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### Causes of and Barriers Within the Informal Economy: How to Promote Change for Women Domestic Workers in Lima, Peru

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The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

Causes and Barriers of Informality:  
Promoting Change for Domestic Workers in  
Lima, Peru

Dominique Burrows

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May 2020

## Abstract

In Peru, over 92% of domestic workers have informal employment. This work examines both the causes and barriers of this informality in the hopes of promoting real change for these workers. I contend that ineffective and exclusive policy reforms, along with the undervaluation of domestic labor and the marginalization of domestic workers, have caused the high rate of informal employment within the sector. From a study I conducted in Lima, I find that most domestic workers are not aware of their rights and most employers do not comply with the law unless there is a third-party intermediary supervising the employment relationship; I argue that these barriers to formalization can be resolved with policy reform and comprehensive State services that seek to educate workers and supervise employers through enforcement measures. Finally, I offer the reforms of Uruguay as a guiding example.

# Chapter 1 - The Causes of Informality in Domestic Labor: Ineffective and Exclusive Policy Reforms

“Even within countries, the informal economy is highly segmented by sector of the economy, place of work, and status of employment and, within these segments, by social group and gender. But those who work informally have one thing in common: they lack legal and social protection.” (Chen 2012, 4).

## 1.1 Introduction

As of 2018, almost 92% of domestic workers in Peru have informal employment, making them the most informal paid laborers in the country. After discovering this shocking statistic, I formed my first research question: *Why is domestic labor the most informal paid labor in Peru?* To fully answer this question, first I must address why informal employment is so high in general and then why domestic labor has the highest rate of informal employment in particular. I argue that Peruvian economic policies throughout the last three decades have failed to sustain economic growth and instead have weakened the capacity of the Peruvian government to manage the rampant informal economy, leading to exorbitant rates of informal employment in all occupational categories in the country. But, when compared to other informal occupations, domestic labor in particular has always been undervalued since its origins in colonial times because it is performed by a marginalized group of workers, which explains why the sector has received minimal legislative attention to address its high rate of informal employment.

### 1.1.1 Definitions

There are three terms that are often used interchangeably, but for the purpose of this work, have separate definitions: informal employment, the informal sector, and the informal economy. Since I am utilizing a Feminist Economics framework, I have adopted the definitions established by the global network *Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing* (WIEGO). In a WIEGO Working Paper, founder Martha Chen writes:

“...the *informal sector* refers to the production and employment that takes place in unincorporated small or unregistered enterprises (1993 ICLS); *informal employment* refers to employment without legal and social protection—both inside and outside the informal sector (2003 ICLS); and the *informal economy* refers to all units, activities, and workers so defined and the output from them. Together, they form the broad base of the workforce and economy, both nationally and globally.” (Chen 2012, 8).

In Lima, paid domestic workers, known as *trabajadoras del hogar*, can either perform a variety of household services or have one specific duty, including most often “cooking, cleaning, laundry, childcare and care of elderly members of the family” (Rafstedt 2017, 1). The majority of these workers work without legal or social protection, performing informal domestic labor.

### 1.1.2 Current scope of the informal domestic labor

In Peru, about 73% of the Economically Active Population (EAP) is informally employed (INEI 2019). Between four occupational categories — wage workers, independent workers (including employers/patrons), unpaid family workers, and domestic workers — the highest rates of informal employment are among unpaid family workers (100%), domestic workers (92%), and independent workers (86%) (INEI 2019). Thus, apart from those who work by taking care of

their own families, domestic workers — comprising 2.3% of the total employed population in 2018 — have the highest rate of informal employment among all occupational categories (INEI 2019). In other words, domestic workers are the most informal paid laborers in the country and are far less likely to receive social and legal protections than the rest of the EAP (see Figure 1.1).

### Percentage of Workers with Conditions of Informal Employment: EAP v. Domestic Workers

Sources: Garavito 2016b; Pérez and Llanos 2017; INEI 2019. Prepared by author.

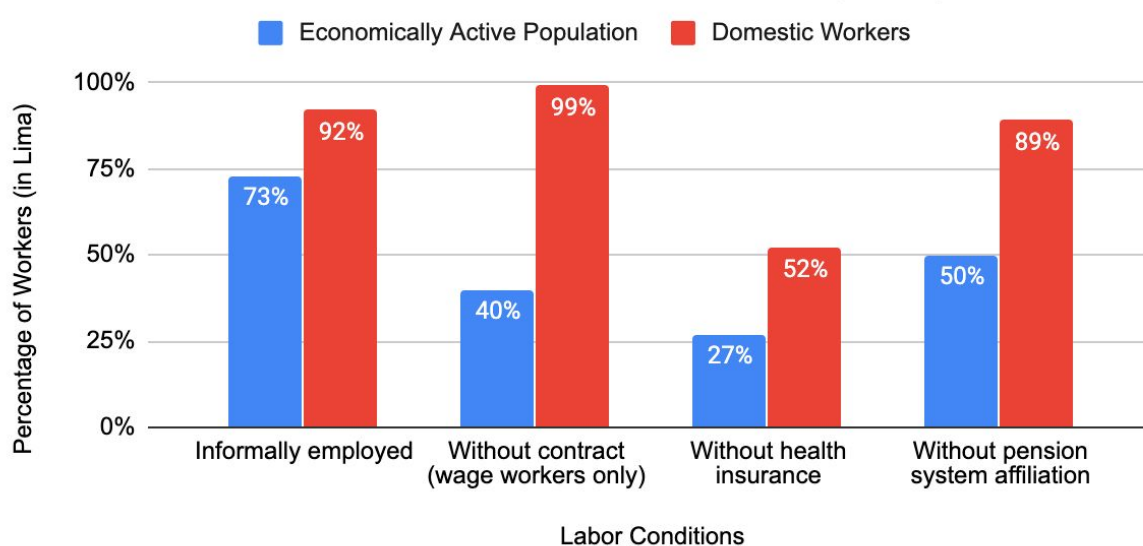


Figure 1.1

## 1.2 The failures of Peruvian economic policies

During the 1980s, Peru experienced extreme economic downturn and sociopolitical upheaval due to the Latin American Debt Crisis and intense civil war, forcing an unprecedented number of Peruvians to engage in informal economic activity to survive (Rodrik 2006; Quiroz 2013; Machado 2014). With the aim of promoting economic growth and reducing the size of the informal economy, the Peruvian government implemented neoliberal policies in the 1990s under

President Alberto Fujimori (Dancourt 1999). Rather than promoting growth, these policies prolonged economic stagnation and shrank the capacity of the Peruvian government to manage economic downturn, increasing the size of the informal economy (Dancourt 1999). After over a decade of exponential growth within the informal sector, the Peruvian government finally passed a series of tax and labor policy reforms in the early 2000s to reduce informal employment in enterprises and independent work. But, once again, these reforms did not achieve their goal and instead increased the percentage of workers without social or legal protection. Overall, these strategies have failed to reduce the size of the informal economy and in turn, have caused exorbitant rates of informal employment within most occupational categories in the country.

### 1.2.1 The effects of modern opportunities under a neoliberal framework

After twelve years of a military dictatorship, the Peruvian government created a new constitution in 1979 in an attempt to restore democracy. But a new extremist organization known as the *Shining Path*, or *Sendero Luminoso*, thwarted this attempt only a year later in 1980. A day before the election of President Fernando Belaúnde Terry, the group executed its first terrorist attack by burning ballot boxes in the province of Ayacucho. Eventually, these attacks became increasingly more violent and spread to other provinces, including to the capital city of Lima, which catalyzed an armed conflict between the revolutionaries and the State. The conflict continued well into the late 1980s and was one of the major markers of the presidential term (1985-1990) of Alan García, who, like Belaúnde, promised to resolve the political and economic turmoil. Unfortunately, García's progressive regime, which initiated state programs for poverty alleviation and nationalized the banking and insurance industries, failed to appease the *Shining Path*. To make matters worse, the economy slipped deeper into a recession with hyperinflation

reaching 7,481% and unemployment reaching 73% between 1989 and 1990 (Martinelli and Vega 2018). It was this combination of terrorism initiated by a communist organization and extreme economic downturn intensified during a socialist regime that created the perfect environment to cultivate the neoliberal policies of the Fujimori administration.

The dualist theory of the informal economy inspired the Fujimori neoliberal framework. Dualist theory argues that the informal economy consists of marginal activities outside of the formal regulatory environment that provide an income safety net for the poor during economic crises (Chen 2012). Many economists have found that this theory holds true in Peru, where there is an inverse relationship between economic growth and the size of the informal economy (Loayza 2007; Machado 2014; ILO 2014, 2017; Chacaltana 2017; INEI 2019). Yet, although dualist theory accurately explains why the informal economy exists in the country, the solutions proposed by dualists have misguided Peruvian economic policies, causing a surge in informal employment and creating a weak government.

Dualists assert that economic growth can be achieved by creating “modern economic opportunities” that draw workers out of the informal economy (Chen 2012, 5); with this goal in mind, the Fujimori administration adopted the policy prescriptions of the Washington Consensus, a doctrine that closely follows the ideals of Neoclassical Economic Theory (Dancourt 1999; Rodrik 2006). These policy prescriptions called for economic opening, therefore the Peruvian government passed various laws to privatize almost all public enterprises and to liberalize imports and capital accounts throughout Fujimori’s two presidential terms from 1990 to 2000 (Dancourt 1999; Contreras 2018). During this ten year period, Peruvian neoliberal economists believed that these policies would encourage informal workers to move to high



productivity industries within the export sector, especially manufacturing and industrial sectors (e.g., mining), which would then promote economic growth and reduce the size of the informal economy. Instead, open trade agreements allowed for a rush of new imports, causing a decline in the manufacturing and industrial sectors and a sharp increase in the trade deficit (Dancourt 1999). As a result, the modern sector was destroyed and more workers entered the informal economy.

Another major consequence of Fujimori's neoliberal regime was that the Peruvian government lost the operational means to produce effective policy capable of resisting external shocks and reversing economic downturns (Dancourt 1999); many of the policies remain intact today, which explains why the Peruvian government still cannot manage economic downturns or the subsequent growth in informal activity. In vulnerable economies like that of Peru, macroeconomic policy response is essential to avoiding economic downturn during external shocks; but the policy reforms of the Fujimori administration greatly reduced the power of monetary policy in the country. Two structural adjustments caused this operational deficit: the privatization and dollarization of the banking system and the financial liberalization of capital accounts for foreign direct investors (Dancourt 1999). First, after shutting down State banking systems, the Fujimori administration authorized commercial banks to accept deposits and to provide loans in foreign currency and then introduced a flexible foreign exchange-rate system. These changes led to a massive increase in deposits made in the United States Dollar, which caused a large expansion in bank credit to the private sector. Although this expansion in credit sounds ideal, it actually caused non-financial enterprises, including workers who receive their income in the Peruvian national currency of Nuevos Soles, to increase their debt valued in

dollars. Thus, when the first devaluation of the real exchange rate caused a rise in real interest rates, it subsequently caused a rise in the real debt burden of Peruvians — which at least partially explains why the percentage of the population living below the poverty line increased from 41% in 1985 to 51% in 1996 (Figueroa 1998). To make matters worse, the Central Bank had no way of regulating the volume of credit in dollars without limiting the free movement of capital, a prohibited act under the policy guidelines of the Washington Consensus. Monetary authorities could not, and still cannot, restrict credit or carry out significant devaluations due to dollarized and liberalized capital accounts. Thus, neoliberal reforms of Fujimori have caused short-term and long-term consequences: already weakened by stunted growth and increased poverty from the 1990s, the Peruvian economy is still vulnerable to any impending external shocks and the Peruvian government is still incapable of reversing economic downturn, which explains why the informal economy remains so large today. In other words, although the inverse relationship between economic growth and the size of the informal economy proves that dualist causal theory is accurate to some extent, the theory's proposed solutions gave rise neoliberal policies that have caused continual economic stagnation and governmental weaknesses, creating a rampant informal economy composed of impoverished individuals.

### 1.2.2 Misguided policy reforms

But dualist theory has not been the only adopted theory that has failed to resolve the problem of a large informal economy. Legalist and voluntarist theorists inspired labor and tax reforms in the early 2000s that were designed to combat informal employment in enterprises and independent work (i.e., the self-employed), but have been ineffective for two main reasons: first, these misguided laws have failed to improve the working conditions of informal enterprise

workers and informal independent workers, and second, they have completely ignored, and therefore failed to improve, the working conditions of the rest of the informal workers not included under their framework.

Since the boom in informal activity in the 1980s, well-known Peruvian economists have utilized legalist/voluntarist theory to argue that informality is the result of economic actors trying to escape the financial inconveniences of the regulatory environment, particularly the tax burden of registering a business and the cost of providing benefits to employees (De Soto 1989; Loayza 2007). In the early 2000s, these economists reasoned that, to reduce the size of the informal economy, the Peruvian government needed to reduce the competitive advantage of informality by deregulating labor and tax laws for small businesses (Loayza 2007). Thus, in 2003, the government passed a law called the Special Labor Regime for Micro and Small Businesses (*Ley MYPE*) that reduced the average non-salary labor costs for microenterprises of up to 10 workers from 54% to 17% as a proportion of salary (ILO 2017). As a result, “several employment benefits were significantly reduced, such as payment for unjustified dismissal, compensation for time of service (CTS) and bonuses. In addition, the obligation to contribute to [health insurance] for microenterprise workers was eliminated...” (ILO 2014, 10). The government also initiated tax incentives, the Single Simplified Regime (*RUS*) and the Special Income Tax Regime (*RER*), which essentially loosened the requirements for paying taxes, filing tax returns, and tracking accounting records for microenterprises and independent workers (ILO 2014, 2017). Although these reforms were based on the legalist/voluntarist theory that reducing costs for informal enterprises and independent workers would encourage them to enter the regulatory framework, these tax and labor laws barely had an impact on informality, as informal employment in

microenterprises (1 to 10 workers) only decreased by about 7 percentage points in a ten year period — from 92.4% in 2008 to 85.3% in 2018 (INEI 2019). The majority of this reduction happened after the creation of e-payroll, “an electronic procedure through which employers with three or more workers must send monthly reports to the National Tax Authority (SUNAT) regarding their workers, pensioners, service providers, personnel in training, outsourced workers and claimants,” in 2018 (ILO 2014, 7); in other words, formalization in enterprises only came after introducing stricter regulations, not deregulating them. Although these laws hoped to encourage formalization in independent workers outside of enterprises as well, they did not work for this occupational category either, as the percentage of independent workers with informal employment only decreased a mere 2% (from 88% to 86%) in the same ten year period (INEI 2019).

