who get employment through recruitment agencies. Furthermore, if none of those

methods and channels work to resolve the issues, they resort to breaking from the employment relationship by leaving the household usually without prior notice to the employers. In most cases, they only seek help from the Philippine embassy if none of their chosen methods are effective enough to solve the issues they experienced.

To sum it up, the Filipino household workers in Turkiye used both formal and informal channels to gain access to the domestic labor market in Turkiye. The informal aspect of their mobility is an implication of flaws in the management of migration of not only the Philippines and Turkiye but also the transit countries. There is therefore a necessity for policy development at multi-national levels. The patterns of their employment practices are generally shaped by the global socio-economic status of domestic work as underpaid and poorly regulated. Such factors are considered in social work practice as antecedents of human rights violation and socio-economic injustice. Furthermore, the general working conditions of the study participants show some consequences of social policies and practices that underserve the vulnerable groups of society such as the undocumented migrant workers. As a social work research which examined social problems to identify areas that needs innovation and development, the study explored and revealed some of the key strengths of the study participants in terms of their motivations, coping mechanisms, support systems and problem-solving skills in order to attain social change and promote the general well-being of the study participants who are undocumented migrant household workers.

### **5.6. The Limitations of the Study**

The number of the sample of study is relatively small. There were only thirty undocumented Filipino household workers who were mostly females with male household workers significantly underrepresented. The sample is not the exact representation of all the undocumented Filipino household workers in Turkiye due to the fact that the undocumented migrant household workers who participated in the study are all based in Istanbul. Furthermore, participants of the study may not be able to express their views articulately due to factors like language barrier, age, or cognition.

Due to the lack of an official statistical reference as to the total number of the population of Filipino household workers in Turkiye that are irregular or undocumented, the

respondents of the study were reached and selected using the snowball sampling method. Therefore, sampling bias is feared or representativeness may not be guaranteed since initial subjects or participants tend to nominate people they know well and based on convenience.

The in-depth interviews were administered on household workers alone. A more comprehensive findings would have been possible if the other significant stakeholders such as recruitment agents and household work employers were also interviewed. The study employed only one primary data collection method which is the in-depth interview with household workers. A more comprehensive method that includes in-depth interviews and focused-group discussion with key informants could be utilized for a better output.

Furthermore, factors like research-induced bias, pure bracketing, and some of the natures of phenomenological research method might have affected the outcome of the study. The used research method possess difficulty in establishing validity and reliability. It also challenges the researcher to maintain pure bracketing. Moreover, the presentation of the study finding is difficult for the phenomenological method due to its highly qualitative nature. In short, the study is limited in terms of sampling method, number and composition of the sample, and in the methodology of the primary data collection. Therefore, the mentioned factors have limited the generalizability and the comprehensibility of the study findings.

### **5.7. Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy, and Research**

The study findings suggest different aspects of social work practice that needs change or development. These goals can be achieved through evaluation, innovation and genuine research. First and foremost, the study suggests an area of social work practice that must be evaluated. This area is in line with the migrant social work. In the study, it is revealed that social work intervention or services are missing in the experiences of the study participants. In general, social work practitioners have ethical obligations to ensure the empowerment of the vulnerable, oppressed, and impoverished and to make sure they have access to resources such as social services. The mentioned obligation applies to the subjects of this study, the undocumented Filipino household workers, who are vulnerable,

underserved and unprotected. Social work knowledge and its core values look at such conditions stemming from the status of the study participants as undocumented migrants and as household workers. In particular, their employment and working conditions put them in need of social work services such as advocacy and community organizing. Therefore, this study recommends that social work practitioners in Turkiye must assess their ethical obligations towards vulnerable groups of clients including the documented and undocumented migrants and household workers.

