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THE EFFECTS OF NEO-LIBERALISM:
A PROPOSAL TO MEASURE WOMEN'S FEELING OF SAFETY
AND JOB SATISFACTION IN TWO GARMENT FACTORIES

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Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
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The Effects of Neo-liberalism: A Proposal to Measure Women's Feeling of Safety and Job Satisfaction in Two Garment Factories

Abstract: Neo-liberal policies have facilitated increased globalization. In turn, environmental, as well as occupational concerns have increased. The following is an overview of principle neo-liberal ideologies as well as their contribution to globalization. The detrimental effects of globalization on the environment as well as occupational health and safety are examined. To narrow the scope, a proposal is set forth which would examine specifically the attitudes of women workers in two garment factories, one with production in the United States, the other with production in Mexico. Although no research is conducted, the format is clear and preliminary conclusions are drawn.

The Effects of Neo-liberalism: A Proposal to Measure Women's Feeling of Safety and Job Satisfaction in Two Garment Factories

With the ever-changing global patterns including; population growth, technology, and increased consumerism, new issues arise. Neo-liberalism and the ideologies it encompasses have had detrimental effects on much of the less industrialized world. To understand neo-liberalism, one must consider a few basic concepts, and understand its link to increased globalization. Once this is understood, it will be possible to look more closely at a particular instance of where neo-liberalism, and thus globalization, has had detrimental effects. Although there are many areas that need sociological focus, here the focus will be the particular effects on women in the factory workplace.

As stated, one must understand neo-liberalism and its basic concepts. Briefly, these key aspects include the following guidelines: promote "free" enterprise, cut public expenditure for social services, deregulate, privatize, and focus on individual responsibility. Although these may seem quite simple, it is these key ideas that have indirect effects on the livelihood of millions of people. These ideologies are manifested in many of the policies of international financial institutions.

One specific policy entitled, Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP), has led to numerous destructive results for the environment as well as workers. This policy stipulates that countries wanting a low interest loan must reduce wages, de-unionize workers, cut education budgets, and privatize institutions and departments that were once governmental, including hospitals, banks, and roads. Also, this policy calls for a

reduction of environmental and health regulations, as well as decrease spending on environmental clean-up and other infrastructure maintenance such as bridges and water and waste management.

A less obvious, yet significant issue of neo-liberalism and globalization is the fact that it undermines popular movements. Unlike colonization and other dominance of the past, this is not done in the form of direct coercion. Rather, it is the preempting of human rights and environmental movements through “consensual social control” (Dash 1998). Because of this, it is more difficult to determine the aggressor and thus the guilty persons to blame for these violations. Reification often occurs as people take a subjective factor, such as globalization and its effects, and objectify them as part of a greater cultural force. It is in this instance that people no longer see that they have control and surrender to submission. Once this is accomplished there is a self-maintenance of social control by those who are they themselves under this control.

Besides the undermining of popular movements, there is also a globalization of culture. Countries that were once distinct in their cultural traditions are becoming more and more westernized. There are Wal-marts and fast food chains across the globe. To follow what the industrialized nations term progress, they enforce a series of formalization and structural changes. They see progress as linear and thus align the processes of the most industrialized nations, with that of the developing nations.

Combined these issues have an effect on the market of local producers, public employees-due to budget cuts, small businesses, as well as workers in both developed and developing countries. However, there are beneficiaries to increased globalization.

The financial classes benefit greatly from the interest paid on loans to the developing, as well as from the profits made from decrease wages. For every \$1 lent, financial institutions earn \$1.30 (Loyd and Weissmann 2002). Besides the financial classes, the commercial classes benefit greatly as well. As small farmers are marginalized, Agro-business and corporate growers profit immensely from lax environmental regulation on pesticides and other chemicals. Factory owners as well as manufactures benefit, not only from the deregulation of environmental standards because this allows for less cost internalization, but also because de-unionization and decreased wages lead to a greater profit.

