

NAVIGATING PRECARIETY: QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AMONG YOUNG FEMALE DOMESTIC WORKERS IN KINONDONI, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

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Abstract

Female domestic workers frequently encounter precarious employment conditions, rendering them vulnerable to socio-economic instability and various forms of exploitation, including sexual abuse. Legal and institutional protections are insufficient to mitigate these risks. This study rigorously examines the lived experiences of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam, focusing on their engagement in sexual relationships and the factors influencing these dynamics. The research aims to elucidate how precarious employment, gender dynamics, and inadequate legal and social protections exacerbate their vulnerability to both socio-economic instability and exploitation, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on labour rights and gender inequality. Utilizing a qualitative ethnographic case study design, this research engages forty-two participants selected through snowball and purposive sampling. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions and were analyzed thematically. The findings indicate that young female domestic workers endure low wages, extended working hours, job insecurity, and a lack of formal contracts, thereby exacerbating their socio-economic instability. This precarious situation compels them to engage in risky behaviours, including acquiescing to coerced sexual advances from male partners often perceived as financial supporters, furthering their exploitation. The findings underscore severe challenges related to exploitation and low wages, leading to detrimental coping strategies. This paper advocates for comprehensive interventions, including strengthened labour protections, educational initiatives on rights, counseling and financial support, gender equality empowerment, improved legal access, and the promotion of fair labour practices among employers.

Keywords: *Female Domestic Workers, Precarious Employment, Gendered Power Imbalances, Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, Interventions.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the plight of female domestic workers has gained significant attention, particularly as reports of exploitation and abuse continue to surface (Human Rights Watch, 2024; Amnesty International, 2020). This has led to increased interest in understanding the socio-economic conditions underpinning their experiences (Martinez *et al.*, 2025; Tholkappian, 2025; Sengar & Shah, 2024). Despite extensive research on labour rights and gender-based violence (ILO, 2024), significant gaps remain in understanding the specific vulnerabilities faced by young female domestic workers in urban settings like Dar es Salaam. Shagembe and Ndaluka (2023) dedicated their study to the exploration of child domestic workers' lived experiences in Dar es Salaam, while Matheka *et al.*, (2020) focused on domestic work, sexual abuse, and exploitation in Tanzania. Additionally, WIEGO's (2021) study on the impact of COVID-19 on informal workers in Dar es Salaam revealed exacerbated vulnerabilities during the pandemic. However, these studies fail to address how these factors intersect with young women's personal relationships and their coping mechanisms in the face of socio-economic instability.

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This study aims to explore the experiences of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam, focusing on their engagement in sexual relationships and the influences that drive these interactions. The central argument of this paper is that precarious employment conditions, gendered power imbalances, and insufficient legal and social protections significantly increase the vulnerability of young female domestic workers to socio-economic instability and exploitation. The following section presents a critical review of relevant literature to identify the knowledge gap this study can fill.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The global context of domestic work reveals a significant gender disparity, with the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2023) estimating that over 82 million individuals are employed as domestic workers, approximately 76% of whom are women. This gender disparity underscores the critical role that women play in domestic work, a trend that is particularly pronounced in Africa. ILO (2023) and Bonnet *et al.*, (2022) estimate that around 10.5 million individuals in Africa are employed as domestic workers, predominantly in the Sub-Saharan region, where over 15% of female employees are found in this sector. Focusing specifically on Tanzania, the 2020/21 Integrated Labour Force Survey reveals that 5.6% of the country's 23.5 million employed individuals work in domestic roles, women comprising approximately 66.5% of this workforce (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2022). This data not only highlights the significant presence of women in domestic work within Tanzania but also raises concerns regarding their working conditions and socio-economic status.

A notable trend in domestic employment is the prevalence of migrant workers, often from economically disadvantaged regions (Gallotti & Branch, 2015; Lutz, 2016; Andall, 2017; Lopez, 2018; Zewdu, 2018; Parreñas *et al.*, 2021; Yeoh *et al.*, 2023). However, in many African nations, including Tanzania, domestic workers primarily consist of local migrants transitioning from rural to urban settings due to poverty (Rugeiyamu *et al.*, 2018; Kerega, 2022; Tanzanian Ministry of Health, 2023). While older women may be perceived as suitable for caregiving roles in certain contexts (Finnemore & Koekemoer, 2018; Yeoh *et al.*, 2023), a significant proportion of domestic workers worldwide are aged 15 to 24 (ILO, 2021; Bonnet *et al.*, 2022). This sector not only attracts local workers but also foreign women seeking employment, with young women often preferred for their lower labour costs (Gould & Kassa, 2022; HRME, 2025). Young female domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, facing precarious working conditions due to limited experience and lack of awareness regarding their rights. Such vulnerabilities increase the risk of engaging in risky sexual behaviours (Bukuluki *et al.*, 2021; Thi *et al.*, 2021). In Tanzania, these workers, referred to as "dada wa kazi" (a Swahili term for housemaids or house girls), predominantly reside in their employers' homes, with approximately 84% classified as live-in workers (ILO, 2014; Kerega, 2022; Cirillo, 2023).

The unfamiliar environments and potential for involuntary intimate relationships exacerbate the vulnerabilities faced by young female domestic workers (ILO, 2021; Thakkar, 2024). The absence of formal contracts, coupled with limited legal and social protections, results in significant exploitation of these young female domestic workers. This exploitation manifests in various forms, including excessive working hours, low wages, and instances of abuse (Sargeant, 2014; ILO, 2016; Bukuluki *et al.*, 2021). Such conditions are characteristic of precarious employment, often referred to as indecent or non-standard employment, which encompasses these adverse features (Kreshpaj *et al.*, 2020; Matheka *et al.*, 2020; Shagembe & Ndaluka, 2023). Moreover, Wazambi (2023) has reported widespread violations among

domestic workers in Tanzania, underscoring a persistent lack of awareness regarding their rights within precarious employment contexts (Mtei *et al.*, 2020). This lack of awareness further exacerbates their vulnerability because these workers remain unaware of the protections that should be afforded to them.

