

**LABOUR EXPLOITATION EXPERIENCED BY NANNY IN EMMA  
MCLAUGHLIN AND NICOLA KRAUS *THE NANNY DIARIES***

**THESIS**

By:

**Faizal Ridha Kirana**

200302110021



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
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MCLAUGHLIN AND NICOLA KRAUS *THE NANNY DIARIES***

**THESIS**

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By:

**Faizal Ridha Kirana**

NIM 200302110021

Advisor

**Ahmad Ghozi, M.A.**

NIP 198302142023211011



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM  
MALANG**

**2024**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled "**Labour Exploitation Experienced by Nanny in Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus *The Nanny Diaries***" is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, October 21<sup>th</sup> 2024

The Researcher,



**Faizal Ridha Kirana**

**NIM 200302110021**

**APPROVAL SHEET**

*This is to certify that Faizal Ridha Kirana's thesis entitled Labour Exploitation Experienced by the Nanny in Emma Mclaughlin and Nicola Kraus The Nanny Diaries has been approved for thesis examination at Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S)*

Malang, October 21<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Approved by  
Advisor,



Ahmad Khozi, M.A  
NIP 198302142023211011

Head of Department of English  
Literature,



Ribut Wahyudi, M.Ed., Ph.D.  
NIP 198112052011011007

Acknowledged by

Dean,  
  
Dr. M. Faizal, M.Ag.  
NIP 1961012003121003

### LEGITIMATION SHEET

This is to certify that Faizal Ridha Kirana's thesis entitled Labour Exploitation Experienced by the Nanny in Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus *The Nanny Diaries* has been approved by the Board of Examiners as one of the requirements for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S) in Department of English Literature.

Malang, October 21<sup>th</sup> 2024

#### Board of Examiners

1. Sri Muniroch, M.Hum.  
NIP 196905032003122003
2. Ahmad Khozi, M.A.  
NIP 198302142023211011
3. Dr. Syamsudin, M.Hum.  
NIP 1969112220026041001

#### Signatures



Approved by  
Dean of Faculty of Humanities



Faisol, M.Ag.

1101 2003 12 1 003

## **MOTTO**

*Whatever grows together, goes together*

- ***The Bear season 3***

*A real loser is somebody that's so afraid of not winning they don't even try*

- ***Little Miss Sunshine***

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is proudly dedicated to my beloved family: My father Dahoni, My mother Lili Latifah and my thesis advisor Mr. Ahmad Ghozi, M.A. All parties who have contributed to this thesis. Thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I'm grateful to have some amazing people who always love and support me.

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9. For my future spouse, thank you also for being the reason for me to get a higher education.
10. For me, thank you for always staying healthy and struggling to keep your studies and ended what you start. Therefore, I am happy and welcome any feedback, criticism, and suggestions. Hopefully, this thesis will provide new insight for future researchers.

## ABSTRACT

**Ridha, Faizal. (2024).** Labour Exploitation Experienced by The Nanny in Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus *The Nanny Diaries*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Ahmad Khozi M.A

*Keyword : Exploitation, Labour, Nanny,*

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The exploitation of nannies in America is a phenomenon that reflects deep-rooted inequality, regulatory weaknesses, and the ongoing challenge of protecting labor rights within the childcare industry. This research aims to uncover the indicators of exploitation experienced by the Nanny in *The Nanny Diaries* and to examine the struggles she faces in confronting labour exploitation. The study is categorized as literary criticism, focusing on the central character in *The Nanny Diaries*, a novel by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus. Literary criticism involves the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of literary works, and this study utilizes Karl Marx's theory of labor exploitation as a framework to understand the dynamics of injustice in labour relations. This research identifies key indicators of labor exploitation as seen in the novel, such as low wages, erratic pay, extended working hours, and unsafe working conditions. The Nanny's struggles represent broader systemic issues of undervaluing domestic labor. The analysis will compare the fictional portrayal of exploitation with the real-life experiences of nannies and domestic workers in early 2000s America, when many faced similar challenges due to weak labor protections, minimal regulatory oversight, and exploitative working conditions exacerbated by their immigrant status.

## مستخلص البحث

رضا، فيصل (2024). استغلال العمل الذي تتعرض له المربيات في رواية "يوميات مربية" للكاتبين إيما ماكلولين ونيكولا كراوس. رسالة بكالوريوس. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة إسلام نيجيري مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج. المشرف: أحمد غزي م. أ

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستغلال، العمالة، المربية

إن استغلال المربيات في أمريكا ظاهرة تعكس عدم المساواة والضعف التنظيمي والتحديات التي تواجه حماية حقوق العاملين في مجال رعاية الأطفال في أمريكا، وقد جاء هذا البحث للكشف عن مؤشرات الاستغلال الذي تتعرض له المربيات والنضالات التي تقوم بها المربيات في مواجهة استغلال العمل في رواية يوميات مربية. ويصنف هذا البحث كدراسة في النقد الأدبي، لأن الموضوع قيد الدراسة عمل أدبي ويتمحور حول الشخصية الرئيسية في رواية يوميات مربية. النقد الأدبي هو تحليل ودراسة وتقييم الأعمال الأدبية. والنقد الأدبي لا يقتصر على تفسير ما هو مكتوب فقط، بل يقوم الباحث بتحديد مؤشرات استغلال العمل الذي تتعرض له المربية. والأخير هو كيف تعاني شخصية المربية من الاستغلال الذي تتعرض له. بالتركيز على نظرية استغلال العمل لكارل ماركس والتركيز على شخصية المربية في رواية "يوميات مربية" للكاتبين إيما ماكلولين ونيكولا كراوس، يستنتج الباحث كيف يمكن تطبيق نظرية استغلال العمل لكارل ماركس لفهم ديناميات الظلم وعدم المساواة التي تحدث في العمل. ينطوي الاستغلال في العمل على أخذ قيمة أكبر من العمل دون تعويضه وفقاً لذلك. وفي حالة المربية، يمكن ملاحظة ذلك في راتبها المنخفض وغير المنتظم، وساعات العمل الطويلة، وظروف العمل غير الآمنة.

## ABSTRAK

**Ridha, Faizal. (2024).** Eksploitasi Tenaga Kerja yang Dialami Pengasuh Anak dalam Novel *The Nanny Diaries* Karya Emma McLaughlin dan Nicola Kraus. Skripsi Sarjana. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing: Ahmad Ghazi M.A

*Kata kunci : Eksploitasi, Tenaga Kerja, Nanny*

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Eksploitasi Pengasuh Anak di Amerika merupakan fenomena yang mencerminkan ketidaksetaraan, kelemahan regulasi, dan tantangan dalam melindungi hak-hak pekerja yang terlibat dalam industri pengasuhan anak. Untuk mengungkap indikator eksploitasi yang dialami oleh pengasuh anak dan perjuangan yang dilakukan oleh pengasuh anak dalam menghadapi eksploitasi tenaga kerja dalam novel *The Nanny Diaries*, penelitian ini dikategorikan sebagai studi kritik sastra, karena objek yang diteliti adalah sebuah karya sastra dan berpusat pada tokoh utama dalam novel *The Nanny Diaries*. Kritik sastra adalah analisis, kajian, evaluasi terhadap karya sastra. Kritik sastra tidak hanya menafsirkan apa yang tertulis, peneliti akan mengidentifikasi indikator-indikator eksploitasi tenaga kerja apa saja yang dialami oleh Nanny. Yang terakhir adalah bagaimana karakter Nanny berjuang dari eksploitasi yang dialaminya. Peneliti memfokuskan pada teori eksploitasi tenaga kerja Karl Marx dan memfokuskan pada karakter Nanny dalam novel *The Nanny Diaries* karya Emma McLaughlin dan Nicola Kraus, peneliti menyimpulkan bagaimana teori eksploitasi tenaga kerja Karl Marx dapat diaplikasikan untuk memahami dinamika ketidakadilan dan ketidaksetaraan yang terjadi pada tenaga kerja. Eksploitasi tenaga kerja, melibatkan pengambilan nilai lebih dari tenaga kerja tanpa memberikan kompensasi yang sesuai. Dalam kasus Nanny, hal ini dapat dilihat dari gajinya yang rendah dan tidak menentu, jam kerja yang panjang, dan kondisi kerja yang tidak aman.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of the Study**

The Exploitation of nannies in America is a phenomenon that reflects inequality, regulatory weakness, and challenges in protecting the rights of labours involved in the childcare industry. Despite the growing need for nannies, caregivers often face unstable working environments, long working hours, low wages, lack of benefits and lack of protection for their rights (Romero, 1992; Macklin, 1993).

In the early 2000s, Americans hired nannies based solely on their needs, often involving more than just having a reliable Nanny. Few rich people hire nannies to let others see that their families have a high economic reputation. The status of a child's caregiver does not really belong to the 'part of the family', making injustice 'easier' to accept. Few nannies are undervalued and easy to exploit (Garcia, 2017).

