

A Study of Peruvian Domestic Workers and Their Labor Opportunities in Santiago, Chile

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Abstract

Because of the poor economic climate of Peru, Chile is receiving an influx of Peruvian immigrants who are seeking shelter in the economic center of Santiago. Marginalization, racism, and poverty make it hard for these Peruvian immigrants to integrate into Chilean society and, as a result, they have formed separate migrant communities. For the Peruvian immigrant, these communities provide their only space for political participation, civic and cultural activities. But they cannot provide for the economic development of the community itself. The problems facing the population of immigrant Peruvian domestic workers are difficult to solve because they stem from a number of factors. To investigate their problems, this paper uses data gathered through formal and informal interviews, and through participant observation of an immigrant-centered NGO, all conducted in Santiago, Chile, in July 2010. The paper focuses on Peruvian women who are working as “Nanas” or domestics and examines their labor opportunities in Santiago. The paper argues that domestic work does not provide Peruvian workers with decent working conditions or livable wages. Therefore, Peruvian women must seek help from three different avenues: the transnational communities they live in, the NGOs who work with the communities to find jobs, and the Chilean government itself.

A Study of Peruvian Domestic Workers in Santiago Chile

Introduction

Economic migrants migrate in search of work and or education. They migrate because of the poor economic climate of their home country or because of their own dire financial situation. Their decision about where to migrate depends on where they can access economic resources and jobs (Sabogal & Núñez, 2010, p. 90). In the 1990s, political and economic instability in Peru lead to an increase in migration to Chile. Today, the fifth largest Peruvian migration is to Chile. In 2003, five-percent (4.69 %) of Peruvian immigrants were living in Chile.

Peruvian migration to Chile is predominately female (Stefoni, 2002). Female immigrants come from the lower and middle class families alone, without their children. Because of the lack of opportunities Peruvian women have in Chile, the majority of women work in the domestic service sector (Stefoni, 2002). Since there is no labor mobility for Peruvian immigrants in Santiago, it is hard for Peruvian workers to leave this sector. Labor discrimination and labor sector segregation are global problems that affect most migrants and refugees. Therefore, it is critical to examine these problems on a local scale to determine possible solutions that might also operate on a global scale.

Using academic journal articles, this paper examines the characteristics and causes of Peruvian migration to Chile. It then examines domestic labor, the distinctiveness of the work, and the experience of Peruvian migrants working in the domestic service sector in Chile. The paper ends with an analysis of the labor opportunities of Peruvian domestic workers in Chile. The paper argues that there is no labor mobility for Peruvian domestic workers living in Chile; therefore, Peruvian domestics must look not only to their own transnational communities

for sources of employment where there is in fact some opportunity for labor mobility and opportunity for increased growth in wages and education, but also to more long term solutions in combating the sources of discrimination prevent these workers from getting better jobs and entering into Chilean society in a more meaningful way. In light of increasing migration worldwide, especially in the developing world, the international community must begin to design and implement new interventions to expand labor markets to immigrants and refugees.

Methodology

This paper is based on data obtained through a combination of research methods. These include: participant observation, in-depth interviews and informal interviews. Participant observation was carried out during my stay in Chile, where I worked with Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes (SJM), an NGO located in Estación Central, Santiago. SJM takes in illegal migrants and provide them with basic services in the areas of individual and family support, religious outreach, community support, and research. SJM works primarily with Peruvian migrants but also attends to Ecuadorians, Bolivians, Colombians and Haitians. In-depth interviews were conducted at SJM with families and individuals who relied on SJM to obtain their basic needs. Research was carried out over a two-month period from June to August. Eleven one hour interviews were obtained.

Informal interviews and participant observation were conducted at the Comunidad Santa Rosa de Lima, with a group of immigrants who meet every Sunday to debrief. The women come together to participate in religious functions, group lunches, and workshops, such as English classes. Around fifty different women join the community every Sunday. Almost all of the women at the Comunidad Santa Rosa work as domestic workers, which has facilitated this study.

Participant observation and informal interviews were also conducted at the Plaza de Armas. The Plaza de Armas is a historic plaza in downtown Santiago which serves as the main gathering point for the Peruvian Community. Peruvian immigrants have transformed the deteriorated buildings surrounded the square into shared residences. Because SJM mainly works with poorer, irregular immigrants, research was broadened to include discussions with Peruvian immigrants at the Plaza de Armas.

Immigration Patterns

Although Latin America has historically been a region for European immigration, in the twenty-first century, modernization, decolonialization and uneven development have transformed Latin America into a region of emigration (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 177). Latin Americans are emigrating because they do not have access to jobs or resources in their own countries. However, most Latin American emigrants are not emigrating with their families. Instead, they are working to earn liquid wages to send back to their families as remittances. In 2006, US\$62.3 billion dollars in remittances were sent to Latin America from the United States, Canada, and Spain (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 177). Although most Latin American immigrants migrate to developed countries such as Spain and the United States, migration from developing country to developing country is becoming increasingly prevalent.

From 1992 to 2002, immigration to Latin America increased by around seventy-five percent (González et al., 2010, p. 804). Further, over ten percent of migrants from Latin America migrate within Latin America. This is a new trend that is occurring as countries such as Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Costa Rica have become more democratic and stable (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 177). Chile, which has become one of the most productive and industrial countries in South America, began to receive an influx of Latin American immigrants in the 1980s (González

et al., 2010, p. 804) Although today the number of legal Chilean immigrants living abroad is still larger than the number of legal immigrants from Latin America living in Chile, the number of immigrants living in the country is the largest in Chile's history (Martínez, 2009, p. 6).

Immigrants constitute around two percent of the Chilean population (González et al., 2010, p. 804). The majority of immigrants come from Peru, Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador (Mora, 2009, p. 340). Peruvians are the largest legal group of immigrants living in Chile. They are also the largest illegal group (González et al., 2010 p. 804). Further, they receive the most resident and temporary visas each year. In the year 2000, Peruvians accounted for fifty-eight percent of the total immigrant population from South America and, in 2010, Peruvian immigrants accounted for twenty-eight percent of the total immigrant population (Parson, 2010, p. 883) (González et al., 2010 p. 804). Because of the poor economic and political climate in Peru, immigration flows from Peru since the 1990s have remained stable, while at the same time, fewer and fewer migrants are returning to Peru (Wielandt, 2006, p. 2).

The majority of Peruvian immigrants who travel to Chile live in the Santiago metropolitan area (Mora, 2009, p. 340). In 2002, seventy-seven-percent of Peruvian immigrants were living in Santiago. Twelve percent were living in the region of Tarapacá and three percent were living in Valparaiso (Torres, 2008, p. 3). The Tarapacá region is located in northern Chile and borders Bolivia. Within Santiago, Peruvian immigrants live in the center of the city (Torres, 2008, p. 3). The majority of Peruvian immigrants live in the communities of Recoleta (13%), Independencia (12%), Estación Central (12%), Quinta Normal (7%) and Renca (2%) (Torres, 2008, p. 3). Peruvian immigrants live in small transnational communities throughout Santiago (Torres, 2008, p. 3).