These labor and tax reforms did not just fail the informal workers who were supposed to benefit from them, they also indirectly failed all informal workers, especially those who were excluded from their frameworks. These workers include those with the highest rates of informal employment: unpaid family workers (100%) and domestic workers (92%). Although these workers only comprise about 12% of the workforce (9.8% in unpaid family work and 2.3% in domestic labor), wage workers — meaning all workers performing wage labor outside of enterprises — comprise a much larger share of the workforce (46%) and also have a high rate of informal employment (54%) (INEI 2019). In other words, the majority of the workforce (58%) and millions of informal workers were disregarded in policy reforms simply because legalist/voluntarist economists and supporting government officials did not want to recognize that these workers did not *choose* informality.

This blatant disregard for the majority of the informal workforce has gone beyond just the creation of ineffective and exclusive policy reforms — even as the Peruvian government has worked to pass more inclusive laws, there are still economists who reduce domestic labor to nothing more than unproductive, low-skill, traditional work that should disappear (ILO 2014, 2017). Economists who believe this, being the same ones who supported modern neoliberal policies and conservative labor and tax reforms, argue that the Peruvian economy has low productivity levels because the least productive sectors employ the most people. They argue that a change in employment structure, by transferring workers from less productive sectors to more productive sectors, would encourage the growth of the formal economy. Yet, these “solutions” ignore the fact that although domestic labor is inherently low productivity labor, it will always be in demand (especially for single and/or working parents and the elderly), therefore domestic workers cannot simply disappear. By neglecting to address this fact, economists not only draw attention away from how important domestic workers are to the functioning of the entire economy but also encourage legislators to ignore the need for improvement within the sector (like in aforementioned labor and tax reforms), allowing the rate of informal employment in domestic labor to remain exorbitantly high.

### 1.3 A history of undervaluation and marginalization

In her 2007 book entitled *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*, Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo addresses the reasons behind the unexpected growth of the market for domestic labor in the United States. She argues that several factors explain the recent expansion of paid domestic work in the U.S., including growing income inequality, women’s participation in the labor force, underdeveloped daycare services, and mass

immigration (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007). More specifically, as more women enter the workforce, they look for substitutes to perform their once assigned labor; given the fact that child-care services are scarce (and therefore expensive) and many female Mexican immigrants (especially undocumented ones with limited alternatives) seek employment as domestic workers, these women can find cheap, unregulated domestic labor with relative ease. Once demanding families hire these domestic workers, they often do not regard the relationship as one of employment because “it takes place in a private home” and “the tasks that domestic workers do—cleaning, cooking, and caring for children—are associated with women’s “natural” expressions of love for their families” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007, 9). Besides being guided by outdated gender norms, “[r]elationships between domestic employees and employers have always been imbued with racial meanings: white “masters and mistresses” have been cast as pure and superior, and “maids and servants,” drawn from specific racial-ethnic groups..., have been cast as dirty and socially inferior” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007, 13).

Although Hondagneu-Sotelo’s study focuses on domestic labor in Los Angeles, other studies have found that demand for domestic labor in Peru is increasing for similar reasons and Peruvian domestic workers face the same gendered and racialized employment conditions (Garavito 2015, Pérez and Llanos 2017). Therefore, just as Hondagneu-Sotelo found that gender and racial dynamics have influenced the employment relationships between domestic workers and their employers in the contemporary United States, I too argue that colonial gender and racial hierarchies in Peruvian culture have marginalized indigenous women to the most precarious forms of domestic labor. Similar to the mistress-maid relationship described by Hondagneu-Sotelo, I argue that domestic work in Peru is viewed as an extension of a colonial

master-slave relationship instead of legitimate employment worthy of social attention and legal protections. Stated differently, “the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity... and social class have served to discriminate against the domestic worker, ensuring vulnerability through limited labor and social rights for those who remain in this sector” in Peru (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 566).

### 1.3.1 A transformation from slave labor to informal paid labor

As anyone who has ever studied the history of domestic labor in Latin America, which is similar to that of the United States, may know, the occupational category originally existed as a form of slave labor initiated by colonists and performed by both African and indigenous peoples. During the age of colonialism, Spaniards in Peru enslaved millions of Africans as household laborers; but even after the country gained independence in 1821 and the new Republic abolished slavery in 1854, wealthy Peruvians continued to exploit the labor of indigenous women in their homes (Garavito 2018). Within household labor, a demographic shift from Afro-Peruvian men to indigenous women occurred for two main reasons. First, under the colonial gender hierarchy, only men could perform paid labor outside of the household. Thus, as the Peruvian economy began to develop and the city of Lima began to urbanize in the late 19th century, freed Afro-Peruvian and indigenous men left the city to pursue manual labor (such as mining) in the Andean mountain regions while indigenous women remained in or traveled to the city to perform domestic labor, eventually causing a transition to an almost entirely female workforce (Garavito 2018; Pérez and Llanos 2017). Second, once the new Republic abolished slavery, Afro-Peruvians no longer occupied the lowest level on the colonial racial hierarchy and found paid opportunities outside of Spanish homes; therefore, wealthy Peruvians began replacing their Afro-Peruvian

slaves with indigenous laborers (Garavito 2018). These shifts in gender and racial hierarchies marked a crucial turning point in the history of domestic labor in Peru:

“The colonial history is relevant for understanding the composition of today’s paid domestic service sector. First, the colonial system—different from that experienced in Europe of the same period—established domestic service as primarily a woman’s job. Though in the early period of colonization there were men performing some domestic tasks, they were primarily former slaves or indigenous. Second, given the colonialists’ racial/ethnic stratification, by the eighteenth century the work was predominantly feminized and indigenized<sup>9</sup>. By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, domestic service became “an almost entirely female and lower-class occupation (Kuznesof 1989, 31)” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 555).

Thus, by adopting new class systems based on gender and racial hierarchies from colonialism, domestic labor in Peru came to be a feminized and indigenized, and inherently lower class, occupation. This history illustrates why the majority of domestic workers in the country are still poor women of indigenous descent (ILO 2013; INEI 2019; Garavito 2016, 2017; Pérez and Llanos 2017).

As domestic service transformed from slave labor into paid labor, the employment relationship between employers and domestic workers came to mirror the servile relationship between masters and slaves (Garavito 2018; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007). Because employers have classified their relationship with domestic workers as something closer to servitude than an employment relationship, the work is continually undervalued by society and ignored on the legislative front (Pérez and Llanos 2017). This also explains why most employers may be reluctant to identify with the title of ‘employer’ (and accept the associated responsibilities) while



domestic workers are more likely to deny that they are employees due to the sexist, racist, and classist stigmas attached to the occupation (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007). For these reasons, “[d]omestic work remains an arrangement that is thought of as private: it remains informal, “in the shadows,” and outside the purview of the state and other regulating agencies” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007, 22).

### 1.3.2 The supposed victory of Law No. 27986

Although I have already offered a brief history of domestic service in Peru, I cannot adequately examine the work’s transformation from slave labor to paid labor without mentioning the only real labor regulation that emerged from the transformation. The bid of domestic workers for recognition as legitimate workers began more than 30 years ago (ILO 2013). In the 1980s, the first major non-governmental organization, called the *Training Center for Domestic Workers* (CCTH), was created to not only enhance the skills of domestic workers but also to demand their fundamental rights as laborers (ILO 2013). During this time, the perception of domestic workers as household servants began to change, eventually inspiring the creation of worker unions such as the *National Union of Household Workers of Peru* (SINTRAHOGARP) in 2006 and the *Union of Domestic Workers of the Lima Region* (SINTTRAHOL) in 2009 (ILO 2013). But, true legislative change did not occur until 2003, when decades of activism finally resulted in the passing of Law No. 27986, the first law to categorize domestic labor as an occupational category (ILO 2013). As I will discuss in-depth in the following chapter, Law No. 27986 is currently the most important advancement in the formalization of domestic work in the country; however, although the Peruvian government created this law as “be all end all” solution to informality

within domestic labor, due to reasons I will divulge later, the law is merely a starting point to achieving true formalization.

## 1.4 Conclusion

Ineffective Peruvian economic policies throughout the last three decades have caused exorbitantly high rates of informality in the Peruvian economy and a colonial regime based on gender and racial hierarchies has created a culture that marginalizes domestic workers and undervalues their labor. Flawed theoretical frameworks inspired ineffective policy reforms that exacerbated informality. The colonial system established a group of workers that are not only discriminated against because of their gender, racial, and class identities, but are also denied their social and legal protections because their occupation is viewed as servitude rather than employment. Although the purpose of this chapter was to reveal these very ideas, it is crucial to the purpose of this thesis to understand an even greater idea presented by Hondagneu-Sotelo when she introduces the primary driving question of her study. After explaining how and why domestic labor in the city of Los Angeles has grown throughout the last several decades, Hondagneu-Sotelo states:

“Yet simply understanding the conditions that have fostered the occupation’s growth, the widely held perceptions of the job, or even the important history of the occupation’s racialization tells us little about what is actually happening in these jobs today. How are they organized, and how do employers and employees experience them?” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007, 27)

The emphasis that Hondagneu-Sotelo places on understanding the current structure of domestic work and the experiences of those within this employment relationship echoes my own personal sentiments, which is why I decided to conduct my own study in August of 2019. In the following

chapter, I will offer the results of my study to connect the abstract theories and historical processes presented here to the current lived experiences of domestic workers in Lima, Peru. In justifying my study, I argue that “it is precisely because this job is performed by the most vulnerable women that an analysis of their collective situation may serve as a barometer to measure the country’s progress toward achieving socioeconomic equity” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 553).

# Chapter 2 - The Barriers of Informality in Domestic Labor: A Study about the Domestic Worker Law No. 27986 (2003) and Its Effectiveness

“The country’s Domestic Worker Law No. 27986 (2003) represents an important step toward recognizing this sector as part of the workforce, not mere “service providers” or “servants”; however, it provides only partial rights and thus needs to be improved and strengthened so that domestic workers might enjoy the same entitlements and protections as do other workers” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 553).

## 2.1 Introduction

Although Law No. 27986 sought to formalize domestic labor in Peru, domestic workers are still the most informally employed among all paid laborers in the country. After these workers spent decades fighting for legal recognition, the Peruvian government finally passed Law No. 27986 in 2003, categorizing domestic labor as an occupational category (ILO 2013). The unprecedented law has been the only attempt to formalize domestic labor by regulating employment conditions and assigning labor rights to workers. These rights include the right to a verbal or written contract, to food and/or accommodations (for live-in workers), to 24 consecutive hours of rest per week, to paid rest during national holidays and 15 vacation days per year, and, lastly, to annual bonuses during Independence Day and Christmas. The law also states that domestic workers qualify for social security, which means that employers must provide their workers with health insurance and affiliation with either a State or private pension system (ILO

2013). Yet, despite the government's effort to formalize the work through these regulations, a substantial 92% of domestic workers worked without receiving their labor rights, meaning they were informally employed, in 2018 (INEI 2019). Although this statistic suggests that the percentage of workers with informal employment has decreased by at least 8% since 2003, the decline has not been steady over the past 15 years (see Figure 2.1). The majority of domestic workers still did not receive their legal labor rights a decade after the law passed in 2003, with 99% of them working without a contract, 52% without health insurance, and 89% without any affiliation to a pension system in 2013 (Garavito 2016; Pérez and Llanos 2017). After learning of this apparent legislative failure, I came to form my second research question: *Why has Law No. 27986 failed to effectively formalize domestic labor?*

### Percentage of Domestic Workers with Informal Employment: 2008-2018

Source: INEI 2019. Prepared by author.

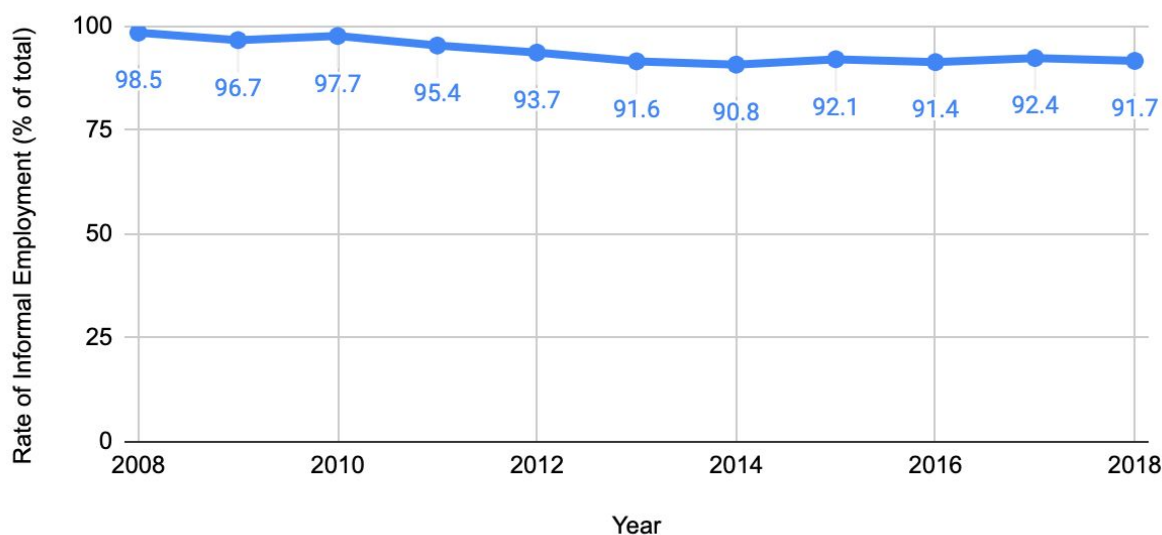


Figure 2.1

I hypothesize that Law No. 27986 has not been effective in formalizing domestic labor for two main reasons: written contracts are not required and the State does not provide comprehensive services to educate workers, supervise employment relationships, or enforce the law, forcing third-party intermediaries to take on these responsibilities with limited capabilities and resources.