Secondly, the study findings also suggest development of social work education policy. In addition to the ethical obligation of social workers towards the vulnerable groups as indicated in the Social Work Code of Ethics by the NASW, Councils of Social Work Education encourage the development of cultural competence. The findings of this study imply the need for improvement in this aspect. Social work educational programs and curricula must be evaluated and supplemented to generate more materials on cultural competency which is essential for a more inclusive social work education and practice. This inclusivity refers to innovation in the local social work practice and education to cover the stigmatized and marginalized groups such as undocumented migrant and household workers.

Finally, the study recommends expounding on this research topic and suggests other related topics that can be researched thoroughly. This current study can be developed for future studies by improving the scope and the methodology. A more comprehensive social work research can be designed by obtaining a larger sample and including other group of related respondents such as recruitment agents, employers of household workers, as well as official representatives from relevant institutions. Moreover, this research recommends conducting future research on two related topics. First, a research study can be conducted to determine the perceptions and attitudes of the Social Work Practitioners and the Social Work Students in Turkiye on the provision of social services to undocumented migrant workers. Another equally significant research can be conducted to examine how the attitudes towards the provision of social services impact the delivery of social services to undocumented migrants.

## CONCLUSION

This phenomenological research was conducted to explore the lived experiences in the contexts of labor market access practices and working conditions of migrant Filipino workers who are undocumented. Factors like undocumented migrant status and household workers make the labor migration experiences of this group of workers an interesting field of research especially for social work. The available literature on domestic work describes this category of work as underpaid, undervalued and poorly regulated. Aggravating the said general status of this category of work is the status of the study participants as undocumented migrant workers. Considering those risk factors and examining them through the lens of social work which champions advocacy of human rights and social justice, does not make it hard to understand the implied persisting threats of abuse, violence and exploitation against the undocumented migrant household workers. At the end, the findings of the study revealed areas and aspects of the participants employment practices and working conditions that must be evaluated and improved in order to promote their general well-being.

Their lived experiences reflect the general status of domestic work as highly informal and poorly regulated category of work. Apparently, the loopholes in the system of employment practices in the sector lead to the irregular legal status of the migrant household workers. Moreover, the findings of the study show consistency with the reviewed literature in showing the general working condition of the migrant household workers in Türkiye as more decent and better compared to their counterparts in other countries in the Middle East. However, this group of workers still face problems in terms of the lack or very poor legal protection, fight for employment rights and benefits, long working hours and vague job description and more importantly the absence of any social work intervention in their experiences.

Despite the existence of legal and institutional challenges in their struggle to achieve decent employment and working conditions, the undocumented Filipino household workers thrived in providing domestic service and overcoming work-related problems by depending on their natural character trait of resilience, developed personal coping mechanisms, and support system provided by their established communities in Türkiye.

However, they are still in need of social work interventions in order to have rights-based guidance in the necessary steps towards social integration and to become empowered migrant workers who understand their eligibility, rights, criteria, and duties in relation to access to social services.

Finally, to highlight the significant value of this research study to the study participants and especially to the social work practice and education, the study presents a list of recommendation for future research works and policy development. Realization of such recommendations can surely contribute to the promotion of the general well-being of undocumented migrant household workers in Turkiye. That is considered by the social work profession as a matter of social justice.

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## APPENDIX A

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant/s:

I am inviting you to the research titled “*The Experiences of Undocumented Filipino Domestic Workers in Turkiye: Labor Market Access in the Context of Practices and Working Conditions*” being conducted by yours truly, Abdulhamid GUNDA. The aim of this research is *to explore the experiences, in terms of working conditions and labor market access practices, of the undocumented Filipino household workers in Turkey*. In the research, you are expected to spend between *45 to 60 minutes* of your valuable time for the interview. What is expected of you in order for the study to achieve its purpose is to answer all the questions completely, without any pressure or suggestion, and to give the most appropriate answers sincerely. If you read and approve this form, it will mean that you agree to participate in the research. However, you also have the right not to participate in the study or to quit from participation anytime you decide to. Furthermore, let us be assured that the information obtained from this study will be used for research purposes only and your personal information will be kept confidential. Since Personal data will be collected in the research, all necessary measures will be taken to protect personal data in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Personal Data No. 6698 and the relevant legislation. If you need more information now or later, other than the information given about the purpose of the research, you can contact and ask the researcher through ..... and or .....

