GLOBALIZATION AND THE CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is a process of interaction among the people, companies, and governments of different countries, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology. Globalization is not new but in recent years, it has become the subject of an impassioned debate between people for and against it. While proponents of globalization believe it is a powerful mechanism through which countries can increase economic development and prosperity for its citizens, its detractors have questioned its effects on the environment, culture, political systems, economic and social development and human rights in the developing world particularly the rights of women in these countries.

History has led to vast inequalities, leaving almost three-fourths of the world’s people living in less-developed countries and one-fifth below the poverty line. The long-term impact of past industrialization, exploitation and environmental damage cannot be wished away. It is only right that development in this new century be even more conscious of its long-term impact. The problems are complex and the choices difficult. Our common future can only be achieved with a better understanding of our common concerns and shared responsibilities. This article tries to some of the recent trends which have been fails to sustainable development in the globalised era. Also it will explore the fact that how a woman is affected by globalization really depends on intersecting factors such as class, nationality, race, ability, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, age and education. For instance, there are women in the burgeoning middle-classes of India and China who have significantly benefited through better employment opportunities, new technologies and increased purchasing power. Also affecting women are high infant mortality rates and the rates of death during childbirth. But, by far the worst consequence of globalization is the uptick in human and sex-trafficking as thousands of women has gone missing while looking for much-needed employment far away from the safety nets of their families and communities.

KEYWORDS: Globalization, Environment, Sustainable Development, Economic Development.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a process of interaction among the people, companies, and governments of different countries, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology. Globalization is not new but in recent years, it has become the subject of
an impassioned debate between people for and against it. While proponents of globalization believe it is a powerful mechanism through which countries can increase economic development and prosperity for its citizens, its detractors have questioned its effects on the environment, culture, political systems, economic and social development and human rights in the developing world particularly the rights of women in these countries. How a woman is affected by globalization really depends on intersecting factors such as class, nationality, race, ability, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, age and education. For instance, there are women in the burgeoning middle-classes of India and China who have significantly benefited through better employment opportunities, new technologies and increased purchasing power.

However, the vast majority of women in all developing countries are worse off now than before. To illustrate: Structural Adjustment Programs have required governments to cut back on food and healthcare subsidies, increasing the burdens already shouldered by women and their families. Additionally, food security is threatened by free trade policies that dictate food be produced for trade rather than domestic consumption. Instead of reforming public healthcare and its delivery, globalization has resulted in the rapid privatization of healthcare and the decline of government facilities which serve poor women and their children. Without primary healthcare, diseases such as leprosy, malaria, measles, neonatal tetanus, polio, and tuberculosis are in evidence again. Also affecting women are high infant mortality rates and the rates of death during childbirth. But, by far the worst consequence of globalization is the uptick in human and sex-trafficking as thousands of women has gone missing while looking for much-needed employment far away from the safety nets of their families and communities. As far back as in September 2003, in his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, warned that the world’s perspective on globalization must shift from a narrow preoccupation with markets to a broader preoccupation with people.

Within the past two decades, globalization has created 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.
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 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 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 cannot 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.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

It is a fact that globalization has also created major problems that need to be addressed. First, it has increased the scope for tax evasion, owing to a rapid proliferation of tax havens around the world. Multinational companies have many more opportunities than before to dodge their fair and efficient share of taxation. Moreover, globalization has created losers as well as winners. In high-income countries, notably the US, Europe, and Japan, the biggest losers are workers who lack the education to compete effectively with low-paid workers in developing countries. Hardest hit are workers in rich countries who lack a college education. Such workers have lost jobs by the millions. Those who have kept their jobs have seen their wages stagnate or decline. Globalization has also fueled contagion. The 2008 financial crisis started on Wall Street, but quickly spread to the entire world, pointing to the need for global cooperation on banking and finance. Climate change, infectious diseases, terrorism, and other ills that can easily cross
borders demand a similar global response. 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.

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 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 base their economies on the reliance of corporations for employment and survival in the World Market. Foreign governments drop “protective trade barriers and offers 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.

WOMEN AND VULNERABILITY IN THE WORKING PLACE

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. 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. 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.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Economically, the denial of union rights contributes to poverty in developing nations and reinforces the imperialistic domination of developed nations 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 or part-time workers would become an addition to the developing nations’ economies.

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. 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 drinks” (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? Do 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 on 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 behavior” (Ong 1987). The motif of female weakness transcends through Malay society. 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.

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 Bacchus 20this 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.

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 women’s work is 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 bringing 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- 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 given 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.

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 Bacchus 32developing 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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