

2-9-2005

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The Effects of Globalization on Women in Developing Nations

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Soc. 380 Ind. Study

Introduction

Within the past two decades, globalization has created a tremendous impact on the lives of women in developing nations. Globalization can be defined as “a complex economic, political, cultural, and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken a global or transnational form (Moghadam 1999). With the establishment of international free trade policies, such as North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and GATT, transnational corporations are using the profit motive to guide their factories toward developing nations in search of “cheap” female labor. Corporations prefer female labor over male labor because women are considered to be “docile” workers, who are willing to obey production demands at any price. In developing nations, certain types of work, such as garment assembly, is considered to be an extension of female household roles. Therefore, cultural influences in developing nations also impacts employment stratification.

Bringing a high demand of employment opportunities for women in developing nations creates an instantaneous change within the social structure of these societies. Although the demand for female employment brings about an array of opportunities and a sense of independence, the glass ceiling continues to exist with the “feminization of poverty” (Moghadam 1999). Researchers in the fields of Sociology, Anthropology, and Economics have collected empirical data that shows the consequences of globalization on the lives of women and their families in developing nations. Given these circumstances and the empirical evidence collected in the various studies, does globalization have an overall positive or negative impact on the live of women in developing nations?

Economic Globalization

The world economic market depends on the flow of imports and exports between developed and developing nations. Throughout history, developing nations are faced with the lack of capital for the internal development of their country. Deficient funds also puts limitations on the amount of imports transferred from developed to developing nations. In order to stabilize the flow of international capital, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) enforce structural adjustment loans (SALs) in developing nations. The amount of power and influence over the World Bank and IMF depends on the amount of capital being invested into the World Bank. The United States has an extremely large amount of capital invested into the World Bank, and is therefore a major instrument in determining the actions and procedures taken by the IMF and World Bank.

The IMF creates “one sided structural adjustment[s] involving the destruction of real economic activity as well as attempts to construct new forms of production bit without a corresponding destruction of financial capital and without a reconstruction of international financial flows” (Elson 1992). Structural adjustments are mainly the privatization of exports in developing nations. SALs were first exercised in African and Latin American countries “as a result of the debt crisis of the early 1980s” (Moghadam 1999). Corporations and the World Bank wanted to prevent the future loss of capital from overseas investments. They decided to work collectively with foreign governments to develop a World Market that would ensure high productivity rates and profit gains from developing nations. Investors felt that developing nations were incapable of surviving in the World Market without the aid of developed nations. As a result, several industries (i.e.: agriculture and clothing) in developing countries were privatized by

corporations (such as Nabisco and Ann Taylor). Privatization, which causes a dependence on imports from developed nations because the loans from the World Bank, is used to support export factories and can not be distributed to support local firms that don't have an international affiliation.

Structural adjustments also involve "cuts in public expenditure, reductions in public sector employment, higher prices for food and other crops, and reductions in the role of government intervention in the economy" (Elson 1992). Rather than allowing developing nations to spend the loans on healthcare, education, and other "quality of life" improvement projects, the World Bank and IMF are primarily concerned with debt repayment and creating profits for corporations in developed countries. Structural adjustments cause a cyclic pattern of dependence of developing nations upon the World Bank for monetary funding. SAs allow transnational corporations the freedom to enter into developing nations and take advantage of the labor force, while stripping these countries of the chance to become autonomous. Desperate for loans from the World Bank, mainly to pay off debts and buy imported goods, developing nations are willing to sell off vital aspects of their country (land, resources, and labor) to the World Market.

Capitalism motivates corporations towards countries that provide the most labor or resources at the cheapest cost. Corporations have changed the employment structure in developing nations. Prior to development, men and women relied on agricultural production as their main source of occupation. Upon entering these nations, corporations have created a sectoral shift in the labor force from the agricultural sector, to working in assembly production. Empirical evidence shows that there has been a significant decline in male agricultural work "from 62% to 14%... [and] a similar decline in agriculture [for women]" (Schultz 1990). Despite this trend, assembly production is

dominated entirely by a female labor force, with the exception of managers and foremen.

Corporations desire female labor for assembly production because women will “work in labor-intensive industries at wages lower than men would accept, and in conditions that unions would not permit” (Moghadam 1999). Females are attracted to assembly production because of the lack of opportunities for female employment in other industries (aside from the informal sector). The main reason for this lack of employment is gender employment segregation, which subjects women to inferior employment positions than those held by men. When comparing occupations, “nearly two-thirds of women in manufacturing are categorized as laborers, operators and production workers while only a few can be found in the administrative and managerial positions predominantly held by men” (Tzannatos 1998). Corporations are reinforcing women’s subordinate economic position in society by offering them inferior employment positions and wages that sustain this position.

