

**Women Migrant Domestic Workers and their Problems with Private
Employment Agencies in Istanbul**

***İstanbul'daki Göçmen Ev İřçisi Kadınların Özel İstihdam Büroları ile
İlgili Sorunları***

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Women Migrant Domestic Workers and their Problems with Private Employment Agencies in Istanbul

İstanbul'daki Göçmen Ev İşçisi Kadınların Özel İstihdam Büroları ile İlgili Sorunları

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Abstract

According to ILO there are an estimated 67.1 million domestic workers globally, of which 11.5 million are migrant domestic workers. The sector is highly female-dominated, at approximately 73.4 percent of all migrant domestic workers. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, there are approximately 121,000 domestic workers in Turkey. However, as a high number also work in the informal economy, the true figure can be assumed to be much higher. It is known that migrant domestic workers in Turkey usually work through private employment agencies, and the aim of this research has been to identify specific problems experienced by female migrant domestic workers engaged by these employment agencies in Istanbul. To the best of the authors' knowledge, there has been no specific research investigating the problems experienced by female migrant domestic workers employed by private employment agencies. This research is aimed at being a step towards filling this gap.

Keywords: Women, Migrant Domestic Workers, Private Employment Agencies, Rights Violation

Öz

ILO'ya göre dünyada 67.1 milyon ev işçisi bulunmaktadır ve bunların 11.5 milyonunu göçmen ev işçileri oluşturmaktadır. Sektörde, tüm göçmen ev işçilerinin yaklaşık % 73.4'ü ise kadın emeği oluşturmaktadır. Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu'na göre, Türkiye'de yaklaşık 121.000 ev işçisi bulunmaktadır. Ancak sektördeki kayıt dışı çalışma oranı yüksek olduğundan dolayı bu sayının çok daha yüksek olduğu düşünülmektedir. Türkiye'deki göçmen ev işçilerinin genellikle özel istihdam büroları aracılığıyla iş buldukları bilinmektedir. Bu araştırmanın amacı da, göçmen ev işçisi kadınların, İstanbul'daki özel istihdam bürolarıyla yaşadıkları sorunları tespit etmek üzerinedir. Literatürde, Türkiye'de özel istihdam büroları aracılığıyla çalıştırılan göçmen ev işçisi kadınların yaşadıkları sorunlara ilişkin özgün bir araştırmaya rastlanamamıştır. Bu çalışma, bahsedilen boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kadın, Göçmen Ev İşçileri, Özel İstihdam Büroları, Hak İhlali

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Introduction

Domestic work is highly gender-based, with the vast majority of domestic workers being women. Domestic work is the sector with the highest share of informal employment, and so it is difficult to regulate and control. The general structure of the sector and the fact that the sector employs mostly women give rise to the types of vulnerability that are also seen in other highly-feminized professions. With the rise of globalization, the labor employed in this sector has found international applications, but this has created more difficult problems alongside local sources of insecurity. In the conceptual framework section of this paper, details will be given of the basic problems that domestic workers encounter in Turkey, such as uncertainty in terms of job definition, wage policies, the length of employment, working hours, the health and safety of workers, a lack of social security, not being allowed to unionize, and basic language problems in trying to communicate with the employer (Erdođdu and Toksöz, 2013: 17 - 19). This study has aimed to identify possible problems that migrant domestic workers in Turkey encounter in their professional lives in connection with private employment offices, and to collect statistical data for the sector about the extent of these problems. To date, there have been no empirical studies in literature about the problems that migrant domestic workers have encountered with private employment offices.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Domestic Work – Conceptual Framework

