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## **ABSTRACT**

The prevalence of domestic violence suffered by our OFW domestic workers is a serious challenge faced by our government and OFWs. Working as domestic workers abroad can be empowering or oppressive. Empowering as it provides economic gain which enable them to support their families. However, other women see the domestic work as oppressive because of poor working conditions, vulnerability to abuse, limited freedom and mobility.

This thesis investigates the lived experience of four run-away domestic workers under the custody of the Philippine Embassy in Middle East. The goal of the study is to examine how these women construct their experiences as OFW domestic workers through the stories they tell with the intentions of both giving voice to and exploring their “real life stories” involving communication and social problems, and primarily OFW domestic workers, this study attempts to mainly focus on investigating the communication struggles they encounter while working for their employers.

The methodology involves semi-structured interviews in which participants reflect on their motivation to work abroad, domestic struggles and the difficulties they face in communicating with their employers and also with their families back home. The interviews were audio-recorder, transcribed and then analyzed.

Focused on narrative analyses not only to investigate how stories were being told but also to see the different layers of meaning in order to understand more of the social phenomenon of domestic workers and explore their struggles. All names of the participants have been changed in this thesis to avoid repercussions with regard to domestic issue and illegal work. The findings of this study demonstrate that the small scale of subjects was very much in line with the bigger picture of run-away domestic workers, although findings did not represent the general population.

Communication is crucial to human life, much more to domestic workers who have to deal with foreign employers with limited communication skills. Participants identified four communication barriers they experienced, namely: language barriers, semantic barriers, psychological attitude and perceptions of reality. Participants also revealed their unfortunate situation from the moment they were hired through the recruitment agencies/ and human trafficked until they abandoned their job and ran-away to the Philippine embassy to seek legal assistance.

**Keywords:** OFW Run-away domestic workers, Communication Barriers, Narrative.