During the 1960s Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corporation “was among the earliest [corporations] to expand [their production] overseas [to Hong Kong]” (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Other corporations followed this overseas trend, taking their export production plants to other developing countries such as: Mexico, South Korea, Hong Kong, the Philippines, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Honduras, Guatemala, and several other developing nations. Capitalist competition among various corporations sparked their interest in cheap labor overseas, which enables them to gain higher profits from cheaper production costs. Corporations are required to pay American Workers, at least, minimum wage (which varies according to state). A female assembly line worker in the U.S. would probably earn “between \$3.10- \$5.00 an hour,” whereas, a female

assembly worker in a developing nation, doing the same work, would earn \$3.10-\$5.00 for the entire day's work (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Despite these numbers, "wages earned in export factories are also usually higher than what they could earn as wage laborers in alternative low-skilled female occupations, such as farm labor, [and] domestic service..." (Lim 1990). These wages allow women and their families to provide more household items (i.e. television), than alternative occupation wages. Therefore, the increase in factory wages over other forms of employment is a major influence on young females for choosing factory employment over the alternatives.

This huge variation in the amount of wages earned between developed nations and developing nations has also created competition in developing nations over which country will work for the lowest wage. Corporations realize that inhabitants of developing countries are living under poverty-stricken conditions and are desperate for employment. While thousands of factory workers are living in poverty, multinational corporate leaders would rather "place their own profit and growth ahead of the needs of their host countries" (Harper and Leicht 2002). Rather than bringing their production factories to countries that need the most economic assistance, corporations are merely concerned with which country can allow the corporation to make the highest profit from their labor and resources.

Most corporations insist that the wages distributed to the female factory workers in developing nations are enough for them to support themselves and their families. Some researchers have found that, "the minimum wage in most East Asian [and Latin American] countries comes nowhere near to covering basic living costs" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Corporations have argued that the cost of living is cheaper in developing nations; therefore the lower wages allow developing families to survive on a

subsistence level income. Medical benefits and educational assistance for children are not offered in work packages. Factory workers have to finance these needs from their weekly wages. What type of data source are the corporate analysts who are making these claims using? Are they looking at the average cost of food, clothing, healthcare, and education in their assessment?

Gloria Scott, head of the World Bank's Women and Development Program, claims that "our job is to help eliminate poverty [in developing nations] ... [and] it is not our responsibility if the multinationals come in and offer such low wages" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). This statement shows the extent to which the World Bank is willing to go to help developing nations. From this statement, it appears that they are unable to make the correlation between low wages and poverty. The officials at the World Bank are not as naïve at former statement made by Gloria Scott. They are aware of the fact that low wages contributes to poverty and continuous loans will further the debt of developing nations to the World Bank. The World Bank is not working towards the needs of developing nations. They are only concerned with corporate investments and how production costs in developing nations affect the economies of developed nations.

Offshore sourcing enables corporations to avoid the wage, health, safety, and environmental policies of developed nations. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) work closely with the IMF and World Bank to ensure that developing countries base their economies on the reliance of corporations for employment and survival in the World Market. Foreign governments drop "protective trade barriers... [and]...offer[s] tax incentives" to investors in order to attract corporations and their factories to developing countries (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Subcontracting arrangements are available

to corporations, which allow corporations that don't want to own their own factory, the opportunity to establish production contracts with local firms.

Throughout the developing world, “there are over one million people employed in industrial free trade zones [(FTZs)]” (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Free Trade Zones (FTZs) are areas within developing nations where there is “customs free import of raw materials, components and equipment, tax holidays of up to 20 yrs and government subsidization of operating costs” (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Workers are treated like prisoners entering a penitentiary with high walls topped with barbed wire and a special police force that searches anyone leaving or entering the FTZ. Employees and supervisors are the only ones permitted with FTZs. If anyone is caught trespassing, they are subject to arrest and/or physical punishment by the police. The conditions within the zone are not publicly disclosed due to the lack of humanitarian treatment towards workers.

The lack of protective tariffs allows corporations to take advantage of female workers. Aside from low wages, women are also subjected to work in hazardous conditions that can cause health problems. The film entitled, *The Hidden Face of Globalization* (2003), discusses the effects of globalization and free trade on women in Bangladesh. All of the garment workers are young women who work long, tedious hours in order to support their families. Lengthy work hours and pressures to meet work quotas have caused nervous breakdowns in several female factory workers. Workers in textile factories are exposed to dust and lint which can cause lung disease. Electronic factory workers are exposed to carcinogenic chemicals without proper ventilation or tools to handle the dangerous materials. *The Hidden Face of Globalization* (2003) also states that factory workers are rarely given breaks during the day and cannot afford to

take sick days. Corporations, such as Sears and JCPenny, employ local subcontractors in developing nations that “show little concern for the health of their employees” (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Corporate leaders in the U.S. are using the “out of sight, out of mind” policy in regards to their factory workers. The corporate leaders use local subcontractors to carry out their “dirty work” and expedite the necessary force required to make profits from factory production.

The Hidden Face of Globalization (2003) also shows how female factory workers in FTZs are treated in terms of maintaining quota deadlines. The women are constantly verbally and physically abused in order to keep up with production demands from corporations. One woman in the film claimed that even though she was sick she had to continue working. Women are dying from working under such hazardous conditions. In Taiwan, “12 women died from inhaling toxic fumes at a Philco-Ford plant” (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). If corporations use portions of their profit to renovate factories and make them safer for workers, their production rates and the quality of goods produced might increase. A healthier work environment might also alleviate the physical abuse that some workers are exposed to because of slow production rates.