In response to the challenges confronting female domestic workers, global initiatives have been undertaken to enhance their rights and working conditions. The ILO's Domestic Workers Convention (C189) advocates for equal protection and decent working conditions (ILO, 2011). Additionally, the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) promotes equitable wages and legal protections (IDWF, 2013), while the Global Alliance against Traffic in Women (GAATW) addresses concerns related to human trafficking (GAATW, 2020). UN Women also emphasizes the importance of gender-responsive policies to safeguard domestic workers (Human Rights Watch, 2018; UN Women, 2020). Within Tanzania, civil society organizations such as the Tanzania Child Domestic Workers Coalition and Wote Sawa Domestic Workers Organization are instrumental in advocating for the rights of domestic workers. The Tanzania Domestic Workers Network (TDWN) and the Conservation, Hotels, Domestic, and Allied Workers Union (CHODAWU) play vital roles in these advocacy efforts (Mramba & Rwebangira, 2023). The ILO has initiated projects aimed at enhancing the role of domestic workers as caregivers, with a focus on promoting gender equality (ILO, 2021). Furthermore, Tanzania has developed a consolidated National Plan of Action to End Violence against Women and Children (NPA-VAWC 2017/18–2021/22) to eliminate violence through collaborative efforts.

Nevertheless, evaluations of these programs reveal persistent challenges, including weak institutional capacities and inadequate funding (Oppong *et al.*, 2022). While extensive studies have explored various facets of domestic work in Tanzania, significant gaps remain in understanding how vulnerabilities influence the sexual relationships of young female domestic workers. For instance, Matheka *et al.*, (2020) conducted a qualitative study in Dar es Salaam that illuminated the influence of male dominance in decision-making on women's ability to negotiate safe sex. This study underscores the critical role of economic pressures, which significantly shape these dynamics (ILO, 2022). Furthermore, Anti-Slavery International (2021) employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the risks of sexual exploitation in domestic work. The study findings indicate that the isolation experienced by domestic workers exacerbates these risks, primarily due to the absence of supportive networks. However, the effectiveness of existing support systems in mitigating these vulnerabilities remains largely unexplored. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic further compounds these challenges.

According to WIEGO (2021), the pandemic has intensified vulnerabilities among domestic workers, necessitating more in-depth research on the intersections of financial stress and negotiation power (Mastorillo *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, the Population Council (2022) identified barriers to reproductive health services, which heighten young workers' susceptibility to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies. Mtatifikolo *et al.*, (2021) explored the interplay between commercial sex work and domestic labour, revealing that economic pressures often compel domestic workers to seek supplementary income through sex work. While some of these studies elucidate the relationship between economic pressures and sexual relationships, a significant gap remains in the comprehensive understanding of how these interdependencies influence the vulnerabilities of young female domestic workers within a robust theoretical framework.

Robust theoretical frameworks that underpin these dynamics are essential for advancing knowledge in this field.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs the feminist-sociological theory of gender order developed by Connell (2002) in conjunction with Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality, articulated in the late 1980s. Connell's theory examines how gender is structured within social hierarchies, emphasizing the social construction and maintenance of masculinity and femininity. In contrast, Crenshaw's intersectionality framework emphasizes how overlapping identities, such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, shape individual experiences and social dynamics. These frameworks enhance our understanding of the factors influencing sexual relationships among young female domestic workers and inform efforts for social change, thus necessitating a focus on gendered power dynamics.

Gender, power, and sexual relations are profoundly interconnected, as explored by various scholars across diverse contexts (Crenshaw, 1991; Connell, 2002; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Murray & Durrheim, 2024). Connell conceptualizes power in sexual relations as a manifestation of gender dynamics, with men typically exerting greater power than women. This imbalance affects sexual behaviour, societal expectations, and interpersonal relationships, extending beyond individual interactions to become woven into broader social contexts and institutions (Connell, 2002). Through her gender order theory, Connell delineates structured relationships among men and women, as well as among different masculinities and femininities, which sustain power and privilege for specific groups. She identifies hegemonic masculinity as the dominant form that legitimizes men's superior status and justifies the subordination of women and marginalized masculinities within social contexts and institutions, including the household (Connell, 2002; Connell, 2005; Connell, 2009).

In the context of household labour, Connell analyses how gender relations reinforce traditional roles, with caregiving and housework predominantly assigned to women, who are often perceived as subordinate. This unequal division arises from male dominance and societal stereotypes, creating a gendered power imbalance that perpetuates various forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation (Connell, 2002; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Such exploitation reflects the structural subordination of household workers, wherein sexual relationships are influenced by patriarchal beliefs that grant men authority over women. Consequently, sexual exploitation can be understood as a manifestation of hegemonic masculinity, wherein men assert control through their authority (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). A comprehensive exploration of gender and power relations is crucial for understanding the dynamics of sexual relations among domestic workers. In Tanzania, domestic workers are often young women from marginalized socio-economic backgrounds, situated in subordinate roles within households that reflect unequal gendered power dynamics (Kerega, 2022; Cirillo, 2023). The interplay of gender inequality, power imbalances, age, and economic circumstances heightens their vulnerability to various forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation. Examining these intersecting factors reveals deeper insights into the unique challenges faced by young domestic workers, thus underscoring the need for social transformation that addresses the intersectionality of multiple influences as articulated in Crenshaw's framework. Crenshaw's concept of "intersectionality," introduced within feminist critical theory, addresses the distinct discrimination encountered by Black women in the United States. It emphasizes how the intersections of race and gender shape identities and

experiences (Crenshaw, 2011; Cho et al., 2013; Crenshaw, 2013). Crenshaw critiques the social structures that perpetuate gender inequalities and advocates for transformative approaches that consider the interplay of multiple factors (Tong, 2013; Marecek, 2016). While initially conceived in a U.S. context, intersectionality has been applied globally across various fields, including gender studies and social justice advocacy for marginalized groups (Kelly et al., 2021).

