

*Global mothers and the
caregiving vacuum:*

Migrant domestic workers and their rights to family life

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Awakening Foundation

- Established in 1987, the first feminist NGO in Taiwan.
- Has been one of the major advocacy groups for women's rights and gender mainstreaming in Taiwan.
- A member organization of the *Migrant Human Rights Advocacy Coalition* in Taiwan.



Outline


- The care-giving vacuum (and why?)
- Asian Migration at a glance
- Situation of migrant caregivers (lack of family life), and policy reflections



Marital status of Filipino Workers in Taiwan (2006)

Filipinas (Female)		Filipinos (Male)	
Single (%)	Married (%)	Single (%)	Married (%)
56	37	27	71

Source: Velos, 2007

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- In May 1995, Philippine president Fidel Ramos called for initiatives to keep migrant mothers at home. He declared, “We are not against overseas employment of Filipino women. We are against overseas employment at the cost of family solidarity.”
 - Media reinforce this position by publishing sensationalist reports on the suffering of children in transnational families.

Asia Migration at a glance

- Asia has been the main supplier of immigrants to other regions in the world since 1960s.
- In the 1980s, resulting from the rise of new industrialized countries (NICs) in East and Southeast Asia, interregional migration in Asia was accelerated.



Estimates of migrant stock by region (in million people)

Region	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Africa	11.4	11.7	13.7	10.5	9.3
Asia	37.1	33.2	31.4	32.5	28.6
Europe	21.5	25.8	24.7	31.5	32.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.7	6.8	6.0	4.6	3.4
North America	15.9	15.3	17.6	17.9	23.3
Oceania	2.7	3.6	3.6	3.1	3.3

Source: Kung, 2007

Classification of Asian nations based on migration situation

Mainly emigration	Philippines / Bangladesh / Cambodia Laos China / Sri Lanka / Indonesia / Vietnam India / Pakistan / Burma / Nepal
Mainly immigration	South Korea / Taiwan / Singapore Japan / Hong Kong / Brunei
Both significant immigration and emigration	Malaysia Thailand

Source: Kung, 2007





Population, GDP, migrant stock and remittances

Selected Countries	Total Population (2000) In 1000 people	GDP(2005) In Million US Dollars	Migrants Stock	Remittances In Million US Dollars
Philippines	75,653	92,586	933,588,000	8,550
Indonesia	212,092	276,004	2,199,371	1,109
Thailand	62,806	174,545	148,600	1,509
Vietnam	78,137	47,111	119,900	2,400
Malaysia	22,218	127,941	1,850,063	
Mongolia	2,533	1,400	30,000	7

Source: Kung, 2007

Some Features in Asia Migration

1. Temporary guest worker is the dominated system

-  Policy makers conscious of the experience of guest workers in Europe
-  In Taiwan, the maximum allowable stay for foreign labor is 6 years.



Some exclusionary features

- -- not allowed to bring family with them
- -- restricted in the jobs they hold
- -- subjected to compulsory health tests such as HIV testing
- -- do not have the channel to choose employers
- -- do not have access to citizenship



Some Features in Asia Migration

- 2 Both public and private sectors are involved in the recruitment of migrants : more cost for migrant workers.



Some Features in Asia Migration

3 Greatest supply of female migrants

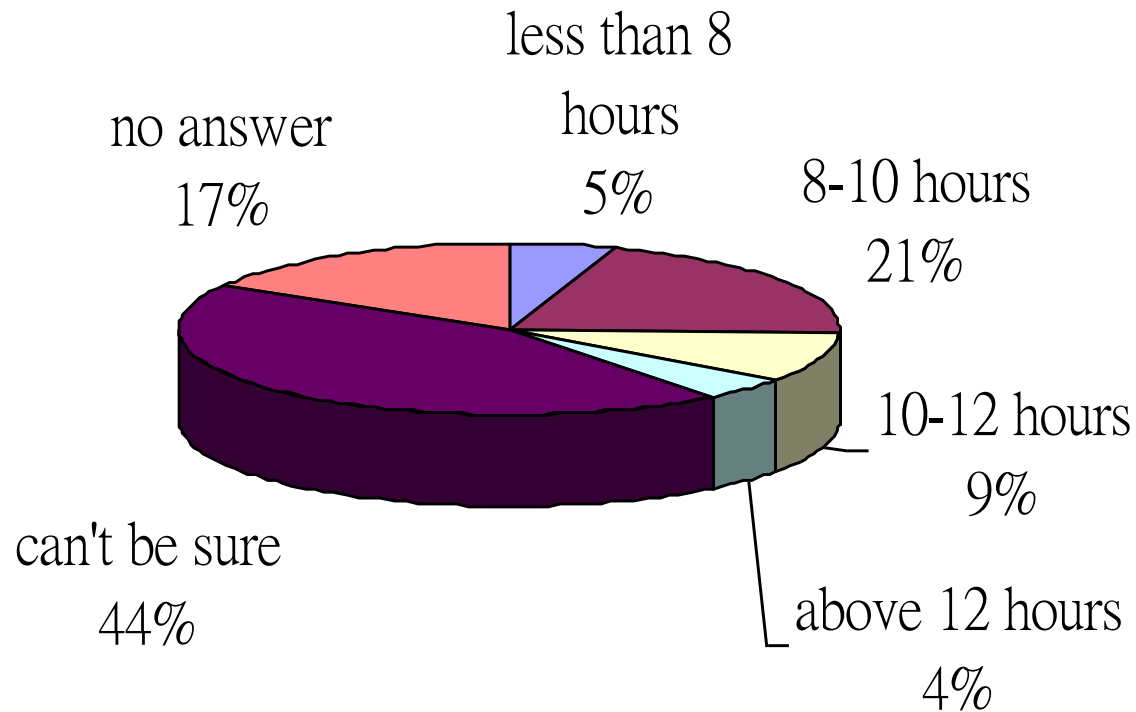
Country of origin of international labor migrants	Number of workers sent	Percent of women	Source
Philippines	651,938	72.5	POEA 2004
Thailand	147,769	17.0	Chalamwong 2005, 12
Indonesia	293,674	72.8	Soeprobo 2005, 7

