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Changing Identity of Woman in the Era of Globalization: A Case Study of Islamabad/Rawalpindi

Sadia Rana (2016-2018).

The identity of women which represents her status in the society is an important existing phenomenon around the globe. The complex global identities represent conflict between traditions, ethics and modernity and it shows the dominant discourse of metropolitan cultures. The complex transformation of the identities of urban women as a working member in the retail stores (cash and carries) is a dominant and an influential part of globalization and over the period of time it has involved many people all around the world into this process which produces highly heterogeneous and fluid identity of individuals. This research by using qualitative research strategy has shown that retail culture has provided opportunity to women and has made them an integral part of modern society. This new identity has also given them chance to change their lifestyles and provided them with extra space to exert their agency in the society.

Key Findings:

1. The current study focuses on the changing identities of the urban women due to changing trends of employment opportunities for them.
2. Based on the data collected from five retail stores located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, this study shows that women's social interaction with each other and with people at large provides them with economic opportunities to grow and boosts their self-confidence. In addition, the social interactions have greater impact on the behaviors, relations and identities of the women employees hired at retail stores.
3. Regarding relationship with colleagues and customers the women shared mixed views reflecting that customers generally are polite excepting a few who misbehave and are difficult to handle. With colleagues, women feel comfortable as male colleagues, in particular, understand and accommodate accordingly whenever female colleagues face timing or health issues.
4. The study also states that female employment opportunities have risen as a response to the globalizing trends of retail branding and opening up of shopping malls endorsing such branding culture. The respondents also shared that such trends also increase equal job opportunities for women. This increasing retail culture facilitates customers to shop under one roof, also providing customer care services and expanding the range of options for women with respect to job absorption.
5. The research also shows that changing trends are gradually accepted by the society as globalization increases and the world transforms into a postmodern era. Such transformations also affect the identities of people especially of women who want to earn and work side by side with men.

Policy Implications:

1. In labor market educational reforms and equipping young people with quality education without hindrance in the flow of ideas and innovation is mandatory. Likewise, in the case of cash and carries there is public dealing with customers so keeping in view the demand of the profession as well customer needs, education of cash and carries workers in professional skills is a necessary requirement.
2. Globalization and technological revolutions bring about social and economic changes and strengthen profound changes of growth across the board. In the wake of this argument the current study emphasizes on channelizing global processes toward creating opportunities on personal (self-development) and professional (job-related) fronts for women, especially.
3. Integration of identities for framing reflexive and eclectic approaches for work-related policies is essential.