Free trade zones make it difficult for workers to unionize in order to attain their basic rights because of the lack protective social and economic policies. Since the governments of developing nations are restricted from creating trade regulation laws in free trade zones, workers have the arduous task of negotiating with the corporations that entered into their country in order to gain social and economic justice. Unfortunately, corporations have made unionization in free trade zones an almost unattainable task. The Jamaicans in the film *Life or Debt* (2001) also work in garment factories which are located in free trade zones. The conditions are similar to those in

Bangladesh because workers who want to unionize are fired from their jobs. The film also mentioned that workers who try to begin a radical movement are blacklisted and cannot work in other factories.

Other researchers have found that although “working conditions, and job security in the export factories are inferior to those in the developed countries, they are comparable if not superior to those found in women’s (and even men’s) jobs in most other sectors of these still poor, underdeveloped local economies” (Lim 1990). Women working in larger, modern factories have better opportunities for unionization. They are more capable than smaller factory workers to organize a political demonstration, such as a strike, to negotiate more rights. It is important to understand that when analyzing the economic conditions in developing nations, entirely Western views of social justice is liable to skew the data presented about working conditions and wages. Although women are subjected to certain terms and conditions, they are a significant improvement from traditional and alternative employment opportunities in these nations. The introduction of factory employment has improved the economic status for several families, even in the slightest way, as compared to other forms of employment. Regardless of the advantage of earning more capital in manufacturing industries, “the wages earned are often insufficient to support a family” (Lim 1997). Based on the literature, females hold a secondary status –compared to males- in the household and work environment. Therefore, although women in export factories are likely to be paid higher wages than women who are farm workers, the wages are not enough to keep them from depending on the financial support of males in their family.

Economically, the denial of union rights contributes to poverty in developing nations and reinforces the imperialistic domination of developed nations over

developing nations. Clearly then, structural adjustments are instruments of capitalistic imperialism over developing countries. They are not meant to develop the economies of developing nations. The dependency theory states that the “intrusion of Western capitalism destroys the self-sufficiency of Third World economies, loots them of resources, and blocks the ripening of diversified capitalist development” (Harper and Leicht 2002). The inability of female factory workers to generate enough capital to support themselves and their families shows that until wages increase and better working conditions are available, the economies of developing nations will continue to exist in poverty.

How can developing nations end this cycle of debt repayment and cease the amount of poverty within each nation? Idealistically, the solution to this matter would include workers being paid higher wages, the enactment of trade taxes, and the ability for each developing nation to produce a stable internal economy that does not rely solely on imports. Realistically, the world market is designed in terms of “winners and losers.” Developed nations are not going to allow developing nations to become economically independent because their goods and services are important assets to the wealthy economies of developed nations. Reducing the amount of interest owed to the World Bank is probably one of the first steps that should be taken to reducing poverty and the amount of debts owed to the World Bank.

Developing nations can also alleviate social and economic problems by imposing taxes on corporations for using their goods and services. This next step might be more of a challenge to achieve because of the corporate profit motive. The IMF, World Bank, and corporations have imposed a false consciousness over the governments of developing nations and their workers. Economically, developing nations are forced to

believe that they must accept the ban on restrictive trade laws and compete with other nations in offering the cheapest labor. If developing nations enact a standard trade tax or wage system, dependent on the specific country's GNP and GDP, developing nations would receive an increase in revenue that might help them to create a stable economy. Even with the imposition of higher wages and taxes, developed nations would still be paying an extremely discounted rate for the production of their goods-compared to the cost of employment in developed countries.

If the IMF and World Bank negotiate a set total for the amount of debt each country owes, less the interest rate, developing nations would be able to pay off their debt. They can use the increased wage and tax revenue to manage import payments and promote social programs such as: healthcare, education, retirement plans and environmental protection. The debt issue is a major obstacle in the path of developing nations to improve their economies. With the alleviation of the debt cycle, developing nations will be able to improve the quality of life in their countries.

Production rates and working conditions are other concerns for factory workers. Corporations assume that orders can be produced in a short time span. They only take into consideration the amount of sales they are making on their merchandise. Rush orders are expected to arrive in perfect quality and condition, within the short time frame given. Are corporate leaders aware of the amount of hours needed in order to produce a rush shipment? Do corporate leaders equate factory workers with machines? Workers are "burnt out" from the pressure to meet their deadlines. Slaving in a factory for long hours without sleep has literally forced young women into retirement- mostly due to health related injuries.

Creating a ventilated work environment with proper lightening is just the beginning. Advanced technological equipment and the necessary equipment to handle hazardous goods can also decrease work related injury, while increasing the rate of production. Corporations should track and forecast their sales more carefully, in order to space out their factory orders and ensure the required delivery rate. If rush orders are necessary, factory foremen might consider hiring temporary or part-time workers to meet the quota. A rational means of increasing production would entail hiring more workers, rather than enforcing longer work hours to complete the quota. The addition of temporary workers can relieve the pressure from full time workers to meet their deadlines. Therefore, healthier working conditions would exist in the factory and a new class of temporary/part-time workers would become an addition to the developing nations' economies.