In childcare, it is important to recognize that human rights violations occur when employers do not fulfil their obligations towards caregivers. An international study by Anderson and Philzacklea (1997) highlighted several forms of violations that often occur in America. These include refusal to pay wages in case of dismissal after trial or probation, as well as refusal to regulate legal resident status, which may impact rights such as tax payments. Sexual control and abuse are also serious issues faced by caregivers, as is pressure to do extra work, often for friends or colleagues. Excessive workload is also a problem, especially when caregivers are responsible for caring for the children and all other household chores. Lastly, a very intimate relationship between domestic helpers and their employers creates a power



imbalance that can worsen working conditions. Therefore, the protection of human rights for caregivers is very important to ensure their well-being (Romero, 2013).

In addition, due to the nature of work that involves the care of children, nannies are often faced with high emotional and physical demands. They must maintain a balance between meeting the needs of children and meeting the expectations of the employer's family, which are often not always in line. It creates an environment where nannies can feel indirectly trapped in Exploitation and unreasonable demands.

Exploitation is a concept that can be discussed in literary sociology, although it is more often associated with broader sociological and economic theories. In sociology, Exploitation refers to a situation in which one social group can profit or benefit from another group's labour, resources, or efforts. This concept is at the core of various sociological theories, especially those related to Marxist social science and the Labour Theory of Value (Brewer, 1986).

Exploitation is included in the concept of Marxism, which argues that under the slavery of labour, there is a fundamental exploitation of the working class by the owners of labour. This exploitation occurs through the extraction of surplus value from the labours' labour, where the labours are paid less than the value they work. This surplus value is then taken by the owner of the production or business as profit. Marxism sees this Exploitation as inherent to capitalist capital of production and is the main driver of social inequality and class conflict (Burawoy & Wright, 2006).

Regardless of the employer's or capital owner's benefits, labour exploitation, such as nannies, is very difficult to avoid. The researchers found ten similar studies, firstly titled "*American Nanny: Locating the Marginalized Third World Labourer Through Contemporary Fiction*", which collected data from three novels that focused on Nanny's role as an illicit labour in the United States. The three novels are *Happy Family* (2008) by *Wendy Lee*, *Lucy* (1990) by *Jamaica Kincaid*, and *My Hollywood* (2010) by *Mona Simpson*. This research aims to reveal the identity and voice of nannies and challenge the one-dimensional view of Exploitation regarding the policies they experience, such as ethnicity, labour policies, and English (Garcia, 2017). There is also an article entitled *Class Exploitation in Ron Rash's Serena Novel: a Marxist Criticism* written by Muniralizah Nurman. This article discusses the depiction of class differences and labor exploitation in the novel *Serena* using Marx's theory of Social Class and Exploitation and the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Indicators of Labor Exploitation. (Nurman et al., 2020). Then *Labor And Gender Exploitation in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Americanah Novel: Marxist Feminist Analysis* by Anggy Rahayu Larasati. This article discusses examining labor and gender exploitation in the novel *Americanah* using marxist theory. The novel explores the character Ifemelu's experiences through a critical lens, highlighting the gender inequalities that shape her life. (Larasati et al., 2012).

Then there is *The Portrayal of Class Struggle in Victoria Aveyard's Novel Red Queen*. This study is aimed to describe the social condition and distinction in Victoria Aveyard's novel *Red Queen* (Ashari et al., 2020). Then the *Social Class Conflict Found in the Novel 'The Kite Runner' Based on Marxism Theory* by

Yohannes Eko. This research discusses class conflict which is presented in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* novel. The novel talk about conflicts about social life in Afghanistan, particularly about social class starting from when Afghanistan was back then a lovely homeland until The Soviet invasion in the end of 1979. The imbalance of social condition impacts the social conflict in the society. The social conflict in the society will influence the condition in the certain society (Rubiyanto & Arini, 2016). Then there is *Class, Exploitation, and Economic Rents: Reflections on Sorenson's "Sounder Basis"* oleh Erik Olin Wright. The research argues that Marxists were right to place exploitation at the center of class analysis because the exploitation-centered concept of class has far greater potential to explain the structural underpinnings of social conflicts over inequality than its main rival, the material "conditions of life" conception of class (Wright, 2000).

Then there is study entitled *Discrimination And Exploitation Of Labour In Mulk Raj Anand's Coolie* by Bina Adhikari. This article discusses about a story of the sufferers in Indian society of Mulk Raj Anand's novel coolie. It describes the class distinction between the wealthy and the needy person. The article illustrated human tragedy in the novel caused by the scarcity, exploitation, hunger, selfishness and torture . Then there is a study entitled *Women's Exploitation Under Capitalism On The Danielle Steel 'Wings'* by Nirna Fira This research discusses the exploitation of women under capitalism and the factors that influence the exploitation of women in a capitalistic society (Fira, 2008).

Further research was conducted by Baharudin and Gosal entitled *Exploitation and Social Discrimination portrayed in The Joker Movie (2019)*. A

study of class analysis exploitation and the social discrimination system related to this era (Baharuddin & Gosal, 2021). Furthermore, there is a study entitled *Class Struggle As Represented By The Character Eloi And Morlock In Hebert George Wells's The Time Machine* by Putri Praciana Noviyandini. The author discusses class differences based on the economic status of society, namely the upper class and lower class which can cause class struggle (Praciana, 2020). The last previous research was conducted by Khadijah Syarifah in her research entitled *Exploitation of the Lower Class in Suzanne Collins' novel The Hunger Games*. Researchers analyzed the exploitation that occurred in the lower-class society in the novel *The Hunger Games* (Khadijah, 2020)

Additionally, researchers can identify the signs of labour exploitation experienced by Nanny by comprehending how labour exploitation affects child caretakers. The childcare sector is frequently the site of glaring social and economic inequality. Similar to nannies, babysitters are frequently insecure, particularly when they work for affluent households (Garcia, 2017).

By understanding the reality of Nanny industry, researchers can see that the exploitation of labour in this sector is a real picture. The stories of Nanny characters in *The Nanny Diaries* deeply illustrate the complex dynamics between inequality, inhumane work demands, and minimal protection. The narrative provides deep insight into how issues of labour exploitation can develop and affect individuals in the context of domestic work (McLaughlin & Kraus, 2002).

Other research highlights the issue of long and irregular working hours often faced by nannies. Along with the demands of looking after children on an uncertain

schedule, nannies often face significant stress and burnout, compromising their time and well-being. Regarding psychological aspects, some studies have shown that the job's emotional demands can create high stress levels. Nannies may feel trapped in unrealistic expectations, especially when it comes to tasks that cover children's emotional and developmental aspects (Romero, 2013).

Based on the several studies that have been found previously, several differences can be found that make researchers want to examine the issue of labour exploitation and Nanny's struggle against labour exploitation also in the novel *The Nanny Diaries*. First, Karl Marx's theory of labour exploitation is analyzed in different novels. Therefore, the researcher wants to apply the theory in *The Nanny Diaries* to reveal the indicators of labour exploitation and Nanny's struggle against it. Second, no research utilizes the topic of labour exploitation studies in *The Nanny Diaries*, which makes researchers interested in studying the discussion.

This study has three research problems formulated to explore the picture of labour exploitation experienced by Nanny and to understand the struggles she face in dealing with labour exploitation.

## **B. Problems of the Study**

In order to get a deep understanding of this research, the researcher formulated two research problems. These problems are presented as follows:

1. What are the indicators of labour exploitation experienced by the Nanny in Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus *The Nanny Diaries*?
2. How does the Nanny struggle against labour exploitation?

3. How does labour exploitation in the novel *The Nanny Diaries* relate to the labour exploitation in United States of America in the early 2000s?

### **C. Significance of the Study**

As discussed, this research is important because it has theoretical and practical functions. This research provide theoretical and practical contributions to literary works, especially in literature learning.

1. Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to contribute ideas to developing literary studies, especially in analyzing novels using marxist literary criticism. The results of the interpretation of this novel are expected to enrich the treasures of literary science and add insight into the concept of Exploitation and sociological literary criticism in literary works such as Kraus' novel, which is based on real phenomena in Manhattan.
2. Practically, the researcher hopes that the results of this study can be used for researchers researching similar objects of study. Researchers hope that they can understand literary works sociologically, add insight, and provide good input in analyzing events or phenomena that occur in labours.

### **D. Scope of Limitation**

This research is limited to *The Nanny Diaries* by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus, focusing on the exploitation and struggles experienced by the Nanny, as portrayed in the novel. The researcher examines these themes through the lens of Marxist literary criticism, specifically looking at how the novel reflects the larger issues of labor exploitation as described by Karl Marx. The scope of this research is confined to the novel's depiction of the Nanny's working conditions—low wages,

long working hours, and lack of personal autonomy and how these reflect the broader socio-economic challenges faced by domestic workers.

While the focus remains on the literary analysis of the novel, this research also draws connections between the fictional narrative and the real-world exploitation of nannies and domestic workers in America during the early 2000s. During this period, many nannies, particularly immigrants, faced similar conditions of exploitation: irregular wages, excessive work hours, lack of legal protection, and vulnerability due to immigration status.

### **E. Definition of Key Terms**

This research including several important key terms that are important for understanding the subject.