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I have read the information above, which must be given to the participant before the research, and I understand the scope and purpose of the study I am asked to participate in, and my responsibilities as a volunteer. Written and verbal explanations about the study were made by the researcher whose name is mentioned below. It was also verbally explained to me the possible risks and benefits of the study. Sufficient assurance has been given that my personal information will be carefully protected.

Under these conditions, I agree to participate in the said research voluntarily, without any pressure or suggestion.

Participant's:

Name and Surname:

Signature:

Contact Information:

e-mail:

Phone:

Researcher's:

Name and surname: Abdulhamid GUNDA

Signature:

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

#### I. Profile of the Respondents

##### A. Socio-Demographic Profile

- Age:
- Gender:
- Civil Status:
- Hometown:
- Address in Turkey:
- Highest Educational Attainment:
- Religious Affiliation:
- Do you have dependents back home (parents, children, relatives, etc.)?
- What is your employment status, employed or not? Pls. elaborate.
- What is/was your work arrangement, stay-in or stay-out? Pls. elaborate.
- Work Arrangement (for currently unemployed respondent, he/she can refer to the latest employment):
  - If stay-in, why did you choose to stay in? Pls. Explain.
  - If stay-out, where and who do you live with? Why stay out? Pls. explain.
  - What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of each work arrangement?

##### B. Employment History

- When did you start working as a household worker and what motivated you? Pls. elaborate.
- Have you ever been employed as a regular worker? Pls. elaborate?
- Have you ever been employed in different sector other than domestic work? Pls. elaborate.
- What made you decide to work as a household worker in Turkey? Pls. elaborate.
- Have you ever worked in a different country aside from Turkey? Pls. elaborate.

## **II. Labor Market Access Practices**

### ***A. Recruitment or Placement practices***

- How did you land for this job or your latest employment? Please explain.
- Did you undergo any training, seminar, workshops before employment?
- If yes, who administered and who paid for the training? What skills are covered? Pls. Explain.
- Were you recruited by an individual recruiter or by an agency?
- If recruited by an individual recruiter:
  - Is he/she a legal or a registered recruiter?
  - How did you meet? Did you meet in the Philippines or here in Turkey? Pls. explain.
  - What is your agreement with the recruiter? Did you or do you have to pay the recruiter? What is the arrangement for payments? Pls. elaborate.
- If recruited by an agency:
  - Where is the agency based?
  - Is it registered or not?
  - How did you know about the agency?
  - What is your employment agreement with the agency? Did you or do you have to pay the agency? What is the arrangement for the payment? Pls. elaborate.
  - Did you sign any contract with the recruiter or the agency?
  - What happens if:
    - The employer terminates the worker?
    - The employer complains about the worker?
    - The employee wants to leave the employer/household?
    - In the case of maltreatment, abuse, non-payment of the salary, or other complaints? Explain please.
- What do you do when you become unemployed? How do you search for a new job or an employer? Please explain.
- Do you have or do you follow a set of criteria for prospect employer? What are the factors you consider? Please elaborate.
- Do you think of becoming a regular employee? Or have you attempted or tried seeking support for a regular employment? Please explain.

What are your main motivations for a) working as household worker, b) working in Turkey?

### ***B. Contractual Arrangements***

Do you have an employment contract with your employer? Is it written or verbal? Pls. elaborate.

If with a written contract:

How did you come up with the contract? Is it signed by you and the employer?

Do you have a copy of the agreement? What are the important contents of the agreement? Please elaborate.

If none, do you know its content? Pls. Explain.

How did you come up with the agreement?

Did you discuss and negotiate together? Or did someone else do it for you? Pls. elaborate.

Have there been changes in the agreement? Have there been changes in the terms and conditions agreed upon? Pls. Elaborate.