Given these alternatives, corporations can increase their production rates while assisting with the development of developing nations. Despite these alternatives, a major problem in terms of production cost is libel to occur. Corporations might continue to scout from country to country in search of the cheapest labor and taxes on exports. Setting a standard price per industry might help to alleviate this unfair form of competition. What about FTZs? Since FTZs are a major source of corporate attraction to developing nations, they should continue to exist with the enforcement of taxes and policies to ensure the rights of workers and the nation's economy. The zones should be changed to "discounted trade zones" and only allow corporations to work there for a limited time and then move their production to regular export factories. Workers with the least experience should work in DTZs and promoted to regular export factories upon accelerated experience and skill level. Temporay and part -time workers can also be

added to these zones to accommodate large shipments and rush orders. The temporary workforce might consist of young women looking for employment who have other responsibilities that prevent them from working full-time or older women who have surpassed the desirable age for factory employment but still want to contribute to the finances within the household. Clearly, economic globalization has the potential to create a variety of changes within the social structure of developing nations. In what ways has economic globalization contributed to the cultural changes within developing nations?

Cultural Globalization

The culture of female employment in developing nations is based on “formal labor, housework, and informal-sector production” (Ward 1990). Only a small proportion of women work in export factories compared to the entire female population. Most work in agriculture, perform housework, or are employed in the informal sector. Females in these nations are limited in society by patriarchal control. These societies claim that female labor is an extension of their household chores. This ideology is “interwoven in the capitalist economy to justify women’s subordination on the global assembly line, in the home and informal sector” (Ward 1990). Regardless of which sector of employment women are working in, they are given limited access to resources and authority over their work.

Informal-sector work “provides the intermediate link between formal waged labor and unpaid house work in that it...is unprotected waged labor...[that enables]...the survival and maintenance of ...families” (Ward 1990). Employment opportunities within the informal sector are also stratified according to gender. Like the formal sector, males

hold supervisory positions, while females are simply subcontracted workers. Women perform informal assembly work in their homes (done by most women) or factories as methods of survival. Working in the home allows women “to care for [their] children...and to retain control over the profits of their labor” (Ward 1990). Most women who choose this option are housewives who do not receive enough money from their husbands to pay for the basic necessities for their family’s survival (i.e. food and clothing). These women cannot seek formal sector employment due to their family responsibilities within the household. Informal/ domestic jobs also provide a survival strategy for women dealing with husbands who don’t want to contribute enough of their wages to provide for the families.

Although women may feel a sense of empowerment, their wages are substantially low in comparison to their male counterparts. Also, “women have the smallest shops, are the least able to compete [in the informal-sector] and are subject to more government inspections than men” (Ward 1990). The glass ceiling also exists in developing nations. Women are given a “taste” of independence that does not allow them to ascend to the same managerial positions as men. The fact that male supervisors believe that garment assembly is an extension of “female work” at home, causes supervisors to stigmatize all women as labors rather promote them to managers. They are confined to these positions because of gender roles and expectations. However, “unemployed...men refused to participate in their wives’ informal work because they felt they could be called away at any time for a waged job” (Ward 1990). This double standard causes women in developing nations to develop a double role of survival. The informal-sector enables women to maintain these roles without the dependence of her husband’s assistance.

There are other household issues that occur in relation to wages and survival. As mentioned earlier, several women seek informal jobs because their husbands are not contributing enough of their wages to ensure the family's survival. These men "simply reduce the amount of money they transfer to their wives so as to be able to maintain their preexisting level of alcohol and tobacco consumption" (Elson 1992). Why do men appear to be disconnected with their responsibilities to maintain the household? Alcohol and tobacco consumption usually leads to domestic arguments and is associated with domestic violence against women and children... [because] the men would often beat up the women [and children] to demand money for drink[s]" (Elson 1992). Men's addiction to alcohol and tobacco leads them to resort to using the money allocated towards household expenses after they have spent the money set aside for personal expenses. Does socialization play an important role in this situation? Since gender expectations allocated women as caregivers and domestic workers, do men feel detached from household responsibilities? Does the media play a role in the male consumption of alcohol and tobacco? Men may use these devices as a form of relaxation from a long day at work. If males spend more time with their families they might develop a closer bond to them that might limit their alcohol and tobacco intake.

Unfortunately, this alternative is a challenge to achieve. Several males would rather desert their families than give up alcohol or tobacco. Although this reduces the expenses within the household, females hold a subordinate position in society and are forced to depend on a man for adequate survival. The "number of women –headed households relying on insufficient and unstable remittances is reported to have grown" (Elson 1992). Family abandonment by males can be another reason for the advancement of poverty in developing nations. The unequal gender wages and limited

access to resources puts women in a disadvantaged position towards the survival of the families.

Another problem that exists among women in developing nations is that “unpaid domestic tasks are private rather than social and because they are both unpaid and private, there is no social system of incentives, of rewards and penalties, to encourage change” (Elson 1992). Women whose daily lives are centered around housework are solely dependent on their husbands for financial support. They do not have access to the public sector that will enable them to enter the market. The lack of assistance towards women who perform housework, places them in a vulnerable position in relation to their husbands. They might feel obligated to their husbands for financial needs and possibly withstand cases of abuse in order to provide for their families.

