Reconstructing women's identity: influences of globalization

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Gender is a social construct, and gendered roles are not given for all time; they are constructed and reconstructed again and again, reflecting the prevalent social norms and thinking of the time, the economic imperatives, the political agenda and so on. With the many forces and changes attributed to 'globalization', it would certainly be a fair expectation that gendered identities should be changing as a result, direct or indirect, of globalization. This paper seeks to examine this expectation, by seeing what clues are offered by studies of the loss and gain of work consequent upon globalization, for the construction of women's identity in India. It is suggested that work (an aspect of 'achieved' status) does influence the beliefs and behaviour of individuals and hence the construction of individual identity, and that at the same time the influence of social norms (or 'ascriptive' status) on the construction of identity remains strong. There has been an implicit assumption by many scholars (as discussed below) that with the enhancement of individual potential through education, better health, employment, there would necessarily be a stronger assertion of individual agency and a weakening of traditional social norms. But the studies referred to here show that even with enhancement of individual agency, there has been no significant weakening of social norms.

Identity Formation

Identity has been the subject of introspection, analysis and theorizing among philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists. At a mundane, everyday level, identity is something that concerns each person, and the recognition that we all have more than one identity, that each of these identities co-exist and overlap, is widely accepted. In speaking of women, the 'dual roles' or 'multiple roles' they play include being a woman, wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend – each of these sets up its own demands and playing each role to the full is usually not possible. So we switch between roles. It seems that 'personal identity' is a composite of several intersecting, even conflicting identities.

While we accept that a role like 'wife' is distinct from that of 'mother' or 'sister', a little more thought suggests that each of these is itself a composite, the net outcome of different and

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competing motives or purposes. For instance, the role of a wife can be that of companionship, service, partner in ritual, etc and all of these at the same time. That these are conflicting identities has been the subject of study by psychologists.

The person that we observe, the identity that we attach to any individual is therefore not the starting point, it itself represents the net outcome of a large number of possible and desirable roles and relationships. The formation of identity is influenced by a wide range of factors, some of which we have the power to choose and some of which are given to us: who are the people in relation to whom we live our lives, what is the work we do, what is the community of which we are a part, what – if any - is the religion we accept, and so on. Identity will be shaped by the roles and responsibilities we need to fulfil.

Gender identity has been explained as made up of ascriptive and achieved identities. For men, the conflicts between ascriptive and achieved status is much weaker than for women. In South Asia, it is women who have been seen as responsible for the sustenance and maintenance of culture, tradition and national identity.[i] Their domestic roles go well beyond responsibility for housework and child care. While women everywhere have to find a balance between the reproductive and the productive, women in India (as perhaps in other old cultures) have the additional responsibility of being the appointed custodian of tradition. The practical implications of ensuring household observance of rituals and rites of passage have received less emphasis than the measurement of time spent on housework, but needs to be recognized both as a significant aspect of time management and as a factor explaining the construction of identity.

These different roles that women play have often been seen as 'modern' vs 'traditional' roles with the implication that there is inherent conflict between the two. In a somewhat extreme view, Sudhir Kakar says that, `In the ideals of the traditional culture, the "good" woman is a *pativrata*, subordinating her life to the husband's welfare and needs in a way demanded of no other woman in any other part of the world with which I am familiar.' (1989: 66)

It has been suggested that to be a member of a community is also to inherit or discover a part of one's identity, a community being marked by 'not merely a spirit of benevolence, or the prevalence of communitarian values, or even certain 'shared final ends' alone, but a common vocabulary of discourse and a background of implicit practices and understandings'. This implies too that 'While the contours of my identity will in some ways be open and subject to revision, they are not wholly without shape' (Sandel 1984:166, 173). On the other hand, Sen argues that 'we do have the opportunity to determine the relative weights we would like to attach to our different identities….the presence of budget constraint does not imply that there is no choice to be

made, only that the choice has to be made within the budget' (2005:350, 351). Bina Agarwal has suggested that women's decisions of conformity might reflect good judgement: 'The appropriate conclusion would then be not so much that women need to realise they deserve better, but that they need to believe they can get a better deal, and to know how that would be possible'. (1994: 57). In other words, women accept the inherited identity largely because they do not perceive any viable alternatives.