This profit comes at the price of environmental degradation. Asthma and prostate cancer affect millions of persons, mostly poor children, a year. The American Lung Association estimates that even here in the United States there are over 30,000 deaths per year due power plant emissions (Shank 2002). It is also estimated that yearly in the U.S. alone, there are almost 11, 000 premature deaths because of coal-fired smoke stacks (Kentor 2002). All of this pollution contributes to global warming which is proven to induce outbreaks of malaria, cholera, and dengue fever (Shank 2002). This statistics are just a few of the environmental concerns in connection to globalization.

In conjunction with the effects of increased industrialization, are issues of polarization to the cities where factory work is located. The surface and ground water supplies are threatened in many cities in developing nations. Because there are less resources for infrastructure spending the water and waste management systems, as well as housing are inadequate. Daily, 130 millions of industrial waste, agricultural run-off,

slaughterhouse remains, and raw sewage enter New River in Mexicali Valley. Since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Hepatitis A rate has increased dramatically, especially along the boarder of Mexico and the United States. Also along the boarder, there are often levels of carbon monoxide that are quite threatening. All of these factors have led not only to an increased infant fatality rate, but also increased birth defects as well.

In addition to health issues, increased industrialization and focus on profit has lead to less concern for safety. World wide there are over 3,300 deaths per day in connection to the workplace (Brown 2002). In the U.S., there are at least 16 deaths per day, 6,000 each year, and over 100, 000 deaths from occupational diseases. This should seem like devastatingly high numbers. Although there is a need for profit, the disregard for occupational health and safety, due to the increased emphasis on profit and personal responsibility as well as a decrease in corporate internalization of cost, has had an enormous detrimental affect on the livelihood of millions of people.

To understand these issues, it is helpful to look at the current political context. Since neo-liberalism and globalization seek to emanate the wealthiest most powerful governments and institutions, one can look to the United States for a clue as to where these policies originate. Compounded with the previously mentioned statistics related to occupational safety in the U.S., is the discouraging record of environmental disrespect. In the past four years, there have been tremendous budget cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency. Many plans to increase regulation and the accountability of corporations have been shelved. Many of the federal agencies whose task is to protect

the environment as well as laborers, have been filled with former lobbyists who were once employees of top oil, mining, timber, automotive, and biotech companies. They who, in the past promoted big business and the deregulation of policies that would protect the environment and worker rights, now have the authority and responsibility to protect that which they had once worked against.

Another division of the U.S. government that reflects our utter disregard for the environment is the U.S. Navy. The Navy generates more toxic waste than the top three chemical companies as well as most of the nation's nuclear waste (Chillett 1999). Often this waste is emptied in the ocean and consequently becomes the problem for all countries. Another issue involving waste disposal is the fact that there is a direct correlation between race and income to one's distance from a toxic waste site. One in four Americans live within one mile of the over 1,222 toxic waste sites (Shank 2002). However, current administration has denied the reauthorization to finance the Superfund, which is committed to toxic waste clean up.

Besides federal agencies and departments, an anti-environmental record is visible in the U.S. Supreme Court. Both Justice Scalia and Thomas have set up obstacles for citizen suits, along with many other anti-environmental agendas. The current administration is, in general, opposed to regulations that would put constraints on industry and thus decrease profits. This mentality is the cause of much concern. It has on many levels, not only impeded the work of the previous five decades, it has also worsened the circumstances by eliminated much of the policies protecting environmental and workers rights (Parado and Zenteno 2001).

Since this is such an extremely immense issue, it is important to more narrowly tailor one's focus. One population that has encountered both environmental and occupational issues are factor workers, specifically women laborers. With the onset of women entering the workforce in the 1970's, a whole new area of study was open to research and evaluation by social scientists. Since then, there have been thousands of studies covering topics from sexual harassment to maternal leave. Along with more women in the workforce, many other changes in economic policy have affected many minorities, including women. The greatest of these factors, globalization, has contributed to an increased need to both raise awareness as well as investigate the implications that globalization has on society. In particular, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has had many effects on the populations of North America and spurred bitter debates on the benefits and costs of the newly "open" borders. Although NAFTA has opened the gates to an immense amount of wealth, it has had extensive detrimental effects on minorities, and thus women in particular.