Since ancient times, domestic work has been related to slavery and other kinds of servitude in which female labor has been used intensively (ILO, 2010: 5). One important aspect of domestic work is that the service provided is performed in a house or other property owned by a real person. In domestic workers' professional relationships, it is accepted that the property owners are the employers. In this respect, domestic workers perform their services in the framework of a bound professional relationship. In brief, the job that domestic workers do should be about the services performed at home and should be done in the name of the employer and under the supervision and monitoring of the employer. In summary, house cleaning, domestic laundry, ironing, etc.; the care of children, the elderly or patients at home and any other services related to domestic work belong in this context. Furthermore, in terms of domestic work as a job, there must be a wage in return for the services provided. (Tijdes and Klaveren, 2011: 4; Karaca and Kocabaş, 2011: 164 - 165; Güler and Benli, 2015: 163) In short, people such as butlers, stewards, servants, cooks, babysitters, drivers, watchmen, pet keepers, and gardeners can be described as domestic workers. (Karaca and Kocabaş, 2009: 162) As well as the diverse specifications according to the job they do, it is possible to categorize domestic workers according to their manner of working. There are those who work daily and regularly and are thus bound to an individual employer; those who work regularly and live on the premises who are bound to an individual employer; those who work regularly part time some of the week/month who are bound to one or more employers; those who are employed by cleaning companies; and those who work on a daily basis irregularly. The ILO defines domestic work as "the work performed for the household or inside a house", and a domestic worker as "a person that does domestic work in respect of employment." (ILO, 2011; ILO, 2013b: 7 - 10) Thus, the ILO description of domestic work covers quite a broad scope.

1.1.1. Some Statistical Information about Domestic Work and the Extent of Domestic Work

First, it should be stated that as domestic work tends to be undertaken in the informal sphere, it is difficult to come up with exact statistical data about this form of work. Therefore, the numbers and rates given in literature show “the least” possible extent of domestic work. It can be safely assumed that there is much more domestic work going on than the numbers and proportions given here. This limitation in the evaluation of domestic work not only demonstrates the inefficacy of the statistics, but also makes it harder to determine the basic problems relating to domestic work. (Güler and Benli, 2015: 163)

According to the data collected, 4–10 percent of the workforce of developing countries and 2 percent of the workforce of developed countries are engaged in domestic work. (UN –Women – ITUC, 2013:1) The ILO research shows that in 2010 there were 67.1 million domestic workers around the world and there are currently presumed to be nearly 100 million domestic workers worldwide. Moreover, international institutions have determined that domestic workers comprise 1.7 percent of total employment and 3.6 percent of paid employment. It is particularly conspicuous that 87 percent of domestic workers are female and domestic workers constitute 7.5 percent of the total female workforce worldwide. According to the data published by ILO in 2008, 15.5 million domestic workers around the world are children between the ages of 5–17 years. Of this 15.5 million, 11.3 million are girls. (ILO, 2015; ILO, 2013b: 11 - 16; Tijdens and Klavere, 2011: 7 - 8; Güler and Benli, 2015: 163). Thus, when carrying out evaluations of the available data, the degree of female labor and child labor in domestic work is particularly striking. The problems of domestic workers may also vary according to structural conditions.

Harsh working conditions are the most significant problem faced by domestic workers. Long working hours, low wages, a tendency towards payment in kind, sexual and psychological harassment, and insufficient health and job security precautions are the prime examples of problems related to working conditions (Evid-Sen, 2013). Together with these working conditions, it could also be stated that domestic work entails different problems relating to social and gender equality. It is important to emphasize that domestic workers do the jobs that are attributed to women in patriarchal societies. Although the housework undertaken by domestic workers has become a paid job, these jobs have aspects that are usually attributed to women, showing that the issue includes gender inequality as a result of societal perceptions. As services performed by domestic workers are differentiated from classic forms of employment, and are most of the time squeezed between professional and family relationships, other specific problems may arise. In this sense it becomes difficult to put a limit on the work of the domestic worker, since they become involved in the employer’s private life. More specialized areas associated with roles attributed to women, such as cooking, cleaning, babysitting, and care for the sick and elderly, make it difficult to form formal professional relationships due to the intimate nature of these jobs. (Bora, 2008: 59; Toksöz and Ulutaş, 2011: 166; ILO, 2010)

It can be seen how important the gender factor is in the context of domestic work. Women constitute 87 percent of domestic workers, with the posts of gardener, security staff, and driver usually filled by men and services such as cleaning or taking care of children or the elderly provided by women. Many domestic workers are from disadvantaged societies, low-income rural or urban areas, or are immigrants or ethnic minorities, highlighting how they are often also vulnerable in other ways (Erdoğdu and Toksöz, 2013: 13). Therefore, it is

useful to analyze the extent of migrant domestic work and the problems those employed in the sector face at work; this, a new topic, forms the specific research area of this study.