Whereas Argentinean immigrants settle throughout the region of Santiago, Peruvian immigrants live in separate communities. Peruvians are more visible than any other immigrant group because they are not integrated into Chilean society (Torres, 2008, p. 3). Peruvians inhabit communities that have been abandoned and rundown and were not rehabilitated with the rest of Santiago during the 1970s and 1980s when Santiago underwent a period of reconstruction due to the modernization projects carried out by the Pinochet government (Torres, 2008, p. 3). In most Peruvian neighborhoods, a family of six people will share a small space without its own bathroom or kitchen. As many as twenty-five families can live in one house (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 34).

Peruvian migration to Chile is predominantly female (Mahler & Staa, 2005, p. 71). From 1996 to 2000, sixty-three percent of Peruvians migrants were women (Parson, 2010, p. 883). Women migrate because of economic hardships, limited job markets, and domestic violence (Stefoni, 2002, p. 117). Women also migrate to gain independence or personal liberties that they are denied either by their families or husbands (Stefoni, 2002, p. 117). Further, many women migrate alone. Women may have husbands that have job opportunities in Peru and therefore want to remain in Peru to work, however the jobs may be very low income jobs and therefore, due to family planning strategies women will migrate to earn more money (Wielandt, 2006, p. 2).

Most Peruvians who migrate to Chile are of working age (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 12). The majority of Peruvian immigrants are between the ages of fifteen and forty-four. Further, children make up less than ten percent of the Peruvian immigrant population (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 12). In Chile, there is a larger population of Peruvians between the ages of forty-four and fifty-nine than Peruvians younger than fifteen (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 13). To compare

these figures with those of Argentine immigrants, the majority of Argentinean migrants are less than thirty-years old. Argentinean migrants travel with their families whereas Peruvian migrants arrive alone, in search of work.

Most Peruvian immigrants have higher levels of education than their South American immigrant counterparts. In the study that Silke Staab and Kristen Mahler conducted in Santiago, they calculated that out of all the Peruvian immigrants they interviewed, ninety percent of the interviewees claimed that they had high school degrees. Another forty percent held some technical or University training (p. 73). Caroline Stefoni, in her study of domestic workers, reaches similar conclusions. Almost twenty percent of the women she interviewed were professionals and had attended university or technical school. Further, fifteen percent were office workers in Peru and had some technical or university education. Finally, only fourteen percent had previously worked as domestic workers and had less schooling (p.131).

For Peruvians in Chile, there is no link between level of education and type of employment (Stefoni, 2002, p. 131). Almost seventy-four percent of Peruvian domestic servants have ten years or more of education whereas only thirty-three percent (33%) of their Chilean equivalents have the same level of education (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 37). Most Peruvian women work as domestic servants even though they have qualifications to work in other fields (Wielandt, 2006, p. 2).

The majority of Peruvians are employed in the domestic service sector. Peruvian migrants are also employed as office workers, technicians, caregivers in day-care centers and in nursing homes (Stefonim, 2002, p. 118). Historically, Peruvians in Chile were employed in the commercial retail sector. However, the commercial retail sector did not have enough labor opportunities for the Peruvians as immigration increased (Stefoni, 2002, p. 118). Therefore, in

the 1990s, as Chileans began to abandon the domestic service market for better jobs in factories in Southern Chile, Peruvians began to become domestic workers (Wielandt, 2006, p. 3). The participation of female Peruvians in the Chilean work force is higher than the participation of any other migrant group (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 37). Estimates show that Peruvian migrants make up eighty percent of the domestic service workers, where as Argentineans constitute nine percent and Chileans and other migrant groups compose the other eleven percent (Martínez et al., 2009, p. 37).

There is labor segmentation between the different migrant groups. For example, the majority of Ecuadorian immigrants work in the field of health and the majority of Peruvians and Bolivians work in the domestic service sector (Wielandt, 2006, p. 3). However, because of social stigmatization against migrants from “poorer” Latin American countries, immigrants from more developed countries, such as Brazil and Argentina although they often have a lower level of education than their fellow Peruvians, are more likely to find a better job (Stefoni, 2002, p. 118). Labor segmentation endangers labor mobility and makes it difficult for migrants to find work in other sectors. Further it makes immigrants more vulnerable to social stigmatization and depressions in the labor market.

Reasons for Peruvian Migration

In the 1970s, there was an agricultural crisis in Peru that spurred a wave of migration from agricultural regions to Lima and other close urban areas (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 90). In 1983, the warm waters from the El Nino current ruined the livelihood of many coastal fishermen (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 90). At the same time, the coastal cities experienced development through the growth of industrial production centers (Carrasco, 2009, p. 15). Indigenous groups from rural areas began to relocate in these cities. For the most part, rural

migrants lived at the margins of the cities (Carrasco, 2009, p. 15). They encountered barriers to legal recognition in Peru and an inability to access basic services (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 90). However, their children still received access to basic education that they could not obtain in rural Peru. The Peruvians who migrated to Santiago in the 1980s and 90s were the children of these internal Peruvian migrants. Therefore, the Peruvian migrants living in Chile today are better educated than their parents and still identify with a rural and indigenous past (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 90).

In the 1990s, due to political instability and economic crisis caused by the Fujimori government, emigration from Peru increased (Carrasco, 2009, p. 188). By 1990, leaving Peru was no longer limited to those who could afford it. Rather, it became a logical solution to escape from poverty for anyone who could (Sabogal and Núñez, 2008 p. 92). Today, seventy-five percent of Peruvian citizens between the ages of fifteen and nineteen want to emigrate from Peru (Navarrete & Yáñez, 2007, p. 179). This sheds light on how vulnerable the current Peruvian economic and political situation is.

Immigration from Peru began in the 1950s. During this time, educated, upper class Peruvians traveled to Europe in search of culture and education. The next wave of migration occurred in the 1970s. This wave was composed of internal migrants, who migrated from the rural areas of Peru to Lima and other developed coastal cities. The current wave of migration began in the 1980s and is still occurring today. It coincides with the worsening of the economic crisis in Peru. Because of this crisis, lower class and middle-class Peruvians are emigrating to the United States as well as to other Latin America countries. It is during this wave that Peruvians began to migrate to Chile (Stefoni, 2002, p. 120).

Immigration Laws

Chile does not have a comprehensive immigration policy. Although there have been many attempts to change the immigration laws, the law used today was created in 1975 (Wielandt, 2006, p. 4). This law's main concern is the effect of migration on national security and, therefore, the Chilean government does not offer many types of visas or have support systems in place for economic migrants or political refugees. Further, the 1975 law is vague and does not address the treatment and trafficking of migrants (Wielandt, 2006, p. 4). Moreover, because there is no coherent migration dialogue between Chilean institutions and organizations, the well-being of the immigrants has been left to the discretion of the government (Wielandt, 2006, p. 4).