1. Exploitation refers to the act of extracting surplus value from labourers beyond what is necessary to cover their wages. This surplus value is the difference between the power provided by the labourer and the compensation they receive (Marx, 1976)
2. Labour is the term that refers to the physical, mental, and social effort used to produce goods and services in an economy. The term can also include all work performed or attempted and productive work, especially physical work performed for wages. In the context of employment, "labour" refers to individuals employed in an enterprise or available for employment (Gough, 1982).
3. Nannies or Childcare are labours who act as family assistants, primarily to care for children and the elderly. They play an important role in providing care in a

domestic setting, often facing challenges related to definitions of work and protection (Helburn, 2003).



## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter discusses more about the theoretical background that was used in this research. There is Marxist literary criticism, exploitation and struggle by Karl Marx.

#### **A. Sociology of Literature**

The sociology of literature is a growing body of theory that discusses literary works in relation to social institutions and those who influence the formation of these works. The focus is on the interrelationship between literary works and the social structures in which they are created. The discipline studies the relationship between writers and society, writers' knowledge of humanity, and the conditions of literary creation and production. As such, the sociology of literature helps to understand financial factors, policy issues, the character and creativity of writers, and the relationship between individual considerations and the social design behind them, including the various social factors that influence the existence and success of literary works (Damono, 1979).

Literary critics and sociologists agree that the sociological approach is fundamental in analyzing literary works, but they differ in their theories and techniques. Literary critics focus on texts, authors, and readers, and evaluate the process of creating, collecting, and translating literary works. On the other hand, social scientists examine books and literary institutions by paying attention to the process of creation, distribution, and use of works as social objects. The main focus of social scientists is on relationships and advertising, centralized and decentralized

publishing, control laws and regulations, distribution procedures, and reading patterns of specific social groups (Damono, 1979).

There are several approaches to the sociology of literature. The most common is to view literary works as social records or reflections of reality. While this representative approach has a long and recognized history, it tends to ignore the role of the author and other social viewpoints that influence the work's existence. The Marxist approach, which emerged with industrialization and capitalism, sees literature as a reflection of basic and superstructure relationships.

### **B. Marxist Literary Criticism**

A subset of literary criticism known as Marxist literary criticism is grounded in the theories and concepts of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx. It entails applying Marxist theory to the analysis of literary and other cultural texts, emphasizing the social, economic, and political facets of the works. Marxist literary criticism looks for the underlying class conflicts, power relationships, and ideological influences in a text. It looks at how literature can be used to question or undermine the prevailing ideology of a society, as well as how it reflects and supports that ideology. Marxist critique delves into the connections between literature and the creation of material goods, the function of artists in society, and the political consequences of artistic expression (Wood & Lodge, 1977).

Marxist literary criticism is a sociological method of literary analysis that aims to comprehend the social and political ramifications of literary works. As evidenced by Plato's Republic and Aristotle's theories on the social origins and purposes of art, it originated in Greece. Marxist critics do not seek to disprove or

reveal the ideology of literature; rather, they seek to comprehend it via sociological study. Their analysis is frequently linked to the objective of toppling the current social system since they see literature as a reflection of the conflicts and weaponry in today's society. Marxist critique highlights the significance of addressing social issues on various levels or in various forms while rejecting the notion of "escapism" in literature. Marxist literary criticism looks for the political and social messages that are hidden within literary works (Edgar et al., 1947).

Marxist literary criticism of literature is rooted in the belief that literature is a produce of the social and economic conditions of its time. It seeks to analyze how literature reflects and perpetuates the power dynamics and class struggles within society. Marxist critics often focus on the portrayal of social classes, labour, and economic systems in literature, examining how these themes are used to either challenge or reinforce the status quo. By examining the material conditions under which literature is produced and consumed, Marxist literary criticism aims to uncover the underlying ideologies and power structures at play in literary works.

Furthermore, Marxist literary criticism emphasizes the importance of understanding the historical background in which a work of literature was formed. It seeks to uncover the ways in which societal forces shape the production and reception of literature, and how literature, in turn, can influence and reflect back on society. Marxist critics often critique works that they see as promoting bourgeois values or perpetuating false consciousness among the working class, while also celebrating works that offer a critique of capitalism and advocate for social change. Overall, Marxist literary criticism provides a lens through which to examine

literature as a reflection of the broader social and economic conditions of its time, shedding light on the ways in which literature both reflects and shapes the world in which it exists (Edgar et al., 1947).

### **C. Karl Marx's Theory of Exploitation**

Exploitation, as discussed by Karl Marx, talk about to the act of extracting surplus value from labourers beyond what is necessary to cover their wages. This surplus value is the difference between the power provided by the labourer and the compensation they receive (Marx, 1976).

Marx's theory of exploitation serves as a critique of the capitalist system, highlighting the inherent inequalities and injustices between employer and labour. It provides a framework for understanding how employer profit from the labour of labours and why class conflict is a natural outcome of such a system. Ultimately, Marx envisioned that the exploitation inherent in capitalism would lead to its downfall and the rise of a more equitable, classless society through revolutionary struggle (Marx, 1976) .

Exploitation can be understood as the process by which one group or individual unfairly benefits from the labour or resources of another group or individual. In the context of capitalism, exploitation often happens when capitalists extract excessive value from the labour of labours, paying them less than the value they produce. This results in the growth of wealth and power by the capitalist class at the payment of the working class. Exploitation can take various forms, including wage exploitation, where labours are paid below the value of their labour, and

resource exploitation, where natural resources are extracted for profit without regard for the well-being of local communities or the environment (Marx, 1969).

Furthermore, exploitation is not limited to economic relationships but can also manifest in social, political, and cultural contexts. For example, marginalized groups may be exploited for their labour, knowledge, or cultural practices without receiving fair compensation or recognition. Exploitation can perpetuate systems of inequality and oppression, reinforcing power imbalances and hindering the ability of marginalized groups to achieve autonomy and self-determination. Recognizing and challenging exploitation is essential for promoting social justice and creating a more equitable and sustainable society (Marx, 1969).

Marx defined Exploitation as the causal relationship between the gains of one class and the losses of another, creating latent antagonistic interests and class conflict. This definition perceives class relationship as structured by a process of Exploitation that generates antagonistic interests. Exploitation is rooted in the ownership and control of productive assets, which generate economic rents that exceed competitive prices or prices sufficient to cover costs. These rents are payments for assets that result in material gains for the exploiters and reduced material well-being for the exploited. Exploitation occurs when three criteria are met: the principle of interdependent welfare, the principle of exclusion, and the principle of expropriation. These principles involve the causal dependence between the exploiter's welfare and the exploited's welfare decline, the exclusion of the exploited from certain productive resources, and the Exploitation's labour deprivation by the exploiter (Wright, 2000).

Exploitation is the source of profit in capitalism, where capitalists extract surplus value from labours, which is converted into monetary profit when the commodities containing the surplus value are sold. It is also important to explain the conflict between labours and capitalists (Wright, 2002).

Karl Marx defined exploitation as using someone or something for one's own advantage or benefit. It may involve a variety of mistreatment, manipulation, or abuse. This research study does not provide a precise definition of exploitation. That being said, the subject of this study is social inequality. This study investigates the relationship between social variables like gender, race, and class and inequality as well as well-being. Although the idea of exploitation is not specifically addressed in this study, it does look at how power disparities and structural injustices can result in unequal access to opportunities and resources, which is a type of exploitation. (MacRoberts, 1986).

### **1. Labour Exploitation**

According to Marxist theory, the process by which employers obtain surplus value from employees' labour is referred to as labour exploitation. The difference between the value laborers produce and the wages they are paid is characterized by this excess value. The foundation of capital accumulation and employer profit is the extraction of surplus value. (Marx 1976).

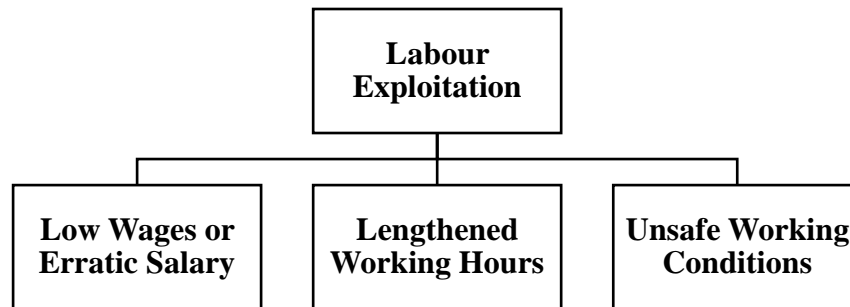
Labour exploitation refers to conditions where an employee, voluntarily or through some form of coercion, works in substandard conditions, or their wages are withheld for work already completed. In more exciting cases, Exploitation also includes instances of repeated use of fraud, coercion, or extortion by an employer.

Labour trafficking, on the other hand, is a form of labour exploitation that involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to force someone to perform unfair or forced labour. According to experts, labour exploitation can involve various forms of unfair treatment, but it does not necessarily mean that there is trafficking involved. Instead, trafficking victims are threatened or physically harmed by their employers (Holmstrom, 1977).

In the context of the journal "Exploitation, Alienation, and Injustice", labour exploitation refers to the unfair and unjust treatment of labours by employers. It occurs when labours are forced to sell their labour to employers, who then take the surplus value produced by the labours. Exploitation can be identified as a situation where the exploited party is worse off after the Exploitation compared to before or experiences adverse consequences compared to the initial conditions that reflect their expectations of being treated fairly. It also reflects the unfairness of the exploited party's position in an alternative context where they do not receive conditions that enable their development (Buchanan, 1979).