Source: Kung, 2007

Situations of migrant domestic workers in Taiwan

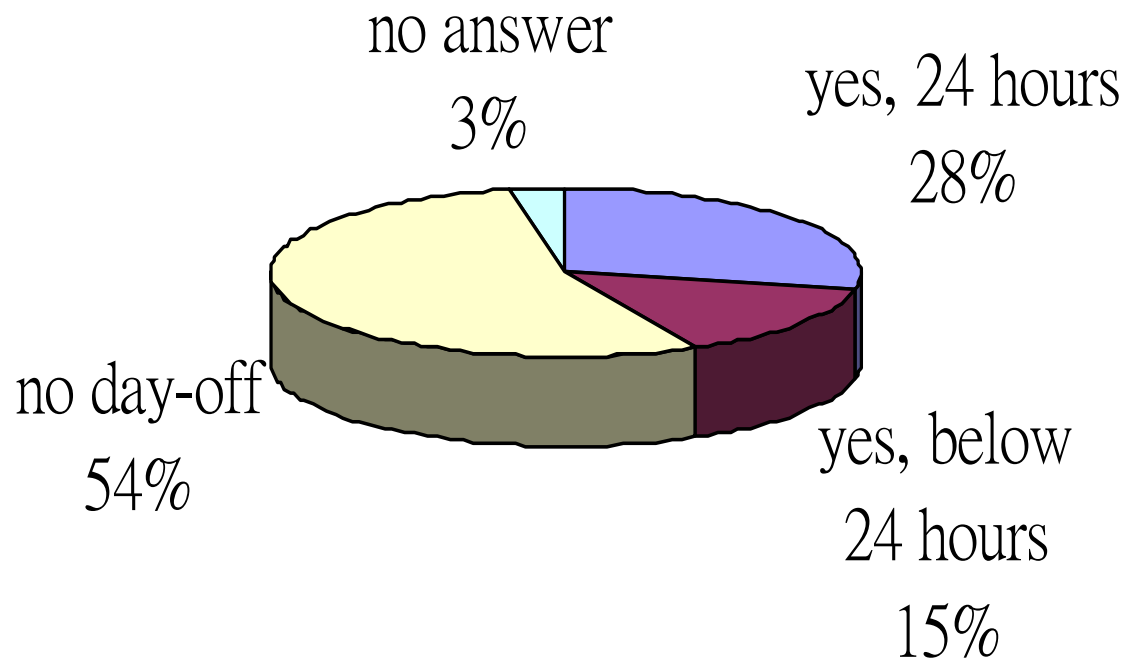


actual working hours in a day



Source: CLA in Taiwan, 2006

Has 1 day off every 7 days




Source: *CLA in Taiwan, 2006*

Rights to family life is too remote?

- Not under the protection of the Labor Standards Law
 - Long working hours
 - No days-off
 - No respire care for bedridden persons
- The Household Service Act challenged by the welfare groups.
- Not to mention ‘family reunion’



Seriously disabled employers vs. migrant domestic workers?

 The heart of the problem is that the state has been making the needs of long-term care a matter of personal affairs, shifting the pressure of caring to individuals, unpaid family members, and the market.



The need of human rights perspective towards migration

- Except for Asia, all major regions in the world have their version of human rights instruments:
 - the European Convention on Human Rights(1950),
 - the American Convention on Human Rights(1969),
 - the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights(1981)
 - the Arab Charter on Human Rights(1994).



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