## 2.2 Study Materials & Methodology

To test these hypotheses, I conducted a study at an employment agency that specializes in helping domestic workers find formal employment in Lima, Peru. *La Casa de Panchita*, or LCP for short, serves as the institutional venue for *Asociación Grupo de Trabajo Redes* (AGTR), a non-governmental organization whose mission is to “[e]ndorse the access to domestic service exclusively of those with legal age to perform it, in compliance with their rights and high efficiency standards” (AGTR, n.d.). During my time as a volunteer at LCP from March to August 2019, I surveyed and interviewed 14 domestic workers and one “promoter” (this is the title the organization gives to head volunteers who run educational workshops and other promotional activities). I chose the promoter due to her extensive knowledge about informal domestic labor and randomly selected visitors who identified as domestic workers.

All of my research material went through the IRB approval process (see Appendix). Once I explained the premise of my study, I provided each participant with an Informative Declaration and a Document of Informed Consent in the Spanish language to ensure that they could make an informed decision about their participation. I always asked for permission to record the conversation. In moments of emotional intensity or discomfort, I reminded participants that they could refuse to answer certain questions or stop the interview at any point. Lastly, since I

conducted these surveys and interviews with a vulnerable population, I have removed all identifying information from my study material and assigned each worker a unique identifier from 1 to 14 to maintain anonymity. Once I have completed this thesis, I will discard all documents and recordings.

Both the surveys and interviews contained six questions (see Appendix). The survey asked questions about identity, including age, race, education level, birthplace, residential district, and first language. I chose these biographical characteristics in particular because previous studies have focused on them, therefore not only did I want to see if my demographic statistics would deviate from those studies but also if I would find similar results about the impact of intersectional identities on employment experiences. My interview questions were both “yes or no” — such as “Have you ever had a written contract with any of your employers?” or “Do you know all of your rights under Law No. 27986?” — and open-ended — such as “Do you think the laws protect domestic workers or do we need another solution?” and “Why do you do domestic work instead of a more ‘formal’ job?” Although I used these questions as a general guideline for my interviews, I sometimes would change the wording or ask supplemental questions depending on the responses of the participants. I constructed these questions in this manner to reveal the relationship between contracts and employment status and to compare perspectives on topics of labor rights, employer compliance, the effectiveness of the law, and job choice. The combined goal of the surveys and the interviews was to uncover the true barriers to formalization that affect Peruvian domestic workers.

Once I knew whether or not each participant had a written contract, I divided them into two main focus groups: Group 1 (the control group) consisting of those without a written

contract and Group 2 (the treatment group) consisting of those with a written contract. To measure employment status, I asked each worker if she had full benefits, partial benefits, or no benefits in her employment. I framed each question with this simple terminology so that the respondents could provide straightforward answers, allowing me to divide them into subgroups consisting of workers with either formal, quasi-formal, or informal employment. By dividing the participants into these specific groups and subgroups, I was able to observe the effect a written contract had on the likelihood of a worker receiving full, partial, or no benefits. With these quantitative and qualitative data, I not only proved my own hypotheses but, as I will discuss later in this chapter, I also confirmed the findings of previous studies.

## 2.3 Survey Demographics

Table 2.1 displays all of the demographic data that I collected through survey responses. Since the purpose of these surveys was to compare the demographic characteristics of the workers in my study to those of workers in previous studies, I will offer the aggregate statistics for every survey question rather than review the individual responses displayed below.

Table 2.1 Survey Responses to Questions of Age, Race, Education Level, Birthplace, District, First Language, and Position Title: Workers 1-14

ID	Age	Race	Education Level	Birthplace	District	First Language	Position Title
1	68	Triguena (Indigenous, black, and Spanish)	Technical school	Puno	Pueblo Libre	Quechua	All-service (including nanny)
2	65	Morena (Brown)	Incomplete secondary	Puno	Rimac	Quechua	All-service (including nanny)
3	71	Mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Complete primary school	Huaral	Rimac	Spanish	All-service (including nanny)
4	39	Mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Complete secondary school	Lima	Santiago de Sucro	Spanish	Caregiver for the elderly
5	38	Mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Complete secondary school	Ayacucho	San Juan de Miraflores	Spanish and Quechua	All-service (excluding nanny)
6	49	"de la provincia" (Andean indigenous)	Complete primary school	Puno	San Juan de Lurigancho	Quechua	All-service (excluding nanny)
7	32	"normal" (mestiza)	Complete secondary school	Cusco	Jesús María	Quechua	nanny
8	35	mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Incomplete university	Puno	Jesús María	Quechua	All-service (including nanny); live-in
9	57	mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Complete secondary school	Lima	San Juan de Lurigancho	Spanish	All-service; live-in
10	35	Mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Incomplete secondary school	Cusco	San Juan de Lurigancho	Quechua	All-service; live-in
11	39	"De la provincia" (Andean indigenous)	Incomplete primary school	Cusco	Lurigancho-Chosica	Quechua and Spanish	All-service
12	50	"normal" (mestiza)	Complete secondary school	Puno	San Juan de Miraflores	Aymara	Nanny
13	47	Andina (Andean indigenous)	Technical school	Junín	Santiago de Sucro	Quechua	Caregiver for the elderly
14	33	mestiza (Indigenous and Spanish)	Technical school	Lambayeque	Lima	Spanish	Nanny



These data demonstrate that my sample, although not large enough to be representative, was comparable to those of previous studies. In general, those studies have found that the typical profile of a domestic worker is an older, migrant/ethnic, poorly educated woman of lower socioeconomic status (Garavito 2016, 2017; Pérez and Llanos 2017). Given the demographic data presented, I would argue the most common profile among the domestic workers in my study matches this description. The only unexpected finding that challenges this profile was a greater proportion of workers with higher education. In their study, Pérez and Llanos 2017 found that only 14% of domestic workers had above a secondary school education level; meanwhile, 28% of workers in my study fell into this category (see 2.3.3). This finding may be related to the general decrease in the live-in modality (see 2.3.7), allowing more domestic workers to work and pursue higher education simultaneously.

### 2.3.1 Age

As demonstrated in Figure 2.2, the largest number of workers (50%) fell in the age group of 29-39. The youngest worker was 32 years old, thus there were no workers in the age group of 18-28. The oldest worker was 71 years old and fit into the oldest age group (62-72) with two other workers. The median age was 47 years old and a total of three workers fell in the age group of 40-50. Only one worker was between the ages of 51 and 61 years old.

## Age Distribution of Workers

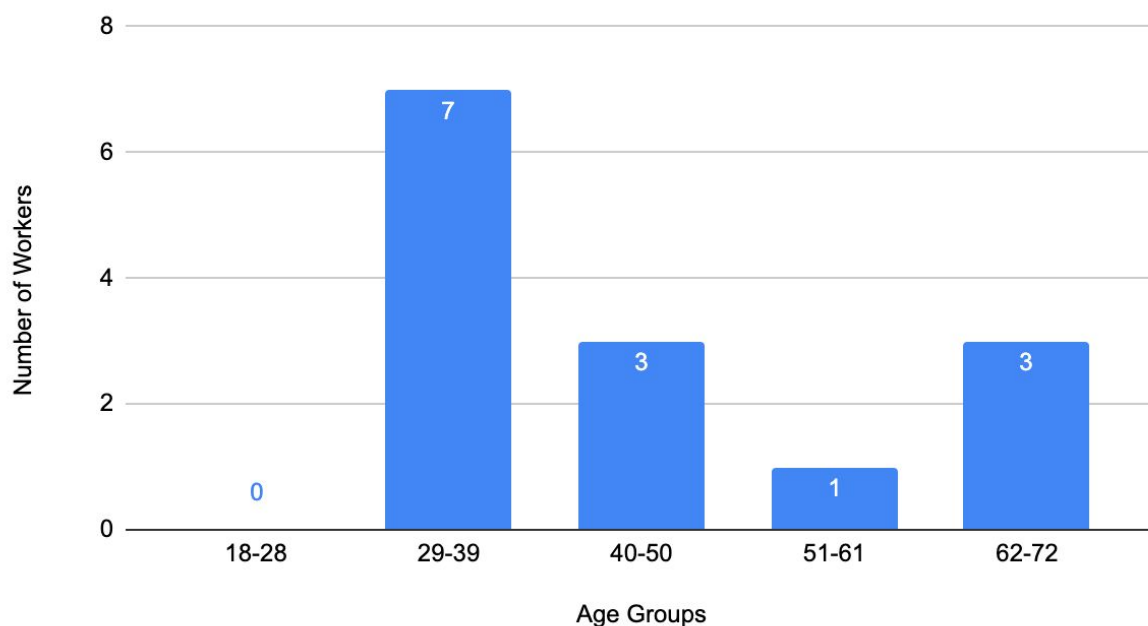


Figure 2.2

### 2.3.2 Race

In Peruvian culture, race is a taboo subject; because race is attached to the stigmas created during colonial times, everyday Peruvians usually do not discuss race or racially categorize themselves (Callirgos 1993). This made my attempt to compare racial groups very difficult, as the workers used many different labels or chose to use non-descriptive labels like “normal.” Despite these categorical variations, the majority of workers (64%) identified as *mestiza*, which signifies a mix of indigenous and Spanish. Since *mestiza* is viewed as the “standard,” I have included two workers who identified as “normal” in this racial category. Three workers (21%) identified as indigenous to the Andean region with labels of *andina* and *de la provincia*. The last two workers (14%) used racial categories usually associated with African

descent, including *trigueña*, which signifies a mix of indigenous, African, and Spanish, and *morena*, which translates to “brown.” None of the workers in my study identified as white.

### 2.3.3 Education level

For education level, there was an almost equal distribution between three categories: less than secondary school, secondary school, and more than secondary school. The first category comprised 36% of the workers: one worker had the lowest educational attainment of incomplete primary school, two workers had complete primary school, and two workers had incomplete secondary school. Another 36% of workers fell into the second category with a complete secondary school education level. Finally, the remaining 28% had above a secondary school education level: one worker was still in university (incomplete), and the other three finished technical school.

### 2.3.4 Birthplace

To determine the percentage of internal migrants in the study, I asked each worker for her birthplace. I found that 86% of the workers had migrated from a different region of Peru to the city of Lima while the remaining 14% were born in Lima.

### 2.3.5 District

Although it is not a perfect measurement, I recorded the residential districts of each worker to glean some information about socioeconomic status. According to data provided by the Crime Observatory of Peru, the Public Ministry, the NGO *Lima Cómo Vamos*, and the Peruvian National Police, the top ten most dangerous districts in Lima are characterized by their high crime, high poverty, and high population density (Dunnell 2018). There were three districts on this list — San Juan de Miraflores, San Juan de Lurigancho, and Lima (marked on the map

below as 10, 2, and 1, respectively) — that were frequently recorded in my study. Over 50% of the workers in my study lived in these high poverty areas.



### 2.3.6 First language

Since Spanish is the official language of Peru, I wanted to know how many domestic workers in my sample did not speak Spanish as their first language. Overall, 57% of workers spoke an indigenous language as their first language: one worker spoke Aymara while the rest spoke Quechua. An additional 14% spoke both Spanish and Quechua as their first languages. The remaining 29% only spoke Spanish.

### 2.3.7 Position title

Finally, although I did not include this category in the original survey framework, I gathered enough information from the workers' interviews to determine their position titles. 64% were 'all-service' (meaning that they perform all household duties, including cooking, cleaning, and sometimes caring for children) while the remaining 36% were single-duty workers: three

were nannies and two were elderly caregivers. Between the modalities of live-in and live-out, only two workers (14%) were live-in while the rest were live-out. This finding reflects the reality that the live-in modality “places the housekeeper in a particularly exposed position of isolation and dependency” as they “frequently work more than eight hours a day, and little is known about the standard of the accommodation and food provided by their employers” (Rafstedt 2017, 1). Thus, most domestic workers now pursue the live-out modality and consider it to be higher status work (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007).

## 2.4 Results

Group 1, the group without contracts, and Group 2 each have seven workers: Group 1 consists of workers 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 13, and Group 2 consists of workers 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 14. The fifteenth participant was the promoter at LCP. Although I have decided to disregard her survey responses because she was not a domestic worker at the time of the study, her interview responses provide insight into Law No. 27986 and possible solutions to the problem of informality; therefore, I will discuss her ideas briefly in the following sections.

### 2.4.1 The relationship between written contracts and employment status

As demonstrated in Figure 2.3, my study found that domestic workers without written contracts, Group 1, were more likely to have quasi-formal and informal employment — meaning they received either some or none of their legal labor rights from their employers — than domestic workers with written contracts. In Group 1, only 43% (3/7) of workers had completely formal employment, while 29% (2/7) had quasi-formal employment and 29% (2/7) had informal employment. In contrast, 86% (6/7) of domestic workers in Group 2 had formal employment,

14% (1/7) had quasi-formal employment, and 0% had informal employment. As a whole, 64% of workers had formal, 21% had quasi-formal, and 14% had informal employment.