1.1.2. Migrant Domestic Work

The ILO has noted a substantial increase in the number of migrant domestic workers over the last 30 years. According to the ILO report, domestic work is performed mostly by migrant workers in regions like Europe, the Gulf States and Central Asia (ILO, 2010: 6). Human Rights Watch (HRW) have stated that there are nearly 660,000 migrant domestic workers in Saudi Arabia, 200,000 in Kuwait, 300,000 in Lebanon, and 196,000 in Malaysia and Singapore (Tijdens and Klaveren, 2011: 15 - 16). Especially in Europe, domestic work is seen as low status by local workers, so these jobs are generally performed by migrant workers. Spain, France and Italy have been reported to have the highest rate of migrant domestic workers: those in Spain are mostly of Latin American origin, in Italy of Eastern European origin, and in France of Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian origin. Migrant domestic workers are known to have an important place in the domestic work sector in Turkey, with the flow of migrants from many different countries, predominantly the former Soviet states (ILO, 2013a: 1; Toksöz and Ünlütürk, 2011: 163).

A key part of this study has been to evaluate the problems that migrant domestic workers encounter at work. These workers may encounter various, multi-dimensional problems in the course of their professional relationships. The most concrete problem is that of language preventing good communication between employee and employer. The main reason why they encounter many problems in the course of their professional relationships is that most migrant domestic workers speak little or no Turkish and therefore cannot check their personal and social rights properly when making a contract. Social and cultural factors may also be a reason why these workers encounter bad working conditions, poor treatment and discrimination. A lack of social security and work permits, the placement fees charged by agencies, and travel costs deducted by agencies who help them into the country are some of the main problems that migrant domestic workers have to face in Turkey. For live-in workers there are also the problems of low wages, food and accommodation provided in lieu of payment, and long working hours. Sexual harassment is a common problem encountered by female workers, and the inequality and discrimination of race, ethnicity, religious beliefs and social status make these workers a group often exposed to rights violations. The problems encountered by migrant domestic workers sometimes even go as far as slavery or human trafficking (Del Pino, 2010: 10). Workers may also have their rights violated through the stripping of their right to communication, a lack of respect for their private lives, and limits on their freedom of belief, among many other problems.

1.1.3. The Relationships between Migrant Domestic Workers and Private Employment Offices

The many problems of migrant domestic workers listed above are matters that should be analyzed through research and argued in detail. The purpose of this study is to specifically analyze the problems and relationships between domestic workers and private employment offices through an evaluation of the opinions and experiences of domestic workers. Thus, it attempted to analyze different aspects of the relationships between migrant domestic workers and private employment offices.

All migrant domestic workers, but especially those foreigners who work illegally providing domestic services, are among the groups who have the least security in their working lives (Yıldırım, 2014: 49). Domestic workers find their jobs via a range of

different sources, such as acquaintances, relatives, private employment offices and consultancy companies. Migrant domestic workers are also known to be employed by some unlicensed companies and it has been reported that these unlicensed companies exploit and violate the rights of migrant domestic workers (Erdoğan and Toksöz, 2013: 34). Harassment, abuse and sending the workers to unsafe workplaces are some of the most frequently seen problems, and even some employment offices licensed by ISKUR (Turkey's Employment Institute) mediate for migrant workers although not licensed to do so (Akalin, 2014a: 24). A common problem experienced by migrant workers is the seizure of passports by an intermediary company during the course of the employment. These companies help the workers to migrate, and sometimes the same company also finds them employment. The services provided by intermediary companies can be summarized as follows: if an intermediary company provides services from the beginning of the immigration process, in return for the service given, travel and visa expenses are covered, and if the same company also finds them a job, the migrant domestic worker will make a payment for each. As previously mentioned, the employment agency is able to take the first monthly wage of the migrant domestic worker and sometimes also differing amounts for other placement services. It has been reported that payments for all these services, including the migration process, can be as high as seven months' wage. Various problems with these intermediary companies are encountered by migrant domestic workers. Sometimes the same company can mediate for the provision of both prostitution and domestic work (Akalin, 2014a: 124 - 127). In this respect, the migration and employment processes for domestic workers have different risks of exploitation. In short, they experience many different problems with the companies who provide employment services to migrant domestic workers. These companies sometimes take an active role not only in the employment and migration of domestic workers but also in communicating with the employer and defining the details of working conditions (Akalin, 2014a: 211).