In Malay Islamic societies, men are given authority over their wives because “women are believed to be particularly weak in spiritual essence...a condition which makes women susceptible to irrational and disruptive behaviour” (Ong 1987). The motif of female weakness transcends through Malay society. Are females themselves weak or do social institutions promote female weakness? Females who are deserted by their husbands appear to be weak because they are unable to provide the basic necessities to their family. Their inability to meet their children’s needs is a result of the lack of social services and employment opportunities available to women. Why are men being paid more and given more opportunities if family responsibilities are assigned to women? In this instance, aren’t the males exhibiting irrational and disruptive behavior by ignoring their familial responsibilities?

Women are showing their strength by taking responsibility for their family after their husbands leave. Women in the informal-sector are also showing their strength by

taking on assembly employment, while managing their familial responsibilities. The governments of developing nations are denying women the opportunities to expand their strength to their fullest potential. If men are afraid that giving women opportunities for advancement would decrease male power, they have already done so by disassociating themselves from the family unit. Men might feel that buying tobacco, alcohol, or abandoning their families are forms of domination over women, but females have found ways to support their families. Either through support networks or informal employment, women are using their strength to overcome obstacles. What if governments in developing nations developed a social services system to further assist the survival of families?

A welfare system, like the one in the United States, is nonexistent in developing nations because of the lack of capital devoted to public expenditure. The implementation of a welfare system would give women financial support, healthcare, and access to employment. Women working in the informal-sector have an advantage over domestic workers because they are able to earn an income to contribute to the survival of their family. Do support networks also cater to women who perform domestic household work? Clearly women who perform this type of work are dependent on their husbands for financial security, since they are unable to provide a source of revenue. How are these women able to support their families if their husbands spend a large portion of their income on alcohol and tobacco? What about the domestic workers who are abandoned by their husbands? The implementation of a welfare system would enable these women to recover from these scenarios and support their families.

Corporations, the IMF and World Bank fail to investigate the social effects of economic globalization on the cultures in developing nations. Do they believe that

economic effects will not change the culture within these nations? If the quality of life in developing nations deteriorates due to the lack of social services, will that also have an adverse effect on the market? The health of laborers in developing nations is already withering away without the necessary access to healthcare or other facilities.

Corporations are oblivious to the fact that children in developing nations are the future laborers. If they are denied the basic necessities in life, how many of them will survive to adulthood? Although families in developing nations tend to be large, mainly due to the lack of birth control usage, there might be a significant decline in the number of family members due to illness or malnutrition. The women working in export factories are already exhibiting the adverse effects of the lack of healthcare. If their children are the next victims, who will carry out the future labor in factories? Corporations will lose money due to the decline in labor to produce merchandise for the World Market.

Knowing the dangers that are associated with export factories, why are so many young women still attracted to this form of labor?

According to the literature, females' subordinate status in developing society shows a correlation with their motivation toward factory employment. Young, school aged females are socialized to be passive and obedient in the classroom. In contrast, boys are encouraged to be leaders in the classroom and in class projects. In May lay cultures, males and females have to take an exam to proceed from primary to secondary school. Males who pass the exam, usually attend vocational or technical to prepare for industrial jobs. Unfortunately for young women, "form three is the end of their school career...[corporations take advantage of this by encouraging] school trips to the local FTZ after students have sat for their Form Three exams" (Ong 1987). From

this study, it is apparent that females are kept in a subordinate position in society by the incorporation of assembly production into their young lives.

Although a few females passed the Form Three exam and went on to further their education, “for most girls, however, Form Three is the end of their school career” (Ong 1987). Girls who move on to higher levels of education are also motivated toward factory production but often become dissatisfied with “work conditions and... [look] for better employment opportunities elsewhere” (Ong 1987). From this evidence, it appears that women with more educational opportunities have more options for earning a living than females with a limited educational background. Why are more females than males likely to fail the Form Three exams?

Based on the literature, young girls are given household chores and are required to assist with childcare, whereas boys, spend their “free time... [on] extracurricular school activities” (Ong 1987). Young females have to perform domestic chores in the house such as: cleaning and cooking, in addition to attending school and doing homework. Therefore, “their gradually increasing participation in these socially reproductive activities interferes with their... [performance] in school” (Ong 1987). Several females are unable to maintain a balance between household and school work responsibilities. Upholding strong family bonds become a major goal in a female’s life and it eventually causes her to lose focus on school. In contrast, males are relieved from these responsibilities and use their free time towards the benefit of their education.

The exam itself is tailored towards males. In several cases in the literature, the courses necessary to pass the exam are: “carpentry, agriculture, and domestic science (Ong 1987). Females usually do not enroll in the first two courses because they are considered “masculine” subjects. Domestic science is also not taken because females

are assumed to learn domestic responsibilities from their mothers and other roles performed at home. Therefore, females usually drop out of school because of this educational disadvantage.