In this study, the intersectionality framework is essential for understanding how the sexual relationships of domestic workers are influenced by a complex interplay of factors rather than a singular cause. This perspective emphasizes the necessity of recognizing how multiple identities exacerbate vulnerabilities and highlight the urgency of transforming gendered power dynamics and social norms that perpetuate hegemonic masculinity as articulated in Connell's (2002) gender order theory. Compared to traditional feminist theories, which often focus on singular aspects of gender inequality, the integrated framework of Crenshaw's intersectionality and Connell's gender order theory provides a clearer understanding of how intersecting identities exacerbate vulnerabilities. Traditional feminist theories, such as liberal and radical feminism, advocate for legal reforms and critique patriarchal structures but may overlook the diverse experiences of marginalized groups. For instance, liberal feminism emphasizes equal rights within existing frameworks, while radical feminism seeks to dismantle patriarchy. However, these frameworks can fail to account for the complexities of intersecting identities and the unique challenges faced by marginalized women.

In contrast, intersectionality recognizes that the convergence of multiple identities shapes oppression, thus offering a more holistic understanding of social dynamics. Connell critiques static notions of patriarchy by framing power dynamics as being dynamic and evolving, providing a robust lens for analyzing sexual relations among domestic workers. This approach allows for a deeper exploration of how gender relations are maintained and transformed within specific socio-cultural contexts. Scholars such as Ruddick (1989) and Collins (2000) further support this perspective by emphasizing the need to consider care work and its historical context of oppression, thereby enriching the analysis of domestic labour and its implications for gender relations. Empirical studies enrich this theoretical framework and affirm its relevance. For example, Matheka *et al.*, (2020) illustrate how men's dominance in decision-making restricts women's ability to negotiate safe sex, highlighting the power dynamics at play in sexual relationships and Anti-Slavery International (2021) shows that the isolation experienced by domestic workers exacerbates their risks of sexual exploitation due to lack of support systems.

These findings underscore the critical insights offered by Connell's and Crenshaw's theories in understanding the realities faced by young female domestic workers. Integrating Connell's and Crenshaw's theories enables a comprehensive analysis of the structural inequalities underlying the exploitation of young female domestic workers. Understanding the intersectionality of gender, power, and socio-economic factors is essential for formulating effective policies and advocacy strategies aimed at protecting and enhancing the rights and conditions of domestic workers. Such insights are crucial for addressing the structural inequalities that underpin their exploitation and facilitating social change that prioritizes equity and justice. This perspective not only informs effective policy interventions but also establishes a theoretical foundation for advocacy aimed at achieving systemic reform and advancing the rights of marginalized populations. This framework makes a significant contribution to the discourse on social justice and the empowerment of vulnerable groups by prioritizing intersectionality and dynamic power relations. This integrated theoretical

framework not only enhances our understanding of the complex realities faced by domestic workers but also serves as a call to action for scholars, policymakers, and activists to develop more inclusive and effective strategies for addressing gender-based exploitation and inequality.

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

This research is part of a broader initiative sponsored by the Research Council of Norway (NORGLOBAL Research Project), titled "Competing Discourses Impacting Girls' and Women's Rights: Safe Abortion and Fertility Control in Ethiopia, Zambia, and Tanzania (SAFEZT)." The study was conducted in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam, between May 2018 and August 2021, focusing on sexual relations and fertility control among young female domestic workers. As Tanzania's largest commercial city, Dar es Salaam attracts a significant influx of domestic workers from various regions of the country (Mtatifikolo *et al.*, 2021). The Kinondoni district was specifically selected for its accessibility, aligning with the study's logistical constraints and facilitating concurrent academic responsibilities at the Institute of Social Work, also located in Kinondoni.

Study Design

A qualitative ethnographic case study design was employed to investigate the complex social phenomena surrounding sexual relations among young female domestic workers. This design integrates qualitative research principles, ethnographic methods, and case study frameworks (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). Epistemologically, the study is grounded on a paradigm that prioritizes individual experiences and subjectivity, emphasizing the understanding of human experiences and social contexts through non-numerical data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Schwandt, 2015). It posits that knowledge is subjective and constructed through social interactions (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Creswell, 2013; Thiyagu, 2023). The adoption of an ethnographic case study design is justified by its capacity to capture the complexities inherent in the sexual relationships of young female domestic workers (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This approach emphasizes individual subjectivity and the significance of context, enabling a thorough exploration of the intricate social dynamics surrounding these relationships, including power imbalances, cultural expectations, and economic pressures (Bourgois, 2003). Moreover, the design facilitated the capturing of nuanced feelings and perceptions regarding their sexual relationships, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of their lived experiences (Wolcott, 2008).

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The study engaged a total of 44 participants to gain diverse perspectives on sexual relationships among young female domestic workers. The majority of the informants were young female domestic workers, referred to as "dada wa kazi" or house girls, comprising 32 participants. Additionally, the study included five employers of female domestic workers and seven representatives from organizations or associations relevant to the field. This diverse sampling strategy was designed to capture a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and complexities surrounding sexual relationships in this context, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of the Study Participants

Participant Category	Number of Participants
Young female domestic workers	32
Domestic workers' employers	5
CHODAWU	1
The Police Gender Desk	2
CMA	1
TAMWA	1
House Work Agency	2
TOTAL	44

Source: Field Data (2021)

The selection of potential participants was carried out using purposive and snowball sampling techniques, which are recognized as valuable methods in qualitative research (Makwana et al., 2023). These techniques were specifically utilized to identify organizations and associations pertinent to domestic work, notably the Conservation, Hotels, Domestic, and Allied Workers Union (CHODAWU) within the study area. CHODAWU's involvement was instrumental in facilitating outreach to potential informants since the union's connections enabled access to individuals seeking assistance with reporting disputes, despite the absence of specific figures on engagement. Accessing the domestic work environment posed challenges, as noted by the ILO (2016). Without proper registries, reaching domestic workers proved particularly difficult due to the informality of employment relationships. The snowball sampling technique further aided in recruiting additional informants, who were brought to CHODAWU's premises by initially contacted participants at opportune times. Key criteria for recruitment included relevant experience and willingness to participate, aligning with the fundamental principles of qualitative research (Crane & Broome, 2017; Saunders & Townsend, 2018).