Various regulations have been put in force in attempts to solve the problems that migrant domestic workers encounter and enable them to live better lives. The United Nations (UN) International Convention on the Protection of Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW) is among the foremost of these. The regulations governments should implement about migrant domestic workers is specified in detail in this 2009 convention, which also gives a detailed analysis of the abuse and negative treatment that migrant workers encounter in relations to work permits, working times, break times, communication and personal relationship rights. The need for various proactive steps to be taken in relation to the services provided by intermediary companies was among the convention's titles (Akalin, 2014b: 327 - 328). The troubles migrant workers suffer due to employment offices are stated in specific detail in ILO convention number 189 on Domestic Workers. In this convention, the necessary steps to be taken by the countries who signed the convention with regard to migrant workers employed via private employment offices are laid out. The main points of this are the specification of conditions for employment and placement services according to national laws and regulations, as well as their application; the establishment of mechanisms for the investigation of complaints about private employment offices, plus allegations of abuse and fraudulent charges; and regulations stating that the fees of private employment companies shall not be cut from the wages of domestic workers (ILO, 2011; ETUC, 2012: 23 - 25). The titles mentioned above actually underline the basic problems likely to occur between migrant domestic workers and private employment offices. Although the convention lays out solutions to these problems, it leaves

the responsibility for enforcement to the governments that have agreed to the convention. However, it is necessary to state that this convention has only been accepted by 24 countries and Turkey is not one of them. Therefore, in consideration of this situation, the problems encountered by migrant domestic workers employed via unlicensed private employment offices should be opened to discussion in detail.

2. Research Methods and Results

In this study, the problems stated above and problems that domestic workers can encounter are evaluated on the basis of the employment of migrant domestic workers via private employment offices. From the surveys conducted as part of this research, an evaluation was made of the results of the primary specifications of the problems encountered in order to help the improvement of employment conditions for migrant domestic workers employed via private employment offices. The research was conducted with 123 individuals employed as migrant domestic workers in Istanbul. The research was applied in Istanbul as it is the most populous city in Turkey and migrant labor is very densely used. The unlicensed structure of migrant domestic work and the problems of work permits and other pressures on migrant domestic workers constituted special difficulties for this research. Most of the migrant domestic workers who were approached rejected being interviewed due to these problems, while many others could not be contacted because most work on their own in employers' homes. Although sample numbers appear to be limited at 123, they can be considered a sufficiently significant number when we consider the limits stated above.

The sample was determined through the snowball sampling method, which is a non-random sampling method. The data was evaluated using the SPSS 18.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software. The Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.933 on the reliability analysis carried out on ten questions about the problems encountered with private employment offices. The interior stability of the results was quite high and the scale was highly reliable. The frequency distribution of the demographic characteristics of the survey participants is shown below:

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Migrants by Age in Years

Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
≤ 20	9	8.0	8.0	8.0
21 – 30	23	20.5	20.5	28.6
31 – 40	54	48.2	48.2	76.8
41 – 50	20	17.9	17.9	94.6
≥ 51	6	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 48.2 percent were aged between 31–40 years, 20.5 percent were 21–30 years , 17.9 percent were 41–50 years, 8 percent were 20 years or younger, and 5.4 percent were 51 years or older.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Migrants by Country of Origin

Country	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Turkmenistan	29	26.9	26.9	26.9
Georgia	29	26.9	26.9	53.8
Uzbekistan	27	25.0	25.0	78.8
Armenia	14	13.0	13.0	91.8
Kazakhstan	4	3.7	3.7	95.5
The Philippines	3	2.8	2.8	98.3
Turkey	1	0.9	0.9	99.2
Kyrgyzstan	1	0.9	0.9	100
Total	108	100	100	