There are two separate, but not dissimilar conflicts occurring. It must be known that for women to gain equality, it must not just occur here in the United States. Here, women still receive only two-thirds wage or salary for comparable work. There are still concerns with women's feeling of safety, unequal treatment, and conflicts with role strain as women go home to work the "second shift."

The struggle of women in the workplace is not confined to the United States. Just south of the U.S. border in an area dense with new industry, women are facing great hardships as they struggle to compete and survive in their work environment. Many

young women are mistreated and then easily replaced if grievances are made against the company. Issues of integrity, culture, and familial economic responsibilities arise. It is known that financial freedom brings with it a degree of social independence, however, at what price should this freedom be bought?

Although there are numerous studies concerning women in factories both in the United States and in Mexico, there are few, if any, comparing the feelings and attitudes of women *between* two factories located in the U.S. and Mexico. Because the U.S. and Mexico are at different stages in their industrial development, it would be beneficial to compare situations of women in the two locales. Growth and development are not necessarily linear, thus the attitudes of women in Mexico will not be exact images of women in the U.S. thirty years ago. The goal of this proposal is not to find an ideal type, or sort of model to which social scientists may evaluate women and their relationship within the work force, but rather to explore the nature, both similarities and differences, that women in the two countries face.

With consideration of time and financial constraints, the focus of this study must be more narrowly tailored. One may ask the general question: How do women's feelings and attitudes surrounding their factory work role and environment differ between company X (garment manufacturing in the USA) and Company Y (garment manufacturing in Mexico)? However, let's look to more specific hypotheses to taper the objective. Firstly, one may argue that women at the factory in the United States feel safer than do women of the factory in Mexico. Secondly, it may be suggested that women at

the factory in the United States have greater job satisfaction than do women at the factory in Mexico.

Through surveys, one may gain a greater understanding of the feelings and emotions surrounding the workplace and its associated environment and thus draw a clearer image of the complexities associated with the oppression and degradation of women's rights in the workplace. Although there has been a push for women's rights, there is still a great deal of work to be done. As exploratory research, this study is merely the first step toward numerous studies that will explore in greater detail the factors that contribute to tribulations women encounter. This will help to identify what actions or policies may be implemented to decrease the great discrepancies between men and women in the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Global Perspective

Although there is a scholarly research surrounding the topic of job satisfaction and safety at the workplace, there have been no previous studies measuring, analyzing or comparing these statistics cross-nationally. As stated, there has been a push for equality in the workplace. There have been recent surveys to compare job satisfaction between genders (Robinson 2002). However, in this study, the focus will be solely on the women to compare the feelings of safety and job satisfaction at two different garment factories, one in Mexico and one in the United States.

To better prepare ourselves to deal with the challenges of the 21st century, it is vital that we broaden our focus (Smith 2001). Also, looking at a broader global

perspective will help us to more clearly understand the underlying issues associated with women in the workplace. Since 1993 when the North American Free Trade Agreement took affect, the borders between Canada, the United States, and Mexico have been opened for trade. Although there have been benefits of NAFTA (Smith and Lindblad 2003), it has also contributed to an increase in competition between laborers in the tri-national area.

As competition increases, job security decreases, which negatively affects job satisfaction (Taylor 1995). However, this increased tension among workers has, in some regions, facilitated an awareness of the similar tribulations that women laborers face. Thus, Canadian, U.S., and Mexican women and labor organizations have mobilized to create a stronger labor movement (Stevenson 2004).

However, my study focuses on individual women rather than the organizations or companies with which they are affiliated. As we have seen, there are statistics about job satisfaction of men and women in the United States. There are also many formulations showing the money flow and job shifts, due in part to the policies of NAFTA (Smith and Lindblad 2003). However, the social science research neglects to concentrate on the individual women and their personal attitudes toward their work environment. To change policy and work toward improved working conditions, it is necessary to investigate the actual problems that have created many of the other issues women face. An increased tension in the work place has also led to increased social tension (Stevenson 2004). There have been numerous studies that have tried to place feminist theory in the context

of economic expansion, and in doing so have discussed the negative affects of neo-liberal policy on the live on many women and children (Mezentseva 2000).