A different view has been offered by Usha Menon who argues that Hindu women derive a 'substantial sense of self worth' from their families and that 'They do not see their conjugal families as oppressive kinship structures but rather as fluid, organic entities that are continually transformed and reconstituted by the essences and qualities of in-marrying women' (2000: 2,10). I would argue that a part of women's identity is indeed 'discovered' or inherited, and it reflects the community and understanding of gender within the community. Menon's analysis is interesting because it suggests that women can use their 'chosen' identities to reinforce the 'inherited' identity: it might be an unwarranted assumption that the strengthening of individual attributes would necessarily mean a weakening of inherited norms. The willingness to observe and respect social and community norms may be freely chosen: the norms themselves are 'inherited', something we discover in the process of growing up and playing roles of increasing responsibility within the family, community etc. The roles we choose for ourselves, the work we choose to do or the manner in which we play out our various relationships, may or may not conflict with inherited roles.

As a corollary, it follows that identity can be reconstructed either through a shift or change in the communal norms or through a new set of choices made by the individual.

A good example of how community norms can change is seen in the history of the nationalist movement. It has been convincingly argued that 'the nationalist paradigm did not dismiss modernity, but tried to make it consistent with the nationalist project'……..'a simple criterion for judging the desirability of reform..was that the essential distinction between the social roles of men and women in terms of material and spiritual values must at all times be maintained. There would have to be a marked difference in the degree and manner of westernization of women, as distinct from men, in the modern world of the nation'. (Chatterjee 1989: 243).

There has clearly been perceptible change in the dress and behaviour of women in the last few decades, more evident in urban India but not absent in rural areas. The change is so widespread that it cannot be seen as assertion of individual identity alone, and reflects implicit approval by those who are seen as the custodians of tradition.

Women's identity is influenced by the context we live in (region, religion, community) as well as by acquired attributes (education, work). It is influenced, directly through the opportunities offered and indirectly by its influence on social norms, by the policies and the actions of the government. There is a role of the state and its policies and programmes, of the market and the opportunities and constraints it presents, as well as the community and its controls and expectations, and the household, the 'black box' which is the most critical determinant of gender identity, but which, it is important to emphasize, does not exist in isolation from all of the above.

Inherited or ascriptive status for women in India is reflected in the level of seclusion to be observed, nature of the conjugal contract, family and kinship norms, traditional inheritance rights. Chosen or created status is influenced by education, health status, fertility rate, labour force participation, political participation, legal rights. The two are not distinct in that one set of factors will influence the other, and neither is immutable over time. However the important distinction is that the former are not individual-specific while the latter are; so, if we compare two women with the same set of inherited influences, their individual attributes will influence and shape the influence of the inherited attributes in the shaping of personality and identity. Equally, similar achieved status can be associated with varying levels of 'inherited' identity. That is, there is no one-to-one mapping between any set of attributes and identity.

It is possible to quantify and measure the variables constituting achieved status such as education, health, or work participation. Behaviour and identity cannot be fully derived from these measures: the influence of underlying social norms is evident in the fact that people's behaviour often departs from legal stipulations and public policy as evidenced in the age at marriage, the giving or taking of dowry, the violence inherent in female foeticide. In so far as work is an aspect of achieved status, changes in the opportunities for work outside the home can be expected to have an impact on the formation of identity, and it is this relationship that this paper seeks to examine.

Women's work and identity

The overall trend in work participation rates has been upward, although the WPR for women is still well below that for men. In 2002, the female activity rate at around 27 per cent was 50 per cent of the male activity rate and the ratio of female earned income was 0.38 that of male (UNDP 2004). Agriculture and allied activities absorb a large number of women. Given the fact that women are largely concentrated in informal work (96 per cent of all women workers), a large percentage in unpaid and home based work, (an estimated 45 per cent of the women non-agricultural workforce is home-based in India) and that it is often difficult to separate housework

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from productive activity, the estimation of women's work participation in large scale surveys is generally an underestimate of the actual hours of work contributed by women to productive activity. Women are found concentrated into a few sectors of activity, and at the lower end of the job hierarchy. Taken together, these characteristics of women's work underscore the fact that while many – or most – women do participate in productive economic activity, a much smaller number is part of a regular workforce employed in organised sector work, and the large majority of working women are in a vulnerable situation as workers, with insecure agreements, often in casual/ part time/ temporary/ contract work, earning low wages, and in most cases with few if any benefits. For women, therefore, work is on the one hand a necessity for survival, but to only a few women does it confer status, security and assurance. Even within the group of women who are workers in the informal economy, there are differences in experience.