## Relationship between written contracts and employment status

Group 1 versus Group 2

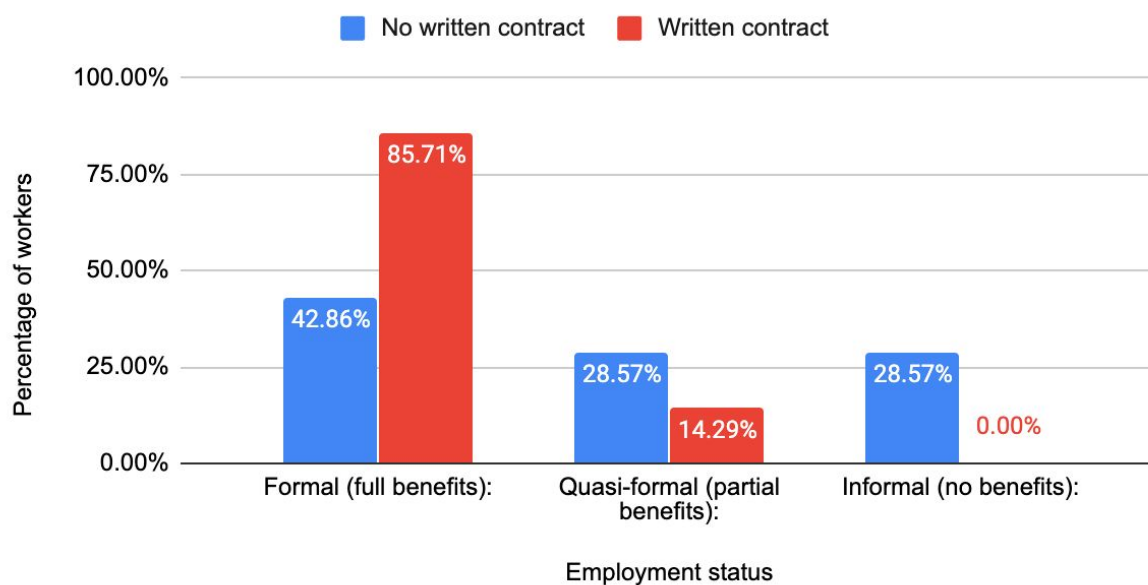


Figure 2.3

Based on the accounts of workers within each subgroup, I have concluded that formal employment can only be achieved by finding employment through an employment agency — as agencies like LCP provide comprehensive services to educate workers on their rights, teach workers how to negotiate with employers through a binding written contract, and supervise and enforce the written contracts through investigations and employer sanctions — or by being “lucky” enough to find an employer who will comply with the law under special circumstances.

My study also found that the main reason why workers had quasi-formal employment is that employers did not want to pay for “more expensive” benefits, especially health insurance, unless they were incentivized by a supervised and enforced written contract.

Lastly, not only do the results of my study demonstrate that only workers without written contracts had informal employment but also that many of these informal workers continued to work without receiving, but still knowing, their rights because they feared to lose their jobs. This fear stems from the fact that domestic workers, especially the older, poorer women of indigenous descent who speak Spanish as their second language and have limited education, are subjected to discrimination in the job market (ILO 2013; Pérez and Llanos 2017; Rafstedt 2017); therefore, without many alternatives, they accept exploitative working conditions to support themselves and their families.

#### 2.4.1.1 How formal employment is achieved: luck or employment agencies

In Group 1, only three out of the seven women received full benefits financed by their employers. Each of the three workers in Group 1 who received full benefits without a written contract mentioned that they were “lucky” to have “good” employers who provided full benefits, alluding to the idea that their employment circumstances were special or unusual in some way. For example, Worker 1 explained that she had begun working for her current employer 30 years ago when written contracts and labor rights did not exist. She told me that she never felt the need to create one after Law No. 27986 passed because her employer “treated her like a daughter” and therefore she was not afraid to ask for her benefits. Similarly, Worker 7 stated that the reason she did not have a written contract is that it was not common when she started working for her current employer eight years ago, but after working for “bad employers” in the past, she learned

to be straightforward and to demand her benefits. Lastly, Worker 13, who was professionally trained as a geriatric assistant, stated that she did not feel the need to create a written contract with her current employers because there was a sense of mutual trust between them: her employers wanted someone “special” to care for their elderly family member and she wanted them to respect her rights, thus both parties upheld their “promise.” Although these workers were satisfied with their current employment, they visited LCP for various other reasons, including to attend educational workshops and to socialize with other domestic workers. All of these workers stated that, through these workshops and social groups, they learned about their rights and formed verbal contracts with their employers.

Meanwhile, six out of the seven women in Group 2 received full benefits financed by their employers and all six of them found their current employers through LCP. Also, except for Worker 3, all of them received written contracts only after they found employers through LCP. Workers 5, 8, and 10 specifically stated that they never had a written contract or received full benefits before their current employers. In contrast, Workers 3, 9, and 14 stated that they always had a written contract with all of their employers and received full benefits, but only Workers 9 and 14 had found all of their employers through LCP.

#### 2.4.1.2 Quasi-formal employment: *“Over everything, it is health insurance.”*

For the purpose of my study, any worker who admitted to receiving some, but not all, benefits was categorized as having quasi-formal employment. All workers who were denied certain benefits did not create a written contract with an employer found through LCP; in other words, only workers who crafted written contracts with the supervision and enforcement of the employment agency received “more expensive” benefits like health insurance.



Two women in Group 1 had quasi-formal employment: Workers 2 and 12. Worker 2 explained that although she had received many of her rights, including hours of rest and vacation, national holidays, and even bonuses, she had never received health insurance. Worker 12 described how she had received “cheaper” benefits, like holidays and Sundays off, but never “more expensive” ones, like vacation days, health insurance, or a pension plan. Meanwhile, Worker 4 was the only worker in Group 2 who received partial benefits. She explained that although she had a written contract in which her employer promised to pay a certain amount and provide particular benefits, she had never mentioned health insurance because she knew that her employer would not be interested. Worker 4 was the only worker in Group 2 who did not create a written contract with her current employer through LCP. Worker 8 emphasized this idea when she talked about how, although she had finally received full benefits in her most recent employment found through LCP, her past employers denied her of health insurance; her words were: “Over everything, it is health insurance. The majority of employers simply do not want to pay for it.”

#### 2.4.1.3 Informal employment: “*To survive.*”

Unlike formal and quasi-formal employment, my study only found informal employment in Group 1, meaning that only workers without written contracts did not receive any of their legal labor rights. Out of the seven workers in Group 1, two of them did not receive any benefits financed by their employers: Workers 6 and 11. Worker 6 stated that she started working as a domestic worker at the age of 19 in the late 1980s (when domestic workers did not have any labor rights) and that none of her employers provided her with benefits after Law No. 27986 passed in 2003. Worker 11 also mentioned that she began working at a young age when she did

not know that domestic workers had rights and that she only learned about the law after visiting LCP. She then explained that, even though it upset her to find out that her employer was breaking the law, she continued working without benefits in order “to survive.”

#### 2.4.2 Interview responses

Once I established who did and did not have a written contract from my first interview question, I modified my second interview question for each group. I asked every worker in Group 1 if she had ever tried to create a written contract with her employer while I asked every worker in Group 2 why she had created a written contract with her employer. The third interview question asked if the worker knew all of her rights under the law and the fourth asked if her employer had followed this law. If not, I asked if she had ever tried to confront her employer. The fifth question asked if the worker believed the law was effective in protecting domestic workers or if she believed that another solution was necessary. The sixth and final question asked why the worker performed domestic labor. The responses to these supplemental questions provided me with a better understanding of how written contracts and aspects of identity impact the employment experiences of domestic workers; their responses are summarized below in Table 2.2.

Overall, workers in Group 2 used written contracts to defend their rights while workers in Group 1 did not use written contracts because either they lacked the proper knowledge to create one before employment or they were afraid of being fired by their employers. Similarly, many workers reasoned that they had informal employment, or that informality exists within domestic labor in general, because most domestic workers are not aware of their rights under the law. Through the interview responses of the workers and the promoter, I learned that this gap in

knowledge is being filled by the efforts of third-party intermediaries, such as NGOs, unions, and employment agencies like LCP. Other workers blamed the law itself for informality, claiming that it is ineffective because it is not enforced by the Peruvian government.

I also learned that, for many workers, aspects of their identities — including age, race/ethnicity, class, gender, and education level — often impacted employer compliance and job choice. This finding reflects the idea that domestic workers are marginalized because they occupy the lowest levels on the racial, gender, and class hierarchies established during colonialism; therefore, many face discrimination from their current employers in the form of labor exploitation, emotional abuse, and job insecurity, but they also face discrimination from possible employers outside of domestic labor who will not hire them because of their marginalized identities. In other words, domestic workers “enjoy little vertical labor mobility precisely because of the confluence of the aforementioned conditions which, in turn, serve to position the women of this sector for a life of service as domestic workers with limited alternatives” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 554-555).

Lastly, I learned that, although many of the workers had experienced unfortunate circumstances in their employment histories, those who found their current employers through LCP still had the agency to demand their benefits and, for the most part, to choose domestic labor as their occupation.

Table 2.2 Percentages of Most Frequent Interview Responses: Group 1 versus Group 2

Questions	Group 1 Answers	Group 2 Answers
1. Do you have a written contract with your employer?	100% No	100% Yes
2. Have you ever tried to create a written contract with your employer?	100% No	100% Yes
2.a. Main reason:	Lack of knowledge	To defend rights
3. Do you know all of your rights under the law?	100% Yes	100% Yes
4. Do you receive all of your rights under the law?	43% Yes	86% Yes
If not, partially?	50% Yes/No	100% Yes
5. Do you think the law is effective?*	57% Mostly yes	71% Mostly no
6. Why domestic labor?	Only option: 43%	Only option: 29%
*No worker stated that the law is perfectly effective and many offered caveats to their answers		

#### 2.4.2.1 Questions about written contracts: “*I didn’t know anything*” versus “*To defend my rights.*”

When I asked each worker in Group 1 if she had ever tried to create a written contract with her employer, everyone answered “No” and offered a reason for why not. Besides Workers 1, 7, and 13, who, as I already mentioned, had special employment circumstances with their employers, the most frequent reason why they did not have a written contract was that they did not know about the law and/or their rights. For example, both Workers 6 and 7 stated that they started working for their current employers several years ago when written contracts were not common, and not many workers knew they were legally entitled to one. Additionally, Workers 2 and 11 said that they did not have written contracts with their current employers because they did not know their rights when they started their jobs. In total, five out of the seven workers (71%) in Group 1 stated that they did not know about the law before they started working as a domestic worker but later learned about their rights while attending educational workshops at LCP.

On the other hand, when I asked each worker in Group 2 why she had created a written contract, their responses were much more unanimous: they all believed that written contracts were essential to access their benefits and to protect themselves against unlawful employment.

When I asked her why she created a written contract, Worker 3 answered: “To defend my rights. Without a contract, I couldn’t.” Likewise, Worker 9 said that she formed a written contract so that her employer would follow the law and provide her with benefits; she also stated that contracts provide more security because they are “more formal.” Worker 4 alluded to this security by stating that she created a written contract because she wanted a signed document that guarantees her pay and benefits. Lastly, Workers 5, 8, and 10 all described how they had past employers who never followed Law No. 27986, so they decided to find employers through LCP that would comply with written contracts. Similarly, Worker 14 said it had always been a priority of hers to have a written contract to track her payments and receive her benefits, which is why she always looked for employers through LCP.

In sum, 12 out of 14 (86%) domestic workers mentioned their rights in their responses to my questions about written contracts. While in Group 1 a lack of knowledge about rights was a reason for not creating a written contract, a defense of rights was the main reason for creating one in Group 2.

2.4.2.2 Questions about the law and employer compliance: “...*we are human beings and they should treat us like human beings.*”

To better understand how the 2003 law has influenced the employment relationships between domestic workers and their employers, I asked the workers three types of questions: one about their knowledge of their rights under the law, another about their employers’ compliance with the law, and a final one about the effectiveness of the law. Their responses to these questions suggest that domestic workers only learn about their rights and find compliant

employers through third-party intermediaries like LCP, which explains why none of the workers believed that the law in and of itself was *completely* effective.

Fortunately, all of the 14 workers stated that they were aware of their rights under the law. Yet, eight of them (57%) admitted that they did not know their rights while working for previous employers in the past 15 years since the law has passed. Five out of those eight workers only learned about their rights through LCP; three other workers stated that they had never even heard of the law until visiting LCP (totaling 57% again). These data demonstrate that the majority of the workers had worked without their rights for some time after the 2003 law and learned about their rights only after visiting the organization.

Regarding employer compliance, nine workers (64%) reported that their current employers followed the law completely and provided full benefits. Four out of nine stated that only their current employers had ever followed the law, meaning that none of their past employers had ever provided them with benefits. In other words, 29% of all workers had only achieved formal employment recently and 36% still had never achieved formal employment because they found their current employers before learning about their rights.

I asked each of the workers if she had ever tried to confront an employer. In total, only four workers (29%) have confronted their employers for various reasons relating to their employment conditions. Worker 1 shared that, after working for over ten years without any benefits, she wanted her employer to follow the 2003 law and respect her rights; she told me that she bargained with her employer by reasoning with him: “I am like your secretary, and if secretaries get Sundays off, I should too.” Eventually, she convinced him to provide all of her benefits. Worker 2 also admitted to confronting employers about following the law. She

described how some of her past employers did not take well to the confrontations, but she always tried to remain calm and explain that she was a single mother of three who needed time off to care for her young children. The other two workers, Workers 12 and 14, recounted that their experiences with confronting employers were rather unpleasant. Worker 12 told me that she had to confront a previous employer because he did not pay her for months-worth of work, but without a written contract to track the receipt of payment, she could not prove that she was denied her pay and fired unjustly. Lastly, Worker 14 explained that although her employers had always provided her with full benefits, she had to confront two different employers for discriminating against her. She talked about how one of them would call her an “india de mierda,” a derogatory slur used against women of indigenous descent, while the other one would belittle her about where she lived. When I asked her what made her finally confront them, she said: “Everyone has a limit.”