With the economic crisis in the early 1980's and the decline in the late 1990's, many corporations saw that finding cheaper labor was necessary to increase profits. Many companies that once gave jobs to many Americans (Here the term is used to refer to people of the United States, not as a term for persons in the North and South Americas) were then moved across the boarders. This proved harmful for both workers in the United States as well as in foreign countries. The idea of globalization is in close connection with the ideologies of Neo-liberalism.

Neo-liberalism

If these ideas seem new, one could easily site Max Weber and the ideals of *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, where profit comes to be seen as an end in itself. Following along these same lines, neo-liberalism has a few key ideas that make it detrimental to many social aspects, including the ideas of a “trickle-down” economy. There is a focus to expand and stimulate economic growth at very high costs. In doing so, there is dangerous de-unionizing, and thus loss of many workers' freedoms in an attempt to keep wages low in order to increase profits (Martinez and Garcia 1997). Other aspects, as sited by Martinez and Garcia (1997), include policy to cut government spending, increase deregulation, privatize industry, and replace a focus on “community” with a focus on individual responsibility. There are obvious downfalls to such lines of thinking and that have directly affected workers all over the world.

Keep in mind that when a minority suffers, women suffer not only as part of the ethnic or economic minority, but they also suffer in terms of their gender. All of the key aspects to neo-liberalism affect women on some level or another. It is women who suffer in the greatest numbers when governments reduce public spending on social and educational programs. It is these same women that are affected by the stigmas associated with economic “failure” due to low wages and “unmotherly” conduct associated with lack of health care. Also, it is these poor women that live in the areas more likely to be polluted and thus they have an increased chance of being harmfully affected. In a 2003 report endorsed by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, they discovered many toxic hazards being ignored at the federal level (McConahay 2003). The increase in environmental hazards can be linked to a decrease in regulation and enforcement of environmental standards.

All of these issues not only affect women, but also, and more particularly, women in the workplace. One area that can be a specific area of increased exploitation is the female Mexican workforce (Myers 1992). In 1992, a non-governmental organization (NGO), met to discuss the effect that NAFTA would have on their livelihood. Issues discussed were problems of changes in safety programs, decreased wages, substandard employment practices, and decreased job security (McGinn 1992). Unfortunately their fears were not imaginary. By 1995 the declining value of the Mexican peso, caused labor costs to fall by 40% (Taylor 1995). This was a great venture for large corporations, who took immense profit from Mexico’s economic crisis. However, many workers lost either their jobs or their bargaining power to fight for workers’ rights due to the increased

competition in this lowest wage war. For many laborers, this was not a time of prosperity.

Women in the Workplace

Now that we have reviewed some of the global factors associated with the problems confronting workers in general, let us focus on more specific literature. One can hardly discuss work without mentioning the ideas of Karl Marx. For Marx, our human nature and potential are developed through labor. However, he recognized the devastating affects that result from increased alienation. Labor is no longer seen as an expression of our capabilities, but rather a means to an ends, a method of monetary gain.

As we have seen there are numerous players in this economic arena. It is practical for employers to be able to tap into a mass of unemployed laborers, what Marx referred to as a “reserve army” (Ritzer and Goodman 2004). This “reserve army” keeps competition high and wages low. But as many have noted, while some gain immense profit, the economic being of many others deteriorates and as the class-system becomes more closed, women are forced in to more marginal employment (Rothstein 1999).

Because of the increase in industrialization, few can produce the goods necessary to sustain themselves. Instead they enter into a contract to receive a wage in order to purchase these items necessary for survival. In that case, there is a type of dependence of the laborer on the employer. This type of dependence can be seen on the employee-employer level, but also, with the increase “free” trade agreements, there is evidence of foreign investment concentration and thus a strong dependence of lesser-developed countries on their larger, more powerful trading partners.

