



GLOBALIZATION'S DOUBLE EDGE: ASSESSING ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN

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Abstract:

The duple outcome of globalization has had a compelling sway on women all across the globe as it offers prospects as well as complications. On the one hand, today's women now have more options to contribute through work, access to education, and healthcare which is a result of improved economic opportunities derived from globalization where technology disseminates ideas to share with the world, empowering women to establish and confront the world for their rights but with the uninterrupted gender-based exploitation, with the forced low remunerations accompanied by the ambiguous employment in some specific sectors like manufacturing. Furthermore, the deconstruction of social safety nets brought about by the neoliberal policies that accompanied globalization has increased the care obligations placed on women which hinders admittance of their access to economic opportunities, which makes women's experiences with the current phenomenon of globalization more complex and context-specific, which demand a detailed and comprehensive evaluation to ensure the fair distribution of its positive outcomes by minimizing its negative effects.

This study analyses the impact of globalization on women in the underdeveloped and developed nations. It is a noticeable fact that globalization positively supports East Asian countries by providing more opportunities that generate economic prosperity but also results in inequality and exploitation, specifically for females and children

living in less or least developed areas. Because of the reduction in public services, women in these areas often experience low earnings, unfavorable working conditions, and an increase in household duties. According to this study, globalization tends to uphold unfair labor practices and discriminatory gender norms even when it can give women access to the workforce and financial independence so there is no doubt in the fact that, Gender inequality and economic development both go hand in hand in developing countries, where women are more likely to be exploited and have lower levels of economic engagement.

Keywords: Exploitative Practices, Sectorial Analysis, Textile Industry, Poor Working Conditions, Domestic Responsibilities, Gender Sensitive Policies

Introduction

The phenomena of globalization is complex and give rise to differing viewpoints. Some regard it as the engine of global economic growth, but others see it as a regressive phenomenon that impedes social progress increases inequality, and jeopardizes employment and living standards. Globalization does, however, also offer chances for worldwide advancement. As seen by the amazing transformation of East Asia, nations that have embraced globalization have seen tremendous economic development and decreased levels of poverty. Conversely, areas of Latin America and Africa that embraced inward-looking economic strategies throughout the 1970s and 1980s, withdrawing from the international economy via commerce and investment, have had unfavorable consequences (Escosura, 2019).

Globalization has profound effects on people, companies, and countries, resulting in both advantages and disadvantages. Nonetheless, women and children in developing nations are disproportionately affected by its detrimental effects. This problem is made worse by the practices of global financial organizations like the IMF and World Bank, which cut back on public services for vulnerable groups including the ill, old, and crippled. This change pushes women to take up caregiving duties, which feeds into the cycle of gender-based exploitation. Furthermore, multinational firms frequently hire women as low-paid employees in developing nations as a result of foreign direct investment. Globalization does, however, have certain advantages. Millions of women have been able to join the labor thanks to it, becoming economically independent and influential. Women have made tremendous progress in establishing their economic autonomy and decision-making authority in emerging nations, where this growth has been especially noteworthy (Yalçinkaya, 2017).

In addition, we should focus on implementing policy changes that minimize these dangers and maximize the advantages, such as strengthening financial and economic institutions to better handle the problems brought about by globalization. This will guarantee that poverty is effectively tackled and encourage sustainable progress. In the meanwhile, assistance should be given to

emerging nations, especially the most impoverished ones, so they can profit from globalization. By offering support, we can enable these countries to take advantage of globalization to promote economic expansion and lower poverty (Escosura, 2019).

1.1: Key Characteristics of Globalization:

The concept of globalization refers to the increased interconnectedness and integration of economies, cultures, and societies around the world. It has a profound impact on how businesses operate and how nations interact with each other.