The rest of the ten workers did not confront their employers for one of three reasons: they did not need to, they did not think to, or they were afraid to. Only Workers 3 and 9, both of whom always had written contracts, said that they never felt the need to confront any of their employers. Likewise, Worker 7 said that although she did not feel the need to confront her current employer, she had to confront past employers and eventually quit those jobs due to mistreatment. Workers 6 and 13 said that they never confronted their employers because they simply were not aware of their rights when they started working and therefore did not know that their employers were breaking the law. Worker 10 also admitted that she never thought to confront her past employers because she started working at 12 years old and assumed that her mistreatment was normal. For the other workers, fear of job loss was the main reason that they

did not confront their employers. Both Workers 5 and 11 said that they knew their past employers did not want to follow the law and would probably fire them if confronted. Worker 11 further explained that although she knew her previous employer took advantage of her timid personality and denied her of her rights, she did not act because she needed the job to provide for her children. Worker 8 also claimed that her previous employers took advantage of her situation because when she started working as a live-in domestic worker, she was a young migrant who did not know anyone in the city and had nowhere else to go; therefore they knew that she would never dare to confront them. When I asked Worker 4 why she had never confronted an employer, she said, “We keep quiet because of the fear of loss. They could throw me away.” She explained that it had always been difficult to find decent work in domestic labor, but the arrival of Venezuelan migrants made it even harder, as they accept longer hours for lower pay and work without any benefits. Therefore, Worker 4 continued to work for unlawful employers to keep her job.

For my final question about the law, I asked all participants, including the promoter, if they believed Law No. 27986 is effective. Even though some answered ‘yes’ while others answered ‘no,’ almost everyone suggested that the law was not enough due to some sort of barrier, such as the flexibility surrounding (written or oral) contracts. Only three participants (20%) said that the law is “better than nothing.” The remaining participants were equally divided; yet, the difference in opinion was not about whether or not informality in domestic labor is a problem, but rather about *what* the solution is and *who* is responsible. Six of the participants (40%) believed that the problem is that domestic workers do not know/accept their rights; therefore, it is their responsibility to educate themselves, work together, and seek justice. For



example, when I asked the promoter from LCP what she thought the solution is, she stated that domestic workers first need to recognize themselves as workers and then they need to educate themselves — not only about their rights but also about how to demand those rights from their employers with negotiation tactics; this is why, she asserted, services like the ones that LCP provides are essential to the formalization process.

Conversely, the other six participants (40%) believed that the problem is that most employers do not follow the law and it is the responsibility of employment agencies and the government to ensure that *all* workers know and receive their benefits. For example, Worker 14 suggested that NGOs and employment agencies should provide better outreach programs to teach workers about their rights, especially in peripheral districts of Lima where there is little knowledge about the law and limited access to services. Worker 9 took it one step further and stated that the law should mandate *only* written contracts because “it is only effective when the work is formalized with a written contract. Without one, the employers do not comply.” Lastly, Worker 13 gave a brief but striking answer; she asserted: “...we are human beings and they should treat us like human beings.”

#### 2.4.2.3 Why domestic labor?

The final question I asked each of the 14 domestic workers was: “Why do you do domestic work instead of a more ‘formal’ job?” Once again, the responses were divided. In general, five workers (36%) explained that domestic work was the only option while the remaining nine workers (64%) asserted that they chose to perform the work because they enjoyed the work or preferred it over other low-pay work.

Among those who stated that domestic work was the only option were Workers 1, 4, 5, 11, and 12, and they all mentioned how aspects of their identities (i.e., race, education level, and socioeconomic status) impacted their job choices. Worker 1 talked about how she tried to find employment at a restaurant before becoming a domestic worker but was rejected because of her “darker appearance” and lack of education. Worker 5 also mentioned that she did not have enough education to pursue any other career. Worker 11 explained that she was very poor and needed the money. Workers 4 and 12 mentioned both a lack of education and extreme poverty. To be specific, Worker 4 explained that she started working with a primary education level and never had the chance to continue her studies because she had to raise her daughter; she continued that “most of us, meaning women of the lower class, need to stay in this job.” Similarly, Worker 12 described how she grew up poor and needed to work for her family, but this only led to generational poverty as she was not able to continue her education. With tears in her eyes, she proclaimed that she had to work to help her daughter pay for college expenses.

For those who claimed that they chose domestic labor, there were two main reasons: they either truly enjoyed the work or simply preferred it over low-pay work. Workers 2, 3, 7, and 10 expressed that they like domestic labor because it suits them, and they are good at it. For Workers 6 and 14, domestic work was a better option than other jobs. For example, Worker 6 explained that she worked as a seamstress for many years but decided to switch to domestic labor because she wanted a more active job. Likewise, Worker 14 described how she used to work as a primary school educator for nine children and made the minimum salary of 750 soles (about \$222) per month without any benefits until she found an employer through LCP who offered to pay her 1250 soles (\$370) per month to care for one child with full benefits. She paused and said:

“So, you compare.” Finally, Workers 8, 9, and 13 explained that domestic labor was the best option for them given their circumstances. Both Workers 8 and 9 were live-in workers who saw the benefit of saving money on food and housing. Worker 13 explained that she wanted to earn a living and pursue a degree in geriatric assistance at the same time, so she reasoned that being a caregiver for the elderly was the best way to save money and gain experience toward her education.

## 2.5 Discussion

### 2.5.1 Analysis of findings

Before I began my study, I hypothesized that Law No. 27986 has not been effective in formalizing domestic labor because it does not necessitate written contracts and the State has failed to provide comprehensive services to educate workers, supervise employment relationships, and enforce the law, which has forced third-party intermediaries to take on these formalization responsibilities with limited capabilities and resources. I believe that this hypothesis was correct because the major findings of my study revealed that domestic workers with written contracts did *not* have informal employment and the main constraints on the law’s effectiveness were a lack of knowledge and a lack of employer compliance, problems that third-party intermediaries like LCP are trying to fix through educational, supervisory, and enforcement services without State intervention.

The first major finding of my study was that the majority of domestic workers without a written contract did not receive any of their legal labor rights. These results relate to the idea that employment relationships between domestic workers and their employers more closely resemble a servile relationship between a slave and master, which is why the employment relationship will

remain poorly defined unless there is a formalizing instrument like a written contract (or the workers simply have good luck, see 2.4.1.1). My study found an unexpected caveat to this rule: *only* the workers who had created a written contract with an employer found through LCP received full benefits (see 2.4.1.2). This suggests that simply modifying the law to mandate written contracts would not suffice, but rather there needs to be a third-party intermediary that guarantees the receipt of full benefits.

The second major finding was that participants either believed that the law was ineffective because workers did not know about it or employers did not comply with it. I argue that the fact that the majority of workers without a written contract did not know their rights before working (see 2.4.2.1) and did not have employers who complied with the law (see 2.4.2.2) not only proves that those with written contracts are more likely to know their rights and have compliant employers, but it also proves that quasi-formal and/or informal employment is not the result of just one or the other, but rather the result of both barriers to formalization. Although some reasoned that it was the responsibility of domestic workers to know their rights and demand employer compliance, the results of my study demonstrate that workers need to visit employment agencies like LCP to learn about their rights, which is nearly impossible for workers who do not receive time off, cannot afford to travel, or simply do not know about their services. Besides, none of these efforts to educate themselves matter if their employers choose to ignore the law. As demonstrated by my study and others, one of the main reasons that domestic workers are more easily exploitable by their employers is because of their marginalized identities. Therefore, since there is little law enforcement, most workers must accept subpar employment conditions. The results of my study reinforce this idea, as many workers talked about being

discriminated against by their employers as well as having limited options due to their racial and class identities (see 2.4.2.2). This idea also explains why many of the workers did not feel comfortable confronting their employers, as they were afraid they would simply be fired (see 2.4.2.3).

## 2.5.2 Limits of the study

Although my study ultimately achieved its purpose and uncovered answers to my research question, I believe it is still important to address possible limitations. The most apparent limitation is that my sample population — women over the age of 18 who visited an employment agency in the center of Lima — may not be representative of the true population of domestic workers. More specifically, previous studies conducted in the early 2000s found that the most vulnerable domestic workers in Lima were poor young (migrant) girls living and working in peripheral districts of the city; these studies found that these girls never received any of their rights under the law and were exploited, abused, and discriminated against by their employers (AGTR 2003, 2004, 2005). But, because I excluded any domestic worker below the age of 18 (due to IRB restrictions) and conducted my study at an employment agency in a central district of the city, I could not collect the necessary data to test the relevance and validity of these older findings. Therefore, my results about domestic worker profiles may not be generalizable to the larger population, even though other studies have found similar results (see 2.3). Although, since domestic labor is performed in private homes, LCP did serve as an appropriate location to conduct personal interviews with numerous workers without having to search for them or visit their places of employment; therefore, I was able to build a random sample of participants who felt comfortable enough to share truthful accounts of their experiences.

Another limitation, or rather a possible extension, is the fact that I did not conduct surveys or interviews with employers. Even though one of the main objectives of my study was to understand the experiences of workers, data from employer profiles and interview responses could have offered insight into how employers come to learn about the law and why they may or may not comply with it. It also could have limited the bias associated with choosing to showcase the experiences of one population over another (although I found it important to do so in my study). Thus, I recommend that future researchers incorporate employer profiles in their studies.

The last limitation, and another possible extension, is the fact that I did not have the opportunity to interview any Venezuelan domestic workers. As briefly mentioned in subsection 2.4.2.2, due to the current economic crisis in the country, millions of Venezuelans are migrating to Peru in search of work, and, as explained by Worker 4, many of them are becoming informally-employed domestic workers. Unfortunately, since Venezuelan domestic workers do not have the same rights as Peruvian domestic workers under Law No. 27986, I could not include them under the scope of my study. I do, however, believe that there is a large gap in research, and academic studies in general, that neglects these particular workers and ignores their employment situations. Thus, I contend that future research should seek to analyze this evolving workforce and its effects on the economic, social, political, and cultural contexts surrounding domestic labor in the country.

### 2.5.3 Final thoughts

Through the analysis of both previous studies and my own, this chapter has established that the likely reason domestic labor has remained largely informal throughout the last 15 years is that domestic workers still lack collective representation on an aggregate level, meaning that

the responsibility to formalize the work falls on small, disorganized, and underfunded third-party intermediaries. The results of my study suggest not only that Law No. 27986 should be changed to mandate written contracts but also that for the law to truly be effective, the Peruvian government must provide additional resources to NGOs, unions, and employment agencies that are working to educate domestic workers about their rights and to ensure the compliance of employers. Although these solutions may seem simple, there are important reasons why action has yet to be taken since the passing of Law No. 27986. In other words, although there have been obvious indications that the law did not achieve its intended goal, powerful and resourceful constituencies continue to actively resist formalization because they benefit from the informality. For example, women who employ domestic workers have directly benefited from the growth of paid domestic labor because it allows them to “purchase release from their gender subordination in the home, effectively transferring their domestic responsibilities to other women who are distinct and subordinate...,” which in turn promotes their own economic and social mobility at the expense of other women (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007, 22-23). But, women employers are not the only key actors transferring responsibilities to domestic workers: the State also uses domestic workers as a scapegoat to avoid subsidizing care services (Pérez and Llanos 2017); without subsidies, demand for cheap, unregulated domestic labor only increases. Lastly, by blaming the problem of informality solely on individual deficiencies (such as workers’ lack of awareness), legislators can avoid taking serious action to improve the labor conditions of domestic workers without large-scale resistance. These ideas foreshadow what I will be discussing in the next chapter: how to promote *real* change for domestic workers beyond seemingly simple policy reform and government intervention.

## Chapter 3 - Promoting Change for Domestic Workers: Comprehensive Policy Reforms and State Services

“The existing legal framework in Peru is inadequate as a normative and protective mechanism of the labour rights of domestic workers... The standard rights guaranteed to the rest of the workforce do not encompass housekeepers, relegating them to a status as second-class citizens. The government has not ratified the 2011 ILO Domestic Workers Convention 189, which extends basic labour rights to domestic workers. Peru has no minimum-wage legislation, and domestic workers are currently legally eligible for only half of the benefits that other workers receive...” (Rafstedt 2017, 2).

### 3.1 Introduction

As shown throughout this thesis thus far, the only attempt that the Peruvian government has made to formalize domestic labor, Law No. 27986, has failed. The results of my study suggest that this failure is due to a variety of reasons: the law does not mandate written contracts and the State does not provide comprehensive services to educate domestic workers (or their employers) or to ensure compliance with the law. Since third-party intermediaries have limited capabilities and resources in their current state, “the quality of the working conditions for many in this sector depends nearly entirely on the benevolence of the employer” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 566). In other words, the only hope that domestic workers have of finding formal employment is either going through organizations (which have their own pitfalls without State intervention) or having sheer luck. Therefore, in Chapter 2, I suggested that each of the aforementioned barriers to formalization must be dealt with simultaneously, Law No. 27986



must be modified to mandate written contracts and the State must provide comprehensive services to educate workers and employers, supervise employment relationships, enforce the law, and, at the very least, support the efforts of organizations like LCP that are already providing these services. To answer my third and final research question — *How can we promote real change for domestic workers?* — in this chapter, I will offer in-depth descriptions of how the aforementioned solutions can be implemented. I will also offer additional solutions that my study found to be just as important to achieving real change for domestic workers: a shift in cultural norms and a unified collective voice.

## 3.2 Policy Reform

There are four basic goals of comprehensive policy reform that address informality: create more formal jobs, register and regulate informal employers, provide social and legal protections to informal workers through the State, and increase the productivity of informal enterprises (through training) and the income of informal workers (Chen 2012). In the case of policy reform for informal domestic labor in Peru, these goals can be reached by improving the current legislation and by ratifying the 2011 ILO Domestic Workers Convention 189.