The Chilean Government offers three types of visas: tourist visas, residence visas, and permanent residence visas. In order to apply for a tourist visa an individual must have a fund of US\$2,000 as well as an intention to travel to Chile for recreation, tourism, health, business, or to visit family (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008. p. 93). There are five different types of residence visas: work visas, student visas, temporary visas, official visas and asylum and refugee visas (Martínez et al., 2009). Work visas are given to individuals who travel to the country to find employment. These visas become effective after a labor contract is signed. Work visas can be used for two years and can be renewed for two two-year periods. Temporary visas are given to immigrants who have family ties to Chile or have general interests in the country. The government of Chile must perceive that these residents will be useful to have in Chile and therefore are given to individuals mainly from Western countries (Martínez et al., 2009) . This visa works for one year and can only be renewed once. Asylum visas are given to political refugees. Immigrants who want to remain in Chile can apply for a permanent residence visas if they have a work contract

and no criminal history (Martínez et al., 2009).

Since there is so much illegal immigration to Chile from Peru, the Chilean government has negotiated with the Peruvian government to pass immigration laws that specifically apply to Peruvians. In 2002, Arica-Tacna agreement was passed where the Chilean government agreed to accept Peruvian national identity cards as documentation for Peruvians entering northern Chile (Wielandt, 2006, p. 4). In 2005, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior passed a law that allows Peruvians to enter Chile as tourists with only their valid Peruvian national identity documents (Wielandt, 2006, p. 4). If immigration to Chile increases from other South American countries, Chile will have to pass similar laws treaties for other immigrants. Therefore, Chile must revise its immigration laws.

There have been two regularizations for undocumented immigrants in Chile, one occurred in 1998 and one took place in 2007. The most recent regularization of migrants occurred in 2007 and 2008 (Martínez et al., 2009). The only prerequisite to obtaining a temporary visa was not having a criminal record. The government gave over 50,000 temporary resident visas to immigrants (Martínez et al., 2009). This regularization was more successful than the regularization that took place in 1998 because it was open to undocumented immigrants, and tourists, as well as immigrants who entered through the Arica-Tacna agreement (Martínez et al., 2009). However, while the regularization did make many immigrants legal, it is still only a temporary fix to the illegal immigration problem. Without a change in overall legislation or border policies, Peruvians will continue to enter Chile without documentation.

Because of the limited types of visas that are available to immigrants, almost all Peruvians need to acquire work contracts in order to obtain residence visas to stay in Chile (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 93). Without residence visas it is almost impossible for Peruvians to

live in Chile because of migration laws, social stigmatization and hiring preferences (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008. p. 93). Immigrant workers are therefore always socially and legally vulnerable because they have to find a job as well as a dependable employer to offer them a contract. The second an employer revokes a work contract the immigrant worker will lose his or her visa.

Most Peruvians enter Chile with tourist visas that are valid for three months (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008. p. 93). During this time, they try and find a job so that they can obtain a contract. With a contract Peruvian immigrants can apply for a temporary residence permit. This visa is only valid as long as the contract is valid (Hill & Staab, 2005, p. 77). The work contract enforces the same labor rights as for native workers. For the most part, however, it is hard for migrants to find a permanent job and, therefore, they are often living illegally in Chile for different periods of time (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008. p. 93). The Peruvians that do obtain temporary work visas, after two years of continuous work, may apply for permanent visas. After five years of legal residency, Peruvians can vote in Chilean elections as well as Peruvian elections. Recently, the two governments have agreed to permit the transfer of social security funds (Mora, 2009, p.341). This shows that not only is Peruvian migration increasing, Peruvian migrants are also moving permanently to Chile. Whereas in the 1980s and 1990s, Peruvian migrants returned to Peru after making money, now they are remaining in Chile and therefore it is in the best interest of the Chilean government to allow them access to their social security funds (Martínez et al., 2009).

Peruvians who cannot obtain tourist visas, either because they do not have enough money or do not have Peruvian documentation, such as a passport or valid national identity card, enter the country illegally (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008. p. 93). There are different ways of forging visas. One method employed by many Peruvian street vendors is to sell old legal travel visas that have been washed and tagged with new identification information (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008. p.

93). Peruvian immigrants can also obtain false permits that allow them to stay in the border city of Arica for a certain period of time and then return to Peru.

Chilean Labor Laws

The rights of domestic workers have changed as Latin American countries have adapted democratic systems (Blofield, 2009, p.161). The economic and political transition to neo-liberalism has reduced the power of organized labor unions. While the growth of democracy has increased the ability of marginalized groups to organize, it is still hard for domestic laborers to organize because their demands as poor laborers contradict the demands of the better-organized middle and upper classes (Blofield, 2009, p.161).

Domestic workers in Chile started to organize in labor unions beginning in the 1920s. During this period, domestic workers began to accumulate rights (Alman, 2009, p. 3). When Augusto Pinochet, came to power, workers were stripped of these protective rights. At the end of the seventeen-year dictatorship, domestic workers had few legal rights. When the Concertacion, the democratic government gained power, workers began to gather in Santiago to demand back their rights. Domestic workers organized as part of these pro-democracy movements that were taking place in the 1980s (Alman, 2009, p. 3). Eventually, two laws passed that supported domestic workers rights: the 1990 Severance Pay law and the 1998 Maternity Rights Law (Blofield, 2009, p.161).

In 1987, an executive bill passed that repealed the most oppressive Pinochet Labor laws. However, the bill excluded employment protections for domestic workers. Therefore, with the help of three-left wing government members, domestic workers organized and recommended the inclusion of laws protecting the rights of domestic workers to be included within the bill (Alman, 2009, p. 3). Today, the law requires that domestic work be regulated by mandatory employment

contracts. Each contract must specify an agreed-upon salary, the employment duration, hours of labor, location of private space for the employee within the household, and the concrete tasks expected of the employer such as child-care, cooking, cleaning, pet sitting etc (Alman, 2009, p. 3). The law also obligates employers to provide social benefits to employees, such as unemployment insurance, health care, and pension contributions (Alman, 2009, p. 3).

In 1995, an executive bill was introduced to improve women's labor rights and to protect the rights of pregnant workers. A liberal senator, Ruiz de Giorgio, inserted a clause on domestic workers (Blofield, 2009, p.175). The clause sparked heated debate from the right wing but eventually passed in 1998. The law states that employers cannot lay off domestic servants during pregnancy or within a year of having the child (Malher & Hill, 2005, p. 9).

In July, 2008, a clause was introduced during national minimum wage negotiations to equalize the minimum wage of domestic workers to that of other workers by 2011 (Martínez et al., 2009). This law, however, is not yet in effect, so working hours are longer than almost all other positions. In Chile, labor laws stipulate that domestic workers can work a 12-hour workday. On average, workers work from seventy to ninety-four hours a week (Blofield, 2009, p. 173). They have one day off a week, usually Sunday. They make seventy-five percent of the minimum wage and only 4.11% of their salaries go to severance pay. They have maternity leave and paid vacations. However, although roughly half of Chilean domestic workers have contracts, this does not mean that their legal rights are enforced.