Can the contract or the agreement be terminated or changed anytime?

If yes, by who and on what conditions?

If without written agreement/contract:

Has there been any discussion/negotiation between you and employer prior to the beginning of employment?

If yes, what terms were included in the discussion?

If not, who talked with your employer about the terms and condition of your employment?

How did you learn about your duties and obligations, number of your working hours etc.?

Do you trust the person? Do you think the terms are fair enough?

Would you have wanted to be consulted?

Have there been circumstances when your employer ignored the terms and conditions of work? Elaborate.

Can your employer or you seek changes in the working conditions, contractual arrangements? (e.g. wage, tasks, working hour, benefits)

### **III. WORK CONDITIONS**

#### ***A. Remuneration***

What is your current salary rate? Are you paid in cash or in-kind? Is it by hourly, daily, weekly, or monthly? Please elaborate.

When do you receive your salary? Is it weekly or monthly?

Do you consider your salary rate reasonable? What do you think is the reasonable wage for the kind of work you are doing?

Do you know the salary rate of other household workers who are doing the same job as you?

Is your current salary higher or lower than your previous salary?

Are you aware of the new national minimum wage in Turkey?

#### ***B. Salary/wage Protection Issues***

Have you experienced any problems with your salary/wage? Are there cases of payment deduction, delays or non-payment at all? What are the reasons behind? Pls. elaborate.

What actions do/did you do when such issues happened?

Do you get any pay slip or any record of payment receipt?

#### ***C. Scope of work***

##### **1. Tasks**

Enumerate the specific tasks you are expected to perform?

Have you ever been asked to perform a task for another household? Please elaborate.

Have you ever been instructed to do non-household tasks? Please elaborate.

Are your tasks or obligations stated in the written/oral agreement?

##### **2. Control over work**

Who delegates you the task you have to perform? Can everyone in the household give you a command to perform some tasks?

Are there times you have to do multiple tasks all at the same time or being commanded by household members all at the same time? Elaborate.

What happens if you cannot finish a certain task or a task is not done properly? Are there punishments, penalty? Please elaborate.

### 3. Workload

How do you assess your working load? Do you think it is light, relatively easy or too much?

Do you have enough time to complete your daily tasks?

Do you get assigned to perform some tasks that are beyond your capability to perform? Please elaborate.

### 4. Working Time

For stay-in workers:

What time do you have to wake up to start working and what time do you get to relax and finally go to bed? Is this fixed? Pls. elaborate.

Are there times when you have to stay late at night or wake up earlier to perform some tasks?

Do you get overtime compensation or payment?

Do you have fixed time for meals? Elaborate further.

Do you have fixed break time during the day? Elaborate please.

For stay-out workers:

At what time are you expected to arrive and start working?

What time do you usually leave the employer's house?

Are there situations when you are asked to stay longer in your workplace?

How often does this happen? How do you feel about these? Please elaborate.

Do you get overtime compensation or payment?

If with multiple employers, how is your work schedule and arrangement? Please elaborate further.

### 5. Rest Days

How are your days off schedule? Is it fixed or flexible? Please elaborate.

Are there times you are asked to forgo your day off? How often does this happen? Is there any compensation for it? Please elaborate.

### 6. Vacation, Holidays and Leaves

Are you free during a non-working holiday? If not, are you paid separately for working? Please elaborate.

Do you have your annual vacation time? Is it paid or not? Pls. elaborate.

Are you entitled for a paid leave? On what circumstances? Pls. elaborate.

In cases like sickness, pregnancy, death of a significant other which make you unable to work, are you still paid or do you get salary deduction? Please elaborate.

#### ***D. Living Conditions***

##### **1. Stay-in Workers**

How is your space in the house? Do you have a separate bedroom or you share with somebody? Please elaborate.

Do you have your private bathroom and comfort room? What other appliances or furniture do you have in your private area? Please elaborate.

Do you have safe and secured spaces for your personal belongings?

Are there any limitations in regards to the parts of the house you can visit?