### 3.2.1 Improve Law No. 27986

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, part of the reason why Law No. 27986 is ineffective is that it does not require written contracts (see 2.4). But, others have argued that the main reason why the law is ineffective is that it does require labor rights comparable to those of other occupations. In particular, domestic workers only receive half of the vacations, bonuses, and overtime compensation that other workers are granted (ILO 2013; Pérez and Llanos 2017; Rafstedt 2017). As a result, their income for similar hours of work is substantially lower than that of other

workers in EAP (Pérez and Llanos 2017). Therefore, the Peruvian government should modify the law to necessitate written contracts and payment receipts, to ensure access to a minimum wage (although the Peruvian government does not enforce a nationwide minimum wage, the country follows a standard called “Minimum Vital Wage,” or RMV for short) and to include comparable rights (i.e., more vacation time, bonuses, and overtime compensation) (ILO 2013). The Peruvian government also should adjust the law to recognize changes to modern hiring practices caused by a rise in “independent” domestic workers, meaning workers within the “live-out” modality. Since the majority of domestic workers now work under this modality, with many of them working part-time and/or for multiple employers, the Peruvian government must outline terms and conditions of employment for these workers to guarantee the protection of all domestic workers (ILO 2013; Pérez and Llanos 2017).

### 3.2.2 Ratify Convention 189

Unfortunately, the simple act of modifying Law No. 27986 would not guarantee that domestic workers would secure what the ILO classifies “Decent Employment,” defined as employment characterized by conditions of freedom, equality, security, and dignity (ILO 2013). For domestic workers to attain this type of employment, the Peruvian government must also ratify the 2011 ILO Domestic Workers Convention 189 (ILO 2013; Pérez and Llanos 2017; Rafstedt 2017). This convention requires all “Members” (or participating governments) to “take measures to ensure the effective promotion and protection of the human rights of all domestic workers” (ILO 2011, Article 3). These measures include: ensuring that domestic workers are protected against all forms of abuse, harassment, and violence, establishing complaint mechanisms, ensuring compliance and occupational safety through labor inspections, penalties,

and other enforcement measures, consulting with representative organizations (e.g., unions) to ensure the right to organize and bargain collectively, and ensuring that domestic workers enjoy working conditions comparable to other occupations, including access to a minimum wage (ILO 2011). These regulations of C189, along with the modifications to Law No. 27986, would achieve all of the goals of comprehensive policy reform outlined by Chen 2012, thus making real change for domestic workers that much more attainable.

### 3.3 State Services: Education, Supervision, and Enforcement

In Chapter 2, I suggested that employment agencies and unions are trying their best to formalize domestic labor by providing comprehensive services not provided by the State. These services include educating domestic workers of their rights under the law, teaching workers how to negotiate to construct a binding written contract, and supervising employment relationships with enforcement measures. In the case of LCP, incoming domestic workers had to attend three educational workshops before matching with an employer: one about their rights, one about negotiation tactics, and one about the value of domestic work. Once both parties had agreed to the terms established in a written contract, LCP would supervise the employment relationship from afar. But, if an employer broke an agreement outlined in the written contract, the worker could file a complaint with LCP and the employment agency would conduct an investigation. If the issue was minor, the agency would facilitate a discussion between the employer and the worker to determine if the discrepancy could be resolved. But, if the agency found that the employer denied a worker one of her rights, LCP would bar that employer from the organization. Through these services of education, supervision, and enforcement, third-party intermediaries

like LCP have been able to formalize labor for a small portion of domestic workers, providing them with access to the qualities of “Decent Employment” outlined above.

Yet, although the success of these organizations is apparent in the example of LCP, their services are limited. As mentioned in Chapter 2, these organizations do not have the capabilities or resources to find formal employment for the entire sector. In their current state, these small grassroots organizations rely solely on donations and only work with a percentage of domestic workers who can visit their dispersed locations or who can access their services through other means, such as outreach programs. Although these outreach programs do help the organizations reach a wider audience, they are still partially effective at best, as these organizations can only go to certain places for limited periods due to a lack of manpower and funding. For example, during my time interning at LCP, the organization had one van, which left every other Thursday to visit a distant, poorer district in Lima where the majority of women are informally employed as domestic workers. Before these trips, promoters at the organization had to take along whatever volunteer happened to be there that day; if no volunteers were present or willing to go, they would go by themselves. The trips were all-day experiences, and many times promoters and volunteers would have to go hours (rain or shine) talking to women who happened to pass by or approach their booth. Therefore, although these services are an important part of current efforts to educate workers of the law, they cannot possibly achieve formalization on a large-scale, and the costs may very well outweigh the benefits. Thus, it is obvious that we need another solution, and this solution should come in the form of State-sponsored educational services.

### 3.3.1 Education

The State should provide educational services to workers, employers, and the public to inform them of the labor and social contexts surrounding domestic labor in the country. Since, as seen in Chapter 2, a lack of knowledge about their rights under Law No. 27986 puts domestic workers at risk of informal employment, the Peruvian government should host regular educational workshops, especially ones managed by grassroots organizations and unions, to educate workers for their rights and to provide them with job training. Since many workers fear that they will lose their job if they speak up (see 2.4), they usually do not demand to be enrolled in the social security system; therefore, part of the educational efforts should focus on teaching workers to value their long-term health and safety by encouraging contributions to health insurance and pension plans (ILO 2013). Because many domestic workers do not live in central districts with government agencies and because they work on weekdays, workshops should be held in various locations and on the weekends (ILO 2013). For employers, educational services should also outline each labor right assigned to workers under the law, but with a particular focus on compliance and enforcement. Employers also should be sensitized to the situation of undervaluation, discrimination, and informality faced by domestic workers. To educate the general public, the State could sponsor communication campaigns in schools, municipalities, and neighborhoods (ILO 2013). To prevent the spread of misinformation, these campaigns could extend to government officials and opinion leaders to sensitize them to the situation of domestic workers (ILO 2013). To encourage continual awareness, the government should supervise national registries of domestic workers, define indicators on the status of domestic workers and compliance with the laws, develop reports to monitor these indicators on an annual basis and

specify goals to maintain accountability, and resume public hearings to present these annual reports (ILO 2013). Lastly, if the Peruvian government chooses to ratify C189, research should track its impact on the labor conditions of domestic workers to guarantee it is achieving its intended goals (Pérez and Llanos 2017).

### 3.3.2 Supervision

Because domestic labor is performed in private homes where there is no supervision, employers rarely abide by Law No. 27986. Therefore, the Peruvian government must develop a monitoring system to ensure employer compliance (ILO 2013; Pérez and Llanos 2017). Given the fact that there are millions of domestic workers whose place of employment is protected by privacy laws, a successful monitoring system would require a team of inspectors specific to domestic labor to define an innovative protocol that overcomes the inviolability of private homes (ILO 2013). Also, the Peruvian government should extend the ability to conduct on-site labor inspections to employment agencies that are currently unable to enter private homes while supervising employment relationships (ILO 2013). Lastly, as I will discuss below, when inspectors find cases of noncompliance, there must be a mechanism for complaints and sanctions against employers (ILO 2013).

### 3.3.3 Enforcement

To enforce Law No. 27986 and other regulations, there must be a comprehensive system that incorporates both preventive and disciplinary measures. To prevent cases of noncompliance, the Peruvian government should provide employers with incentives to comply (ILO 2013); these could come in the form of subsidies that reduce the monetary burden associated with providing health insurance and affiliation with a pension system. To deal with cases of noncompliance, the

Peruvian government must first promote the right of workers to denounce noncompliance and protect them from retribution; then there needs to be an effective system to deal with these complaints, including labor inspections and sanctions for employers (ILO 2013). In cases where a worker must take legal action against a non-compliant employer, the State should also provide her with legal advice and representation (ILO 2013). Lastly, there should be some public record that recognizes compliant employers and sanctions non-compliant ones (ILO 2013).

### 3.4 Cultural Shift and Collective Representation through Unity

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, domestic workers continue to suffer from social discrimination, within their employment relationships and elsewhere. Besides the emotional distress that workers experience from prejudices against their marginalized identities (as found in my study), domestic workers even face physical segregation, with many of them being barred from certain bathrooms, rooms, entrance ways, beaches, swimming pools by their employers (ILO 2013). Without an effective complaints and sanctions system, these forms of discrimination will persist. Yet, although this system would help to cope with discriminatory acts, it would do little to prevent them from happening in the first place. Since discrimination against domestic workers has historical and cultural origins (see 1.3), key actors, including the workers and those who represent them, need to promote and facilitate a cultural shift in Peruvian society to truly improve both the labor and social status of workers within this occupational category. I suggest that this task can be completed by “mobilizing in the context of union membership and along the lines of gender, ethnicity, and class in order to pave the way for a heightened sense of collective agency and power” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 566). In other words, unifying the efforts of organizations and unions would not only allow domestic workers to uphold a strong sense of

collective representation but also would provide them with the visibility necessary to combat discrimination.

There are two labor unions for domestic workers: the Domestic Workers Union for the Lima Region (SINTTRAHOL) and the National Union of Domestic Workers (SINTRAHOGARP) (Pérez and Llanos 2017). They currently face challenges because they are no unions or associations for employers, preventing collective bargaining and negotiating, and they have a strained relationship between themselves (Pérez and Llanos 2017); therefore, I suggest that the Peruvian government should provide the services necessary (e.g., funded communication campaigns) to encourage the creation of an employers' union or association and to facilitate discussions between this newly established organization and the existing labor unions (and between the labor unions themselves); these solutions would also help to resolve labor and social issues exacerbated by a lack of collective representation, including exploitation and job insecurity.

### 3.5 Conclusion: The Challenge of Peru and The Success of Uruguay

To promote real change for domestic workers, the Peruvian government must adopt a comprehensive plan that addresses an ineffective law, a lack of State services providing education, supervision, and enforcement measures, and a cultural norm that favors the undervaluation and discrimination of domestic workers. As suggested above, the unity of domestic workers through organizations and unions would ensure collective representation in the legislative environment, guaranteeing that the solutions are appropriate and desirable. Yet, one of the biggest barriers to real change that cannot be fixed with policy prescriptions or collective action is the capacity of the Peruvian State to provide the services outlined above. As mentioned



in Chapter 1, the Peruvian government has been largely incapable of monitoring informal enterprises or enforcing labor regulations that benefit their informal workers. For this reason, key actors on the legislative front have pushed for the ratification of C189, which provides clear regulations on how to provide comprehensive services; yet, these efforts have been largely futile:

“To date, the Ministry of Labor and Employment Promotion (MTPE) and the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP) have taken some steps to examine the viability of implementing C189. Specifically, the MTPE has led a multisector working group, including members of civil society, to monitor the development of an action plan intended to promote the enforcement of domestic workers’ labor rights, though the working group appears to have little traction, if any. Moreover, two parliamentarians have called for the ratification of C189, but these efforts have not progressed. Thus, on the legislative front scant attention has been devoted to domestic worker rights” (Pérez and Llanos 2017, 553).

Therefore, the Peruvian government needs to openly recognize that they have a limited capacity to provide the necessary services, promote the efforts of third-party intermediaries, and delegate the responsibility of developing an action plan to these organizations. Uruguay, where domestic workers faced similar challenges, provides an example of how to remedy State limits. Uruguay passed its first domestic labor law, the 18.065 Act, in 2006, lagging behind Peru by three years. Like Law No. 27986, the law outlines the rights of domestic workers, including “an eight-hour workday, adequate food and housing for live-in domestic workers, and safeguards for domestic workers terminated because of pregnancy” (Human Rights Watch 2012). Unlike Peru, however, the country has developed a more successful legal framework for domestic labor. In 2012, Uruguay became the first country in the world to ratify Convention 189 and in 2016, the country implemented a National Care System to extend social protection to caregivers, including

domestic workers (Pérez and Llanos 2017). Now, domestic workers in Uruguay have health coverage for themselves and their families, unemployment insurance, paid sick leave, maternity leave, annual bonuses, and a social security fund; these workers even get their own paid holiday called Domestic Workers Day (ILO 2019). To ensure the success of these laws, the Uruguayan government constructed a “multi-channel strategy” that guides workers and employers through processes of registration, invoicing, and social security contributions; put simpler, the country’s Social Security Institute (BPS) now provides online services that teach employers how to register employees and that ensure the receipt of labor rights by outlining the terms and conditions of employment (i.e., salary and bonuses) in online contracts, calculating the social security contributions of both parties, and sending workers automatic invoices of said contributions (ILO 2019). The Uruguayan government also has hosted communication campaigns to promote domestic labor, improved access to information via the internet, and enhanced its social media presence to encourage social awareness. As a result of these services, the country has witnessed a drastic increase in formalization of domestic labor, with the percentage of employer registration at 67% and the percentage of jobs contributing to the social security fund at 76.4% in 2018 (ILO 2019). The rate of evasion (employer noncompliance) has dropped from 60% in 2006 to 24% in 2017 as well (ILO 2019). Thus, the Peruvian government has a lot to learn from the example of Uruguay; since, it does not have the capacity to educate and supervise the entire domestic labor sector in-person, online services such as the ones outlined above may work around this deficiency. Similar initiatives in Peru, such as e-payroll, have already been relatively successful in reducing informal employment in enterprises (see 1.2.2.), so suggesting that comprehensive online services could promote formalization in the domestic labor sector is not an implausible

claim. But, like any solution, there are limitations to this online strategy. In Uruguay, 97% of households have computers (ILO 2019); meanwhile, only 54% of households in Lima had internet access in 2018 (INEI, n.d.). Therefore, many employers and domestic workers will not have access to these online services. The strategy also does not account for non-compliant employers who refuse to make use of the online services. Overall, these limitations prove that the Peruvian government cannot completely substitute in-person services, such as labor inspections and sanction systems, for online ones. Thus, the State must work to implement *all* of the proposed solutions outlined in this chapter if it ever hopes to achieve real change for domestic workers.

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# Appendix

## Connecticut College

### RESEARCH APPLICATION REVIEW FORM For Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB)

#### RESEARCHER:

Name: Dominique Burrows

E-mail: dburrows@conncoll.edu

Box No.: 3232

Telephone No.: 1 (860) 876 4540

Date Submitted: July 7, 2019

#### TYPE OF RESEARCH:

- Honors Study  
 Individual Study  
 Course-related project  
 Faculty project  
 Other

#### FACULTY SUPERVISOR

*(required if student researcher)*

Name: Candace Howes

By signing below, I indicate that

- I have reviewed this proposal and approve of the proposed research.
- I believe the student has the necessary training, skills, and support to conduct this research in an ethical manner.
- I agree to supervise the completion of this research.