Firstly, globalization has enhanced trade volumes between nations with reduced government, leading to increased Gross Domestic Product and prosperity. It fosters better cooperation between governments and further improvements in trade. Liberalization, another hallmark of globalization has relaxed regulations and cooperation, enabling stability and smoother trade, furthermore, globalization has increased the employment ratio by enlarging production capacity and establishing firms in diverse geographical regions, additionally, globalization has improved communication and transportation networks, making it easier for businesses to communicate from different countries to connect and collaborate, but countries are more dependent on each other due to globalization, this is a drawback and means what happens in one country can have ripple effects on others (Ibeh & Carter, 2008).

There's a cultural change as well, the exchange of ideas, customs and values between cultures. As business expands and grows in urban areas, it often leads to the development of urban centers around industrial hubs. Overall, globalization has improved the standards of living by stimulating economic growth and economic activity, it provides employment opportunities and offers a wide range of choices to consumers. Moreover, globalization has enabled companies to outsource certain tasks or processes to third-party providers in other countries (Escosura, 2019).

1.2: The Roots of Global Integration

The first wave of globalization which happened up to 1914, was characterized by Great Britain's dominance both geographically and technologically, driven by innovations like steam engines and industrial machines. Industrialization by the British was facilitated by technological advancement in transportation and manufacturing and it led to significant economic growth with trade expanding at 3% annually. During this time, investment opportunities became more global, and people from different regions started investing in projects worldwide.

For instance; the Suez Canal was a big project and the construction of that project caught the attention of various investors from various places, while Britain gained the most from global trade, and other countries like Argentina and Uruguay also did well by selling their specialty products like meat. But of course, there's always a negative part too. European countries took control of Africa and left Ethiopia free. Countries like China and India struggled to keep up with the changes

and many workers in rich countries lost their jobs or got less wages because of machines and foreign products (Pani & Singh, 2014).

Globalization entered a new phase after World War II, it was led by the US and fueled by technological advancements like cars and airplanes from the second Industrial Revolution. Globalization became global after its fall in 1989. We firmly support institutions like the European Union and free trade agreements and it also played a key role in building up international trade. By 1989, global exports had surged, accounting for 14% of global GDP, prewar levels. The collapse of the Soviet Union also accelerated globalization with the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) encouraging countries worldwide to engage in free trade agreements. The invention of the internet marked a hallmark of the third Industrial Revolution which further accelerated globalization by connecting different people worldwide. The internet made it easier for businesses to engage in global trade. This era of globalization is referred to as hyper-globalization because, after this, there's a remarkable increase in global trade. By the 2000s, exports from one country to another accounted for about a quarter of the total global GDP meaning a significant portion of the world's economic activity is involved in international trade. Furthermore, trade contributed to about half of the world's GDP, emphasizing its importance in driving economic growth and developing on a larger and global scale.

The current phase of globalization is marked by the dominance of the US and China, along with the cyber world serving as the new frontier. This phase is characterized by the rapid expansion of the digital economy driven by technologies like e-commerce, digital services, and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, there are drawbacks as well like digital growth is accompanied by challenges such as cyber-attacks and negative impacts of climate change, including pollution and deforestation.

While globalization can lead to economic growth and cultural change, it can also contribute to social unrest and economic inequality. Many people, especially in Western countries, have lost faith in globalization due to obvious reasons like concerns about mass immigration. This loss of faith has resulted in the adoption of protective measures and trade disputes. The idea of globalization known as 'globalism' is losing its favor, as evidenced by the United States reducing its role as a global leader (Klaus, 2018).

1.3: Dimensions of Globalization:

Globalization is often seen as a multifaceted phenomenon having various dimensions like cultural, economic, and political, scholars like Water and Cheng suggested that globalization is a social process characterized by diminishing constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements, increasing the awareness of this phenomenon among people. Water identifies economic, political, and cultural globalization as one of the most prominent distinct forms, each