Data Collection Methods

Data collection encompassed semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, recognized as effective methods for exploring sensitive topics (Gill & Baillie, 2018; Akyıldız & Ahmed, 2021). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three primary groups: young female domestic workers, their employers, and leaders from relevant organizations, as highlighted in Table 1. This approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the various perspectives and experiences regarding sexual relationships and employment conditions. The interviews were flexible, enabling the interviewer to adapt questions based on the flow of conversation while ensuring that key topics were systematically addressed. To enhance the validity and depth of the findings, focus group discussions were used as a follow up technique to triangulate the data obtained from the interviews. This methodological triangulation is crucial in qualitative research as it integrates various data sources to strengthen the credibility and validity of research outcomes (Donkoh, 2023).

Two focus group discussions were conducted: one with six young female domestic workers and another with four employers. These discussions were held at the union premises at different times, thereby facilitating rich dialogue among participants. The focus groups encouraged participants to interact with one another, allowing diverse viewpoints to emerge and fostering a deeper understanding of the social dynamics at play. This combination of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions provided a robust framework for understanding the complex realities faced by young female domestic workers. The integration

of these methods facilitated a comprehensive examination of the factors influencing their sexual relationships and overall experiences within the domestic labour sector.

Data Analysis

Data management commenced in the field, with meticulous documentation of participant narratives (Bingham, 2023). This process involved precise assignment and validation of participant codes to ensure confidentiality and facilitate subsequent analysis (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019; Corti *et al.*, 2020). A thematic analysis approach was employed to extract meanings from the qualitative data collected, thus allowing for a comprehensive exploration of participants' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Thematic analysis entails several critical steps: familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, identifying and reviewing themes, and defining them for clarity (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This method was selected for its adaptability in addressing diverse research questions and its efficacy in uncovering nuanced patterns, particularly within sensitive contexts (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

Thematic analysis ensures that findings authentically reflect their lived experiences while providing a systematic framework that enhances data organization and validity by prioritizing participants' voices (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). This method was selected for its adaptability in addressing diverse research questions and its ability to uncover nuanced patterns within qualitative data, particularly in sensitive contexts (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). The analytical framework emphasizes the importance of participants' perspectives by ensuring that the findings accurately represent their experiences (Insight, 2023). Its structured approach not only bolsters data organization and rigour, but also facilitates the effective integration of findings from multiple sources, thereby enhancing the validity of the research (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, the analysis was guided by the research objectives and questions, ensuring alignment with the study's overarching aims.

Ethical Considerations

The data collection process was carefully planned to prioritize ethical considerations. Strict adherence to ethical guidelines was maintained throughout. Oral informed consent was obtained from all participants after explaining the research objectives, the principle of voluntary participation, their right to withdraw at any time, and measures to ensure data confidentiality. To protect anonymity, pseudonyms were assigned to all informants by ensuring that their identities remained confidential. These practices align with the ethical standards set by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2024) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC, 2025). Interviews and focus group discussions were audio-recorded with participants' permission to ensure accurate capturing of their narratives for analysis.

FINDINGS

The findings of this study illuminate the precarious employment conditions of young female domestic workers, commonly referred to as "house girls." The data indicate that their job stability is significantly influenced by their ability to navigate and disengage from sexual relationships as dictated by their employers. Despite this expectation, many of these young women report challenges in avoiding intimate relationships, revealing a complex interplay between employment demands and personal agency. Among the thirty two young female domestic workers interviewed, the age distribution is noteworthy: eighteen participants were aged between fifteen and eighteen, while fourteen were between eighteen and twenty six. A

critical observation is that thirty of the informants began their employment before turning eighteen, with only two securing positions thereafter. This trend raises significant concerns regarding the vulnerability of younger workers in the domestic labour sector.

Disparities in educational attainment are prominent among the participants. Specifically, twenty eight individuals were either school dropouts or had not completed their primary or secondary education. Informants attributed their educational challenges to intersecting factors, including economic hardship, loss of parental support, lack of social networks, premature pregnancy, and logistical difficulties related to commuting to school. Many expressed a desire for better opportunities in urban areas, often prioritizing work over education. A notable feature of the informants' employment situation is the absence of formal contracts, underscoring the precarious nature of their working conditions. This lack of contractual security not only heightens their vulnerability but also reflects systemic issues within the labour market for domestic workers. The narratives suggest that the sexual relationships these young women engage in frequently stem from clandestine arrangements, further complicating their precarious circumstances. The subsequent section delineates the multifaceted nature of these relationships by categorizing the various factors influencing sexual dynamics among young female domestic workers. This analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the social, economic, and cultural contexts that shape their experiences.

Factors Influencing Sexual Relationships

The narratives provided by the participants reveal several key factors that facilitate sexual relationships among young female domestic workers and their partners. The primary factors identified include indecent employment conditions, gendered power imbalances, and deficiencies in legal frameworks. Pseudonyms have been employed to protect the identities of all informants thus ensuring confidentiality and ethical integrity throughout this research.

Indecent Employment Conditions

Young female domestic workers experience substandard working conditions characterized by low wages, extended working hours, limited rest periods, job insecurity, a lack of formal contracts, and diminished bargaining power. Their compensation is often inconsistent. The accounts of Maimuna and Ashura illustrate this:

"Some months I receive my pay on time, but often it is delayed. I can't afford to refuse any extra work because I don't know when I might get paid again" (Maimuna, interview informant, 2021).

"She assured me that she would provide a monthly sum of TZS 35,000; however, there are occasions when she does not give it to me on schedule. When she is unable to provide the necessary funds or is out of town, I am compelled to wait until the subsequent month" (Ashura, interview informant, 2021).

Despite frequently receiving wages below the statutory minimum of TZS 60,000 per month, domestic workers face persistent payment delays. Their limited bargaining power exacerbates this situation, influenced not only by their youth but also by prevailing gender dynamics that curtail their agency. Furthermore, these workers often exceed the legally mandated nine-hour workday, undertaking a multitude of responsibilities such as childcare, cooking, and cleaning. Kalumuna's account illustrates this:

"After waking up in the morning, I usually accompany the young children to school and then tend to those who remain at home. I also clean the house, prepare meals, wash utensils, and occasionally do laundry. Before retiring for the night, I wash the utensils once more and boil water for tea" (Kalumuna, interview informant, 2021).