*Signature of Faculty Supervisor:*

#### IRB COMMITTEE (2018-2019):

##### Co-Chairs:

Audrey Zakriski (*Fall 2018*)

Jason Nier (*Spring 2019*)

##### Members:

Terry-Ann Craigie

Ann Sloan Devlin

Simon Feldman

Judelysse Gomez

Community Representative (TBA)

##### **Committee Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please fill out the following form for research plans that involve the use of human participants. The purpose of the form is to bring to the attention of the IRB research requiring review for the ethical treatment of human participants as described in federal regulations (see <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/regulations/common-rule/index.html>).
- The IRB Administrator or Chair will review each proposal to determine if a) the research is exempt from IRB review; b) can receive expedited review (low risk studies); or c) requires full board review (research with minors and with

Candace Humes

Date: 5/31/19

vulnerable populations; see schedule for monthly meetings).

- Researchers should submit the completed form to the IRB before the research is started.
- Only electronic submissions will be accepted (send to [irb@conncoll.edu](mailto:irb@conncoll.edu)).
- Use for *new proposals only*. Renewal form is available on Camelweb.

### 1. Title of Research Project:

The Demand for Domestic Work in the Peruvian Informal Economy:  
The Experiences of Women Workers in a Poorly Regulated System

### 2. Other investigators (including name, position, and department; *if applicable*):

### 3. Project period:

I will begin conducting research with human participants on **July 15, 2019** and will end my research by **August 12, 2019**. The research will be included in an Economic Honors Thesis completed during the 2019-2020 academic year.

***\*\*\*Please note that all approvals are good for one year. It is the responsibility of the investigator to seek a renewal 2 weeks prior to the expiration date noted in the approval letter if plans for data collection extend beyond this 1-year period.\*\*\****

**4. Proposal:** Attach an overview of your research, including background and rationale, hypotheses, potential contributions of the research, and your methods/procedures for the proposed research. Below is a list of required elements to assist you in preparing your proposal. *See Checklist for IRB submissions on CamelWeb for additional reminders/details.*

- All instruments (e.g., surveys, interviews with questions to be asked) to be used in the study are to be included in an Appendix.
- A complete description of the procedure, including exactly what the participants will experience, should be included.
- An explanation of all recruiting procedures, and copies of all recruiting materials (e.g., emails, flyers, script for verbal recruiting) should be included with the proposal.
- An explicit statement concerning ethical issues that may be involved in the research plan should be included. This includes a thoughtful consideration of the potential risk(s) posed to participants from participating in your research. This statement of risk will need to consider the features of your participants and the climate of risk in the location where you will be conducting your research. At times, the IRB will require outside verification of your assessment of risk (e.g., student research in international contexts with vulnerable populations).



A statement from a faculty member or internship supervisor who is familiar with the local climate and has reviewed your research may be helpful in these cases. Finally, you should describe what you will do to mitigate any risk that is posed to potential participants by your research.

- An Informed Consent document must be included with the proposal. This document explains the research to potential participants in understandable terms and provides sufficient detail about the research, what it involves, risks and benefits, whether there is any compensation for participation, data security, confidentiality or anonymity, and what will be done with the data so that the participant can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate in the research. *See CamelWeb for a sample Informed Consent document.*
  - If your research involves minors, you will need to develop an Informed Consent Document for a parent/guardian to sign and an *Assent Form* for the minor to sign. The Assent form is similar to the Informed Consent document but is written in age-appropriate language and offers the minor the opportunity to decide whether he or she would like to participate.
- Include a summary of your plan for debriefing subjects and include your debriefing statement to subjects. *See CamelWeb for a sample Debriefing form.*
- If you are conducting research through a community organization, a statement of agreement from a person in a position of authority at the organization should be included with your proposal.
- If your research will be conducted in a language other than English, the IRB will need all materials to be provided to participants in the language to be used, as well as English versions. To verify your translation, we require a statement of equivalence from a fluent or native speaker of the language to be used in the research, if you are not fluent yourself.

**5. Name of external sponsoring agency (if applicable):**

**6. Does your research project involve any data covered by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)?**

YES NO

*If yes, what steps are being taken to de-individuate and safeguard the data?*

**7. Does your research project involve any of the following? Check if YES**

\_\_\_\_\_ participants under the age of 18

\_\_\_\_\_ covert observation

- studies of ethnic and other group differences
- intervention research
- use of deception
- invasion of privacy
- aversive (noxious) stimulation
- induction of mental or physical stress or deprivation  
(e.g., food, water, sensory, sleep)
- invasive procedures (e.g., drugs, blood samples, surgery)
- potentially embarrassing situations
- no use of consent forms (requesting to waive the  
requirement)
- other ethical issues concerning the dignity and welfare of the  
participants
- if yes, explain below:*

**For every checked (YES) item provide a rationale and a brief description of the precise procedure you plan to follow in your research proposal where you describe ethical issues.**

**NOTE: Items 8-11 pertain *only* to Psychology 100 Participant Pool Users.**

8. *Estimated number of minutes* the experiment will take: \_\_\_\_\_ # Minutes
9. *Number of participants* the researcher would like to have and why (i.e., justification):  
\_\_\_\_\_ # Participants
10. *Number of sessions* the researcher expects to run: \_\_\_\_\_ # Sessions
11. Will research be conducted in: *large group* *small group* ***individual*** (circle one)
- Average number of participants in each group: \_\_\_\_\_ # Participants/group

**For all applicants**

12. If required, *training in the protection of human participants* has been completed, and certification of that training is attached to the IRB proposal. Human participants training/certification is **required** for all researchers involved in Federally-funded research. It is *recommended* for all other researchers. Free human participants training/certification can be completed at:

<https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>

## 13. Other comments to the IRB:

I am currently studying abroad and conducting a CISLA internship simultaneously in Lima, Peru. I am currently interning at *La Casa de Panchita*, which is a non-governmental organization and employment agency focused on women domestic workers and their empowerment. I have been working with the organization since March and will continue working there until August 12, 2019, which is when I return to the United States. My internship supervisor is Ágata Zumaeta Figueroa. She has signed a letter stating that I am allowed to conduct interviews at the organization and that my translations are correct; I attached this letter to my original proposal.

## 14. Certifications:

*I certify that the statements herein are accurate and complete. I agree to inform the Connecticut College IRB should there be any changes in the research protocol or if problems arise from this protocol. I accept responsibility for the conduct of this research, the supervision of human participants, and I agree to maintain informed consent documentation as the regulations require.*

Dominique Burrows

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's Name (printed)



\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's Signature

July 7, 2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PLEASE SUBMIT TO:**

Professor Audrey Zakriski (Chair, Fall 2018) or Professor Jason Nier (Chair, Spring 2019) at [irb@conncoll.edu](mailto:irb@conncoll.edu). **Electronic submissions are required.** You will be informed as soon as possible whether your project has been approved or whether additional information or revision is required.

**Proposals involving vulnerable populations will be reviewed at the monthly IRB meeting and must be submitted 1 week in advance. See CamelWeb IRB site for meeting dates.**

(Rev. 9/18)

### Overview of Research:

#### **Rationale:**

The main purpose of this study will be to analyze the historical trends within the Peruvian economy in order to explain why the informal economy has expanded so drastically and why the demand for domestic labor in this sector is so high. To supplement my research, I want to interview domestic workers in Lima to understand their experiences in the field and compare those experiences to the stated labor laws, which are rarely followed or enforced. Additionally, I want to examine what identity characteristics may influence their experiences in the field, e.g. race/ethnicity, education level, migration status, or socioeconomic status, and how these characteristics may influence future (policy and non-policy) solutions.

#### **Background:**

The study of the informal economy of Peru is very relevant because 79% of all work in the country is informal, which is a high rate when compared to other Latin American countries (INEI 2014). Additionally, domestic workers alone account for 2.6% of the economically active population and almost 100% of this work is done informally (INEI 2013). Thus, domestic work is a significant portion of the Peruvian informal economy and should be analyzed in this study. Since domestic work has always faced severe discrimination and primarily employed “poor, young, and ethnically marginalized women” (Pérez & Llanos 2017, 553), I find it crucial to collect data about domestic workers and their experiences in order to supplement prior research and suggest solutions for the problems these women are currently facing in the informal sector.

#### **Hypotheses:**

Due to persistent economic crises, the Peruvian economy gave rise to a vast informal sector; a large portion of this sector grew to meet the high demand for household labor. The demand for household labor can be explained by the need for child-care and cleaning services that cannot be fulfilled by the working heads of the household; and since domestic work traditionally has been deemed ‘feminine,’ women compose the majority of domestic workers. Additionally, historical

gender, class, and racial/cultural discrimination as well as a lack of law enforcement has allowed for the continued economic exploitation of these women, who oftentimes face abuse due to their vulnerable socioeconomic position. Lastly, in a country like Peru with such a pervasive informal sector and weak judicial system, standard policy solutions are not sufficient, and future interventions must be complex and reflective of the actual reality of domestic labor.

### **Potential Contributions:**

It is my hope that once my research is completed and transformed into an Economics Honors Thesis, my project will have two main potential contributions. Primarily, I hope that my interviews with the domestic workers give them a space to talk openly about their experiences, a space where they feel heard and recognized for their work. Secondly, I hope that my work contributes meaningful ideas to a topic that is severely neglected in Peru and can give a voice to domestic workers through my policy and intervention recommendations. Since I will be analyzing the effectiveness of the current policy prescriptions through the shared experiences of domestic workers, I hope I will be able to offer recommendations that not only better the working conditions of domestic workers, but that were constructed with the desires and needs of actual workers in mind.

### **Methodology:**

To supplement my scholarly research, I would like to conduct surveys and interviews with women domestic workers through my internship organization, *La Casa de Panchita*. The women at the organization go there for various reasons: some go to find work through the employment agencies; others attend educational workshops, such as ones focusing on child-care, English classes, and computer classes. A lot of women utilize the space as a support group, where they converse with other women and volunteers at the organization to discuss topics like self-esteem, health, domestic violence, and their work. Thus, I want to work with a select group of women at the organization who would volunteer to be surveyed and interviewed for my project.

In order to find women who would be interested in participating, I will be working closely with my internship coordinator at the organization, Ágata Zumaeta. Since Ágata works directly with

the domestic workers, she will be able to lead me to a few women who may be interested in participating. Additionally, if Ágata does not know of any women who are interested, she will be able to connect me with other leading volunteers at the organization who also work directly with the domestic workers. After I am introduced to the women, I will explain my project to them and present a Debriefing Statement document with further information. Once they have signed the document, I will set up times to meet with each of them privately.

At the meeting, I will present the Informed Consent document and explain to them once again what my research entails and how I will use the information they provide. After they sign the document, I will present a short survey with basic identity questions. I will utilize this survey for demographic information that will help me compare their information to scholarly research and analyze their experiences for my future recommendations. After the survey is completed, I will inform them that I am beginning the interview and will be utilizing my phone to record the conversation so that I can listen back to their answers later. Once I have asked each of my questions, I will end the interview and stop the recording. I will then thank the interviewees and ask if they have any further questions about my research or the use of their information. Once each woman is interviewed, I will conclude my research using human participants.

#### **Statement of Ethical Issues:**

Due to the history of exploitation and abuse of domestic workers in Peru, the women that I am interviewing may face potential risks from participating in my research. One of the most consequential risks is that they may be punished and/or fired from an employer for sharing their experiences. This could occur if the employer were to gain access to my finished project and see that their employee had participated in my interviews. Since these women are oftentimes already vulnerable due to intersecting aspects of their identity, e.g. socioeconomic status, race, education level, migrant status, it is important that they do not face further discrimination or employment challenges after participating in my research. Thus, in order to mitigate this potential risk, *their information will remain completely anonymous*. In other words, I will explain to them that I am using their demographic information, such as their age, race, education level, and migrant status, in order to make comparisons, but that this information *will not be attached to a specific person or*

*name*. The questions asked in the surveys and interviews will not ask for identifying information, and if this information is provided, I will delete it from the recording and not use it in the study. In order to protect their personal information from the signed Informed Consent Forms, I will keep the forms in a locked drawer in my bedroom, to which only I have access. Lastly, after June 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, I will destroy all consent forms and recordings. I believe that by anonymizing their information, I will mitigate the risk of exposing them to unintended consequences from their employer.

This solution will also help to mitigate the risk associated with an invasion of privacy. As I will be asking these women about their real experiences as domestic workers, the questions may provoke them to share sensitive information about their personal lives. This may make them uncomfortable and/or vulnerable throughout the interview process. In order to encourage them to feel safe and confident in their responses, I will again clarify that their information will remain anonymous, and that it is their choice to participate and to provide only as much information as they see fit. Additionally, I will remind them that *La Casa de Panchita* can provide them with resources to seek safe spaces and counseling in the case of psychological distress or trauma.

Another potential risk of my research is inherent in the structure of my project being written in English rather than in Spanish. Since my thesis will be in English and many of the interviewees do not speak fluent English, there is the risk that they will not be able to understand my work nor my analysis of their information. In order to help mitigate this risk as much as possible, I will explain to them that my final project will be written in English, but that I will be including their exact quotes in Spanish by using the recorded interview session. That way, I will avoid misquoting them and they will be able to read the quotes without problem. Additionally, I will provide my internship coordinator, Ágata Zumaeta, with my final project so that she will be able to review my work and provide translations if requested, as she speaks both English and Spanish fluently.

## Declaración informativa

Quiero agradecerte por aceptar participar en mi investigación sobre trabajo doméstico. En esta investigación, estoy estudiando la historia del trabajo doméstico en el Perú y las experiencias de las trabajadoras domésticas en su empleo. Para entender la realidad del trabajo doméstico en el Perú, quiero saber quién hace este tipo de trabajo. Por eso, les estoy pidiendo a mis participantes que completen cuestionarios con su información. Además, quiero escuchar testimonios actuales de trabajadoras del hogar. Por eso, estoy entrevistando a muchas mujeres en *La Casa de Panchita*.