What is your arrangement when it comes to food, eating or cooking? Pls. elaborate.

How do you keep your communication outside of the household? Do you have access to telephone or mobile phones? Please elaborate further?

Do you have any other issues in regards to your stay within the household? Pls. elaborate.

##### **2. Stay-out Workers**

How is your accommodation condition? Where do you live? Do you live alone or live with other people? Please elaborate?

Are you comfortable in the house, with your housemates? Is the house clean, safe and secured? Pls. elaborate.

Given the chance, would you like to move out or live with your employer? Please elaborate.

#### ***E. Healthcare***

In case of sickness or accident, who pay for the cost of medicines and or doctor's visit?

How much of a concern is healthcare issue in your employment? Please elaborate.

Have you ever been terminated or suspended from work due to illness or accident? How do you handle this?

***F. Workers' Union or Organization***

- Have you heard or do you know any household workers' organization? Pls. elaborate.
- Are you a member of any Filipino Community in Turkey?
- How did you hear about these organizations?
- What do you think about these unions or organizations? Please elaborate?

***G. Disputes, Grievances, Problems***

- Do you have any problems with your employment? What are the usual causes of problems? Please elaborate.
- How is your relationship with your employer and other members of the household? Please elaborate?
- In cases of problems with your employer or with a household member, what steps do you undergo to resolve the problems? Please elaborate.
- In case of harassment and abuse, what do you do and from where do you seek support? Please elaborate.
- Do you keep in touch with anyone or any agency in cases of emergency? please elaborate.
- Do you know your basic human rights? Your right as migrant worker? Pls. Elaborate?
- Are you aware of the organizations, national or international, that advocate for basic human rights as well as migrant and labor rights? Pls. elaborate?

# CURRICULUM VITAE

**Abdulhamid GUNDA**

## A. EDUCATION

**Ph.D.:** Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Social Work, 2024, Istanbul

**MA:** Namık Kemal University, Health Management, 2017, Tekirdağ

**Undergraduate:** Mindanao State University, Nursing, 2010, Marawi/Philippines

## B. ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

College Instructor, Philippine Muslim Teachers College, Education Department, 2010-2012

## C. INTERESTS

Migrant Social Work, Employee Attitudes, Migrant Domestic Work

## D. PUBLICATIONS

### **Book Title: Türkiye’de Filipinler Çalışmaları-I**

Title of the Chapter: Türkiye’de Filipinli İşçi Göçü, Abdulhamid Gunda, Yayın Yeri: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Sayfa Sayısı:193, ISBN:978-605-136-625- , Bölüm Sayfaları:19-44

### **Book title: Handbook of Research on Behavioral Finance and Investment Strategies: Decision Making in the Financial Industry**

Title of the Chapter: The Philippine Health Care Delivery System and Health Expenditure, Abdulkadir Işık, Abdulhamid gunda, Birol Topçu, Yayın Yeri: IGI Global, Sayfa Sayısı: 522, DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-7484-4.ch016, Bölüm Sayfaları: 271-28

## **Conference Papers and Presentations**

GUNDA, A. (2023). Detention Experiences of International Students: A Case Study. Presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Student Symposium at Istanbul Gelişim University, Istanbul, Türkiye.

GUNDA, A. (2022). Employment Practices of the Filipino Household Workers in Türkiye: Presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> International Student symposium in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye.

GUNDA, A. (2021). The Impact of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic on Migrant domestic workers: A Case Study in Turkey. Presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> International EMI Entrepreneurship and social Sciences Congress in Aksaray, Türkiye.

GUNDA, A. (2020). Exploratory Study on the Psychological Impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak on Asian Students Living in Turkey. Presented at IZU Graduate Students Social Science Congress in Istanbul, Türkiye.

GUNDA, A. (2019). Continuance Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction of Filipino Health Workers. Presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> National Student Congress of Health Sciences at Istanbul Gelişim University, Istanbul, Türkiye.