In addition to household responsibilities and educational disadvantages, “the presence of the FTZ just down the road from the school [also] exerts an indirect influence on the poor performance of females students in secondary education” (Ong 1987). Females from poor families feel obligated to helping with the household finances and often choose to work in the FTZ as a means of survival. In comparison, young men, who “are engaged in wage employment ... [,] ... often resist making a regular contribution to the family budget because of their privileged status at home” (Ong 1987). As mentioned before, males are more likely than females to earn higher wages. Why is women’s work considered a means of survival, while males’ work is considered to be privileged? Again, there is a pattern of household dependence on females and the lack of financial responsibility on the behalf of males in the household.

The “family economy ideology” seen among poor families, reinforces patriarchal values which state that women should hold a limited/restricted position in society (Wolf 1997). Young women in Taiwan also end their educational career at an early age and are “socialized to be filial and to pay back the debt they incurred to their parents for brining them up” (Wolf 1997). Females have to repay their debt before getting married, which usually occurs at an early age. Therefore, since females are considered to be “short-term members ‘of the family, parents did not ‘waste time in schooling them” (Wolf 1997). This is a clear example of the lack of opportunities to females in Taiwan. Not only do most young women lack the educational background to advance in society, they are also considered to be less important to the family unit than males because of marital

factors. Treating females as subordinates to males within the family unit transcends throughout other institutions within society (especially education and employment). Females are also unable to advance because they relinquish their wages as a means of supporting the family. Retaining a portion of their wages would allow females to have more authority over their personal spending.

However, research performed in Java shows that young men were motivated towards factory employment based on “individual social and economic reasons, not for the betterment of the family economy” (Wolf 1997). Factory work in Java is considered to be a “higher status” job in comparison to agricultural labor (Wolf 1997). Women prefer working in factories than on farms because it frees them from the restrictions of familial control. Compared with agricultural work, several females felt that factory was easier and provided a better income. Factory work also brought females “into contact with males and females from other villages, [which] often led to romances and gave them some earnings of their own (Wolf 1997). Female workers enjoyed earning their own wages because it gave them the freedom to purchase “clothing, consumer goods for the household, and [their wages were also] made accessible to [their] parents for life-cycle events (birth, death, marriage,...)” (Wolf1997). Their low –wages caused females to be somewhat dependent on their families, while allowing them the independence of attaining certain goods or tasks. Javanese female factory workers also have more autonomy over choosing their own spouse- as opposed to traditional arranged marriages. Therefore, the remittance of wages, according to the literature, varies from one culture to another- where some females are more autonomous than others.

Working in export factories also has several other cultural effects on women's lives in developing nations. Sexual harassment "is another hazard of factory work, especially for women who are out late at night working the graveyard shift" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). According to the literature, women in the Bataan Export Processing Zone in the Philippines are faced with common encounters of harassment from male supervisors. Workers are "often told to lay down or be laid off" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Women often feel that they have to give in to their supervisors' sexual advances in order to keep their jobs. Some women began to wonder "what they've gotten themselves into" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Women wanted to know whether or not independence and earning their own wages was worth being subjected to unwanted sexual advances.

Another effect of women working in factories is that "westernized dress and changed lifestyles... [often cause women to be] ...rejected by their families and find it hard to reassimilate when they can no longer find employment on the assembly line" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Factory workers exhibit a different lifestyle compared to informal and agriculture workers. Although factory workers are still bound to domestic responsibilities, working in an FTZ or other export factories introduces western cultural values such as dating and delaying marriage. When factory workers can no longer find work on the assembly line, it is difficult for them to make the transition back into mainstream society and incorporate the same values they tried to escape from by working in export factories.

Another effect of export factories surrounds "the issue of women workers' morality [which is] debated by several women's groups, politicians, and community leaders [in several Asian countries]" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Female factory workers are

thought to be sexually explicit-especially those who don't live at home. Female workers "are often scorned by men as unsuitable marriage partners" (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 1998). Female workers also spend most of their youth working in factories –the age that most women in developing societies get married (age 16-24). Female workers are usually faced with competition over husbands once they leave the assembly line.

Based on this data, factory work appears to be a temporary form of independence for young women in developing nations. Although some women enjoy the freedom of delaying marriage, they soon realize that this form of independence might actually be a burden because finding a husband later in life is not as easy as in their youth. As mentioned earlier, dependence on a husband for survival is common among developing nations. Even though female factory workers are able to gain limited independence and autonomy over their expenditures, they have to return to mainstream society and get married in order to survive.

Corporations target young female workers without thinking about the cultural changes that they create within developing societies. Based on the literature, it appears that these females live a "westernized fantasy" by working in export factories. Corporations are imposing ethnocentric values (independence -both financial and socially) upon factory workers, without consideration for the implications that result from these value adjustments. The fact that female workers who leave the factories are forced to look for husbands in order to survive in society, makes it seem as though the efforts of these women to gain their independence were merely a waste of time. Corporations might be using the independence factor to lure young women into their factories. Nevertheless, females are still subjected to a subordinate status in society

once they leave the export factories. How can women reclaim this form of independence without depending on the males in developing nations for support?