The present findings, tentative though they are, may not have any applicability to the large majority of women who are in the unorganised sector, and whose conditions of work are both poor and possibly deteriorating, and for whom the experience of work would be different. While the conditions at work have much to do with the economic as well as health outcomes, whether or not workers are organised affects their situation and their ability to cope with vulnerability (see Carr et al 1996; ISST 2005a). In trying to understand how work might have an influence on identity for women in the informal economy, the relevant factors are less likely to be whether or not they are working for an income, but rather whether they are organised, have some measure of support outside of the immediate environments of home and workplace. The significance of this is that once again we are confronted with the need and the importance of a group identity, although in this case the group (an organisation of women) is a new and not an inherited identity. In a society built around strong community traditions, individuals have little power. Reconstructions are more likely to be successful if they build up new group identities. In a recent study of the practical and strategic needs of hill women, the value that women place upon women's groups as sources of empowerment and solidarity came out strongly. Equally, these groups, while articulating and standing up for women, felt it important to establish a relation of co-operation with men, which can in the present context be seen as a further affirmation that women place value both on individual and group identity, and on family cohesion. (ISST 2005b).

WIEGO, or the network Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organising, has been able to highlight and encourage the organising and networking of women workers in the informal economy internationally. [ii] In so far as globalization is associated with stronger organisation it would improve the situation of informal workers at work and also influence the level of self

awareness. 'The process of establishing global linkages to empower workers has involved enabling them to develop a new kind of identity. Organising workers into craft and skill-based groups, as the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) does for example, leads to the emergence of new types of workers. These "new" home-based workers are organized and aware, in contrast to the traditional, isolated, and unaware artisan.' (Sudarshan and Unni 2001: 113).

In trying to explore the implications of 'work' for 'identity', therefore, it is likely that the nature of the work and the other associated attributes of the person as well as the nature of the group or groups to which an individual belongs will all play an important role. The empirical evidence cited below is of women from different parts of the country and in different types of work; it includes mainly groups of (unorganized) women workers in formal employment although not at the high end of such work.

Globalization, work and identity

Globalization contains within it the idea of many kinds of change, and this paper attempts only to see what might be happening to the construction of gender as a result of changes in the area of work. Changes in the economic regime that can be attributed to globalization have different impacts on different groups. If we limit ourselves to labour force participation, there are groups that have gained work and others that have lost. What impact does this kind of change on 'achieved status' have on the sense of identity?

Overall, many groups of women workers have lost jobs and have been made more vulnerable to various risks as a result. Some groups have gained work. In general, those who have lost work are not the same as those who have gained work. The economic environment and the new influences, by which women especially younger women might be influenced, will surely have some impact on what is seen as 'acceptable behaviour'. The influence of the economic environment is mediated in the present by the prevailing social norms. Greater change may be apparent in the future than is evident in the present. Also, what is the change we expect to see? It has been rightly pointed out that modernity need not have the face of the west. Expecting this will be to greatly underestimate and to miss the enormous changes that are already happening around us in the construction of gendered identity, but which present a different kind of modernity. Specifically, we might expect to see some new balance between inherited and chosen identities. [iii]

The relation between globalization, women's work, and identity depends crucially on who we are talking about: 'women' is not a homogenous category, and the community norms are different

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from place to place. This paper draws upon studies conducted in different places and among different groups of women. Each example should be seen as independent, from which we attempt to understand the manner in which the work environment might be influencing the construction of identity.

The studies referred to below give some indication of the kinds of changes in the lives of women and men, and the construction of gender identity, that have been introduced in this era of globalization as a result of the gain, or loss of work. Based on the understanding of the formation of identity discussed above, the changes that we are seeking to locate are likely to be found either in change in social norms, or in an individual's ability/ desire to make new or different choices. Although the different studies referred to below did not explicitly address the question of identity and did not explore the cultural dimension of women's lives, they do throw some light on what women perceive as the positive and the negative outcomes of the work environment. These findings go some way towards resolving the issues relating to the construction of identity discussed above – although in an indirect way, and certainly should not be seen as other than indicative only.