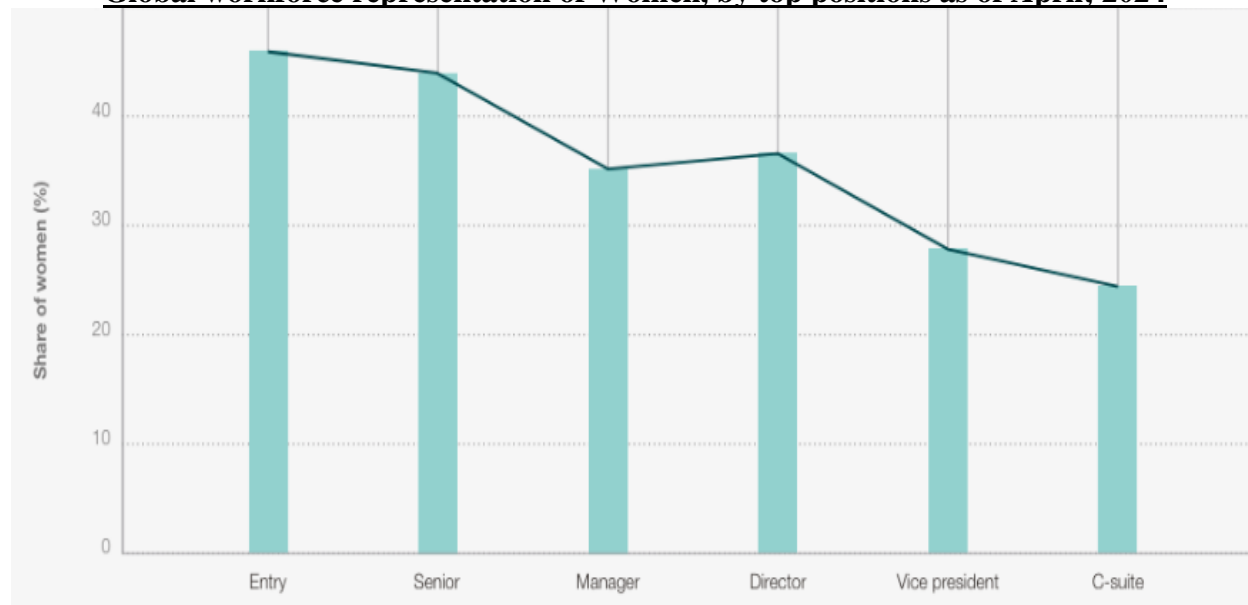
of them acts as a global force primarily through the mediation of symbols, which facilitate their diffusion worldwide.

Additionally, Cheng describes globalization as the transformation, adaptation, and development of values, knowledge, and technology among different countries and societies. He emphasizes the growth of global networking, and the interflow of cultural, educational domains, technological, economic, social, and political along with increased international alliances and competitions (Rifai, 2013).

2. Literature Review:

In examining the multifaceted impacts of globalization, our main focus is its effect on women. The question is whether globalization is beneficial for women is very complex and requires careful consideration of definitions and contexts. According to (Jaggar, 2001). The answer depends on how we define 'globalization' and 'beneficial' and which women we consider. While globalization in its current neural form is not beneficial for most women, the problem lies in its organization, not globalization itself. An alternative form of globalization could greatly benefit women, as well as children and men (Dutta, 2018).

Global workforce representation of Women, by top positions as of April; 2024



Source: WEF; 2024

Women constitute an essential portion of the global workforce but often face various economic disparities. Despite performing nearly two-thirds of work hours. They receive only one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth of world property. Globalization has led to an international division of labor, where multinational corporations exploit female labor, especially