Domestic workers do not have the resources, networks, time or skills to participate in the political system or to organize around needs or desires. They do not have legal or political representation to promote their interests. Because live-in domestic workers are isolated from others and have to negotiate with individual employers as opposed to an organized employers

association (Blofield, 2009, p. 168), their ability to organize is limited at best. Further, Peruvian citizens are even less likely to organize because of their status as non-citizens. They also have no domestic support for their cause. Domestic workers are not currently organized in Chile.

Chileans are now the minority of domestic workers in this sector. The increase in Peruvian migrants working as domestic workers has undercut labor rights and organization in this sector and there is no longer any unified or persistent leadership.

Domestic Labor

A domestic servant works at an employer's private residence to supply services such as cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing and childcare. The domestic service sector is different from other service sectors. Unlike typical service workers, a domestic worker is paid in money and goods, struggles to lead a private life and is forced into a situation of inferior cohabitation (Gálvez & Todaro, 1989 p. 311). A domestic worker's salary has less of an influence on her standard of living than all other service jobs. There is no distinction for a domestic servant between her work time and her own time. A domestic servant's place of work is isolated because it is at the home of her employer. This means that she must share her workspace with her employers while they go about their daily routines (Gálvez & Todaro, 1989 p. 311). Domestic servants must work around people and remain unnoticed while avoiding annoying the residents of the house (Gálvez & Todaro, 1989 p. 311). When visitors are invited or the family goes out in public, the maid must dress in a certain way so others know her status. Further, unlike other service jobs, it is difficult to measure the intensity and quality of housework. Different employers might have different standards and are harsher in their criticisms of their employees (Gálvez & Todaro, 1989 p. 311). In Chile, the status of immigrant women does not improve because Peruvian immigrants are chosen for their perceived gender characteristic to work in the

field of domestic work. Chilean, employers further believe that the racial traits of the Peruvians make them “perfect” for domestic work and construction (Mora, 2009, p. 343).

Due to these adverse conditions, domestics have no influence over their working conditions. Domestics are at the mercy of their employers; they have to either accept the conditions of their job or quit (Malher & Hill, 2005, p. 11). A family can manipulate the workers’ pay by limiting her access to foods and goods in the house. For example, an employer can serve an employee fewer meals or not permit her to use hot water. Also, employers prefer limited contact between household workers so that their employee’s level of consciousness remains low. Moreover, domestic laborers are commonly excluded from related communities, such as feminist networks, worker’s associations, and working mothers’ groups (Romero, 199, p. 1). Employment in this sector can lead to abuse, loneliness, and entrapment (Romero, 199, p. 1).

On the other hand, this unique form of labor gives immigrants easy entry into foreign labor markets (Stefoni, 2002, p. 121). A growing trend in Latin America, Asia and Africa is for females to migrate to obtain work in the domestic service sector (Stefoni, 2002, p. 121). This is because working as a live-in domestic provides workers with food, income, safety and shelter. It also gives women the opportunity to negotiate their marital status and to escape from domestic abuse. Stefoni, in her study, illustrates that housework can have advantages, because it allows Peruvian women to save money, to have relative job security and job stability, to obtain a bigger salary than in Peru, and the job does not require any qualifications (Stefoni, 2002, p. 128).

But there is little labor mobility for domestic workers. Most domestic workers start as live-in domestic workers. Once that have earned enough money, they can become live-out service providers (Alman, 2009, p. 4). . Live-out service providers have better schedules because they only work eight to ten hours a day (Gálvez & Todaro, 1989 p. 311). Eventually, live-out service

providers can become house cleaners. Cleaning women have more control over their schedule and their salary (Gálvez & Todaro, 1989 p. 311). Because multiple families employ them they are less vulnerable and have more flexibility in job selection. In a study that Alman conducted in Spain, he found that Spanish domestic servants have trouble getting better jobs because other jobs require additional education, or local recognition of foreign degrees. Further, in Spain, unemployment is high, which increases competition between foreign domestics and locals and limits a foreign domestic's ability to get better jobs (p. 4).

Leading feminists in Europe and in the U.S. in the 1960s battled for women's rights by confronting the issue of housework and the position of the women in the family (Romero, 1999, p. 1). Oppression became synonymous with subjugation through housework. Phrases such as wage-less housewives and unpaid house laborers were coined to describe the inequalities women faced (Romero, 1999, p. 1). Certain feminists alleged that payment for their work in terms of wages could be a solution to their low status position. However, throughout this debate, domestic laborers were excluded from the discussion and not consulted on whether or not wages from housework would increase the social value of their labor (Romero, 1999, p. 1).

Domestic labor is a major source of employment in Latin America. In the region, paid domestic work employs over twelve million women and girls. This is more than fifteen percent (15%) of the economically active female population (Blofield, 1998). Only six Latin American countries - Bolivia, Colombia, Uruguay, Chile, Brazil and Peru - have reformed domestic labor laws since democratization (Blofield, 2009, p. 161). In Bolivia, Uruguay and Colombia, these reforms have resulted in nearly equal rights for domestic workers. In Chile, Brazil and Peru labor reforms have resulted in only partial equality (Blofield, 2009, p. 161). Despite labor reforms,

domestic workers continue to be exploited, underpaid, and undervalued in almost all countries (Blofield, 2009, p. 161).

The number of domestic workers in Chile has doubled since the 1980s (Blofield, 2009, p. 172). Peruvian domestic workers make up more than eighty percent of the current workforce. Although Peruvian domestic workers are more educated than their Chilean counterparts, they have access to fewer resources and rights. The Peruvian workers who migrate to Chile are displaced from the social networks and institutions of their home countries (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 93). Peruvian migrants must obtain a permanent visa and must remain in Chile for more than five years in order to gain legal rights. Most Peruvian immigrants, consequently, do not have political rights, such as voting and access to legal institutions (Stefoni, 2002, p.122). They also do not have economic rights, and are marginalized because of their socioeconomic status.

Illegal immigrants live a very constrained life in Chile. If Peruvian migrants do not have a Chilean identity card, or other important visa documents, it is hard for them to access financial systems such as credit, lending, home renting and bank accounts (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 93). Further, Peruvian domestic servants are not able to claim the rights guaranteed to them by Chilean labor laws. Although contracts are required under Chilean labor laws, some employers ignore them. Peruvian women do not know their rights (Hill & Staab, 2005, p. 78). Therefore, some employers are able to convince their domestic servants that if they migrate back to Peru they will not be able to claim their benefits or pensions. They convince the workers that it is better if they pay them more as opposed to paying for benefits, which works out in favor of the employer. The difficult working conditions and the lack of compliance with contracts force many domestic workers to search for other job opportunities.