Of the total participants in the survey, 26.9 percent were from Turkmenistan and Georgia, 25 percent from Uzbekistan, 13 percent from Armenia, 3.7 percent from Kazakhstan, 2.8 percent from the Philippines, and 0.9 percent from both Turkey and Kyrgyzstan.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution by Migrant Education Level

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Primary and below	12	10.4	10.4	10.4
High school	35	30.4	30.4	40.9
Bachelor degree	67	58.3	58.3	99.1
Masters degree	1	0.9	0.9	100.0
Total	115	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in this survey, 58.3 percent had a university bachelor degree, 30.4 percent were educated to high school level, 10.4 percent to primary school level or below and 0.9 percent had a masters degree.

We see that despite the majority of those coming to our country as migrant domestic workers having studied at university, they do not find graduate work opportunities.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution by Migrant Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Married	76	63.3	63.3	63.3
Single	41	34.2	34.2	97.5
Others	3	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 63 percent were married, 34.2 percent were single and 2.5 percent gave another status.

Table 5: Frequency Distribution by Where Migrants' Spouses Live

Country where spouse lives	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Turkmenistan	26	34.2	34.2	34.2
Turkey	17	22.4	22.4	56.6
Uzbekistan	12	15.8	15.8	72.4
Georgia	11	14.5	14.5	86.9
Armenia	4	5.3	5.3	92.2
Philippines	2	2.6	2.6	94.8
Kyrgyzstan	2	2.6	2.6	97.4
Kazakhstan	1	1.3	1.3	98.7
Mongolia	1	1.3	1.3	100.00
Total	76	100.00	100.00	

Of the total participants in the survey, 34.2 percent stated that their spouse lived in Turkmenistan, 22.4 percent in Turkey, 15.8 percent in Uzbekistan and 14.5 percent in Georgia.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution by Where Migrants' Children Live

Country	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Turkmenistan	26	31.3	31.3	31.3
Georgia	23	27.7	27.7	59.0
Uzbekistan	15	18.1	18.1	77.1
Turkey	11	13.3	13.3	90.4
Philippines	3	3.6	3.6	94.0
Armenia	3	3.6	3.6	97.6
Kazakhstan	1	1.2	1.2	98.8
Kyrgyzstan	1	1.2	1.2	100.00
Total	83	100.00	100.00	

Of the total participants in the survey, 31.3 percent stated that their children lived in Turkmenistan, 27.7 percent in Georgia, 18.1 percent in Uzbekistan and 13.3 percent in Turkey.

Table 7: Frequency Distribution by Citizenship Status of Migrants' Spouses

Citizenship Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Turkey	11	16.7	16.7	16.7
Others	55	83.3	83.3	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 83.3 percentage stated that their spouse had citizenship of another country and 16.7 percent had Turkish citizenship.

Table 8: Frequency Distribution by How They First Found a Job

Means of finding job	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
An acquaintance's advice	11	9.4	9.4	9.4
A relative's advice	17	14.5	14.5	23.9
An agency in their home country	38	32.5	32.5	56.4
Employment office in Turkey	50	42.7	42.7	99.1
Other	1	0.9	0.9	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 42.7 percent found a job for the first time via employment offices, 32.5 percent via an agency in their home country, 14.5 percent through a relative's advice, and 9.4 percent thanks to an acquaintance's advice.

Table 9: Frequency Distribution by Payments Made to Establishments or People Providing Employment

Payment made	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Yes	99	98.0	98.0	98.0
No	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 98 percent had made a payment to establishments or people providing employment, and 2 percent had not.

Table 10: Frequency Distribution by Frequency of Payments Made to Establishments or People Providing Employment

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Once only	10	8.5	8.5	8.5
Each Job	59	50.0	50.0	58.5
Monthly	49	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	118	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 50 percent made payments for each job, 41.5 percent made monthly payments, and 8.5 percent made one payment only.

Table 11: Frequency Distribution by Migrants who had been to Other Countries as Migrants

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Yes	20	16.5	16.5	16.5
No	101	83.5	83.5	100.0
Total	121	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 83.5 percent had never been to another country as a migrant and 16.5 percent had worked in another country as a migrant.