The experiences of other informants, including Semeni, Chaulamoyo, Sikudhani, Stakiwi, Zaharani, Amina, Ndimama, Tabu, and Aminata, further illuminate the exploitative conditions under which these workers operate. Such circumstances not only undermine their economic stability but also create environments conducive to the formation of intimate relationships as a means of seeking support and security.

Precarious Employment and Sexual Relations

The informants consistently highlighted how these precarious or indecent working conditions shape their interactions and relationships, thus fostering environments where sexual relationships can emerge as coping mechanisms. Aminata articulated this sentiment:

"When I don't have money for basic needs, I sometimes feel I have no choice but to rely on 'Chibaba' (sugar daddy) for support. It's not what I want, but sometimes it feels like the only option" (Aminata, interview informant, 2021).

The precarious conditions faced by these young women not only heighten their vulnerability to exploitation but also complicate their ability to assert boundaries in their personal lives. This often leads to entanglements in sexual relationships viewed as a means of securing additional support or resources. Insufficient financial resources compel these workers to engage in such relationships to improve their economic circumstances and support their families back home in their villages. Moreover, these intimate connections frequently facilitate access to desired goods and essential social networks. Sikudhani's account evidences this:

"A caring sexual partner is invaluable; when my employer fails to pay me on time and I run out of money, or when I fall ill, or when my relatives urgently request financial assistance, I text him, and he sends me funds. He acts as a broker, and it was through him that I was hired" (Sikudhani, interview informant, 2021).

These testimonies reveal the complex interplay between economic necessity and personal agency, illustrating how the pressures of their employment situations can lead to reliance on intimate relationships for survival. This dynamic underscores the urgent need to address the structural inequalities that underpin their circumstances. The interviewees reported having either in-home or external sexual partners, indicating that these relationships can be categorized into two distinct types: those with household partners and those with external partners.

Sexual Relations within Households

The findings of this study reveal complex dynamics regarding sexual relations within the households employing young female domestic workers, commonly referred to as "house girls." Despite strong discouragement from female employers against engaging in sexual

relationships, some male relatives within these households, particularly husbands, actively encouraged such interactions. Observations indicated that house girls often entered their employers' rooms in their absence for various legitimate purposes, such as collecting laundry or responding to calls from the employers' husbands. While none of the house girls explicitly reported engaging in sexual encounters within the household, several mentioned experiencing intrusive advances from male family members, particularly the husbands of their employers, who occasionally offered financial incentives in exchange for favours. One informant articulated this nuanced relationship, stating:

"My employer's husband is sympathetic; I adore him. He usually provides financial support and says kind things to me when my relatives face problems at home, such as my parents' illness or when I'm having issues with my employer (his wife) over low pay"
(Ndiyana, interview informant, 2021).

Although some house girls had small rooms within affluent households, these spaces were accessible to male relatives without consent, thus creating opportunities for sexual advances through promises of material goods and flattery. Another informant shared:

"When his wife (the house girl employer) is absent, he comes to my room and tells me I am more attractive than his wife; however, when she is around, he never comes in"
(Marriam, interview informant, 2021).

A third account further illustrates this dynamic:

"The husband of my previous employer would come into my room at night. If I weren't asleep, he would pretend to say, 'Sorry, I came in here by mistake,' but instead of leaving, he would share stories about his business and promise to buy me a mobile phone. His wife travelled most of the time"
(FGD 1).

Sexual Relations with External Partners

The findings also detail the nature of sexual relationships with external partners, primarily characterized by economic transactions. The male sexual partners of house girls from outside the household typically included motorcyclists (boda-boda), auto-rickshaw riders (dereva-wa-bajaji), street vendors of beauty items (wauza urembo), and brokers (madalali). This dynamic underscores the complexities of economic dependency and social interaction within the domestic work sphere.

This challenge was articulated by Penina as follows:

"My friend is a seller of small beauty items...He sometimes comes by the house with various beauty products and says, 'If you want these, you know what I expect in return.' It feels like a trade, but I am just a girl trying to look good and fit in" (Penina, interview informant, 2021).

This transactional nature of relationships highlights the precarious position of house girls, who frequently navigate a landscape where emotional and material support is interwoven with sexual favours. Another informant noted:

"Sometimes I go to the market on foot when my employer wants me to go to the market without money for transport. However, if I find a boda-boda by the road and ask for a ride, he often says, 'If you want a ride or some extra cash, you have to spend time with me.' I know exactly what he means, and it feels like I have no choice but to agree" — Juliana, interview informant, 2021.

Furthermore, live-out boyfriends, particularly those in the transportation sector, often seized opportunities to visit house girls when their employers or relatives were absent. Given the context of low and frequently delayed wages, house girls felt compelled to accept the material support offered by these external relationships. Their narratives reveal that these partners were referred to by various affectionate Swahili terms, such as *laazizi*, *boo*, *mume*, *tajili*, *dia*, *wa moyo wangu*, and *kipenzi*, reflecting both intimacy and social connection. Notably, some domestic workers had ended relationships with boyfriends in their home villages. However, feelings of loneliness, stress, and a pressing need for emotional and material support led them to enter new sexual relationships with men in urban areas. One informant expressed:

"I left my laazizi (boyfriend) and a little child at home. After completing primary school, I had a child. I have a friend here who rides a three-wheeled vehicle; he also helps me when I am short on cash. I want to keep working for now, but I might return home when I have a good time" (Zaharani, interview informant, 2021).

These accounts reveal the intricate interplay between economic necessity and personal relationships among house girls, highlighting a cycle of dependency that often blurs the lines between affection and transaction. This phenomenon underscores the need for a deeper understanding of the socio-economic factors that shape the lives of domestic workers, particularly in contexts where gendered power imbalances persist.