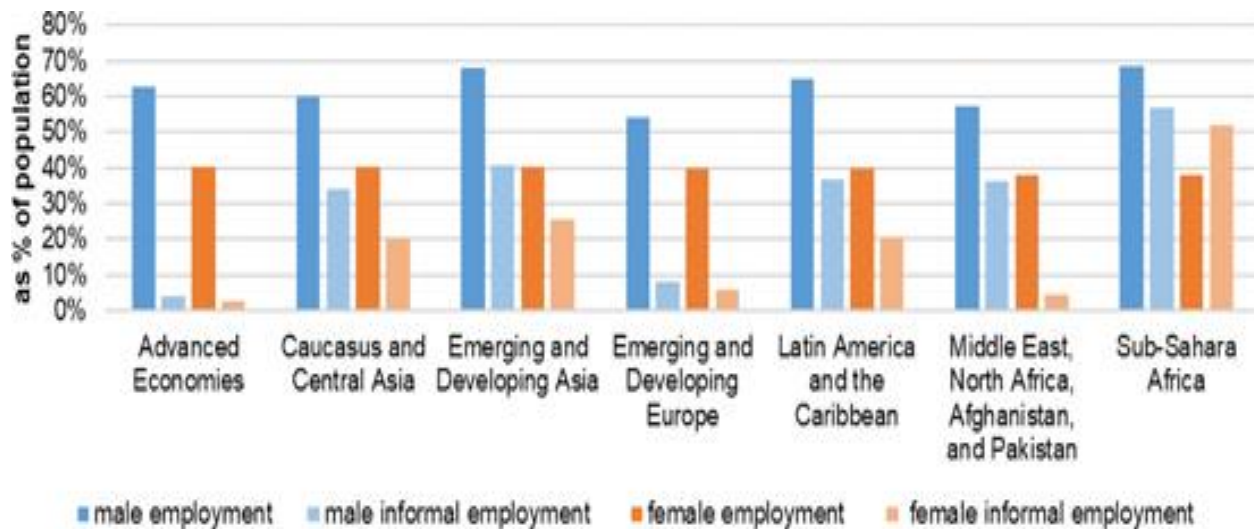
in developing countries. Women in free trade zones often face poor working conditions and low wages (Shah, 2007).

2.1: Gender Dynamics in a Globalized World

The globalization paradox refers to the contradictory effects of globalization on various aspects of society, including gender roles. In the context of gender studies, the globalization paradox highlights the conflicting ways in which globalization impacts gender equality, women's empowerment, and traditional gender norms.

Globalization can both challenge and reinforce gender inequalities. While globalization may provide opportunities for women to enter the workforce, access education, and participate in decision-making processes, which can promote gender equality, it can also lead to the exploitation of women in low-wage industries, reinforce traditional gender stereotypes, and increase gender-based violence and discrimination so, how relevant is the globalization paradox to gender studies? (Oza;2012) states that by acknowledging the paradoxical effects of globalization on gender, researchers, and policymakers can better understand the complexities of gender relations in a globalized world and develop strategies to promote gender equality and social justice.

Male and Female Employment and Informal Employment by Region



Source: IMF e-Library, 24-5-24

2.2: Gender and Globalization

a) Intersectionality:

Globalization intersects with other social categories such as race, class, and sexuality to shape gender experiences in diverse ways. The globalization paradox acknowledges the

interconnected nature of these identities and how they influence individuals' access to resources, opportunities, and rights.

b) Cultural Dynamics:

Globalization brings about cultural exchange and hybridization, leading to the reconfiguration of traditional gender norms and identities. The paradox lies in the simultaneous preservation and transformation of cultural practices related to gender roles in the face of global influences.

c) Labor Market Dynamics: Globalization impacts women's participation in the labor market, both positively and negatively. While globalization may create new employment opportunities for women, it can also lead to precarious work conditions, gender-based wage gaps, and exploitation in global supply chains.

d) Policy Implications: The globalization paradox underscores the need for gender-sensitive policies and interventions to address the unequal effects of globalization on different gender groups. It calls for a nuanced understanding of how global processes interact with local contexts to shape gender relations and inequalities (Oza, 2012).

2.3: Effects of Globalization on Women:

The effects of globalization on women have been examined especially for developing countries that have a high population of women that as India. There are positive and negative effects of globalization on Indian women. The two positive impacts are equality between the genders and job opportunities being provided to both men and women. Through globalization, communication lines are opened up and attract foreign companies and organizations into India. These companies raised women's self-confidence by providing them new job opportunities and high wages and in turn promoted equality between men and women (Yalçınkaya, 2017).