## **2. Indicators of Labour Exploitation**

There are several indicators of labour exploitation including low wages or erratic salaries, lengthened working hours and unsafe working conditions that related on Value, Price and Profit book by Karl Marx. Among them all are very detrimental to labours, especially those experienced by Nanny in the novel *The Nanny Diaries*.



#### **a. Low Wages and Erratic Salary**

A low wage refers to the rightfully directed lowest hourly wage that employers are mandatory to pay their employees for their effort. This wage rate is established by government regulations to set a baseline level of compensation aimed at ensuring that labours receive a fair and minimum standard of living. When the minimum wage is set at a low level, it can result in labours struggling to meet their basic needs, facing financial insecurity, and experiencing difficulties in covering essential expenses such as housing, food, healthcare, and education. Low minimum wages can contribute to income inequality and perpetuate poverty among low-wage labours, making it challenging for them to achieve economic stability and upward mobility. Erratic wages, on the other hand, illustrate an employer's inconsistency in pay among workers. Uncertainty and unfairness in pay can affect worker morale and productivity. Workers who feel unappreciated may become less motivated and productive (Marx, 1969).

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2002 about 570,000 American workers reported earning exactly \$5.15 per hour, the prevailing Federal minimum wage, and another 1.6 million reported wages below the minimum wage. Overall, these 2.2 million workers make up 3.0 percent of all hourly paid workers.



About 1 in 10 workers who work less than 15 hours per week earn minimum wage or less. This data comes from the Current Population Survey. It should be noted that the presence of a large number of workers with reported wages below the minimum wage does not necessarily indicate a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act, as there are exceptions to the minimum wage provisions in the act.

#### **b. Lengthened Working Hours**

Lengthened working hours refer to the extension of the duration of the working day beyond the standard or previously established boundaries. It is the constant tendency of capital to stretch the working day to its extreme physically possible length in order to increase surplus labour and, consequently, profits for the capitalist class. Historically, the working day has been subject to constant expansion driven by the capitalist pursuit of maximizing profits through the appropriation of additional labour from labours (Marx, 1969).

Standard working hours in the United States are 8 hours per day from 9am to 5pm with a 30-minute lunch break. Although the standard working week is 40 hours, American workers regularly exceed this weekly figure.

#### **c. Unsafe Working Conditions**

Unsafe working conditions refer to environments or observes in the workplace that pose a risk to employees' health, mental or well-being. These conditions can include a wide range of psychological stresses, among others. Toxic work environment is also included in unsafe working conditions. A toxic work environment is often characterized by negative behaviors such as bullying,

discrimination, lack of support from management, poor communication, and excessive work pressure (Marx, 1969).

#### **D. Karl Marx's Theory of Struggle**

Marx argued that struggle is the main driving force in history, where the oppressed working class seeks to overthrow the exploitative capitalist system to build a more equal and just society (Marx, 1969).

Labour struggle refers to the ongoing conflict and resistance between labours and employers over issues such as wages, working conditions, benefits, and labours' rights. The underlying power relations and competing interests between employers and labour in the capitalist economy are the source of these struggles. Workers want better working conditions and equitable treatment, and businesses want to make as much money as possible (Marx, 1969).

Protests and negotiation are symbols of labour struggle, which are carried out by workers and labour groups to resolve issues and further their interests. At the center of the labour movement are these constant fights for social and economic justice, which have a significant impact on workplace policies, employment relations, and the advancement of workers' rights and dignity. (Marx, 1969)

These acts are a component of the labour force's typically ongoing resistance to wage decreases, injustice, and instability as well as its attempts to obtain wage rises.. These struggles are inherent to the wage system and are driven by the fact that labour is treated as a commodity, subject to the laws that govern price movements in general.

Protest is the act of voicing dissatisfaction or demanding changes to a particular policy, condition, or situation. In the context of labours' struggles, protest often involves demonstrations, strikes, or other mass actions to pressure employers to meet their demands, such as increased wages, improved working conditions, or protection of labours' rights (Marx, 1969).

Negotiation is a process in which two or more parties communicate and bargain to reach a mutually beneficial agreement. In the context of employment relationships, negotiations usually take place between labour unions and company management. The aim is to reach agreement on issues such as wages, working hours, benefits, and working conditions. Successful negotiations can result in a collective bargaining agreement that sets out the rights and obligations of both parties (Marx, 1969).

#### **E. Labour Exploitation in United States America in the early 2000s**

Labor exploitation in the United States in the early 2000s was rooted in the dynamics of globalization, economic policies, and weak legal protections for workers. Globalization has led to a labor market that increasingly depends on immigrant and informal workers, many of whom lack legal protections due to their undocumented status. These workers are often drawn from developing countries to take on low-wage jobs in developed nations like the U.S., where they face unsafe working conditions and little access to labor rights (Sassen, 1998)

A key issue in low-wage sectors such as retail and fast food is the inadequate enforcement of labor laws, particularly concerning minimum wage violations. Due to poor government oversight, many workers are underpaid and lack access to

unions, further weakening their ability to secure basic rights like reasonable working hours and health benefits (Browne et al., 2005).

Immigrant women in domestic work, especially nannies, are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. They frequently endure long hours, low pay, and social isolation, often living with their employers without clear separation between personal time and work. Employers can easily exploit these workers, using their uncertain immigration status to pressure them into accepting harsher conditions for less pay (Parreñas, 2002).

The main reason for exploitation in this period is the strict immigration policy, which makes immigrant workers afraid to report rights violations due to the risk of deportation. In addition, the large influx of migrant workers coming to the United States without legal status allowed companies and individuals to take advantage of cheap labor. Globalization also created economic dependence between workers in developed countries and their families in their home countries, which forced them to accept poor working conditions in order to send money to their families (Sassen, 1998).

Working conditions for nannies in the early 2000s were extremely precarious. Nannies, especially those of immigrant origin, worked excessive hours, often living in their employers' homes without the right to privacy or adequate rest. They rarely received health benefits or paid leave, and many worked for less than minimum wage because their status was not legally recognized. Social isolation also worsens their situation, as they are cut off from communities or external support that could help them fight the conditions of exploitation. As a result, child

caregivers at that time experienced economic instability and severe psychological distress.

In conclusion, labor exploitation in the United States during the early 2000s was exacerbated by a combination of globalization, weak labor protections, and the precarious legal status of immigrant workers. The intersection of these factors created a labor market where domestic workers, particularly immigrant nannies, were vulnerable to systemic abuse. The lack of enforcement of labour laws, as highlighted by David Weil, allowed employers to violate wage standards with impunity. Meanwhile, Rhacel Salazar Parreñas emphasizes how nannies, living in isolation and under constant pressure, endured long hours with little compensation or legal recourse. Saskia Sassen's analysis of globalization underscores how economic dependence and immigration patterns placed these workers in exploitative conditions. The cumulative effect of these factors left nannies in precarious situations, facing both economic instability and emotional strain, highlighting the urgent need for stronger labor protections and comprehensive immigration reform to address these vulnerabilities.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **A. Research Design**

This research is categorized as a study of literary criticism, because the object under study is a literary work and centers on the main character in *The Nanny Diaries*. Literary criticism is the analysis, study, evaluation of literary works. Literary criticism does not only interpret what is written. However, literary criticism is the act of reading literary texts deliberately, in an informed and disciplined manner. The data sources in this research are obtained from literary works in the form of novels. In addition, to examine the data sources, this research will use a Marxist approach and Karl Marx's concept of exploitation and struggle.

In this analysis, the researcher focuses on Nannies and Labour exploitation and the struggles they face while working for wealthy families in *The Nanny Diaries*. All data relating to nannies will be described regarding labour exploitation and some of the factors that influence exploitation.

#### **B. Data and Source data**

The researcher obtained data from a novel entitled *The Nanny Diaries* novel by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus. The novel was published in 2002 and later adapted into the movie *The Nanny Diaries* which was released in 2007. The novel has 306 pages and was published by St. Martin's Griffin. The data used in this study are sentences or dialogues that show indicators of labour exploitation, struggle and

relationship between labour exploitation in *The Nanny Diaries* novel and in America in early 2000s.

### **C. Data Collection**

The researcher took a number of actions during data collection to ensure efficient data processing. The first step was for the researcher to read *The Nanny Diaries* novel thoroughly and attentively to better understand the storyline. The researcher further highlighted information related to the research topic. The researcher then sought to examine the data collected using the methodology and theories used in the study, continued by correlating the data with life events that occurred in America in the early 2000s.

### **D. Data Analysis**

The researcher uses textual study for data analysis to interpret the conclusions drawn from the novel *The Nanny Diaries*. The data will be analyzed by using the theory applied in the text under study. The use of textual study involves four stages. It starts with identifying the data that has been collected, then categorizing it according to the purpose of the research, elaborating on it using the theories and methodologies used, researched several journal articles that discuss the phenomenon of labor exploitation that occurs as in the novel *The Nanny Diaries*, then tried to connect the original events that occurred in real events with those in the novel and then concluding all the data.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is divided into three parts. In the first part, researchers will identify what indicators of labour exploitation are experienced by Nanny. The second is how the character of Nanny struggles from the exploitation she experiences and the last is the relation between labour exploitation in the novel *The Nanny Diaries* and labour exploitation phenomenon in United States America in the early 2000s. The researcher focuses on Karl Marx's theory of labour exploitation and focuses on the Nanny character in the novel *The Nanny Diaries* by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus.