Gendered Power Imbalances

The gendered power imbalance is evident in the sexual relationships between house girls and their male partners. While their predominantly female employers strongly discourage these relationships, the males actively encourage them. Reported male partners include three-wheeler drivers and motorcycle operators involved in local transport, street vendors, brokers, and some males within the households. Although legal and socio-cultural norms generally prohibit sexual relationships with minors, male power is pronounced, often facilitated through underground arrangements that evade social scrutiny. The narratives of house girls reveal that their male partners hold considerable decision-making power because of their older age and greater financial resources. In contrast, the younger and economically disadvantaged house girls experience constrained power and choice, limited by their age, prevailing gender inequalities, and lack of control over financial resources. One informant articulated this dependency:

"He often reminds me that if I want nice things, like a new dress or a phone, I have to give him what he wants. It feels like I have no choice but to comply; my desires are completely dependent on his approval" (Sikudhani, interview informant, 2021).

The exchange of sexual services for desired commodities, such as mobile phones from partners, can entrap domestic workers in challenging relationships. The following quotes illustrate their precarious situations:

"I fear breaking off the relationship with him because he might ask for his money back... I have nowhere else to get money" (Aminata, interview informant, 2021).

"Every time I tried to express my feelings, he would threaten to take away the things he bought for me. It made me afraid to speak up" (Semeni, interview informant, 2021).

These accounts reveal the insidious nature of dependency in these relationships, where the balance of power is heavily skewed in favour of male partners. The interplay of financial dependence, emotional manipulation, and fear of social scrutiny underscores the urgent need for comprehensive interventions. Such measures must empower house girls and address the systemic inequalities perpetuating these gendered power dynamics. Intervention efforts can work towards dismantling the structures that enable exploitation and vulnerability by fostering awareness and support systems.

Insufficient Legal and Social Protection

Practices such as low pay, sexual abuse, and male interference in the private lives of house girls represent clear violations of their rights. However, these issues are rarely reported to institutions responsible for addressing matters of domestic workers. Organizations like the Police Gender Desk, Tanzania Media Women (TAMWA), the Commission for Mediation and Arbitration (CMA), and the domestic workers' trade union (CHODAWU) frequently receive few reports of rights violations, sexual violence, and abuse against house girls. Personnel from these institutions attribute this situation to several factors: the informality of house girls' employment, their lack of legal recognition as employees, strict control exerted by employers, and their relatively young age, which is compounded by a lack of knowledge and life experience.

One informant from the Gender Desk noted:

"These are young girls; they can't report their sexual relations unless others do so, on their behalf, as their understanding is limited. However, they should not be involved in these situations. We have received cases of sexual violence; the victims are not domestic workers but mostly older women and a few primary school girls" (Gender-Desk, interview informant, 2021).

Similarly, a TAMWA informant remarked:

"Neither employers nor house girls are cooperative, so who will come to inform us? It isn't easy to access them at their workplace. In a previous year, one house girl was brought here by a Good Samaritan after being severely beaten by her employer, but she was not cooperative in revealing the reasons behind. I believe this is due to lack of knowledge and experience" (TAMWA, interview informant, 2021).

Furthermore, the CMA informant stated:

"Cases of domestic violence against children are not dealt with in the CMA. Children are not allowed to be employed. Our focus is on dispute resolution for employees recognized by the labour law" (CMA, interview informant, 2021).

In this context, the socio-economic well-being of house girls remains inadequately protected. Without robust legal mechanisms, they remain vulnerable to violence and exploitation, significantly impacting their overall well-being. The lack of recognition and support exacerbates their precarious circumstances, perpetuating a cycle of abuse and neglect.

Employers' Views on Sexual Relationships

The perspectives of employers regarding house girls' sexual relationships reveal a predominantly negative stance. Analysis of the data indicates that many female employers oppose such relationships, driven by sociocultural norms that discourage premarital sexual activity, alongside gender role expectations and moral reasoning. Employers expect house girls to fulfill household duties, maintain high moral standards, and avoid behaviours that could be perceived as negative influences on their children. Engaging in sexual relations or becoming pregnant is deemed unacceptable, potentially leading to termination of employment. One employer noted:

"My purpose in having a house girl is for her to perform household duties. If I discover that she is engaging in sexual relationships, she will not stay in my house. What will my children learn from a promiscuous house girl?" (Employer, interview informant A, 2021).

House girls depend on their employers, and decisions regarding their employment typically occur without formal written agreements. As a result, they often receive only oral directives about acceptable behaviour, thus contributing to a sense of job insecurity. Another employer expressed this perspective, stating:

"When I look for and hire a house girl to perform domestic duties, I do not accept one who engages in sexual relationships or becomes pregnant. I usually tell them to follow my directions. In our traditions and norms, young people's engagement in sexual relations is not allowed. It is better to employ someone else with good behaviour" (Employer, interview informant C, 2021).

This dynamic highlights the complex relationship between employer expectations and the fragile position of house girls in domestic labor settings. It is noteworthy that the employers of the house girls interviewed had young children who required care while they were employed or self-employed. Most of them hired their house girls through brokers (middlemen) or informal agencies, although some were connected with house girls through family networks or their home villages. The employers were typically engaged in the formal sector as government employees or in the informal sector, working in areas such as hair and beauty salons, small-scale trade, and the sale of beverages, fruits, vegetables, and second-hand goods. Their income levels were reflected in the remuneration provided to house girls, which often amounted to 35,000 TZS (approximately \$ 16), significantly below the national

minimum wage of TZS 60,000 per month (Government of Tanzania, 2022). This wage disparity highlights the economic constraints faced by both employers and house girls, thus underscoring the challenges within the domestic labour market.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the critical factors influencing the sexual relationships of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam, including the precarious employment conditions, gendered power imbalances, and inadequate legal and social protections. The discussion is premised on these elements through an integrated theoretical framework of gender order and intersectionality (Connell, 2002; Crenshaw, 1989), thus providing a comprehensive analysis of how the interplay among these factors shapes the sexual relationships of these workers. The complexities of their experiences and the systemic issues that perpetuate their vulnerability can be better understood by examining these dynamics.

Precarious Employment and Sexual Relationships

Low wages, long hours, and the absence of formal contracts characterize the precarious employment conditions faced by young female domestic workers in Kinondoni. Such conditions, as documented in various contexts (Kreshpaj *et al.*, 2020; Palvimo *et al.*, 2023; Hult *et al.*, 2024), contribute significantly to the economic dependence of these workers on their employers and male partners. This reliance exacerbates their vulnerability, severely limiting autonomy and increasing exposure to exploitation. The International Labour Organization (2023) highlights that this economic dependence engenders power imbalances, thus impeding their ability to negotiate safe sex practices and refuse unwanted sexual advances.

