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"The experiences and working conditions of domestic workers in Lusaka Zambia".

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Abstract

Domestic work in Zambia has its roots in the early colonial era as a source of cash incomes for the male workers. Females mostly stayed home to raise families and manage the households, eventually being incorporated into domestic labour as child minders, and later fully fledged domestic work as is the case currently. Like other domestic workers worldwide, these domestic workers provide critical services facilitating the operations of the labour market and the functioning of the economy. Through surplus domestic labour, the domestic worker is situated as an ideological function in the reproduction of the social relations of production which subsequently leads to their exploitation and abuse through increased precariousness.

The study aimed to explore the experiences and working conditions of domestic workers in Zambia focusing on Lusaka's Kalingalinga and Mtendere areas. The study further examined the role of stakeholders such as the Ministry of Labour, the United House and Domestic Workers Union of Zambia (UHDWUZ), Employment Agencies as well as the employers in the regulation of domestic workers conditions of service, in addition to the responses of domestic workers to their challenges. This was achieved through the use of qualitative interviews involving both structured and semi- structured questions to collect data between 18th June 2012 and 8th July 2012 with a purposive sample of 43 participants.

The study revealed that despite the recent introduction of legislation, domestic workers continue to suffer abuse and exploitation engendered by lack of access to information, low levels of education, massive unemployment as well as lack of organised representation.