Political Globalization

Women in various communities throughout developing nations have created self-help groups that “might provide a springboard to transformation if...[women] were redirected toward women’s strategic gender needs as well as toward their practical gender needs” (Elson 1992). Although women cannot prevent their husbands from leaving, they have joined together to address the problems in the public service sector, including: “housing, schools, nurseries, transport, social security, and hospitals” (Elson 1992). As mentioned earlier, the SALs require cuts in public expenditure. Therefore, poor women and children are unable to gain adequate access to the resources mentioned above. Women and children are suffering from the results of this inequality, as well as the effects of economic globalization. Since women are becoming the heads of households, shouldn’t the government acknowledge this form of social change and give them more access to resources?

Community support groups were somewhat successful in their attempts to implement prohibition in India. They’ve managed to reduce the amount of women being abused by their husbands over the consumption of alcohol. It is important to remember that “the degree to which survival and transformation strategies can be successful depends heavily on what happens to the international financial system” (Elson 1992). Women will continue to work in the informal-sector, with or without the help of their husbands, to support their families. The only way for women to gain access to increased wages or social services is to reform the system that maintains their

subordinate position. Joining together and forming support groups is a step in the right direction towards achieving more rights for women. Breaking through inequalities is the next step in the process towards achieving more rights for women in society.

Starting at the local level is important for women in developing nations because it enables more workers to join forces and create an awareness of women's needs throughout their country. These women share common backgrounds such as: abuse, poverty, and lack of adequate wages and resources. Creating support groups unites women towards a common goal in achieving more rights. The governments within developing nations should become aware that while males are being given more rights, wages, and access to resources, they are using these rights frivolously. Women are responsible for most of the household necessities and should be compensated in order to meet these needs.

During the U.N.'s Decade for Women (1976-85), women's groups from across international boundaries came together to discuss the impact of development on women in developing countries. Three goals that derived out of The Decade in order to reduce women's oppressed position in developing nations are: "Equality ([which] was seen primarily as a feminist issue coming from Western industrialized countries), Peace ([which] was included at the request of the Eastern Socialist bloc), and Development ([which] was perceived as key to the Third World countries of the South" (Bunch and Carrillo 1990). Feminism is the main foundation of these goals, which essentially want to address and resolve the pressing issue of domination over the lives of women around the world.

The U.N. Decade sparked the "development of global feminism... [where] women of the North and South [discuss] the diversity and commonality of our lives and about

how to ‘develop a global perspective with each of our movements’ on all the issues that affect women” (Bunch and Carrillo 1990). The organizations that attended The Decade discussed the male bias in development that fails to consider women’s needs. Women are not considered in development projects because of the patriarchal “persistence in looking at women only in their roles as mothers, ‘rather than as active agents,’ workers, and managers of resources” (Bunch and Carrillo 1990). An example of this scenario exists in Peru, where women are unable to access water for their daily chores because the male who has sole access to the water pump, works in the fields during the day. If a woman was in charge of the pump, women in the village would have adequate access to the water needed to complete their daily chores. Giving women power over their daily chores would advance their positions in society.

The literature also states that there are two long term goal of feminism: “1) the achievement of women’s equality, dignity, and freedom of choice through women’s power to control their own lives within and outside the home and 2) the removal of all forms of inequality and oppression through the creation of a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally (Bunch and Carrillo 1990). In regards to formal and informal employment, women’s work should be rewarded with wages and benefits that would enable them to support themselves and their family. Creating a just social and economic order will allow more women to further their education and to obtain managerial and technical positions. Allowing women who have worked in a certain industry to be promoted to managerial or higher level employment would also enable them to earn more wages to support their families. As mentioned earlier, females are the main providers for their families- since males tend to spend their money

on other means. Realizing this cultural factor and allocating higher paying jobs to females, would release their dependency on males for financial support.

Although The U.N. Decade established these essential goals to end the subordination of women, individual NGOs and grassroots organizations are tailored towards addressing specific issues surrounding development. Transnational solidarity networks, which are comprised of: “unions, movements, NGOs of local women working in ... [export processing zones]... as well as middle-class activists from the country and transnational NGO movements,” are formed when individual organizations work together with other organizations towards a common issue (Desai 2002). Women Working Worldwide, The Clean Clothes Campaign, Label Behind the Label, and DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) are examples of NGOs that are working to protect the rights for factory workers and strive to improve factory conditions. These NGOs incorporate “consumer education as a part of their advocacy network...” in order to raise public awareness about the inequalities that exist in developing nations (Desai 2002). Educating consumers might encourage them to support these NGOs or petition corporations for their inhumane practices against women in developing countries.

As mentioned earlier, the informal sector continues to play an important role in the survival of women in developing nations. The “Self- Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in India was one of the first organizations to define the various informal activities of women, such as vegetable vending, ragpicking and producing goods at home for sale as work” (Desai 2002). SEWA has been successful in unionizing informal workers in India and establishing a university to train women to

become leaders. SEWA continues to empower women in India, allowing them to maintain control over various aspects of their daily lives.