Most Peruvian domestics have never before worked in the domestic service (Hill & Staab, 2005, p. 78). While they earn higher wages than they would in Peru, they have experienced downward social mobility. They come to Chile to support their children. They believe that when they earn enough money they will return to Peru. Although Peruvian women do return to Peru regularly, they are now returning to Peru less often. Peruvians who remain in Chile more than five years say they feel distanced from their culture and feel they have no choice except to stay in Chile (Sabogal & Núñez, 2008, p. 93).

History of Chilean Domestic Workers In Chile

The domestic service sector has always been an important Chilean labor sector. Wealthy Chilean families have employed domestic servants since the 1800s. There is a traditional household division of labor in Latin America, which places all the responsibility of housework on women. Therefore, middle and upper class women have always relied on cheap domestic workers to improve their own individual rights. As women began to gain more rights and enter the Chilean labor force, the need for domestic workers increased (Pappas-DeLuca, 1999, p. 100). Further, as the economic situation in Chile improved, women from Santiago began to find jobs in sectors other than domestic service. The labor market opened up and rural Chileans began to fill this niche (Pappas-DeLuca, 1999, p. 100). Sex-role ideology still has an enormous impact on the employment in Chile. As of 1991, the personnel service sector remained the largest employment sector for women (Pappas-DeLuca, 1999, p. 100).

Until the 1990s, the domestic service sector in Chile was predominately composed of rural Chilean domestic workers. Because rural, poor women did not have access to education, employment opportunities, land ownership or equal rights, they migrated to Santiago (Pappas-DeLuca 101). Migration gave rural Chileans the opportunity to achieve social and economic

independence. There was a labor market for domestic workers because employers in Santiago preferred hiring southern Chileans because they were expected to be innocent, trustworthy and competent as well as dependent and inferior (Pappas-DeLuca 103).

These are the same traits that today are associated with Peruvians. However, whereas typical Chilean workers were from rural birthplaces, had low socioeconomic status, and a poor education, Peruvian workers are from both rural and urban areas, come from both the lower and the middle classes, and have completed at least ten years of schooling. If Peruvians were not discriminated against in the labor market for being Peruvian and for being immigrants, they would have access to better jobs than the Chilean domestic workers.

Domestic Service and Peruvian Migrants

In Chile, the native-born supply of domestic workers has decreased as a result of economic growth (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p. 75). Economic cycles determine the size of the domestic labor market. In periods of economic expansion, desire for domestic servants will increase. However, economic expansion will allow native, lower income women to find jobs in more preferable sectors. This occurred in Chile beginning in the 1980s, when Chile began to export natural resources. Export-oriented development that fueled the growth of agro-industries expanded the Chilean labor market (Schurman, 2001, p. 5). In 2001, Chile's natural-resource export sector provided one out of every ten Chilean workers with jobs (Schurman, 2001, p. 4). Women from southern Chile who traditionally migrated to Santiago to become domestic servants, instead, found positions in the export sector (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p. 9). This has allowed Peruvian women to migrate to Chile to fill the void in the domestic service sector.

Legal changes that enforce the mandatory payment of benefits and salaries make hiring Chilean domestic servants more expensive. Moreover, these laws make hiring native domestic

servants less desirable because employers have less power over their employees (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p. 8). Peruvians, however, can be hired without contracts, and therefore Chilean employers do not have to adhere to labor laws (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p.9). Even the Peruvian women hired with contracts often do not understand what their rights are and therefore do not demand them. And, as we have seen, many Peruvian women rely on their employers for a contract because a valid work contract is essential for maintaining their legal immigrant status. Without a contract they become illegal immigrants and subject to deportation or an ever more marginalized life.

Chilean employers are discontent with the services provided by Chilean domestic workers. Mahler, in her study, found that Chilean employers did not want to hire Chilean domestics because the Chilean workers resented their work as domestic servants, demanded too much from their employers and felt too empowered (p.75). Further, Chilean employers did not want to hire Chilean domestics because the domestic workers did not want to assume their role as a nanny in public, and did not want to wear their uniform in private or public (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p. 75).

Chilean employers value the perceived character traits of Peruvian nannies. They are pleased that Peruvian domestic workers have high levels of education, can cook, have polite manners, and speak a more beautiful and educated Spanish (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p. 75). Since there is an opportunity for Peruvians to insert themselves in the field of domestic labor, most migrate in search of domestic work. Social networks among Peruvian workers make it easier for Peruvians to find and acquire jobs in the sector. All of these factors make the domestic service sector the easiest sector in which Peruvians can find employment.

Peruvian Discrimination in Chile

Peruvian domestic workers living in Chile are confronted with discrimination. Peruvians are discriminated against first because they come from a poorer country and come as immigrants needing whatever work they can find. The discrimination stems from the economic inequalities between the two states. Second, they are subordinated in their position as domestic workers. The position itself makes one inferior. Because Chilean workers require their domestic workers to look and act like nannies, Peruvians have to assume a position of servitude, make themselves invisible in the household, and distinguish themselves from their employers by their dress. Wearing a uniform becomes a symbol of their inferiority. Third, they are discriminated against because of their ethnicity. Their genealogy is perceived as indigenous (and dark), whereas Chileans perceive their own ethnicity as European (and white).

The Peruvian migrants who enter Chile are either in the lower or middle class. They enter because of their inability to find work in Peru. Political and legal circumstances in Chile further disempowers migrants (Mahler & Staab, 2005, p. 77). Peruvians often feel that Chileans do not want them in their country (Parson, 2010, p. 896). There is a basis in reality for this feeling since Chileans view newly arrived Peruvian workers as a threat because they compete with lower and middle class Chileans in the sectors of construction and domestic work. Despite the level of education of most Peruvian immigrants, because of their state of poverty in Chile, almost all Peruvians are perceived as low skilled. As Mahler and Staab point out in their study, there is a dual discourse about Peruvian workers in Chile. Chilean employers see Peruvians both as educated and skilled domestic workers but as lacking all other skills (p.77).

Peruvians are discriminated against because of their perceived racial differences. Peruvians and Chileans share many of the same ethnic characteristics, they speak the same language, they

have similar cultural roots and they have the same religious beliefs (González et al. 2010, p. 806). However, many Chileans descended from White and Occidental Spanish origins, whereas many Peruvians descended from Andean origins. Many Peruvian immigrants are very dark skinned compared to Chileans and therefore they are discriminated against because of the color of their skin.

Chilean residents identify more with their country than with the region. This makes it difficult for Peruvians immigrants to incorporate themselves into Chilean identity. Further, the more the Chileans perceive immigrants to be different from themselves in terms of their style, values and ways of life, the more they feel threatened. Peruvians confront racism in all aspects of the public realm. They deal with racism while searching for work, buying goods and in their places of residence. Further, they confront racism in the public spaces in which they organize, such as parks or markets.