Table 12: Frequency Distribution by Who Pays the Wages for the Work

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Employing family	64	53.3	53.3	53.3
Private employment office	55	45.8	45.8	99.2
Others	1	0.8	0.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 53.3 percent were paid their wages by the family they worked for, 45.8 percent by private employment offices, and 0.8 percent in other ways.

Table 13: Frequency Distribution by Violation of Rights by Private Employment Offices Encountered by Migrants

	Frequency	Percent age	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Wages	2	1.8	1.8	1.8
Others	1	0.9	0.9	2.6
Wages and protection	1	0.9	0.9	3.5
Wages and others	1	0.9	0.9	4.4
Form of professional relationship, wages and protection	2	1.8	1.8	6.1
Problems with wages, work permit, personal rights and freedoms and family	1	0.9	0.9	7.0
Problems with wages, form of professional relationship, personal rights and freedoms and family	2	1.8	1.8	8.8
Problems with visa, work permit, wages, professional relationship, family	4	3.5	3.5	12.3
Problems with visa, work permit, professional relationship, family, personal rights and freedoms	1	0.9	0.9	13.2
Problems with work permit, wages, professional relationship, personal rights and freedoms and family	5	4.4	4.4	17.5
Problems with visa, work permit, wages, professional relationship, personal rights and freedoms and family	93	81.6	81.6	99.1
Problems with visa, work permit, wages, professional relation, personal rights and freedoms, family and others	1	0.9	0.9	100.0
Total	114	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 81.6 percent stated that they had problems with visas, work permits, wages, types of professional relationship, personal rights and freedoms or the employing family in their professional relationship with private employment offices.

Table 14 gives the percentage of the opinions of the migrants about private employment offices. The responses were given as a five point Likert scale as: Strongly agree=5, Agree=4, Undecided=3, disagree=2, Strongly disagree=1

Table 14: Percentage Table of the Opinions of the Migrants about Private Employment Offices

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Indecisive %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
Encourages legal work	6.5	3.3	10.6	52.0	27.6
Protects me in the course of solving problems with the family	4.1	1.6	10.6	48.8	35.0
It is safe to find a job via a private employment office	5.7	4.9	12.2	52.0	25.2
Easy to communicate with	3.3	4.1	12.3	44.3	36.1
Never commits physical or psychological harassment	33.3	46.3	8.9	4.9	6.5
Provides fair working hours	4.1	4.9	11.4	50.4	29.3
Active in helping me take my legally-sanctioned off days	2.4	7.3	13.0	41.5	35.8
Active in occupational health and safety	2.4	6.5	12.2	54.5	24.4
Active in solving language problems	2.5	4.1	13.9	46.7	32.8
Active in wage payments	3.3	6.6	13.9	34.4	41.8

Of the total participants in the survey, 52 percent answered that they did not agree, 27.6 percent strongly disagreed, 10.6 percent were undecided, 6.5 percent strongly agreed and 3.3 percent agree with the statement “private employment offices encourage legal work.”

In response to the statement “The private employment office that I am bound to protects me when I have a problem with the family I am working for”, 48,8 percent did not agree, 35 percent strongly disagreed, 10.6 percent were undecided, 4.5 percent strongly agreed and 1.6 percent agreed.

In response to the statement “I find it more reliable to have a professional relationship with private employment offices than other alternatives.” 52 percent did not agree, 25.2 percent strongly disagreed, 12.2 percent were undecided, 5.7 percent strongly agreed and 4.9 percent agreed.

In response to the statement “I can communicate easily with the private employment office whenever I need to.” 44.3 percent disagreed, 36.1 percent strongly disagreed, 12.3 percent were undecided, 4.1 percent agreed and 3.3 percent strongly agreed.

In response to the statement “I don’t think I am exposed to physical and psychological harassment by the private employment office.” 46.3 percent agreed, 33.3 percent strongly agreed, 8.9 percent were undecided, 6.5 percent strongly disagreed, and 4.9 percent disagreed.