New work opportunities

An example of a sector in which new work opportunities have been created for women is the ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) sector. Based on new technologies, most of these opportunities do require basic literacy and numeracy skills; however efforts have been made to reach out to rural areas and less privileged groups. Studies in Kerala suggest that while women have gained some new work opportunities in the sector, this has not been accompanied by any changes in domestic work responsibilities (ISST 2005c). One sub set of the ITES sector is call centres that have been set up in India and that employ a large proportion of women, with women employees being 40-60 per cent of the total workforce in most call centres. The attrition rate for women employees is reportedly higher than that for men, and most women employees are young and unmarried, between 19 to 24 years of age. The nature of the job is such that it requires shift work, including night shifts, and the work is done with continuous monitoring and supervision. (In the case of call centres catering to the USA and UK, the major part of the work is at night). It requires a high level of concentration with few breaks, and is seen to be stressful. Call centres largely handling overseas work place a premium on the ability to familiarize oneself with other cultures, depending on where the clients are located, and as has been pointed out this influences the intake of candidates as well as on- the-job training. One study found that 96 per cent of call centre workers had studied in private schools (Mazumdar 2004: 256). The negative

aspects of call centre work have received considerable publicity, in particular the likely effect on health. [iv] Call centre work has also led to social and economic empowerment at the level of the individual. Aspects of this work have important implications for a changed construction of identity via changes in social norms. This includes the freedom to work at night, to work side by side with men, to socialize (in whatever degree) with colleagues, to be exposed to a different work environment and culture. While the form of participation in the latter can be confusing, it also holds out the possibility of a shift in certain widely accepted norms of behaviour. In conversations with a small sample of call centre women workers in Delhi and Bangalore what emerges is that these young women value the independence, the newly acquired confidence and articulation, and the exposure to other cultures: several saw it as being incompatible with marriage and hence as a short term rather than long term career prospect (Mitter 2004). Or, perhaps what we are seeing here is the genesis of an Indianised modernity, an attempt at fusion. Interviews with girls working in call centres are difficult to interpret because they are simultaneously expressions of achievement as well as conflicts.

The finding that women in call centre work wish to reconcile the modernity of work with the traditions at home is interesting, but confirms what has been seen elsewhere. The fact that globalization has tended to increase rather than decrease practices such as dowry has been described as linked to the cultural politics of globalization. The need to assert one's identity, one's place in the world, has taken the form of a renewed claim of traditional identities, with an assertion of modernity through lifestyle. Thus a study of IT professionals in Andhra, found that for these highly successful, wealthy, well travelled individuals, intra caste marriages with dowry was the norm. (Palriwala 2005: 28). Whether women call centre workers will follow the same route remains to be seen: it is possible that they will use the opportunity to re-negotiate their positions within a marriage and a household, but this is perhaps what women have always done!

The argument that new work opportunities do contain the seeds of change for identity, although it is difficult to see how far this change might go, finds some support in a study of households in which women had gained work, in Sonepat, Haryana and Noida, Uttar Pradesh where each household had at least one woman working in an Export Processing Zone or in an export oriented unit. In both places, households were better off with access to new work opportunities (see Mukhopadhyay 2003a: 89-122; ISST 2001). The study found that with women going out to work, some re-allocation of household responsibilities did take place. In Noida which largely had nuclear families, men were seen to share more of the work than in Sonepat where the presence of

other women in the household meant that the redistribution of work was more generally from one woman to others.

The most interesting finding from the perspective of the formation of identity is the reasons why women valued their work outside the home. While economic security was valued both by men and women, most women placed a higher value on experience and social networks. The latter, in particular, was seen much less as a gain by men, unsurprising in light of the much lower mobility and contact outside the household that women have. Thus in Noida, over 70 per cent of women (and 26 per cent of men) reported 'enlarged social network' as a positive change with employment; in Sonepat, the corresponding numbers were 33 per cent and 15 per cent. Since in Sonepat the households were largely joint households there may have been stronger constraints on mobility. Larger social networks does not just mean more friends, it means new sources of information, access to both individuals and institutions. Moreover, in an analysis of stress and mental well being in these households, it emerged that working persons have less stress than those who do not work

These studies suggest that where women have found work as a result of globalization, there is a significant change in their levels of self esteem, self confidence, and social networks outside the home. However the further impact of these changes will depend very crucially on the one hand on how women wish to use this new 'power', and how far the community and the society norms are also changing.

It should be mentioned that some studies from Kerala suggest that the actual or potential threat to established patriarchal structures through women's education and employment have been neutralised, and that little change has been possible in terms of reconstructing identity – if anything, women are in a more vulnerable situation. As Mridul Eapen and Praveena Kodoth put it,

'the narrowing of gender disparities in education have equipped women to acquire earning power in 'suitable' occupations generally non-technical in nature. The persistence of gender differentiated family roles, with primary responsibility of domestic chores falling on women, in turn perpetuates this sexual division of labour through an asymmetry of opportunities offered for acquiring 'untraditional' skills……….Any attempt to have a greater 'voice in the family' could be misconstrued as an attempt to challenge the gender differentiated family authority and lends itself to domestic violence'.(Eapen and Kodoth, 2003: 255,262).