González, in his study, observed that both Chileans and Peruvians experienced inter-group anxiety (p. 814). González found while analyzing assimilation patterns and preferences of Peruvian migrants in Chile, that fifty-four percent of Chilean participants and fifty-two percent of Peruvian participants favored separation of the two communities whereas forty-six percent of Chileans and forty-eight of Peruvians supported integration and assimilation (González et al. 2010, p. 814). This is different from other countries where migrant groups and the local population support integration (González et al. 2010, p. 815). This may change, however, among second generation and third generation immigrants or as demographics shift.

Nia Parsons, in her ethnography of a domestically abused Peruvian immigrant, Antonia, provides an example of the racism and prejudice felt by Peruvian migrants in Chile. Antonia felt that the racism was caused by her ethnicity, which she perceived as similar to that of an

indigenous person. She alleged that in Chile, people with darker skin, black hair, and short stature are classified as socially inferior (Parson, 2010, p. 13). Antonia, struggled in her place of residence, because the Chilean roommates with whom she shared an apartment building, did not talk to her, which made her feel like she did not exist (Parson, 2010, p. 14).

The Chilean media has also created an anti-Peruvian dialogue (Parson, 2010, p. 15). In Chile, “poverty is defined as Indian in the popular imagery” (Parson 14). The images of Peruvian migrants that are distributed in the media are images of illegal immigrants, immigrants living in desperate poverty, and delinquents (Stefoni, 2002, p. 118). The press uses the term illegal instead of undocumented or irregular because it has a negative connotation (Matínez et al. 2009, p. 42). The press also reflects the feminization of migration as a problem because of the competition it poses to Chilean women (Martínez et a. 2009, p. 42). The diversity of Peruvian migration and the differences in generational migration are not reflected in media coverage.

Although the domestic service sector provides job opportunities and decent pay for workers, compared to what was available to them in Peru, Peruvian immigrants in the field are experiencing downward social mobility. Hill and Staab concluded that Peruvian domestics are often underfed, underpaid, overworked, and verbally abused. Further, their personal privacy is violated. Therefore, although the domestic service sector does provide jobs for Peruvian women it is not a fair and just opportunity. And the situation is compounded by prejudice and discrimination.

Research

The research for this study was obtained over a two-month period from June to August 2010. Eleven long interviews were acquired. Further, many observations of conversations between domestic workers were obtained. This section reflects this research.

The majority of women interviewed for this study migrated to work as domestic servants. Lydia, a Bolivian immigrant of twenty-six years came to Chile to better her economic situation. She migrated specifically to become a nanny and she had already worked in this sector in Bolivia (Lydia, Bolivian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 4 July. 2010).

A Peruvian immigrant interviewee from San Martin, Peru, also came to Chile to work in the domestic service sector. She had previously worked Costa Rica as a cleaning woman in an office. Because the pay was not good so she migrated to Chile to become a domestic servant (Peruvian Immigrant San Martin 1. Personal Communication. 11 July.2010).

Even those who do not come to Chile to work in the domestic service sector eventually get jobs as service providers because this is the only sector where there are job opportunities. Only three Peruvian women interviewed for this study had worked outside the field of domestic work. All three of these women now are either domestic servants or are looking for a job in domestic service. Both immigrants Maria and Milagros worked for a brief period in the service industry, in fast food restaurants (Maria,Peruvian Immigrant. 4 July. 2010) (Milagros, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010). Johanna worked as a vendor of goods (Johanna, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010).

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An immigrant from Lima, Fernanda, came to Chile for economic reasons as well as to help her sister with her newborn baby. She found that it was nearly impossible for her to find work, because almost all immigrants come to Chile to work as live-in, domestic workers. She, however, could not work in this field because she had to take care of her niece. Although she was hired to work in a fast-food restaurant when she first arrived in Chile, after three months she had to quit because her employer was not going to give her a contract. When interviewed she had been unemployed for two-years and was looking for work as a live-out service provider (Fernanda, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 18 July. 2010). Milagros, a 31-year-old Peruvian woman with two children, came to Chile to find a job. She first worked in the service sector but could not obtain a contract. She had to quit and could not find another job. When she found that there were not employment opportunities, she decided to work as a live-in nanny because she would be given food and housing, and a small salary (Milagros, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010).

Peruvian women are forced to work in the domestic service sector even though they have university degrees or enough education to provide access to other types of work. Angela, a Peruvian immigrant, has a BA in Accounting from a university in Lima. She could not, however, get a job in this field and had begun to feel that her degree was worthless. Angela is now employed as a live-in nanny, although she has four kids of her own living in Santiago (Angela, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 11 July. 2010). Johanna studied graphic design and had completed three years of her education but not her final internship (Johanna, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010). Milagros, completed her high-school studies in Peru, and migrated to Argentina where she completed three-years of university-level education (Milagros, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010). Elie, a

Peruvian immigrant from Quipo, completed her nursing degree before moving to Chile. When she got to Chile, she found out that her degree was not valued and, therefore, she would have to go back to school for two years in order to become a nurse. She did not have enough money and therefore became a domestic worker (Elie, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 11 July 2010).

As discussed above, working as a live-in nanny or domestic worker blurs the lines of what is work and what is not. Because the domestic worker lives with a family, she is required to be “invisible.” At the same time, the tendency for the family is to think of her as “on call” at any time of the day. The working hours become blurred as well. Long hours become the norm.

In a study conducted by Doña and Levinson, almost all of the women they interviewed complained of at least one negative employment experience (Doña & Levinson, 2005 p. 9). Peruvian immigrant from San Martin, who had been living in Chile for five years, explained how domestics are treated in Chile: “People who have money will never treat those who are working in their house with decency. They do not treat domestic servants as human beings. They will always treat them as inferiors. They treat their dogs better than they treat their domestic servants” (Salvadora, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 11 July. 2010).

Many Peruvian immigrants complain that they are overworked. Doña and Levinson, in their interviews, found that domestic servants complain of working from 6:30 am to 10:30 pm. Further, their employers seldom recognized their efforts around the house or paid them for over-time hours. The interviews conducted for this study showed similar results. Milagros, complained that working and living in Chile was too hard. She used to work as a live-out nanny. She rented an apartment so that she could live with her children. With only her salary, the apartment was unaffordable. Further, it was impossible for her to work long hours, as a non-

resident nanny, and take care of her child. She had to quit her job and now plans to move back to Peru (Milagros, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010). Lydia is also working as a live-out service provider. However, she still works six days a week and struggles to get to work very early in the mornings (Lydia, Bolivian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 4 July. 2010). In an interview with Johanna, for example, she complains that she could not work as a domestic because it was too hard and too tiring. Salvadora, similarly responded that “To be a domestic worker, one single person has to do everything. Therefore the body gets tired, very tired. This is not a way to live happily”(Salvadora, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 11 July. 2010).

Peruvian domestics are forced to do almost every household task. A different immigrant, also from San Martin, Peru, complained that in the house where she works, she does everything from cooking to cleaning to caring for the kids. “This is extremely exhausting and difficult” (Peruvian Immigrant San Martin 2. Personal Communication. 18 July. 2010). Milagros complains that when she came to Chile she did not like or know how to do housework. She was however, forced to learn. “I did not like housework. I had to work as a domestic though. I had to learn a lot, Chileans like everything in a specific way, I had to learn to clean, to cook, everything how they want it. They want full hours from me but I have a child” (Milagros, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 29 June. 2010).