In response to the statement “The private employment office plays an active role in the fair regulation of my working hours.” 50.4 percent disagreed, 29.3 percent strongly disagreed, 11.4 percent were undecided, 4.9 percent agreed and 4.1 percent strongly agreed.

In response to the statement “The private employment office plays an active role in helping me take my legally-sanctioned off days.” 41.5 percent disagreed, 35.8 percent

strongly disagreed, 13 percent were undecided, 7.3 percent agreed and 2.4 percent strongly agreed.

In response to the statement “The private employment office plays an active role in taking necessary health and safety precautions for me.” 54.5 percent disagreed, 24.4 percent strongly disagreed, 12.2 percent were undecided, 6.5 percent agreed and 2.4 percent strongly agreed.

In response to the statement “The private employment office plays an active role in solving language-based communication problems I encounter because I have a different mother tongue.” 46.7 percent disagreed, 32.8 percent strongly disagreed, 13.9 percent were undecided, 4.1 percent agreed, and 2.5 percent strongly agreed.

In response to the statement “The private employment office is active in ensuring my wages are paid regularly”, 41.8 percent strongly disagreed, 34.4 percent disagreed, 13.9 percent were undecided, 6.6 percent agreed and 3.3 percent strongly agreed.

Table 15 shows the average and standard deviation values describing the ten questions about the migrants’ views on private employment offices:

Table 15: A Summary of the Views of the Migrants about Private Employment Offices

	Average	Standard deviation
Encourages legal work.	3.92	1.053
Protects me in the course of solving problems with the family	4.10	0.943
It is safe to find a job via a private employment office.	3.87	1.040
Easy to communicate with	4.06	0.977
Never commits physical or psychological harassment.	2.07	1.101
Provides fair working hours	3.97	0.991
Active in helping me take my legally-sanctioned off days.	4.02	1.008
Active in occupational health and safety	3.93	0.923
Active in solving language problems	4.04	0.926
Active in wage payments	4.06	1.059

When the average values are examined, while individuals state that they are not exposed to psychological and physical harassment by the private employment office, they believe that the private employment offices do not encourage legal work or solve problems with employer families, they do not think it is safe to find a job, they cannot communicate with the office, the office is not fair in terms of working hours, and the office is not active in terms of ensuring health and safety, dispelling language problems or ensuring the payment of wages.

Table 16: Frequency Distribution of Having a Work Permit

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Always with a work permit	20	16.7	16.7	16.7
Sometimes with a work permit	76	63.3	63.3	80.0
Never with a work permit	24	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

While the majority of the migrants (63.3 percent) stated that they sometimes worked with a work permit, 16.7 percent had no legal work permit.

Table 17: Frequency List of which Intermediary Obtained the Work Permit

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Employing family	64	54.7	54.7	54.7
Private employment office in Turkey	43	36.8	36.8	91.5
Agency in the home country	7	6.0	6.0	97.5
Others	3	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Of the total participants in the survey, 54.7 percent obtained their work permit from the family for whom they were working, 36.8 percent from the private employment office in Turkey, and 6 percent from agencies in their home country.

Table 18: Frequency Table by Recommending Working in Turkey to their Families and Friends

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	115	98.3	98.3	98.3
No	2	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

When considering their working experiences, 98.3 percent stated that they would recommend working in Turkey to their family and friends.

2.1. Relationships between Variables

The Chi-square test was applied to evaluate whether there was a correlation between the variables of recommending working in Turkey to family and friends and having a work permit or the intermediary from which they obtained the work permit.

The results of the Chi-square analysis are displayed in the table below:

Tablo 19: Having a Work Permit * Recommending Working in Turkey to Their Families and Relatives Cross Table

		Recommending Working in Turkey to their Families and Relatives			Total
		Yes	No		
Having a work permit	Always with a work permit	Count	19	3	22
		% within 1	86.4%	13.6%	100.0%
		% within 2	17.1%	27.3%	18.0%
	Sometimes with a work permit	Count	71	5	76
		% within 1	93.4%	6.6%	100.0%
		% within 2	64.0%	45.5%	62.3%
	Never has a work permit	Count	21	3	24
		% within 1	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
		% within 2	18.9%	27.3%	19.7%
Total		Count	111	11	122
		% within 1	91.0%	9.0%	100.0%
		% within 2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Of those who always worked with a work permit, 86.4 percent would recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family, while 13.6 percent would not. Of those who sometimes worked with a work permit, 93.4 percent would recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family and 6.6 percent would not. Of those who never worked with a work permit in Turkey, 87.5 percent would recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family, and 12.5 percent would not. Migrants who did not always have permission to work in Turkey were the most likely, considering their working experiences, to recommend it to their friends and family.