Losing work

Globalization has created work opportunities for some groups of women, but many others have lost work. Recent investigations by the National Commission for Women show the very large groups of women workers who have lost jobs as a result of trade liberalisation and/ or the introduction of new technology. Women reported that the impact of a loss of work and fall in earnings had been compounded by indebtedness, and excessive drinking by men leading to increased violence against women. The women mentioned a range of coping strategies which included migration, search for casual work, mortgaging land, sale of assets (eg utensils), withdrawal of children from school, discontinuation of medicines to save on health related expenditure, prostitution, and the ultimate strategy, suicide. Women losing jobs are thus clearly more vulnerable within the household, even though the entire household is adversely affected. In this adversity, women reached out to the state: the demand of the workers was two fold in the hearings conducted – protect our jobs; and protect us. Such loss of work tended to be 'covariant' in nature, affecting large groups not individuals alone, and so the entire community is adversely affected (see Sudarshan 2004). The one cue we get on what these changes mean for identity is the finding that there is in most cases an increased violence within the home; the indication is of an erosion of individual identity and increased recognition of the shared experience of the group.

Another study can be referred to here. In a study of retrenched worker households, ISST tried to examine what might be the gender differentiated impact within households in a situation of losing work. (see Mukhopadhyay 2003b). The sample of households studied was from different areas in Delhi and West Bengal. The households faced a loss of income. In Delhi, it was also seen that while over 80 per cent of the male workers were in skilled jobs prior to retrenchment, after retrenchment only 13 per cent were able to access skilled jobs. The de-skilling was more evident among females: 100 per cent of the sample was in skilled jobs prior to retrenchment, and only 10 per cent after. The gender biases in society explain the fact that fewer of the retrenched women workers were able to access jobs afterwards and the loss in income was also reportedly experienced more by the women. In Delhi, many of the retrenched workers were able to get other work, but in West Bengal half the workers were still unemployed several months after retrenchment. If coping strategies are reviewed, we find that in West Bengal assets were sold (46 per cent of households), children withdrawn from school (19 per cent), dietary habits changed (63 per cent), loans taken (85 per cent) and expenditure cut (70 per cent). In Delhi, expenditure was cut (51 per cent), loans taken (18 per cent), dietary habits changed (16 per cent), children withdrawn from school (12 per cent). None of the households reported sale of assets.

The study gives us a few cues on how gender identity might be changing. For instance, it was found that working women – even when they had been retrenched – had more control over household resources than women who did not work. On the question of whether they could spend money without seeking permission, in West Bengal, where the women were not working, 88 per cent chose not to reply. In Delhi, 68 per cent of working (retrenched) women said that they could do so, as against 40 per cent of women who did not work. Freedom of mobility, usually seen as a good indicator of women's empowerment, was viewed with caution by both men and women. Interestingly women did not approve of free movement of adolescents girls and women – 74 per cent women and 63 per cent men disapproved in Delhi. Similarly women disapproved of women going out to work more strongly than men – 80 per cent women against 39 per cent men. These responses can be interpreted as, that men perceive the economic benefit of women's work and are less aware of potential conflicts and problems; whereas women are more aware of these and hence tend to be more conservative in their response. An analysis of mental health [v] showed that women workers who had been retrenched showed higher levels of stress than their husbands (presumably, the double burden of being a woman and a participant in the paid labour force).

Almost half of the couples interviewed said there had been an increase in tension/ conflict within the family after retrenchment.

Three factors with a bearing on identity can be seen. First, the fact of work emerges as a strong influence on women's sense of autonomy and identity; retrenchment did not take away the greater role that working women play in household decisions. Second, the responses to questions on mobility and decision making suggest that women are also very aware of the potential conflicts between the demands of ascriptive roles and new identities. Third, enhanced tension and increased violence within the households as a result of losing work suggests that women might end up being more vulnerable, in a weaker situation than before vis-à-vis others in the household.

Conclusion

If we put together the indications for identity formation from gaining and losing work, it seems that the increase in autonomy that is experienced by women during a period of gaining work is not completely lost, but is certainly eroded, at times of losing work. To generalise even further, the background and context of a growing economy with new work opportunities holds out the possibility of the reconstruction of identity in a manner that gives women greater autonomy. However, this co-exists with a strong inherited or ascriptive identity. If the influence of globalization is a strengthening of individual attributes (through work and increased earnings) this will allow women to re-negotiate roles and responsibilities within the home: it does not

necessarily mean that ascriptive roles will be abandoned. To the extent that such a re-negotiation takes place, it can be argued that a reconstruction of identity is taking place. Much more research is needed to establish the nature of the new balance.