In India, globalization could not provide better job opportunities for all Indian women. 96% of women were in the unorganized sector. There was an article in which it was highlighted that humiliation, harassment, and exploitation of women have been more widespread in India due to globalization has strengthened patriarchy in India, and has set pushbacks for women's struggle as women are working in hazardous conditions and have been paid lower wages than men.

2.4: Impact of Globalization on Women in Third-World Countries

Globalization brings both advantages and disadvantages for women in third-world countries. On the one hand, it opens up avenues for economic participation, education, and social mobility, while on the other hand, it also promotes exploitation and deepens existing inequalities among women. Women can enter into industries such as textiles, agriculture, and various services due to globalization which leads to financial independence and women empowerment. The expansion of global markets requires workforce expansion, which includes women from third-world countries.

This leads to women having higher job opportunities and employment ratios. Employment in these sectors requires women with their income, which can lead to greater financial independence and decision-making power within their households and communities.

However, this increased economic participation often brings drawbacks, women in these industries frequently face poor working conditions, low wages, and limited labor rights. Exploitative practices such as long working hours, unsafe work environments, the gender pay gap, and lack of job security are common. Meanwhile, globalization also affects education and social mobility for women, access to global information, and educational opportunities for women and girls and it allows them to gain the skills and knowledge needed to participate more fully in the global economy (Yadav, 2021).

Globalization also leads to the establishment of multinational corporations in developing countries, creating new jobs. These jobs can provide women with better income compared to local employment (Ruspini, 2019) which fosters the breakdown of restrictive traditional values by promoting gender equality through increased interaction between rich and poor countries. Employment empowers women by providing financial independence, enhancing their social status, and increasing their influence among their communities. So open economies with robust trade relations generally exhibit fewer forced labor practices, leading to better overall labor conditions for women (Neumayer & de Soysa, 2007).

3. Methodology:

This study aims to evaluate the diversified impact of globalization on women through extensive and detailed research based on literature. To acquire pertinent information, a comprehensive study of reputed research articles, books, and other relevant material was carried out focusing on the outcomes and consequences of globalization and its impact on global women's economic, social, and political independence to have a comprehensive grasp of the intricate links between the lives of global women and globalization, by using the literature assessment of various domains including gender, political science, sociology, and economics.

The literature was analyzed as per relevancy of the topic like, trade and investment made by women, the labor feminization, and the global standing of women in the value chains. The language and narratives used in the literature were examined using a critical discourse analysis technique, revealing the power structures and prejudices that influence the conversation on globalization and women's empowerment. This research attempts to reflect the genuine and detailed image of double standards of globalization accompanied by the issues and opportunities for the global women under the narrative of women empowerment.

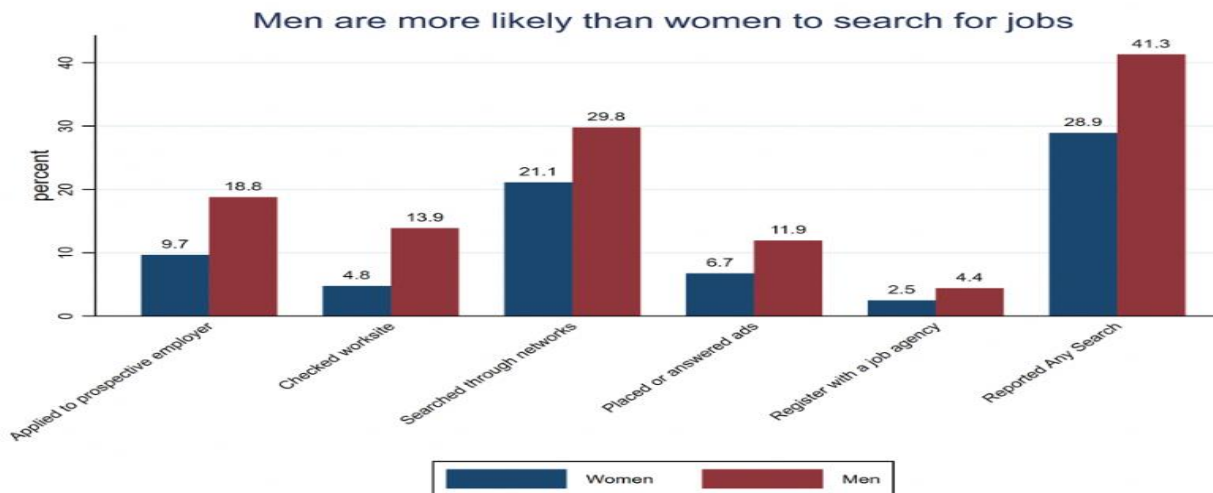
3.1 Indicators:

Economic Participation:

Employment Rates: 67% of women are employed in agriculture, 16% in the services sector, and 14% in the manufacturing sector (National Report on the Status of Women in Pakistan, 2023), Income Levels: Average income of women compared to men, Job Opportunities: Availability and types of jobs available for women.

4. Result and Conclusion:

The results concluded after comparing the impact of globalization on underdeveloped and developed countries with the fact that, Globalization will advance many economic benefits through internationalization but at the same time endure gender disparity where women confront unequal payments and other benefits with the restrictive access to many new opportunities. The root cause of this gender disparity lies in harsh exploitation, lack of true economic involvement, and say in decision-making. There exists a clear indication of sectorial bias in different sectors specifically in manufacturing and agriculture. In agriculture, although women are one of the major contributors/labor but appear as unpaid participants practicing no financial freedom accompanied by an unfavorable workplace environment that forces women to be silent workers and discourages them from being part of the workforce.



Source: <https://www.theigc.org/blogs/gender-equality/barriers-faced-women-labour-market-participation-evidence-pakistan>

Therefore, the research conducted in this study highlights the pros and cons of globalization while examining its intricate and multidimensional impacts on global women specifically in underdeveloped countries where Globalization widens the gap of inequality and exploitation, which disproportionately affects women and children in the most vulnerable places, even while it may also spur economic growth and reduce poverty in other locations. Globalization fosters women's economic empowerment and opens venues for several career options, but at the same time keeps unfair labor practices and gender discrimination alive. Hence, plenty of concerns arise

in the case of Globalization that demand thoughtful policy shifts, even as it has the potential to significantly boost economic development and empower women. By minimizing these concerns and fostering a more just global community, these initiatives can ensure that everyone benefits from globalization.

5. Recommendations:

A harmonized policy shift is the need of time to tackle the harmful impacts of globalization that spur its positive outcomes. This may be generated through unbiased gender laws, access to education and skill-based training, conducive environment to accept women in the roles of leaders, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, policy, and lawmakers. In addition, the provision of a safe working place and improving social safety nets might help insulate them from the adverse effects of globalization. It is the responsibility of every state to develop gender-inclusive trade laws by providing support via advocacy and collaborations with women's organizations where routine monitoring is a must to ensure true implementation of all women-sensitive laws so that we may, we may endeavor to build a more inclusive and equitable global community. Like other nations, Pakistan should also work hard to minimize the negative effects of globalization on women and maximize its positive effects. Obstacles like limited access to financial, health, and educational resources, prevent Pakistani women from their active participating in the economy as females are almost 51% of total population of Pakistan and their absence in economic contribution means absence of half population. For minimizing this disparity public and private partnerships must be encouraged to develop gender-sensitive policies and initiatives to support women's job possibilities, skill development, and entrepreneurship. In addition, laws and policies must be formulated to reduce the gender wage gap and expanding women's access to resources like finance and property ownership. Moreover, to shield women from the detrimental effects of globalization, social safety nets including healthcare and unemployment benefits should be reinforced. Pakistan may capitalize on the advantages by solving these issues and giving women's economic development priority.

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