Pearson's chi-square statistics were applied to evaluate the relationship between the variables of recommending working in Turkey to family and friends and having a work permit. The Pearson chi-square value was equal to 1.478 and the observed level of significance was $p=0.478$. As the result was $p>0.05$, this was not significant at a 5 percent significance level.

Table 20: Recommending Working in Turkey to their Families and Friends * From Where the Work Permit was Obtained Cross Table

		Recommending Working in Turkey to their Families and Friends			Total
		Yes	No		
List of from which Intermediary the Work Permit was Obtained	Employing family	Count	57	9	66
		% within 1	86.4%	13.6%	100.0%
		% within 2	52.3%	64.3%	53.7%
	Agency in the home country	Count	6	1	7
		% within 1	85.7%	14.3%	100.0%
		% within 2	5.5%	7.1%	5.7%
	Private employment office in Turkey	Count	46	4	50
		% within 1	92.0%	8.0%	100.0%
		% within 2	42.2%	28.6%	40.7%
Total		Count	109	14	123
		% within 1	88.6%	11.4%	100.0%
		% within 2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Of those who got their work permit from their employing family, 86.4 percent would recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family, while 13.6 percent would not. Of those who got their work permit from an agency in their own country, 85.7 percent would recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family, while 14.3 percent would not. Of those who got their work permit from a private employment office in Turkey, 92 percent would recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family, while 8 percent would not.

Those domestic workers who got their work permits from a private employment office in Turkey were the most likely, considering their working experiences, to be willing to recommend working in Turkey to their friends and family.

Pearson's chi-square statistics were applied to evaluate the correlation between the variables of recommending working in Turkey to family and friends and the intermediary from which they obtained a work permit. The Pearson chi-square value was 0.958 and the observed level of significance was $p=0.619$. As the result was $p>0.05$, it was not significant to a 5% significance level.

Conclusion

This research was an empirical study aimed at determining the problems experienced by migrant domestic workers in their professional lives while working with private employment offices in Turkey. According to the results of this research, migrant domestic workers do not believe that private employment offices encourage legal work, solve problems with the families they work for, provide safe ways to find jobs, make communication with the office easy, provide fair working hours, encourage the use of legal off days or the mitigation of occupational health and safety precautions, do not help to solve language problems with the family and are not active in ensuring that wages are paid. In addition, 50 percent of the migrants interviewed stated that they made payments to the offices for each job they took, 41.5 percent made monthly payments and 8.5 percent made one payment only. Finally, and most importantly, most of the migrants (63.3 percent) stated that they sometimes worked with a permit, while 16.7 percent stated that they had no work permit.

The general results of this study, with data from both field research and the literature, show that most of the problems experienced by migrant domestic workers are situations in which they cannot find a reliable official response. Most of the private employment offices which help migrant domestic workers in the course of finding a job reproduce an informal structure similar to the usual characteristics of domestic work. As the predominant characteristics of these employment agencies are individualism and informality, migrant domestic workers are left with a less reliable professional relationship with neither legality or security. Many intermediary companies demand placement fees but refuse to become involved in any problems which the workers may encounter. Therefore, migrant domestic workers who are employed via private employment offices must deal with the problems by themselves. It is important to state that the aforementioned problems of migrant domestic workers will likely not be completely resolved with the current low level of regulation. The first step to a solution is that existing control mechanisms must be more strictly enforced. Through adequate supervision, this traditionally under-the-counter and unregistered process could be regulated in a fair manner. There is also a need for unions and non-

governmental organizations to develop projects for collaborative solutions for migrant domestic workers without their direct involvement in the process.

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