A critical analysis framed through the integrated lenses of gender order and intersectionality (Connell, 1987; Crenshaw, 1989) offers a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted circumstances these workers encounter. Connell's gender order theory elucidates the everyday power dynamics that shape gender interactions, revealing how entrenched norms limit agency. Concurrently, Crenshaw's intersectionality framework highlights how overlapping identities, such as age, socio-economic status, and gender, compound vulnerabilities. This integrated approach clarifies structural inequalities and emphasizes the complexity of lived experiences, enriching our comprehension of systemic barriers that hinder autonomy and exacerbate exploitation.

Hegemonic masculinity manifests in relationships with male partners by reinforcing traditional gender roles and underscoring the entrenched gender orders that contribute to systemic inequalities faced by domestic workers. This dynamic illustrates how power relations are perpetuated within interpersonal relationships, thus further entrenching the subordination of these workers. While female employers may publicly disapprove of sexual relationships, this disapproval does not shield house girls from exploitation; instead, it may create an environment conducive to clandestine arrangements, amplifying their vulnerability. Available studies indicate that economic pressures compel young women into sexual arrangements, thus compromising their autonomy and often resulting in coerced consent (Chatterji *et al.*, 2005; Wamoyi *et al.*, 2016; Kilburn *et al.*, 2018). The Population Council in Tanzania corroborates this, noting that economic hardships render domestic workers particularly susceptible to exploitation (Population Council, 2022). In pursuit of financial support and modern goods, such as mobile phones, these workers frequently engage in transactional sex, where sexual favours are exchanged for material assistance. This dynamic

heightens the risk of sexual violence and reproductive health issues (Wamoyi *et al.*, 2016; Kilburn *et al.*, 2018; Pearce, 2019). Evidence shows that unmet basic needs increase the likelihood of engaging in transactional sex, often compromising safe sex practices due to fear of losing financial support (WUR eDepot, 2013). Long working hours further exacerbate vulnerability, as exhaustion impairs judgement and increases susceptibility to coercion (Mtei *et al.*, 2020). The lack of personal time and supportive relationships leads to isolation, making these workers more dependent on exploitative partners. The absence of legal protections and formal employment contracts exacerbates this precariousness, as oral agreements severely limit their ability to negotiate and assert their rights (Anti-Slavery International, 2024). The interplay of precarious employment conditions, gender dynamics, and intersecting identities significantly shapes the experiences and vulnerabilities of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni. Addressing these systemic issues through targeted policy interventions and enhanced legal protections is crucial for empowering these workers and mitigating their risk of exploitation.

Gendered Power Imbalances and Sexual Relationships

The influence of gendered power imbalances on sexual relationships is a critical area of inquiry that reveals the intricate dynamics of exploitation, agency, and vulnerability. In Kinondoni, young female domestic workers often struggle to negotiate directives or assert their rights due to the pronounced power dynamics they face with their predominantly female employers. This lack of agency is exacerbated by their relative youth, which diminishes their confidence and ability to advocate for themselves. Employers wield considerable authority over these workers, creating an environment where traditional gender norms dictate interactions and reinforce expectations of submissiveness. Consequently, house girls may feel compelled to conform to the desires of both their employers and male partners, often at the expense of their autonomy and well-being. The interplay of age and gender significantly restricts the ability of young female domestic workers to negotiate their conditions. While female employers may publicly denounce sexual relationships, such disapproval does not shield house girls from exploitation. Instead, it may foster an environment where male partners exploit these young women through clandestine arrangements. This highlights the complexities of their situation, as internal pressures converge with external ones, further entrenching their vulnerability and limiting their agency.

The intersection of gender and age exacerbates these power imbalances. Many house girls are young and inexperienced (ILO, 2021; Bonnet *et al.*, 2022), which heightens their vulnerability. Societal perceptions of youth as a period of innocence and dependence (Shabani, 2014; Afonja, 2015; Kihwele, 2018) further entrench their subordinate status, complicating their ability to resist coercive advances. As one informant articulated, *"He often reminds me that if I want nice things, like a new dress or a phone, I have to give him what he wants."* This dependency underscores the insidious nature of their relationships, where the balance of power is skewed heavily in favour of male partners. Moreover, the exchange of sexual services for desired commodities can entrap domestic workers in relationships that are difficult to exit. For instance, Aminata's statement, *"I fear breaking off the relationship with him because he might ask for his money back.... I have nowhere else to get money,"* illustrates the precarious nature of their situations. Similarly, Semeni's fear of expressing her feelings, *"Every time I tried to express my feelings, he would threaten to take away the things he bought for me,"* highlights emotional manipulation that exacerbates their vulnerability.

Utilizing Connell's gender order framework (Connell, 1995, 2020), it becomes clear how these imbalances stem from structured social relations that privilege men over women. This framework clarifies the division between public and private spheres, where men dominate public authority while women are confined to undervalued domestic roles. In Tanzania, traditional roles marginalize women's economic advancement, often placing men in positions of authority (Maji Safi Group, 2024). Crenshaw's (1989) intersectionality framework further elucidates how overlapping identities, including gender, age, and economic statuses, combine to produce distinct forms of oppression. The compounded effects of these intersecting vulnerabilities necessitate a critical examination of the societal structures that shape the lives of young women in domestic work. Addressing these systemic inequalities is essential for fostering an environment that genuinely empowers women. Comprehensive legal protections must be established to safeguard the rights of domestic workers alongside the creation of supportive systems designed to empower them. Acknowledging the complexities of their lived experiences is vital to addressing the multifaceted nature of their exploitation. Through comprehensive policy changes and major societal shifts, **we can aim to** can be mitigate the risks of exploitation and promote the dignity and rights of young women in domestic and employment settings.