Racism and sexism are also factors that limit labor mobility in Chile. Johanna talked about the racism she felt while living in Chile. “Chileans hate Peruvian people. I went on multiple interviews to become a domestic worker, but they said they didn’t want to hire a Peruvian.” Salvadora speaks about how employers treat domestic workers. “They will always treat women as inferiors, they will never value them for the work that they do. You work all day long and

your salary does not compensate you for what you worked” (Salvadora, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 11 July. 2010).

Mahler and Staab, moreover, found that Chilean employers sometimes do not pay salaries or sometimes pay them late. Chilean employers prefer to hire women without contracts so that they do not have to pay for social benefits. Further, Peruvian domestics and their Chilean employers do not draw up contracts that detail their work schedule. When, on the other hand, they create an agreement, Chilean employers often ignore it. In Chile, there is a law that states that anyone who works a twelve-hour day can take three hours of total break throughout the day (p. 112).

Doña and Levinson found that most of the women they interviewed did not have established working conditions and, therefore, did not have pre-determined periods for resting. Antonia, in her interview with Parson, stated that she was treated really badly by her employers, when she worked as a live-in domestic. “They made me work, and they didn’t pay me. And then they told me they would pay me for all of my months together, that I shouldn’t worry” (Parson, 2010, p. 9). However, after three months of work, her employer fired her unexpectedly without pay.

Even with these problems, however, Peruvian women choose to work as live-in workers for several reasons. First, only as live-in domestics can they earn enough money to send remittances back home. Many of the Peruvian immigrants interviewed had migrated to Chile in order to send support to their children and families back in Peru. As live-in domestic workers their food and lodging is paid for, so their salary can be used to send money back to Peru. As live-out workers they can hardly earn enough money to pay for their apartments and living expenses.

Most Peruvian immigrants come to Chile with limited resources and connections to the country. Live-in domestic work provides these women with an easy way to obtain food and shelter. They do not have to live in remote or dangerous situations, in slums or overpopulated

houses. None of the women interviewed for this study wanted to become live-out service providers or cleaning women instead of live-in domestic workers. For example, Johanna, after working as a live-in service provider, began to work as a cleaning woman because she had a child. She found no new benefits in this type of work. However, while women expressed that becoming live-in domestics was the best option for them, they articulated that they did not want to continue in this line of work.

When Antonia eventually migrated back to Chile once again to pay off her debts, she found another job as a live-in nanny. But when her daughter announced that she was pregnant she had to leave her job and work as a live-out Nanny. “They paid me little. I had to pay rent for my room. I had to have food, and then I sent little to my daughters in Peru. I couldn’t find work that wasn’t a live-in maid position” (Parson, 2010, p. 12).

Almost all of the Peruvian immigrants interviewed said that domestic work was hard and tiring. However, the majority of immigrants responded that they liked the families they lived with. This finding is inconsistent with previous studies. Although the majority of women expressed that they like the families they worked for, almost no one wanted to keep working in the domestic service sector.

The Peruvian immigrant from San Martin, who had previously worked in Costa Rica, explained that although her current salary is substantially better than in both Costa Rica and Peru, and the family she works for treats her well, she wants to leave Chile and find better work (Peruvian Immigrant San Martin 1. Personal Communication. 11 July.2010). Lydia, although she likes the house she works in, would like the opportunity to do something else. Angela also likes the family that she lives with in Chile. However, she does not like her life in Chile and wants to return to Peru as soon as she makes enough money (Lydia, Bolivian Immigrant. Personal

Communication. 4 July. 2010). Elie also stated that the housework is good and she gets along with her family. Milagros, similarly, liked the family she worked for, although she eventually quit. Even Salvadora stated that her family was nice even though she did not believe that they treated her well (Salvadora, Peruvian Immigrant. Personal Communication. 11 July. 2010) .

Overall, none of the Peruvian women interviewed were interested in continuing to work as live-in domestics. Most women expressed the need to change jobs because the work hours were far too long and they did not have time for themselves nor the ability to regulate their own work schedules. They wanted to be less dependent on their employers and to separate the time and space where they work and live. However, they found that there were not job opportunities in other sectors. They also observed that within the field of domestic work itself there was no labor mobility. Live-in workers are a preference for Chilean employers because they work longer hours, and are always present to support the family. Many women who were raising their own families could not become live-in domestics. Only one of the women interviewed was working as a live-in domestic and had kids that were living in Chile. Other women had children but the children had remained in Peru with other family members. The Peruvian immigrant from San Martin explained that: “I do not think that any person that works as a domestic service worker likes her job. A domestic worker always tries to find better work” (Peruvian Immigrant San Martin 2. Personal Communication. 18 July. 2010)

The field of domestic labor is a dead end in terms of economic mobility, but also is a kind of trap for those who enter into it. Anyone working in this field is subject to mistreatment; overwork, over-exertion, racism, and non-payment of salary. Although many of the women interviewed said they were lucky to work for a kind Chilean family, even with good employers they still suffered from abuse and isolation. Though many Peruvians migrated to work in the

domestic sector, they did so believing that they would then be able to find employment in a different sector. However, in the interviews they stated that once they were in their new country they discovered that this was impossible. Ironically, many of them said that once they earned enough money they would return to their countries of origin and find employment there. Lydia said that she wanted to move back to Bolivia to open a store. Johanna stated that she wanted to move back to Peru and work in a job that better fitted her actual skills.

Why are Peruvian women unable enter other sectors in Chile? First, although women have become more integrated into the Chilean workforce, there is still discrimination against women working in certain sectors. Second, Peruvian degrees are not recognized as valid in Chile and, therefore, Peruvians have to go back to school to legitimize their degrees. Third, many Peruvians either come to Chile illegally or as tourists. Therefore, they need a labor contract to become legal residents. However, without papers, it is hard for women to find jobs in most fields because it is illegal. Peruvians who remain in Chile without papers are at risk of being deported. They must find work quickly and must rely on an employer who will offer a contract. Fourth, racism in Chile discourages Peruvians from working in most other sectors. Many employers discriminate against Peruvians and only hire Chileans. Further, because of discrimination, work in other sectors might be even more difficult. The harsh labor conditions in health institutions deter Peruvian immigrants from finding jobs in the health sector. Chilean patients are racist and classist towards their Peruvian nurses. Moreover, Chilean citizens fear that if Peruvians enter other sectors they will steal jobs from Chilean workers. Fifth, Peruvians use NGOs, church groups and informal networks to obtain jobs in the domestic service sector. No networks are in place to help Peruvians find jobs in other sectors. Therefore, Peruvians have to use newspapers

and radio to find jobs, which puts them in competition with Chileans who are always favored for the job.