This paper has tried to touch on the role that an increase or decrease in work opportunities might be playing in the reconstruction of identity. As indicated earlier, most of the studies referred to talk about women in the organised sector, albeit from low rather than high income groups. The findings on call centre women workers might also be influenced by the fact that those who opt for this work are already reasonably independent individuals who are seeking rewarding opportunities. In so far as social norms (such as accepting a mixed work force, allowing girls to socialise outside of family events) are altered, the impact will be wider.

From the limited sample considered, we conclude on an ambivalent note. Evidence from the studies referred to confirms that participation in work has the potential to initiate or accelerate a reconstruction of gendered identity which allows greater play to the individual, to the 'chosen' aspect of identity which is influenced by achieved status. Where globalization has had positive economic outcomes (new work opportunities) there is a significant change in women's levels of self esteem, self confidence, and social networks outside the home. This appears to have increased their ability to negotiate favourable outcomes within the household. There also is an acceptance of a new role for women outside the home (and its implications – dress, behaviour, mobility, and personal interactions).

At the same time, such changes in 'chosen' aspects of identity do not imply that there is a change in ascriptive responsibilities. Working women's responses confirm that they are aware of actual or potential conflicts in time use. These are resolved through re-allocations of household responsibilities between men and women in nuclear households or between women of the household, in extended families. At least in one context – Kerala – the initial findings suggest that ascriptive roles continue to dominate albeit in new forms. It has been argued that women's situation is difficult because of the triple burdens of paid work, unpaid and household maintenance work, and reproductive work. What makes the situation more complicated here is as suggested at the outset, women's central role in cultural tradition, and religious practice – and their own need to be valued as members of a community. What is seen as desirable independence and freedom in one context, might appear to be a sign of loss of position or identity in another.

Globalization has led to the acceptance of new work roles for women – both by women themselves, and by their families and communities. Equally, her role within the home, as nurturer of the household and custodian of tradition, continues to be alive – both for women and

for their families and communities. In this situation, some reconstruction of identity is inevitable. However to understand how it is being reconstructed, we need to delve into the various community roles that women play and which they value, not limit ourselves to the productive/ reproductive dichotomy. It is also fairly clear that women are seeking an outcome that is acceptable to men and to the wider community: and in that respect, represents a form of modernity that is distinctive to this society.

Acknowledgements

Endnotes

[i] The duality between public and private has a special meaning in South Asia where scholars have claimed that the private is also seen as "eastern", "spiritual" and the domain of the women. As a result, attempts to eradicate customary practices that are violent toward women meet with local level resistance and require both a political as well as a legal approach. Coomaraswamy 2005.

[ii] See www.wiego.org

[iii] Excerpts from an interview with Partha Chatterjee:
"Ours is the modernity of the once colonized. The same historical process that has taught us the value of modernity has also made us the victims of modernity." ………..The thematic (is) the overall frame, and I think we failed in finding a thematic for *our* modernity. In other words, we did not succeed in formulating a *different* thematic. The thematic description of modernity was exactly the same as in the West, we always wanted to be exactly the same *kind* of moderns. ……local elaborations of the modern - and an incredibly large number of innovations have been made - allowed for the great themes of modernity to become *domesticated*. These specific situations, however, remained very different from the situations of Western modernity. The number of different things that non-Western modernity has produced in terms of actual practices in localized situations never really managed to find a larger language which could give them the identity or the character of a *different* modernity. That is what I meant when I said that we also became the *victims* of modernity. The overall *constraints* of a given framework have always bound us to merely innovating at a localized level but without ever succeeding in claiming that this is in fact a more general framework of modernity which can be universally used by others………….. China is in fact the perfect example: in spite of all this amazing transformation, intellectually there are almost no claims that emerge from there that suggest that they are changing faster than any other part of the world. The language in which this change is being described is the *old* language of modernization, growth, technology and so on. It is *exactly* the same language.
http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/chatterjee3.cfm

[iv] Sleep disorders were experienced by 30% of the workers, and 44 % reported either digestive problems or headache/ bodyache. Mazumdar 2004: 265.

[v] Mental health and well being have been measured using modified psychological tests, the GHQ (General Health Questionnaire) and SUBI (Subjective Well-Being Inventory).

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