Although some cite the benefits (Smith and Lindblad 2003), the more in-depth social science research shows the negative affects of this dependent relationship. It can lead to a host of problems as Jeffery Kentor points out, “foreign capital penetration exacerbates income inequality” (2001: 436) This affects women in the workplace directly due to the fact that as inequality increases, the disparity between women’s and men’s wages increases (Avdela 1999).

A direct link to globalization and the push toward profit is the affects that these priorities have on the safety in the workplace. According to Lemus and Barkin (1998), with the introduction of new technology, there are more accidents and other detrimental health issues for laborers. Also associated with the concentration on profit, there is increasing intensity of work and underdeveloped training programs that all contribute to safety hazards in the workplace (Lemus and Barkin 1998). Although research has shown the increase in workplace hazards, there have been few if any studies to indicate women’s personal attitudes toward the situation.

To focus more clearly on the specific research question, let us examine why it is necessary to compare women’s satisfaction and feeling of safety in two different garment factories. Issues of less government spending on social programs, decreased job security due to ever changing markets, and the drive to lower wages have all contributed to the present situation of unstable, high-pressure employment. Since this is affecting women from many different regions, and there are, in some instances, a gathering of women who are cooperating in resistance against the oppressing actions of their employers. However, for the most part the companies themselves have tried to divide U.S and Mexican

Workers (Bandy 2004). Both American and Mexican employees are threatened by cheaper labor and feel the pressure of competition from their employers threatening to relocate.

In periods of economic recession, women typically join the work force to supplement household income (Parrado and Zenteno 2001). This increases the amount of job pressure and ultimately affects worker satisfaction as well as the amount of resistance they will put up against unfair employment practices. Also, studies have put forth ideas of the differences in coping methods of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic women in dealing with harassment (Cortina 2004). Cortina suggests that Hispanic women who are harassed by “in group” members are less likely to seek support from both public and personal sources (2004). Also, in relation to sexual harassment, the specific workplace environment can affect the meaning of gender in the workplace. Issues of inequality, job pressure, and also harassment are all aspects I wish to survey as a means to discover more information. All of the literature gives me a strong foundation on which to work.

Although there have been various studies seeking to understand the effects of globalization, Neo-liberalism, and the affect of gender in the workplace, none could answer these specific questions put forth. For this reason, it is necessary to observe, survey, and compare the feelings of women in two different companies to better grasp their personal attitudes toward their workplace environment. This is an attempt to see a pattern of oppression among the women of both countries. However, obtaining statistical data is merely the first step.

HYPOTHESES

Now that we have grasped the general problems associated with globalization and its affects on women and the work place, let us tailor our focus to a particular research question: How do women's feelings and attitudes surrounding their factory work role and environment differ between a garment factory in the USA and garment factory in Mexico? Two statements have been put forth about the expected relationship between the attitudes and feeling of women in two different factories: A) women in the Mexican factory feel less safe than women in the American factory, and B) women in the Mexican factory have greater job satisfaction than do women of the American factory.

Within these two hypotheses there are numerous variables including location of employment, women's feelings of safety, and women's job satisfaction. Location of employment is the independent variable and has two levels; employment at the Mexican garment factory, and location at factory within the United States. The dependent variables include women's feeling of safety and job satisfaction.

The two companies will be identified in the sampling plan. However, for an operational definition it need only be known that the women of each company will be identified by their presence on an employee roster. The dependent variable, safety, is defined as the condition of being free from harm, or secure from the threat of loss or injury. Quite simply, it may be defined as a lack of vulnerability, which is having the strength to withstand attack. Safety may be measured by answers to particular questions which reflect, both directly and indirectly, a feeling of safety. Some of the questions include:

How would you rate your level of comfort?
 Have you ever been injured at work?
 Do you fear the possibility of injury?
 Do or would you relate these problems/fears to management?
 Are you confident that these problems/fears would be fixed or resolved?
 How would you describe your work environment?
 How would you rate your level of comfort with your coworkers?
 How would you rate your overall comfort level with management?
 Have you ever been of felt threatened at your workplace or in connection to work?
 Have you ever felt sexually mistreated or abused at you workplace or in connection to work?
 Did or would you feel comfortable to report mistreatment?