#### **A. Indicators of Labour Exploitation Experienced by Nanny**

This section will explain the exploitation experienced by Nanny. There are three indicators of labour exploitation. The first indicator is Low wages and Erratic salary, the second indicator is long working hours and the third indicator is Insecurity of the job.

To further understand how these indicators of exploitation are depicted in *The Nanny Diaries*, we will begin by discussing the low and erratic salary received by Nanny. Labours who experience these conditions often not only struggle to meet their basic needs, but also face ongoing financial uncertainty. This creates significant stress and pressure, which ultimately affects their overall quality of life. The researcher will examine how this aspect is reflected in Nanny's life through various quotes and situations in the novel.



## 1. Low Wages and Erratic salary

Low wage refers to the lowest legally mandated hourly wage that employers are required to pay their employees for their effort. The low wages here also occur because jobs such as nannies themselves, which are in charge of childcare, are still a little unclear regarding labour laws. The erratic salary is also a factor in the exploitation of nannies in this job, because nannies in this novel are given an erratic salary whether it is a large or small salary or even late or not paid at all (Marx, 1969).

In the novel *The Nanny Diaries*, the job posters submitted by the employer, the contents of the posters are very strange and even seem to disrespect the labours of the Nanny. However, Nanny still tries the job as a Nanny for the children of the rich family. Here is one of the quotes in the job posting poster.

*“Must enjoy the delicious anticipation of ridiculously erratic pay. Mostly, must love being treated like fungus found growing out of employer’s Hermes bag.”* (p. 1).

The quote above is part of a job advertisement for a Nanny position. It highlights the unpredictable and often inconsistent nature of the job's compensation. The use of the word “delicious” adds a sarcastic tone, implying that nannies should consider the uncertainty of an unpredictable salary as something thrilling or fun, even though it is a downside. This reflects the often unstable and underappreciated nature of domestic work, where nannies can face unpredictable working hours and payment schedules.

According to Karl Marx, exploitation happens when the value produced by labours is greater than the wages they receive, with this excess value being taken by the owners of capital (employers) as their source of profit (Marx, 1963). This

quote hints at instability and erratic in salary payments, which is a form of exploitation in the context of work.

Erratic in salary payments adds a psychological burden on labours, as they cannot plan their finances with certainty. This puts labours in a vulnerable position, where they are forced to accept this uncertainty due to economic necessity and the power imbalance between them and their employers. In other words, employers can take advantage of labours' weaker bargaining power to suppress wages or delay payments, while labours have little choice but to accept these conditions.

In addition to taking care of the children, Nanny was also doing things other than that, even though the initial agreement and job criteria given by her employer were only for taking care of children. Nanny was also not paid more when she did work that she was not supposed to do. Here is the quote:

*This is a red flag here, Nan. Now, if memory serves, you signed on to provide child care for this woman. That's all, right? Is she paying you any more for this extra service? No. Mom, this is not a good time to be having? (p.59-60).*

The quote above reflects the exploitation that occurs when Nanny is asked to do additional work without additional compensation. Karl Marx argued that in a capitalist system, employers always look for ways to maximize surplus value by increasing the workload without increasing wages. In this case, the Nanny was initially hired to care for the child, but was then asked to perform additional tasks without extra pay, indicating exploitation that goes beyond her initial employment contract.

This action exposes the injustice inherent in capitalist labour relations. The employer uses his power to demand more work from Nanny without properly compensating her, thus increasing the extra value extracted from her work. When

Nanny is not paid for these additional tasks, the employer effectively steals the value generated by the extra labour, which is the essence of exploitation according to Karl Marx. This also illustrates the alienation experienced by labours, where Nanny is alienated from the fruits of her labour and has no control over her working conditions. As such, this quote illustrates how job owners create unfair working conditions, where labours are exploited for the employer's maximum benefit without equal reward for the extra work they do.

Injustice and uncertainty in terms of compensation are often faced by Nanny in this novel. Excerpts from the novel, which talk about the uncertainty and unfairness of salary payments, give a clear picture of the frustration and disappointment experienced by Nanny. Here are the quotation:

*"Let me tell you something when they went to Lyford whatever didn't get paid. I never get paid when they go away."* (p. 199).

The above quote reflects Nanny's frustration and disappointment with her employers who were unreliable and unfair in terms of compensation or salary. Nanny recounts her experience that when her employers traveled, specifically to a place called Lyford, they neglected to pay her while they were away. This highlights a common problem faced by domestic labours, where they are often taken for granted and not properly compensated, despite their crucial role in the household. The quote underscores the unstable and often exploitative working conditions experienced by Nannies.

The quote "Let me tell you something when they went to Lyford whatever didn't get paid. I never get paid when they go away" from the novel *The Nanny Diaries* illustrates this exploitation clearly. Surplus value is the difference between

the value produced by labours and the wages they receive (Marx, 1963) .When the employer goes to Lyford and does not pay Nanny, this is a clear example of how the employer takes surplus value without compensating the labour equally. Nanny generates value by looking after the house and possibly the children during the employer's absence, but does not receive the payment she is entitled to.

This illustrates the structural injustice in the capitalist system where labour is systematically exploited. Nanny works and produces value, but the employer does not pay her wages while they are away, meaning Nanny works without earning wages for the period. This shows how employers use their power to reduce labour costs to a minimum, taking advantage of Nanny's labour without providing fair compensation. This exploitation creates an inherent injustice in the employment relationship where employers benefit greatly while labours, like Nanny, remain in vulnerable and unfair conditions. This is a classic example of how capitalism accumulates wealth through the exploitation of the surplus value produced by labours.

In the quoted text, Nanny is addressing her employer, Mrs. X, about the issue of not being paid for three weeks. She mentions that her rent is due, highlighting the urgency and necessity of receiving her overdue wages. Here is the quote:

*Okay, also, I wanted to ask you about getting paid, because my rent is due this week? And you haven't paid me in three weeks And you haven't paid me in three weeks.And I now owe your husband's girlfriend eight hundred dollars.” (p. 236).*

In the quote, Nanny reminds her employer that she has not been paid for three weeks, while basic needs such as rent must be met immediately. This reflects how employers, as representatives of the capitalist class, tend to ignore the basic needs of their workers, utilizing their dominant position to delay payment. Marx

explained that in a capitalist system, workers are often in a weak position, having little choice but to accept unfair working conditions. By delaying payments, employers increase the financial dependence of workers, which creates a continuous cycle of exploitation. The worker, in this case Nanny, works hard but remains trapped in economic instability due to the employer's inability to meet their financial obligations on time. This is a clear example of the injustice that Marx criticized, where the surplus value produced by labour is taken by the capitalist without properly compensating the worker.

Nanny reminds Mrs. X of the need to pay wages on time as she has to pay rent. Nanny also attaches a list of working hours that have been requested by the employer. The quote shows the tension between the nanny's personal needs and the employer's expectations, here is the evidence of the quote:

*While I in no way want to inconvenience you, I feel it would be impractical to commit to an earlier start time as I have to attend a number of graduation events on Friday evening. I will be in Nantucket by 7 P.M. and, of course, anticipate you will adjust my pay accordingly. Speaking of which, I was wondering if you've had the chance to get to the bank as my rent is due. Please find attached a list of my hours as you requested. Again, I really appreciate the options.” (p. 238).*

In that quote, Nanny asks Mrs. X to ensure timely payment due to the need to pay rent. This illustrates the financial uncertainty faced by Nanny, who must rely on wages to meet their basic needs. Nanny mentions that they cannot start early due to other commitments. This shows the flexibility and adaptability demanded of workers without any additional compensation or proper timings. Karl Marx criticized the capitalist system that demands workers to work according to the needs of capitalists, often without regard for the workers' personal welfare or needs.

There is a quote that depicts Nanny politely reminding Mrs. X to pay her. This shows that salary payments are often delayed or ignored, a common problem faced by domestic labours. Here's the quote:

*"Dear Mrs. X, Just a quick reminder that my thesis defense is tomorrow, so I'll need to leave at 2 o'clock sharp. Also, if you could pay me, that would be great."*  
(p. 239).

In the text, the Nanny asks to be paid, which implies that they have provided labour that has not received compensation or wages. This situation can be seen as a form of labour exploitation, as the employer has taken advantage of the labour without providing appropriate wages in a timely manner. Karl Marx argues that this delay in payment is a way for the employer to gain more value from the labour without direct compensation, thus exploiting the labour's labour.

In the quote above Nanny mentions that she has to leave at exactly 2 o'clock for her thesis exam. This highlights the control that employers have over labours' time. Karl Marx's theory states that in a capitalist system, labours' time is commodified and controlled by the employer. The need to request time off for personal academic activities underscores the lack of autonomy labours have over their own time, further emphasizing the exploitative nature of the employment relationship.

Here is a quote that illustrates that Nanny complains about her salary because the salary she gets is not proportional to the number of hours she works.