Once Peruvians become domestic workers, it is even harder for them to find jobs in other sectors. First, Peruvians are isolated from organized unions and networks of workers. They usually only have Sundays free, which does not allow enough time for them to organize. Second, if Peruvian migrants work without a contract, they are not subject to the domestic labor laws. If they work with a contract, employers still do not follow labor laws, because Peruvians are too vulnerable to be able to quit their jobs. When labor laws are not followed, domestic workers are overworked and do not have time or private space to look for other jobs. Third, employers feel threatened when workers have outside educational opportunities.

Alman conducted a study in which she investigated a Red Cross course offered to Peruvian Domestic Workers. She found that the workers took the Red Cross certification course because they imagined that their lives would be different after they received Red Cross certification (Alman, 2009, p. 9). The Red Cross organization is recognized internationally and they could use the certificate to migrate to a third country, like Italy or Spain, and find employment there (Alman, 2009, p. 12). Further, some women believed that enrolling in the course would lead to greater respect at their current jobs and maybe a better salary (Alman 13). However, for the most part, the Peruvians in the course did not tell their employers they were taking the course and were scared of being fired if their employers found out. Sadly, the Red Cross course certificate was not even recognized by the Chilean Ministry of Education. The story is one more example of the dead end experienced by women in the domestic service sector.

Domestic labor is a precarious sector because domestic labor does not allow Peruvian migrants to bring their families to Chile. If migrants become live-in workers, they have to leave

their families in Peru and send money back home. This is clearly not a desirable outcome and leaves the children in vulnerable situations. But if Peruvian women do bring their families to Chile, they need to work as live-out domestics and often do not earn enough money to support their family. Immigrants are extremely vulnerable to economic depressions because if they are laid off, it is difficult for them to find other work. Even economic slumps may cause massive unemployment among the whole immigrant population.

Community Development and Employment Possibilities

The situation for the immigrant domestic workers in Chile is difficult and it is hard to see what solutions are viable for them. Because the Peruvian immigrant population is comprised mainly of women and because the jobs open to them are almost entirely as domestic workers, they face specific and special problems. Peruvian migrants are living in separated communities throughout Santiago and social stratification and exclusion have fostered the emergence of Peruvian transnational communities. Some think these communities could provide a new framework for development as well as provide immigrants with new forms of immigrant citizenship and identity (Mora, 2008, p. 340). They believe that Peruvians can organize in communities to overcome marginalization and poverty. Peruvian transnational communities do provide spaces for the migrants to participate in political, civic and cultural activities. Further, the communities can serve as locations for economic exchange, cultural reproduction, and a place to bond over common experiences of exclusion (Mora, 2008, p. 344). But, given that the work force is mainly women, living in the homes of Chilean families, with little time to themselves, it is hard to see how this can be valid solution. It is far more likely that the existence of separate Peruvian communities hinders Peruvian inclusion into the Chilean society.

The neighborhoods that Peruvian immigrants occupy are currently underdeveloped. Peruvians inhabit these areas because it makes the cost of living cheaper. Since the communities are new, Peruvians must rely on other neighborhoods to buy goods. In the surrounding area near Plaza de Armas and the Mercado Central, markets have sprung up that sell mainly Peruvian goods. The markets contain businesses and services, like restaurants, and internet and phone centers that cater mainly to Peruvian users. The presence of Peruvian migrants require the growth of new businesses because Peruvians want easy ways to stay in touch with relatives in Peru, and want to purchase similar goods to those they relied on in Peru (Martínez et al. 2009, p. 34). If Peruvians become the owners of these businesses using microlending from NGOs, that will clearly create some jobs that are not domestic. But even in situations where it is Peruvians providing these services, the amount of integration is limited and the reality is that these shop owners will be feeding off other immigrants only. The only way to expand this small market is by increasing the number of immigrants. Unless one convinces Chileans to buy your product, you haven't actually integrated into Chilean society or added meaningful jobs. Such jobs and businesses are always going to be limited by numbers of the immigrant population. And the danger is, the owners of these businesses might actually be perpetuating discrimination.

The bulk of the immigrants in Chile are women for whom the only available work is live-in domestic work. As we have seen, this allows them very little time to socialize among their own community. As women in a male-dominated society they will have little access to jobs even within their transnational community that empower them or provide the means of escape from their domestic situations. They battle racial prejudice, gender prejudice and stereotyping about domestic labor in general. If these problems are going to be overcome, local political

organizations, comprised of Peruvians and Chileans, NGOs and other groups must focus on solving these bigger problems.

In the past, scholars have focused on improving the struggle for women's rights in order to empower Peruvians in the domestic service sector. Further, they have suggested that Peruvian workers need to organize to demand their rights with the support of NGOs (Hill and Staab 82). Other scholars have suggested that interventions aimed at reducing segregation and prejudices are critical to improving Peruvians rights. Gonzales, for example, claims that the interventions should focus on trying to create friendships between the two communities (González et al 816). All of these interventions are clearly critical for the well being of domestic workers. But it is also important to focus on interventions that broaden labor opportunities for Peruvian domestic workers.

Peruvian transitional communities can be potential sources of employment. NGOs can focus on microlending to support the growth of small businesses. NGOs can also assist Peruvians in obtaining the necessary permits to sell goods, foods, or services. But it is imperative that these businesses are able to integrate into the broader Chilean markets. Employment in transnational communities can help Peruvians escape from the structural inequalities that currently restrict labor mobility. But it is also necessary to create opportunities for immigrants within the broader Chilean economy. Creating job opportunities outside of domestic work has to become a focus for NGOs and political organizations. The current conditions of domestic labor create an untenable situation for immigrants. There is little chance of escape from the long hours, and the entrapment within the family homes of Chileans. Even in situations where the family treats the domestic worker well, that worker remains a servant of the family, on call all the time, with no

real life of their own. And in those situations where the extra money is sent out of the country to support a family in Peru, there is almost no chance of escape.

Clearly, there are no short term solutions for domestic workers in Chile. Solutions, in terms of ending racism against darker skinned, indigenous peoples, of sexism, and the creation of a class of servants wearing uniforms as badges of their class, are all targets that need to be addressed if long term solutions are going to be found. These are not goals that can be solved in a short period of time. But local political organizations and NGOs can work to support individual Peruvian businesses that support the local Peruvian neighborhoods. They can work to gain recognition of the education that many Peruvians have. And they can focus more on expanding the kinds of jobs available to Peruvian immigrants so that more opportunities are open to them.

In the future, with the continuation of globalization and the threat of global warming, migration is only going to increase. Further, as Western countries increasingly close their doors, to migrants, immigrants will turn to neighboring underdeveloped and developing countries. Therefore, it is critical that we work towards increasing labor mobilization so that immigrants are not forced to work in abusive and precarious jobs. The development of transnational communities is occurring worldwide. Therefore, we must turn NGO attention to support the growth of these small communities, so they become less marginalized and vulnerable. This will allow immigrants to integrate into their host countries as communities, with networks of support and economic empowerment.

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