The second dependent variable, job satisfaction, consists of a feeling of fulfillment of needs or wants. It is a state of being vindicated or gratified. That is, job satisfaction is a convinced assurance of reward or compensation (monetarily and/or emotionally). A presence or lack of job satisfaction at or in connection to the workplace will be indicated by the responses to the following questions:

How many hours do you work during each seven day week?
 Are you the main financial contributor in your household?
 Are you satisfied with the wage you receive?
 Do you feel you receive a fair wage?
 Do you feel you receive fair benefits?
 Do you feel you receive adequate sick leave?
 If you have complaints or criticisms toward the job or workplace environment, would you feel comfortable communicating these to management?
 Do you feel there is equal treatment to all entry-level employees?
 Do you feel there is room for positional advancement?

The goal of conceptualization is to be clear and concise, however, these variables are multidimensional, which means they have more than one discernable aspect. Therefore it is important that there is a clear definition to conceptualize the variables and reinforce their meanings by presenting questions that adequately reflect the operational definitions.

Based on previous research indicating the affects of economic pressure and competition on the effects of job satisfaction (Taylor 1995), it would seem that both the Mexican and the American factory workers would have less job satisfaction then workers

in other sectors. However, that is not the emphasis of this study. Rather, as stated, this proposed study would compare job satisfaction as well as a feeling of safety between the two groups.

Numerous sources indicate the increased environmental and occupational hazards that are continuously increasing due to deregulation and other neo-liberal policies (Lemus and Barkin 1998; Martinez and Garcia 1997). Although these factors affect both Mexican and American factory workers, they have a greater impact on women. Thus, as proposed in Hypothesis A, Mexican women will feel less safe in their workplace environment than their American counterparts.

Although there is an immense amount of competition in the Mexican factories, there are a few factors that led me to conclude that Mexican women will report higher satisfaction. One, the garment industry is a fairly recent development in Mexico and there has always been a high degree of competition (Kentor 2001). Along this same logic is the fact that, although it is marginal, many women welcome the notion of gaining employment, not as an end in itself, but as a means to supplement household income (Parrado and Zenteno 2001). Also, the options for employment are more limited in Mexico and therefore, the work associated with garment factory labor is rationalized in a different fashion (Salzinger 1997).

Thirdly, since much of job satisfaction is based on involvement with “in-group” members, and Hispanic women are less likely to report or seek guidance from problems involved with “in-groups” (Cortina 2004), women in the Mexican factories will report or disclose problems less often and try to ignore the situation rather than make a disturbance

in the “in-group.” When completing the survey, this rationalization will be reflected in their responses, and thus there may be an increased appearance of satisfaction. Therefore, Mexican factory workers will appear to have higher job satisfaction than the American laborers (Hypothesis B).

A survey is not a completely comprehensive plan for evaluating the complex topics suggested. Rather, it is an initial step on which to build a foundation for further research. With that in mind, the following is an outline for the proposed research design.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Sampling Plan

Now that the hypotheses have been summarized, it is necessary to outline the specific target population. This may seem like a simple procedure, but in reality it is difficult to narrow one's scope. Because the garment and textile industry comprises a substantial 28% of the labor force in the maquiladoras region (“Maquiladora Labor” 1998) it would only seem reasonable to focus attention on that industry. The garment industry is interesting in that women are twice exploited. Firstly, it is part of the fashion consumer driven organism to which many women, from all socioeconomic spheres, succumb. Secondly, women make up a large part of the underpaid, oppressed, and easily replaceable workforce and thus are hit once again.

Although it is easy to find advertisements and retail locations of many brands of clothing, it is quite another obstacle to locate information on the company who manufactured the garments, let alone where and how. Since September 11th of 2001

there has been an increase in national border security. This has led to an increased awareness of where clothing is being manufactured. Although there are very strict laws about labeling and information concerning where imports originate, it is not information easily available to the public.