*"Five hundred dollars. Five hundred dollars? Ten days. Sixteen hours a day. Twelve dollars an hour."* (p. 300).

The overall meaning conveys that despite working long hours for many days, the caregiver receives a relatively low hourly wage, highlighting the challenging

conditions and inadequate compensation often faced by caregivers. This amount is much less than what she should be earning based on the hours worked.

This situation shows that Nannies are highly exploited by their employers. Although Nanny works long hours and hard work, she only receives a fraction of the value generated by her work. This exploitation is reflected in the huge disparity between the wages she should have received and the wages she was actually paid, as well as the high level of exploitation.

## **2. Lengthened Working Hours**

Lengthened working hours are one of the indicators of labour exploitation. In *The Nanny Diaries*, not only does Nanny get a small and erratic salary, but she also experiences other things such as long working hours. Because of this, it becomes difficult for her to manage her writing time for her thesis.

In addition to the erratic salary, the poster made by her employer also mentioned that Nanny had to work for 16 hours with a pre-schooler who deliberately did not take a nap. Here's the quote:

*“Must relish sixteen-hour shifts with a deliberately nap deprived pre-schooler.”*  
(p.1).

In the above quote the phrase “sixteen-hour shift” directly relates to Karl Marx's discussion of capital's tendency to extend the working day to the maximum extent physically possible. Karl Marx states that “the working day, however, has in itself no constant limit. It is the constant tendency of capital to extend it to the utmost extent physically possible, because at the same rate, surplus labour, and consequently the profits made from it, will increase.” The sixteen-hour work system

is an example of this. The sixteen-hour work system is an example of the tendency to maximize surplus labour by extending working hours.

Karl Marx also discussed the detrimental effects of overwork on labours, comparing it to a machine that breaks down more quickly if overused. He noted that “a man who has no leisure, whose whole life, apart from physical distractions such as sleep, food, etc., is absorbed by his toil for the capitalist, is not unlike that of a burdened animal (Marx, 1969).

The mention of “pre-schoolers deliberately not napping” highlights the severe impact on labours' well-being, as they are deprived of necessary rest periods, further emphasizing the exploitative nature of extended working hours.

Nanny initially only wanted a job that was light and not too taxing on her studies, but the reality she faced was very different from expectations. Here's an excerpt:

*"College student Nanny wanted a 12-hour-a-week gig, but soon enough, she is soon working triple-overtime attending 'Family Day' at preschool and being asked by a 'Long-Term Development Consultant' what 'methodology' she follows in dressing young Grayer." (p. 2).*

The college-aged Nanny initially sought a job with a 12-hour workweek, but ended up working more than that, including attending 'Family Day' at the kindergarten. This situation is in line with Karl Marx's observation that capital tends to extend the working day to the maximum extent physically possible to increase surplus labour and profits. The Nanny's working hours have been extended far beyond the previously agreed time, reflecting this tendency.



There is a quote given to Nanny not to overexert herself in her work. This situation illustrates one's concern for the well-being of Nanny, who may appear exhausted or stressed due to the heavy workload.

*“Well, just don't wear yourself out. It's not worth it.”* (p. 99).

The above quote describing the concern about being overworked suggests that Nanny is exerting a lot of effort perhaps more than is reasonable or sustainable, yet this effort may not be matched by fair compensation. This indicates surplus value extraction, where the Nanny's hard work generates more value than she receives in compensation.

Nanny expresses her frustration and exasperation over working eighty hours a week for the past month, only to feel unappreciated and undercompensated. The following data shows that Nannies work above the average person does:

*“I worked, like, eighty hours a week for the past month and for what? I'll tell you for what. Earmuffs!” I sigh exasperatedly, looking out through my hair to where the row of black kitten heels along the wall transitions into a colorful array of Chinese slippers.”* (p. 123).

In the quote above Nanny mentions that she worked “eighty hours a week for the past month,” which indicates an excessive amount of working time. According to Karl Marx, surplus value is generated when labours produce more value during their working hours than the wages they receive (Marx, 1963). Excessive working hours indicate that the individual is generating significant surplus value for the employer, as they are likely not being compensated proportionally for the extra hours worked. This is in line with Karl Marx's statement that the general tendency of capitalist production is to lower the average standard of wages and increase the extraction of surplus value from labours.

The quote also reflects the control that employers have over labours' labour. Labours' time and energy are directed towards producing value for the employer, often at the expense of their well-being. This control over labour is a fundamental aspect of Karl Marx's theory of exploitation, where capitalists extract as much value as possible from labours' labour.

Nanny described her extreme fatigue and inability to sleep due to Grayer's constant coughing echoing throughout the apartment. She checks the clock and sees that it is 2:36 am, emphasizing how late it is and how little rest she gets. This situation highlights her physical and mental strain, as well as the demands of her job that lasts into the early hours of the morning. Evidence of this description can be found in the following data below:

*I roll over for the eighth time in the last fifteen minutes. I'm so tired that my body feels weighted, but every time I'm about to drift off, Grayer's hacking cough echoes through the apartment. I reach over to pull the clock back toward me and the red numbers read 2:36A.M. Jesus.” (p .138).*

The quote illustrates the grueling conditions under which Nanny works. Karl Marx argued that exploitation occurs when workers are not compensated fairly for their labour and are subjected to oppressive working conditions.

In this passage, Nanny's extreme fatigue and inability to sleep due to Grayer's cough exemplify how her labour extends beyond normal working hours, infringing on her rest and personal time. This highlights the excessive demands placed on her, with little regard for her well-being, reflecting the exploitative nature of her employment. Despite her physical and emotional exhaustion, she is compelled to remain attentive and responsive, demonstrating how her labour is continuously

extracted without adequate rest or recovery, thus embodying the core of Karl Marx's critique of exploitation.

In the novel *The Nanny Diaries*, there are quotes that describe situations where Nannies experience several exploitation through long working hours and excessive responsibility without getting enough rest.

*Staring up at the Xes' guest-room ceiling, I try to add up the few hours of sleep I've managed to get in the past three nights and the total makes me even heavier. (p. 138).*

In the quote above, Nanny describes her physical condition, which is very exhausted due to continuous work without adequate rest. In Karl Marx's theory, the exploitation of labour often involves long and exhausting working hours, where labours are forced to work beyond the limits of their physical capabilities without proper remuneration. In Nanny's case, she had to work for 24 hours a day, seven days a week, without sufficient time to rest. This is clearly a form of exploitation as the employer is overusing her energy without providing proper compensation or time off.

Nanny's non-stop work shows how employers take maximum advantage of labour without considering the welfare of the labour. Nanny's exhaustion also reflects the injustice and lack of humanity in the employment relationship, where labours are seen as mere tools to achieve maximum profit for the employer (Engels, 1867).

The long hours of continuous work make Nanny's physical and mental condition very exhausted, as evidenced by the quote below:

*I'm so tired I feel like my eyes are filled with playground sand. Desperate to regain some semblance of lucidity, I step carefully around the debris to locate my headphones and plug them into the stereo. (p. 227).*

The unreasonably long working hours not only drained Nanny of her energy but also disrupted her mental well-being. Nanny's condition described in this quote shows that she is on the verge of total exhaustion, which is a direct result of long and unhealthy working hours. According to Karl Marx, slavery tends to maximize the use of labour for maximum profit without regard for the health and well-being of labours. Nanny's situation is an example of how human resources are misused and left in conditions that are detrimental to their well-being.

Because the duration of working hours exceeds the reasonable limit, Nanny lacks rest hours, making her too exhausted.

*I'm bone tired from spending twenty-four/seven keeping Grayer entertained as his mood has blackened and fever risen. (p. 138).*

In this quote, Nanny works “twenty-four/seven,” which means she doesn't get proper rest. This is a form of exploitation as she is forced to work beyond reasonable limits without getting adequate compensation or time off.

Nanny is forced to work around the clock without adequate rest, showing an intensive form of exploitation. The exhaustion she feels is not only physical but also mental, as she has to look after a sick and cranky Grayer all day. This reflects Karl Marx's view that in the capitalist system, labours are often squeezed for their labour supported. This not only deprives Nanny of her right to personal time and rest, but also lowers her overall quality of life, which is the hallmark of labour exploitation in Karl Marx's view.

### 3. Unsafe Working Conditions

Mr. X's poor habit of infidelity serves as an example of the insecure working conditions in this story, as Nanny feels pressured mentally and has responsibilities outside of her role as a nanny. This is the quote that:

*"Things only get worse when Mr. X's mistress expects Nanny to help facilitate her employer's affair." (p. 2).*

The quote above illustrates this form of exploitation by highlighting how Nanny is forced to engage in situations that do not fall under her work responsibilities, which creates an unsafe and uncomfortable working environment. In Karl Marx's theory, unsafe working conditions are not just about physical danger but also include moral and emotional distress brought about by unfair and unethical tasks.

When Nanny is asked to help facilitate her employer's affair, she is placed in a vulnerable position and potentially damages her reputation and well-being. This creates an unsafe work environment as Nanny is forced to perform actions that go against her moral values without additional compensation. The quote is a clear form of exploitation, where the employer uses her power to demand more from the labour without considering the labour's well-being. This condition reflects the structural injustice in capitalist labour relations, where labours are not only exploited economically but also morally and emotionally, as they are forced to fulfill unethical and detrimental demands without equal remuneration. In this context, Marxian exploitation encompasses the moral and emotional distress experienced by labours due to unsafe and unfair working conditions.