Inadequate Legal and Social Protection

The protection of young female domestic workers in employment settings in Tanzania, particularly in Kinondoni, is profoundly inadequate. The inadequacy manifests in various forms, including exploitative labour conditions and a heightened risk of sexual abuse. The absence of specific legal protections for young female domestic workers in Tanzania significantly exacerbates their vulnerability to exploitation because they often engage in informal employment lacking formal contracts or adequate labour rights (Digest, 2024). Alarmingly, domestic workers frequently earn significantly less than the mandated minimum wage, thus highlighting systemic challenges in enforcing labour laws (Government of Tanzania, 2022; Digest, 2024). Consequently, they endure unacceptable conditions characterized by precarious employment and unwanted sexual advances stemming from their limited recourse against exploitative and abusive practices (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

Rights Violations and Reporting Challenges

The rights violations faced by young female domestic workers are severe and multifaceted. They experience low pay and sexual abuse. However, these issues are rarely reported to responsible institutions, including the Police Gender Desk, Tanzania Media Women (TAMWA), and the domestic workers' trade union (CHODAWU). Personnel from these organizations cite several barriers to reporting abuses, such as the informality of employment, lack of legal recognition, strict employer control, and the young age of the workers, which limit their understanding of their rights. Several studies report that the informal nature of domestic work, characterized by verbal contracts and the absence of written agreements, complicates the enforcement of workers' rights (Digest, 2024; Wote Sawa, 2024).

An informant from the Gender Desk noted, *"These are young girls; they can't come to report their sexual relations unless others do so on their behalf, as their understanding is limited."* This statement underscores the broader issue of isolation and lack of agency among these workers.

Furthermore, personnel from TAMWA highlighted the challenges of accessing these girls: *"Both employers and house girls are not cooperative. Who will come to inform us?"* Such remarks reveal the systemic barriers that prevent these workers from seeking redress. Due to

their relatively young age, these domestic workers cannot often advocate for their rights or negotiate fair treatment, thereby leaving them deprived of the security that decent work requires (ILO, 2021). This situation underscores the urgent need for comprehensive legal reforms and social support systems that empower these workers. The necessity of systemic transformation is further illuminated by Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, which elucidates how power dynamics perpetuate gender inequalities, particularly in domestic contexts (Connell, 1987).

By challenging these entrenched norms, advocates can push for reforms that empower young female domestic workers. Additionally, Crenshaw's intersectionality framework highlights how overlapping identities, such as age, gender, and socio-economic status, compound the vulnerabilities of these workers (Crenshaw, 1989). This perspective calls for inclusive policies that specifically address the unique challenges faced by young female domestic workers, thus advocating for a legal framework that recognizes their rights and provides adequate protection. In summary, the multifaceted exploitation of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni and beyond in Tanzania necessitates a critical examination of the systemic barriers they face. This analysis highlights the importance of legal reform and social support in empowering these vulnerable workers by integrating empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative ethnographic case study has investigated the experiences of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam, focusing on their sexual relationships and the influencing factors. Grounded on gender order theory and the intersectionality framework, the findings reveal significant systemic deficiencies linked to gender dynamics. Precarious employment conditions, characterized by low wages, long hours, and job insecurity, exacerbate their socio-economic instability, compelling them to engage in risky behaviours, including compliance with coerced sexual advances. This situation highlights pervasive gendered power imbalances and the vulnerabilities associated with their youth, compounded by inadequate legal protections. The findings emphasize the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to address these vulnerabilities. Strengthening labour protections, implementing educational programs to inform young women of their rights, and providing access to counselling and financial assistance are essential steps toward empowerment. Additionally, promoting gender equality and enhancing legal support are critical for fostering a safer working environment. By addressing these systemic challenges, stakeholders can significantly contribute to the empowerment and social equity of young female domestic workers in Kinondoni, ultimately enhancing their working conditions and promoting justice and gender equality in the broader labour sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance the rights and well-being of female domestic workers, several key recommendations must be implemented. First, policymakers should strengthen labour protections by enacting comprehensive regulations that mandate formal employment agreements, thereby safeguarding workers' rights and providing them with legal recourse against exploitation (ILO, 2011). Second, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups must develop targeted educational programs to inform these workers about their rights, available support services, and financial literacy, thereby empowering them to advocate for themselves (UN Women, 2020). Additionally, government agencies and NGOs should facilitate structured access to counselling and financial assistance programs to

alleviate economic pressures and promote overall well-being (Smith, 2019). Furthermore, educational institutions and community organizations should prioritize gender equality initiatives that focus on skills training and self-advocacy, thereby enhancing the resilience of young women against exploitation (Baker & Sweeney, 2020; Hossain & Tiwari, 2017; UN Women, 2020). Ultimately, promoting fair labour practices among employers, specifically advocating for reasonable working hours and adequate compensation, is crucial for creating an equitable work environment (Taylor, 2021). Stakeholders can significantly contribute to a just labour landscape for young female domestic workers by adopting these recommendations.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Future research should focus on several key areas to enhance the understanding of young female domestic workers. Longitudinal studies are necessary to explore the long-term effects of precarious employment conditions on their socio-economic and relational lives, providing deeper insights into their evolving experiences. Additionally, investigating the role of community support networks can reveal how these networks enhance resilience by offering emotional and practical assistance. Cross-cultural comparisons could further illuminate varying vulnerabilities and coping mechanisms among domestic workers in different cultural and socio-economic contexts by informing tailored interventions. Lastly, qualitative research focused on the coping strategies employed by these workers in response to the challenges will provide a nuanced understanding of their personal relationships and decision-making processes. Addressing these areas will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding young female domestic workers and inform the development of more effective policies and support systems.

LIMITATIONS

This study acknowledges several limitations that may affect the interpretation of its findings. First, the sample size is a significant concern; the limited number of participants may restrict the generalizability of the results, making it difficult to draw broader conclusions about the experiences of young female domestic workers across diverse contexts. Second, self-reporting bias may be present, as participants could underreport negative experiences or provide socially desirable responses. This bias may lead to skewed data and affect the overall accuracy of the findings. Finally, the geographical scope of the research may limit its applicability. The results may not be relevant to other cultural and socio-economic contexts, as they focus on a specific region, thereby reducing the overall relevance and impact of the conclusions drawn.

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