To complete the survey, it is necessary to find two garment manufacturing companies, one with production in Mexico, and the other with production in the United States. After much investigation, two companies based in America have been chosen, one manufacturing in the maquiladoras region of Mexico and the other with production in the U.S. Although it would be ideal to select these companies using probability sampling, there is not an available nor reliable database of all garment factories in the United States and Mexico. Also, one must realize that, as I stated, these consumer products may be easily purchased, however, locating their origin of construction is much more difficult. Due to these circumstances companies will be chosen using nonprobable, purposive sampling. All of the research aids in the understanding that having control over the manufacturing companies greatly facilitates the research. Also, since the research is both exploratory and qualitative, it is well suited for purposive sampling.

The first company selected, based in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, is Oshkosh B'Gosh Inc., known for its family apparel made in the United States. On the other hand, the second company selected is a contracting company from Denver, Colorado called Colorado Cut and Sew. Although Colorado Cut and Sew has factories in the U.S., they contract garment production in Mexico as well.

To obtain an employee roster the company must be contacted to obtain more information about their specific garment production factories. This information is harder to obtain, however, of the target population, women entry-level factory workers of Oshkosh B'Gosh and Colorado Cut and Sew, a sampling frame is easily drawn from the employee roster. Although a census is ideal, both time and financial constraints permit me from surveying the entire population of both companies. It may have been easier to do nonprobability sampling, however there are many disadvantages including the possibility of a less representative sample.

Data Gathering Method

The design of a study depends largely on the project objectives including exploration, description, or critique. Also one must ask questions pertaining to sample size and measurement. For a high-quality project, it is necessary to align the goals of the study with the appropriate method of gathering and analysis. There are many types of designs ranging from cross-sectional to experimental to a case study. The cross-sectional design is one in which data are collected from all variables at only one point in time. This type of study is both inexpensive, easily analyzed statistically, and has the possibility of a large sample, since there are not concerns with retention. While the focus is on the relationship between the variables and less concerned with the relationship of time-order, and because there are both financial and time limitations, the cross-sectional study best fits criteria. In the future it is possible that data may be recollected and statistics drawn on differences over time, rather than seeking comparisons between two companies.

To collect the data, a survey will be used (see Appendix A). Surveys are frequently used in the social sciences because they are easy to analyze statistically and convenient to use for large samples. For this research, the unit of analysis is women and their attitudes, thus a self-report method seems not only likely, but necessary. Since the attitudes of women would be hard to observe in the workplace, it seems impractical. Also, the researcher's presence in the workplace would affect not only the workers, but the management as well. To diminish the affects of both employees and management, the researcher will survey the respondents outside of the workplace environment and use a self-report, individually administered questionnaire as the data collection method. This is the best way, considering the circumstances, to obtain an indication of the independent variables, safety and job satisfaction. Since this is exploratory research, there are numerous questions on the survey. After this current project is completed, a formulation of new hypotheses and follow-up interviews would be taken to support any new, more specific postulations.

However, for the time being, one must focus on the task at hand; to explore the range of feelings and attitudes toward safety and job satisfaction at or in connection to the work place between the workers at two different garment factories. Because the researcher will be working with women of at least two nationalities, the questionnaire will be produced both in Spanish and in English. Although group-administered questionnaires are both inexpensive and time efficient, that is not the appropriate method for this proposal. Also, an internet or telephone-based survey seems unlikely since most of the Mexican and many of the American respondents will have access to neither.

Rather, individually administered questionnaire will be the method. It not only has a good response rate, but also, the researcher can make other verbal, physical, and environmental observations as the survey is administered and the questions are answered. A fundamental advantage of the individually administered survey is that as the interviewer, the researcher will be there to answer any questions. Because the investigator may not be working with a highly literate population, this is an important factor. Obviously, there may be concerns with my effect on the respondents; however, formal guidelines to follow, both for the instructions, as well as answers to their possible questions may be followed to avoid any discrepancies.