Creo que mi investigación es importante porque no muchas personas estudian estos temas, y creo que debemos discutirlos con más frecuencia, para que más personas conozcan lo que experimentan las trabajadoras del hogar.

Si tienes alguna pregunta o preocupación acerca de cómo voy a realizar mi investigación, por favor contáctame por correo electrónico a [dburrows@conncoll.edu](mailto:dburrows@conncoll.edu) o contacta la voluntaria principal Ágata Zumaeta a [agatazumaetafigueroa@gmail.com](mailto:agatazumaetafigueroa@gmail.com). Además, si estás interesada en aprender más sobre los temas de mi investigación, puedo proporcionar otros recursos. *La Casa de Panchita* ha publicado muchos libros sobre el trabajo doméstico y la realidad del trabajo.



## Debriefing Statement

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in my research about domestic work. In this research, I am studying the history of domestic work in Peru and the experiences of domestic workers in their employment. To understand the reality of domestic work in Peru, I want to know who does this type of work. This is why I am asking my participants to complete surveys with their information. Also, I want to hear real testimonies of domestic workers. This is why I am interviewing many women at *La Casa de Panchita*.

I believe my research is important because not many people study these topics, and I believe we should discuss them more often so that more people know what domestic workers experience.

If you have any questions or concerns about how I will conduct my research, please contact me at [dburrows@conncoll.edu](mailto:dburrows@conncoll.edu) or head volunteer Ágata Zumaeta at [agatazumaetafigueroa@gmail.com](mailto:agatazumaetafigueroa@gmail.com). Also, if you are interested in learning more about the topics of my research, I can provide additional resources. *La Casa de Panchita* has published many books about domestic labor and the reality of the work.

## Documento de consentimiento informado

Título del proyecto: *La demanda de trabajo del hogar en la economía informal peruana: las experiencias de las trabajadoras en un sistema mal regulado*

Investigadora principal: Dominique Burrows, estudiante, Connecticut College

Consejera de facultad: Candace Howes, Profesora de economía, Connecticut College

Patrocinador del estudio: Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts

### Invitación a ser parte de un estudio de investigación

Estás invitada a participar en un estudio de investigación. Para participar, debe ser una trabajadora doméstica mayor de 18 años y que vive en Lima, Perú. La participación en este proyecto de investigación es voluntaria.

### Información importante sobre el estudio de investigación

Cosas que debes saber:

- El propósito del estudio es conocer sus experiencias como trabajadora doméstica. Si decides participar, te voy a pedir que completen un cuestionario y que seas entrevistada por mí en *La Casa de Panchita*. Esto llevará aproximadamente entre 30 minutos y 1 hora.
- Las molestias de esta investigación incluye compartir información personal y sensible sobre ti y tu empleo. Para evitar cualquier posible riesgo, tu información será anónima.
- El estudio te permitirá hablar abiertamente sobre tus experiencias como trabajadora doméstica, aunque no habrá compensación monetaria.
- Participar en este proyecto de investigación es voluntario. No tienes que participar y puedes detenerte en cualquier momento.

### ¿De qué se trata el estudio y por qué lo estoy haciendo?

Este estudio trata sobre la historia del trabajo doméstico en el Perú y las experiencias de las trabajadoras del hogar en su empleo. Estoy realizando esta investigación porque es un tema descuidado en el mundo académico y quiero comprender la realidad actual del trabajo doméstico en el Perú, ya que el trabajo es una gran parte de la economía informal.

### ¿Qué pasará si participas en este estudio?

Si aceptas participar en este estudio, se te voy a pedir que completes primero un cuestionario y luego que seas entrevistada por mí en *La Casa de Panchita*. En el cuestionario y la entrevista, voy a preguntarte preguntas sobre tu identidad y tus experiencias como trabajadora del hogar. Un ejemplo de estas preguntas es: “¿Alguna vez has tenido una mala experiencia como trabajadora del hogar?” Estas entrevistas serán en privado y deben tomar entre 30 minutos y una hora. Luego compararé la información que otras mujeres y tú proporcionan a la investigación académica sobre el trabajo doméstico en el Perú.

### ¿Cómo podrías beneficiarte de este estudio?

Aunque no vas a recibir una compensación por este estudio, podrías encontrarlo gratificante para hablar de tus experiencias en un entorno seguro. Mi propósito es reconocer el trabajo que haces como importante y validar tus experiencias sin dañarte. Al participar en este estudio, podrías ayudar a representar a otras trabajadoras domésticas que no tienen acceso a estudios de

investigación y no pueden hablar sobre sus experiencias. Además, tu información contribuirá a la investigación que generalmente se ignora en el mundo académico.

### **¿Hay algún riesgo asociado con estar en este estudio?**

Para evitar el riesgo de ser identificada, tu información será completamente anónima. Además, participar en esta entrevista NO afectará los servicios que recibes de *La Casa de Panchita*. Si no deseas compartir cierta información, puedes elegir no responder las preguntas. O, si deseas hablar más sobre tus experiencias, *La Casa de Panchita* tiene muchos recursos para ofrecerte asistencia en tu búsqueda de servicios de asesoramiento.

### **¿Cómo voy a proteger tu información?**

Garantizo que tu información permanecerá anónima. Aunque solicitaré un permiso escrito para usar tu información demográfica y testimonios grabados, mantendré documento separado del material de la entrevista y NO solicitaré ninguna información de identificación, como tu nombre o dirección.

Los resultados de este estudio pueden publicarse o presentarse en una reunión, pero no habrá información de identificación incluida en la publicación y / o presentación. Seré la única persona que vea este Documento de consentimiento informado, y se guardará en un lugar seguro hasta la conclusión de este proyecto. Después del 31 de junio de 2020, este documento y cualquier material de entrevista grabado serán destruidos. Si incluye información de identificación en tus respuestas, esta información se eliminará y no se incluirá en el estudio.

### **Tu participación en este estudio es voluntaria**

Es tu decisión participar en este estudio de investigación. La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Incluso si decides ser parte del estudio ahora, puedes cambiar de opinión y detenerte en cualquier momento. No tienes que responder a ninguna pregunta que no quieras responder. Si decides retirarte antes de que se complete este estudio, tu información no se utilizará y se descartará.

### **Información de contacto para preguntas sobre tus derechos como participante**

Si tienes preguntas sobre tus derechos como participante de una investigación, o deseas obtener información, hacer preguntas o discutir cualquier preocupación sobre este estudio con alguien que no sea la investigadora, contáctale con la siguiente:

Lima:

Jr. Putumayo 177, San Miguel.

(Alt. c. 22 de la Av. La Mar).

Teléfono: (511) 562-1600

O

Av. Almirante Miguel Grau 1010, Barranco.

(Alt. Estudio 4).

Teléfono: (511) 206-7800

E.E.U.U.:

Kira Phillips, administradora de IRB

Jason Nier, presidente del IRB

Connecticut College Institutional Review Board

270 Mohegan Avenue

New London, CT 06320

Teléfono: 00 +1 (860) 439-2330

Correo electrónico: irb@conncoll.edu

### Tu consentimiento

*Al firmar este documento, tú aceptas participar en este estudio. Asegúrate de comprender de qué se trata el estudio antes de firmar. Te daré una copia de este documento para tus registros.*

*Mantendré una copia con los registros del estudio. Si tienes alguna pregunta sobre el estudio después de firmar este documento, puedes comunicarte con el equipo del estudio utilizando la información proporcionada anteriormente.*

*Entiendo de qué se trata el estudio y mis preguntas hasta ahora han sido respondidas. Estoy de acuerdo en participar en este estudio.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre en letra de molde

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fecha

### Consentimiento para ser audio grabado

*Estoy de acuerdo en ser audio grabado.*

***SÍ*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***NO*** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fecha

## **Informed Consent Document**

Title of the Project: *The Demand for Domestic Work in the Peruvian Informal Economy: The Experiences of Women Workers in a Poorly Regulated System*

Principal Investigator: Dominique Burrows, Student, Connecticut College

Faculty Advisor: Candace Howes, '43 Professor of Economics, Connecticut College

Study Sponsor: Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts

### **Invitation to be Part of a Research Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be a woman domestic worker who is older than 18 years of age and lives in Lima, Peru. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

### **Important Information about the Research Study**

Things you should know:

- The purpose of the study is to learn about your experiences as a domestic worker. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey and to be interviewed by me at *La Casa de Panchita*. This will take approximately between 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- Discomforts from this research include sharing personal and sensitive information about yourself and your employment. To avoid any possible risk, your information will be completely anonymous.
- The study will allow you to talk openly about your experiences as a domestic worker, although there will be no monetary compensation.
- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You don't have to participate, and you can stop at any time.

### **What is the study about and why are we doing it?**

This study is about the history of domestic work in Peru and the experiences of domestic workers in their employment. I am conducting this research because it is a neglected topic in academia and I want to understand the current reality of domestic labor in Peru, since the work is a large portion of the informal economy.

### **What will happen if you take part in this study?**

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to first complete a survey and then to be interviewed by me at *La Casa de Panchita*. In the survey and interview, I will ask you questions about your identity and your experiences as a domestic worker. An example of these questions is: "Have you ever had a bad experience as a domestic worker?" These interviews will be in private and should take about 30 minutes to an hour. I will then compare the information that other women and you provide to scholarly research about domestic work in Peru.

### **How could you benefit from this study?**

Although you will not receive compensation from this study, you may find it rewarding to talk about your experiences in a safe environment. My purpose is to recognize the work that you do as important, and to validate your experiences without harming you. By participating in this study, you could help represent other women domestic workers who do not have access to

research studies and cannot talk about their experiences. Also, your stories will contribute to research that is usually ignored in academia.

#### **Are there any risks associated with being in this study?**

In order to avoid the risk of being identified, your information will be completely anonymous. Also, participating in this interview will NOT affect the services you receive from *La Casa de Panchita*. If you do not wish to share certain information, you can choose not to answer the questions. Or, if you would like to speak about your experiences more, *La Casa de Panchita* has many resources to offer assistance in your search for counseling services.

#### **How will we protect your information?**

I guarantee that your information will remain anonymous. Although I will ask for written permission to use your demographic information and recorded testimonies, I will keep this form separate from the interview material, and I will NOT ask for any identifying information, such as your name or address.

The results of this study may be published or presented at a meeting, but there will be no identifying information included in the publication and/or presentation. I will be the only person to see this Informed Consent Document, and it will be stored in a secure place until the conclusion on this project. After June 31, 2020, this document and any recorded interview material will be destroyed. If you include any identifying information in your responses, this information will be deleted and will not be included in the study.

#### **Your Participation in this Study is Voluntary**

It is totally up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If you decide to withdraw before this study is completed, your information will not be used and will be discarded.

#### **Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant**

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the following:

Lima:

Jr. Putumayo 177, San Miguel.

(Alt. c. 22 de la Av. La Mar).

Telephone: (511) 562-1600

OR

Av. Almirante Miguel Grau 1010, Barranco.

(Alt. Estudio 4).

Telephone: (511) 206-7800

U.S.A.:  
 Kira Phillips, IRB Administrator  
 Jason Nier, IRB Chairperson  
 Connecticut College Institutional Review Board  
 270 Mohegan Avenue  
 New London, CT 06320  
 Phone: 00 +1 (860) 439-2330  
 Email: irb@conncoll.edu

### Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. I will give you a copy of this document for your records. I will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I understand what the study is about, and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

### Consent to be Audio/video Recorded

*I agree to be audio/video recorded.*

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**Investigadora:**

**Número de cuestionario:**

**Fecha:**

1. ¿Cuántos años tienes?
  
2. ¿Cómo te identificas racialmente? (ejemplos: blanca, negra, mestiza, india)
  
3. ¿Cuál es tu nivel de educación?
  
4. ¿Dónde creciste? O, ¿de dónde eres?
  
5. ¿En qué distrito de Lima vives?
  
6. ¿Cuál es tu primera lengua? ¿Hablas otra además del español?



**Researcher:**

**Survey number:**

**Date:**

1. How old are you?
  
2. How do you identify racially? (examples: white, black, mixed, Indian)
  
3. What is your level of education?
  
4. Where did you grow up? Or, where are you from?
  
5. In what district of Lima do you live?
  
6. What is your first language? Do you speak another besides Spanish?

## Preguntas de las entrevistas

1. En algún momento durante el tiempo has trabajado como trabajadora del hogar, ¿has tenido un contrato escrito con tu empleador?
2. ¿Alguna vez trataste de crear un contrato con tu empleador? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
3. ¿Conoces todos tus derechos como trabajadora del hogar bajo la Ley Número 27986? Por ejemplo, ¿sabías que tienes derecho a 24 horas de descanso continuo por semana y 15 días de vacaciones cada año, y que tu empleador debería proporcionarte un seguro de salud?
4. ¿Alguno de tus empleadores ha seguido estas leyes? Si no, ¿alguna vez trataste de confrontar a tu empleador? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
5. ¿En general, ¿crees que estas leyes se aplican y son efectivas?  
¿Crees que protegen a las trabajadoras del hogar o necesitamos otra solución?

6. ¿ Finalmente, ¿por qué haces trabajo doméstico en lugar de un trabajo más formal?

## Interview Questions

1. At any time when you have worked as a domestic worker, have you ever had a written contract with your employer?
2. Did you ever try to create a contract with your employer? Why or why not?
3. Are you aware of all your rights as a domestic worker under Law Number 27986? For example, did you know that you are entitled to 24 hours of continuous hours of rest a week and 15 days of vacation each year, and that your employer should be providing you with health insurance?
4. Have any of your employers followed these laws? If not, did you ever try to confront your employer? Why or why not?
5. Overall, do you think that these laws are enforced and effective? Do you think they protect domestic workers, or do we need another solution?

6. Finally, why do you do domestic work instead of more formal work?