Another issue facing women in developing nations is the privatization of healthcare. As mentioned earlier privatization “has greatly reduced government funded primary care, thus limiting [the] access... [of healthcare to women]...” (Desai 2002). The Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT) in India conducts research on women’s health in India and provides health services to poor communities. Health Watch, which derived out of CEHAT, strives toward a “more woman centered approach to reproduction and eliminated the quotas that local health practitioners had to meet for population control” (Desai 2002). At the population conference in Cairo, the declaration emphasized that “the need to empower women and protect their human rights [is the best strategy of population control” (Desai 2002). Giving women more employment opportunities and power over their reproductive health will enable women to make more decisions in terms of family planning.

The environmental movement is another cause that has derived out of development. Deforestation and desertification caused by the increased need of natural resources in globalization has created several obstacles in the lives of women in developing nations. For women “in the Third World, destruction of the environment means that women have to spend more time every day to gather wood for fuel, fodder for cattle, and fetch drinking water” (Desai 2002). Spending more time on these chores results in less time spent on production in the informal sector. Therefore, women are not able to produce enough goods to ensure a sustainable income or maintain rural land development. The Fundacion Ecuatoriana de Tecnologia Aproprada, CENDA, and activists in Greenbelt, Kenya are focusing their attention on the environmental justice

movement. Their goals include reforestation and the development of rural farming communities. The redevelopment of land will enable women to increase their production and possibly their household income.

The Central American Network of Women in Solidarity with Maquila Workers (The Network) “is made up of autonomous women’s organizations from: Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador” that strive towards the empowerment of women in Central America (Mendez 2002). Women in garment factories usually produce clothing in a “piecemeal” manner. Therefore, women cannot individually assemble one article of clothing. A Honduran organization in The Network organized a workshop that provided women with the basic skills to sew their own clothes. These workshops are essential economic components to women because they allow women to sew their own clothing for their large families.

The Network also seeks to improve the wage and working conditions for women in all sectors of the economy in Central America. Their methods for improvement include “negation, lobbying, media campaigns, and electronically disseminated action alerts” (Mendez 2002). The network also maintains records of human rights violations and other labor conditions of their research in factories. The Network uses careful tactics while lobbying so that they don’t urge factories to the point of relocation. This “greatly limits The Network’s ability to engage in the kinds of political maneuvering that have been successful for other transnational advocacy networks, such as international boycotts...” (Mendez 2002). According to the literature, the Honduran Factory KIMI allowed member of The Network and other organizations to monitor the assembly production of the highly publicized Kathy Lee line of clothing. The Network used the media to gain attention to this factory and was successful in their attempts to monitor

the factory conditions. Kathy Lee was in a position where relocation was not an option because if she did, the media would expose the conditions in the new factory.

Therefore, NGOs have a significant impact of the lives of women in developing nations and offer women a form of support and protection against unfair conditions.

Conclusion

Globalization has” reduced the ability of women... [in developing nations]...to find paid work that offers security and dignity” (Desai 2002). Although women’s roles in the labor force have changed from traditional agricultural and domestic roles, to manufacturing and assembly production, the overall effect of globalization (based on the literature used in this analysis) has proven to be negative. There are empirical claims of women gaining more autonomy over their own wages and a feeling of independence from traditional gender roles in society- especially in marriage and childrearing. Women are also becoming the breadwinners in most households because of the lack of male responsibility in the household. Young daughters are financially supporting their parents and fellow siblings, while mothers (married or single) are seeking informal work to provide for their children.

Globalization has changed the intrahousehold responsibilities for males and females, where females are given more responsibility over the survival of the family. Males are no longer the providers- yet they have more opportunities for financial and social advancement in society. Although female responsibilities have increase, SALs implement by the IMF are gender biased towards males. They fail to include females in managerial and upper-level positions. The limited advanced of women in the formal sector shows a great disregard for their social and economic responsibilities within

developing nations. Female labor is not rewarded in relation to the impact they have on society. Therefore, women's work continues to be stigmatized as inferior, in comparison to males work, regardless of their increased responsibilities in society.

The establishment of various NGOs around the globe and the collaborative efforts of these organizations have improved the lives of women in developing nations. The U.N. Decade recognized the importance of female labor in developing nations and the fact that economic policies fail to address the needs of females. Representatives from NGOs agreed that global feminism should be established to reduce the inequality facing women in these nations and to improve the advancement of women in society.

As a result of The U.N. Decade, NGOs in throughout the developing world have reached out to women to meet their needs in farming, environmental protection, healthcare, domestic issues, employment conditions, and to reduce the financial strains in their everyday lives. The collective organization of women's groups throughout the world has also generated the attention of the media, which is necessary in educating the general public about the current issues facing women in developing nations. The continued efforts of these groups and the economic realization of the importance women's work will eventually create greater social awareness about the inequalities facing women in these nations.

The economic policies and structural adjustments associated with globalization create the most negative impact on women in the developing world. The denial of social and economic rights is the most inhumane aspect associated with the formal and informal sectors. Economists and policy makers who implement these adjustments need to consider the impact of the current policies on women's lives and the inequalities that exist between men and women. Enabling the advancement of female opportunities

and guaranteeing female workers more rights will increase the quality of life and create a more sustainable living standard for women and their families in the developing world. Without these changes, women will continue to suffer in their subordinate positions within the economic market.

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