Before Nanny worked with Mr.X's family, there were 6 nannies who had worked with them. It turned out that in that situation they had an unpleasant experience and only made a trivial mistake, one of them was fired. Here is the quote:

*"That woman is pure evil. They have six nannies in four months before Caitlin no one stayed. And one got fired for giving him a corn muffin in the park." (p. 200).*

A very high turnover rate is a major sign of a toxic work environment. In Karl Marx's theory of exploitation of work, this condition suggests that labours cannot survive in work due to poor working conditions, both physically and mentally. This reflects job instability and suggests that nannies may be subjected to significant stress, ill-treatment, or inhumane working conditions. A Nanny simply for giving corn muffins to a child she is caring for shows injustice and contempt for labours. In Karl Marx's view, this is a form of exploitation in which the employer has the absolute power to dismiss labours without a valid reason. It also shows that labours have no job security and live in constant fear of losing their jobs due to trivial things.

In addition to cheating, Family X's old maid has a bad habit of consuming illegal substances. Of course, this put Nanny in an unsafe and toxic environment which Nanny actually had to adapt to.

*"What's she on?" I ask, though I already have a pretty good idea. "Coke. Alcohol. Prescription stuff when she can't sleep." (p. 210).*

The use of these substances not only reflects her employer's personal problems, but also creates an unhealthy and unstable working environment for Nanny. This shows how Nanny has to work in unsafe and toxic conditions, which reflects Karl Marx's theory of the exploitation of labours through unhealthy working conditions. Her employer's reliance on hazardous substances creates an unstable

and dangerous work environment, which negatively affects Nanny's mental and emotional health. Furthermore, these conditions exacerbate Nanny's alienation from her work, making her feel alienated and unsupported in dealing with the daily challenges of the workplace.

There are situations where Nanny feels forced to get involved in the drama of her employer's family affair, which is actually outside of her job responsibilities.

Here's the quote:

*He was having an affair with Mrs. X. "WHAT??!!" I nearly drop the sheet "I'm sorry, I'm just so burned out. I know I'm way too consumed by this job. I really don't want to care if he had a first wife. I really don't want to spend tonight talking about them. (p. 215).*

When Nanny states that she does not want to care about her employer's personal relationships or talk about them at night, it shows that work has gone beyond reasonable professional boundaries. In a healthy work environment, labours should have clear boundaries between their work and personal lives. However, in Nanny's case, these boundaries seem blurred, creating a toxic work environment where labours feel trapped and constantly stressed.

In this quote, Nanny also expresses her need to not get involved in her employer's personal matters. However, the inability to separate work from personal matters suggests that Nanny lacks the emotional support necessary to maintain a balance between work and personal life. This is another aspect of unsafe working conditions where labours are left to handle emotional stress without adequate support.

## **B. Nanny's Struggle Against Labour Exploitation**

According to Karl Marx, there are two actions of labour struggle that are found in *The Nanny Diaries* novel, namely protests and negotiations with employers. The protests here show a lot of protests made by Nanny to family X, more precisely Mrs. related to salaries and workloads that exceed the capacity and agreement at the beginning of the job. And Nanny also proposed negotiations related to the salary given by Mrs. X because the salary given was very erratic and relatively very small.

### **1. Protest**

Protest is an act of voicing dissatisfaction or demanding changes to a certain policy, condition, or situation. Protests are also interpreted as direct actions by labours to fight exploitation and demand change (Marx, 1969). Through protests, labours demand improved working conditions, decent wages, and other rights, while challenging existing power structures. The protests are not just about immediate issues such as wages and working hours, but also reflect efforts to change the social and economic structures underlying exploitation.

There is a quote that Nanny is burdened with tasks that are clearly beyond the responsibilities that she should carry. His mother spoke to Nan confirming that the task was not included in her job description.

*"Nan, this is not even within a million miles of your responsibility. You don't have to be the one to tell her. Trust me it's not in your job description."* (p. 135).

The above quote shows how labours are often forced to perform tasks that are outside the agreed scope of work. In this case, Nanny is asked to take on



responsibilities that are not included in her job description, which reflects the exploitation and oppression often experienced by labours in the capitalist system.

The above quote is an example of how employers exploit labours by constantly expanding their duties and responsibilities without providing additional compensation or equivalent rewards. This deepens the alienation experienced by labours, as they feel increasingly alienated from their work and the value they create. In this situation, Nanny is forced to carry out an unfair task, which not only adds to the workload but also causes emotional and psychological stress. Karl Marx saw this as part of a broader class struggle, in which labours had to constantly struggle to maintain fair limits in their work and resist employers' attempts to exploit them further. This reflects structural injustices in capitalist labour relations, where labours are often forced to do more work without equal rewards, while employers continue to accumulate profits from their hard work.

There is a quote from Nanny explaining firmly to her employer that the tasks she does, such as caring for and raising her employer's children, are a form of work or labour. Here's the quote:

*There's been lot of confusion, so let me make this perfectly clear for you: this is job—that's right, j-o-b, job—that I've been doing is hard. Raising your child is labour. (p. 303)*

The quote above describes a form of protest from Nanny who tries to clarify and affirm the value of work that is often ignored by her employer. This quote is a form of protest against the capitalist tendency to underestimate household chores and childcare as something that does not require compensation or rewards on par with other jobs. Firmly stating that "childcare is labour," labours challenge traditional views that disparage reproductive work. The above quote is an attempt

to broaden the definition of work to include important tasks that support the sustainability of society, but are often not appreciated in the context of a capitalist economy. This protest is a form of struggle to recognize and appreciate all types of labour, including those carried out in the domestic sphere.

Nanny expressed her frustration over the very poor working conditions and very low wages. She described ten days of work full of suffering and stated that she was only paid three dollars an hour for the job. This phrase shows the injustice and exploitation it has experienced.

*But for ten straight days of unmitigated, torturous hell, you paid me three dollars an hour! So, before you wrap up a year of my life to be trotted out as an anecdote at the next museum benefit. (p. 302)*

This quote expresses labours' anger at extremely low wages and inhumane working conditions for ten days. Karl Marx saw this as a clear example of exploitation in which the labour of labours is overexploited for unfair rewards. These protests reflect labours' struggle to gain recognition for the value of their work and demand appropriate compensation. By highlighting the injustices in the wages received, labours seek to expose the inequalities that are often hidden in capitalist labour relations.

The quote above describes how the ten-day experience of labours was filled with "unbearable hell," showing the physical and emotional suffering experienced. Labours express their frustration with employers who don't seem to care and only see their years of employment as stories for entertainment at charity events. This reflects the dehumanization experienced by labours, where their hard work and suffering are reduced to mere anecdotes for high-end entertainment.

There is a quote that Nanny vented her anger at her employer for the lack of recognition and appreciation for the role and effort she has made in raising her employer's children. She emphasizes the various skills and duties that have been taught to the child, and emphasizes her identity as a caregiver, not as a friend or an equal to her employer.

*I'VE BEEN RAISING YOUR SON! I've been teaching him how to talk. How to throw a ball. How to flush your Italian toilet. I am not a med student, a business student, an actress, or a model and I am in no shape or form a 'friend' to that crackpot you married. Or purchased or whatever." I shudder in disgust. (p. 303).*

The above quote illustrates a strong form of protest from a caregiver who feels disappreciated for the work and dedication that has been given in caring for her employer's children. In this quote, the caregiver highlights the different aspects of the work that has been done, such as teaching the child to talk, playing ball, and even doing simple household chores. By stating "I'VE BEEN RAISING YOUR SON!" the caregiver demands recognition for his significant contribution to the employer's family life. The above quote is a form of labours' struggle for proper recognition and reward, countering the capitalist tendency to neglect work that does not directly contribute to financial gain. The Nanny affirmed that even though she is not a medical student, business, actress, or model, her work is very important and valuable.

Nanny delivered a rebuke to her wealthy employer who was emotionally and physically absent from her child's life. She highlights her employer's indifference towards her own family, even though she has provided many toys for her child. Nanny is frustrated by the fact that her employer never enjoys time with her child and only relies on money to replace emotional presence. Here is the quote:

*I pause to catch my breath, looking around at all the toys he's paid for and never once enjoyed with his son. "There are people in your home human beings drowning in their desire for you to look them in the eye. You made this family. And all you have to do is show up and like them. It's called 're-la-ting.' So get over whatever totally-absent-buying-your-affection parenting that you received and get here, man because this is your LIFE and you're just pissing it away!" "Woof". (p. 304).*

Nanny criticizes the dysfunctional family structure where employers use wealth to replace emotional and physical presence. It shows how the rich to remain emotionally uninvolved in their family life. Nanny uses her words as a weapon against the employer and demands a change in the family dynamic. This is a direct act of resistance aimed at changing the employer's behavior and improving the emotional conditions in the household.

This quote also illustrates the tension in the employer-employee relationship, where the nanny feels the need to educate her employer about his responsibilities as a parent. This highlights the power imbalance and how Nanny tries to negotiate her role and responsibilities within Mr. X family.

