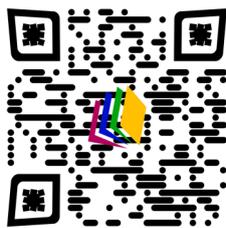


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Women Empowerment: Jobs in Global Manufacturing and Services

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ABSTRACT:

The 'feminization' of global manufacturing and services industries in Global South has gained interest from numerous scholars who put forth disparate observations on women empowerment in periphery countries such as Bangladesh, and South Africa. The paper uses three frameworks of gender studies, *Women in Development*, *Women and Development* and *Gender and Development* to study the cases of Bangladesh, Mexico, India, and Zimbabwe to argue that employment in global manufacturing units and services has empowered women to an extent. While women employed in global manufacturing units in Bangladesh enjoy greater agency ('the power to') and decision-making power ('the power within'), Mexican women working in maquiladoras are unlikely to observe a similar level of empowerment. Furthermore, women employed in the global caregiving sector tend to migrate to core countries such as the Filipino women to United States or more developed countries in their own regions such as Zimbabwean women to Johannesburg. There is limited scope for the migrated women to experience empowerment such as joining trade unions ('to power with'), and increased agency due to several cases of illegal migration or language barriers. In contrast, there is a higher chance for economic empowerment and increased decision-making power in the nursing industry as argued by Indian nurses serving in UAE.

KEY WORDS: Women Empowerment; WID; WAD; GAD; Agency; Trade Unions

Introduction

Since the 1990s, there has been an immense proliferation of discussions and studies over the state of women workers within globalisation, their struggle against exploitation, tussle for rights and tactics to implement these rights. The 'feminization' of global manufacturing and services industries in Global South has gained attention from several scholars who put forth diverse observations on women empowerment in countries such as Bangladesh and Mexico. It