## **2. Negotiation**

Negotiation is the process by which two or more parties communicate and negotiate to reach an agreement that benefits all parties. In the context of employment relations, negotiations usually take place between labours and employers. The goal is to reach an agreement on various issues such as salaries, working hours, benefits, and working conditions. Successful negotiations can result in a collective bargaining agreement that governs the rights and obligations of both parties.

Nanny tries to emphasize the importance of cooperation to ensure that her working hours are in accordance with the original agreement. This shows that Nanny feels that the previously agreed limitations on working hours are not being

respected, and she is trying to assert her rights so that she does not continue to be exploited.

*And this means that we need to try together to make sure that I am working the hours upon which we both agreed." (p. 125).*

This sentence shows that Nanny is trying to renegotiate or affirm the agreement that has been made regarding working hours. This is a form of struggle where the labour tries to defend her rights and ensure that the employer fulfills his part of the employment agreement.

Nanny shows awareness of her rights and tries to communicate assertively with the employer. The phrase “we need to try together” reflects the attempt to reach a common understanding and solidarity in an effort to ensure that the working hours agreement is respected.

After several previous incidents, Nanny did not want a repeat of previous incidents such as excessive working hours. There was a moment when Nanny invited Mrs. X to talk about the working hours she would be working on Wednesday the 3rd. Here is the evidence of the data quote:

*I would like to have a conversation regarding the hours you listed for Wednesday the third. I believe I took him shopping that day. (p. 239).*

In this context, the Nanny demonstrates class consciousness by questioning the record of her working hours. She realizes that the hours recorded may not reflect the actual time spent working, which could mean she is not being paid fairly. This is the first step in labours' struggle to get proper recognition and compensation for their work. Nanny who requested a conversation about working hours is an example of this negotiation. She is trying to fight for her rights through dialogue with the employer, an important action in the dynamics of the worker-employer

relationship. This negotiation reflects an attempt to achieve fairer working conditions and appropriate rewards for work performed.

Nanny's protest against unreasonable working hours or excessive expectations from her employer. Here is the quote:

*Okay now listen. If I say. Two days a week, you should respond. Okay two days a week. If I say, I have to leave at three because I have a lecture. (p. 302).*

In this excerpt, the labour firmly stipulates that she will work two days a week and must leave work at three to attend college. This is a form of resistance to the employer's control, showing that the labour is trying to set time limits and priorities in her life. Karl Marx saw this as an example of a labour's struggle for recognition and respect for their needs outside of work, such as education and personal development.

Nanny's request to negotiate her working hours in the quote above, often conflicts with the interests of employers who want full flexibility from their labours. This conflict reflects a fundamental tension in the employer-employee relationship, where Nannies seek to maintain their autonomy and well-being, while employers seek to maximize output at the expense of labours' work-life balance. Karl Marx saw labour resistance as part of a larger struggle to reduce alienation and demand fairer rights within the workplace. Without this struggle, Nannies would continue to be trapped in conditions that exploit them, where their personal needs and development are ignored in favor of the employer's profits (Marx, 1969).

At the end of *The Nanny Diaries* by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus, after Nanny struggles with her work exploitation, she reaches her breaking point after enduring months of mistreatment and neglect by family X. After being unfairly

accused and seeing the emotional impact the family's behavior has on Grayer, she decides to leave her job. After being unfairly accused and seeing the emotional toll the family's behavior takes on Grayer, she decides to leave her job.

In the climax, Nanny confronts Mrs. X, confronting her about her lack of appreciation and respect. She leaves a poignant note expressing her feelings and highlighting the emotional and psychological impact of her job. Nanny's departure is bittersweet, as she cares deeply for Grayer but realizes that staying in such a toxic environment would not be sustainable for her own well-being.

### **C. Labour Exploitation in the Novel *The Nanny Diaries* relate to the Labour Exploitation in United States America in the early 2000s?**

The labor exploitation depicted in *The Nanny Diaries* mirrors some of the broader issues of worker exploitation in the United States during the early 2000s. The novel highlights themes such as long working hours, low wages, and the lack of worker protection for domestic laborers, which closely relate to real-life exploitation of low-wage workers, including nannies and domestic help, during that time. Many of these workers, often immigrants or vulnerable individuals, faced erratic pay, informal contracts, and poor working conditions without proper legal recourse or union support.

In the U.S., particularly in the early 2000s, the domestic labor sector was underregulated, with workers not fully covered by federal labour laws, including minimum wage and overtime protections under the Fair Labor Standards Act. This exploitation of labor, often hidden within affluent households, paralleled the struggles seen in *The Nanny Diaries*, where the protagonist faces inconsistent pay,

emotional manipulation, and overwork without proper recognition or compensation.

*The Nanny Diaries* indirectly comments on the larger issue of labour inequality, a problem that affected many sectors of the American workforce during this period, especially for domestic workers and those in precarious employment situations. This reflection is important for understanding the intersection of class, labor, and exploitation in modern-day society.

The challenges faced by the protagonist in *The Nanny Diaries* also reflect the broader economic dynamics tied to capitalism and class stratification during the early 2000s. Karl Marx's theory of labor exploitation, which focuses on the capitalist class extracting surplus value from workers' labor, is evident in both the fictional narrative and real-world domestic labor conditions. In the novel, the nanny's long working hours, coupled with emotional labor, produce significant value for the wealthy family she works for, while she receives disproportionately low compensation in return. This mirrors Marx's critique of how the capitalist class benefits from the unpaid or underpaid labor of workers, who are left alienated from the products of their labor.

Moreover, the invisibility of domestic labour, both in *The Nanny Diaries* and in real life, underscores the devaluation of this work in capitalist societies. Domestic workers, often women and immigrants, perform essential tasks that maintain the functioning of households and economies, yet this labour remains undervalued, unrecognized, and exploited. The lack of regulation and worker protections in the early 2000s, as well as the absence of collective bargaining power,



left these workers vulnerable to exploitation. This historical context allows readers to view *The Nanny Diaries* not only as a personal story but as a social commentary on the systemic exploitation faced by low-wage workers in the U.S.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### **A. Conclusion**

The researcher concludes that Karl Marx's theory of labor exploitation provides a valuable framework for understanding the dynamics of injustice and inequality in labor relations. Labor exploitation, which involves extracting more value from labor without appropriate compensation, is evident in Nanny's situation, where her low and erratic salary, long working hours, and unsafe working conditions exemplify systemic exploitation. Nanny's wages do not reflect the amount of work and responsibility she carries, and the irregularity in payment, along with low compensation, mirrors the broader exploitation that occurs in the employment relationship between labor and employer.

Nanny's experiences closely parallel the real-life exploitation faced by domestic workers in early 2000s America. At that time, many nannies and domestic workers, particularly immigrants, encountered similar conditions: low pay, lack of legal protections, and abusive work environments. These workers often lived in isolation, dependent on their employers for housing and work, and lacked recourse to legal action due to their undocumented status or the informal nature of their employment. Nanny's struggles with inconsistent pay and excessive working hours echo the conditions of many domestic workers in the United States during that period, who faced widespread violations of wage laws and overwork without adequate compensation.

In addition, Marx's emphasis on the struggle of laborers to resist injustice and demand change is reflected in Nanny's actions throughout the novel. Her demands for fair pay and attempts to negotiate her working hours represent forms of resistance against the exploitation she experiences. This mirrors the real-life efforts of domestic workers in early 2000s America to organize and fight for better rights and working conditions. During this time, organizations such as the *National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)* began advocating for the rights of domestic workers, pushing for legal recognition and protections that would reduce exploitation and improve their working conditions.

Overall, this analysis shows the relevance of Karl Marx's theory in understanding and exposing the injustices experienced by domestic laborers like Nanny, both in fiction and in reality. The novel not only highlights the personal struggles of one worker but also sheds light on broader systemic issues of labor exploitation, which were prevalent in early 2000s America. Issues such as low wages and erratic pay, lengthened working hours, and unsafe working conditions remain relevant today, and through Marx's perspective, it becomes clear how vital it is to continue striving for justice and equality in the world of work, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized labor groups like nannies and domestic workers.

### **B. Suggestion**

In analyzing *The Nanny Diaries* using Karl Marx's theory, the researcher has provided deep insight into the forms of exploitation experienced by the Nanny. This analysis has successfully highlighted how the low wages and erratic salary unfairness in payment, long working hours, and unsafe working conditions reflect

the principles of exploitation described by Karl Marx. However, there are still gaps for further research. For example, further research could explore how other aspects of Karl Marx's theory such as labour alienation or capitalist ideology contribute to the dynamics of the relationship between Nanny and her employer. In addition, an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates feminist perspectives or post-colonial theory could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how gender and racial factors influence Nanny's experience of exploitation. As such, this research opens the door for further studies that can enrich the discussion on labour exploitation in fictional literature and its application to broader social contexts.

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## **CURRICULUM VITAE**



Faizal Ridha Kirana was born in Tangerang on April 26<sup>th</sup> 2002. He graduated from SMAN 1 Kab. Tangerang, Banten. He started his higher education in 2020 at the Department of English Literature at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and finished in 2024. During his study in the University, he has participated

in several volunteer activities at the campus.