Although it is the respondents' choice to participate, a high rate of participation is more likely to occur through the use of individually administered questionnaires. It is a major concern that the social characteristics, feelings and attitudes of participants and nonparticipants may differ enough to have a detrimental, biased effect on the sample. Therefore, it is very important that a high percentage of my sample participate. To eliminate, or at least decrease the nonresponse bias, the sample will be collected using a systematic random sampling method.

There are disadvantages to this approach including the fact that it is more expensive and time-consuming. Also, there is a greater chance of interviewer effects as well as possible respondent concerns with anonymity. However, the researcher's rapport with the respondents, as well as the information available by observations of the person and her environment, will significantly outweigh the disadvantages of an individually administered questionnaire.

Data Gathering Instrument

The operational definitions were discussed in the hypotheses section; however, it was not mentioned that there are numerous ways to operationalize the variables. Since this is a survey, it is possible that the questions could be either open or close-ended. An open-ended question allows subjects the freedom to respond fully in their own words. Open-ended questions are ideal for exploratory research because they allow the respondents to answer more fully. For this reason open-ended questions are often used in the initial stages of project. However, they are both costly and time-consuming, not only for the respondents, but also for the researcher who must transcribe the information as well as deal with issues of post-coding. Other advantages of close-ended questions include the researcher's advantage to ask questions about more sensitive topics, often subjects are more likely to place themselves in a range, as opposed to writing their specific circumstances. Also, the convenience of analyzing and making comparisons across subjects makes closed-ended questions ideal. For these reasons, it is best to use a survey with predetermined answers.

By using close-ended questions, it is necessary that the answer choices are exhaustive as well as mutually exclusive. If these two criteria are not met, there will be problems with the accuracy of the data. Other issues pertaining to the gathering instrument include the question of validity. Because the independent variables, safety and job satisfaction, are multidimensional, it is necessary that the survey questions reflect the range of definitions related to these concepts. For this, one must compare both the conceptual and operational definitions to many other well-established definitions

including a questionnaire entitled “Occupational Safety and Health Conditions and Consciousness of Toy Workers in Foreign Invested Enterprises in Mainland China” (“How Hasbro” 2001) and also a variety of standard dictionaries. Many other people read the survey questions and commented on the degree to which they believed the questions were measuring what they were intended to measure. Through these actions, a strong sense of both face and content validity was attained.

Once the construction of the questions is complete, it is necessary to focus on the format of the survey. Because the survey is for a relatively new and sensitive subject, the substance of the questions, but also their placement within the questionnaire is important. Although it is necessary to get straight to the point, one must be sure to lead up to the most probing questions. Therefore, the survey contains filler questions to guide the flow and format. Also, with the more sensitive questions, space is left at the end for more casual, less profound questions as a way for the respondents to ease out of the survey. To build rapport for future interviews as well as give the respondent a feeling of closure, the end of the survey is a place for any additional questions or any other information they would like to share.

The use of a self-administered, close-ended survey is just one of the many methods that may be utilized. However, considering time and financial constraints, as well as my educational background and the nature of the project, this is the best method for data collection. Once, the methods are outlined, it is then time to focus on the mechanics of collecting the data as well as the proposed data analysis.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

With adequate preparation in the choice of the data gathering method and instrument, the difficulty of collection and analysis is minimized. The data will be obtained by individually contacting thirty-five female employees from each company. The survey is set up that a seven point scale will be used with the lower range reflecting a higher satisfaction and greater feeling of safety. The survey questions will be answered with responses varying from very comfortable to very uncomfortable and also very satisfied to very unsatisfied. Once the scores are collected and entered, they will be checked for accuracy using a random sample for data cleaning. If there is item nonresponse, the mean of the sample will be used to indicate the value for that answer. However, because of the nature of my survey, there should be few instances of nonresponse.

Gaining access requires strong social skills. To obtain honest, accurate results the researcher must try to make connections with my participants while being as knowledgeable and courteous as possible. A better rapport will assure a greater response to any follow-up interviews.

The logistics of conducting this survey include travel to the factory in the United States, as well as to the factory in Mexico. Financial costs will include airfare, hotel, food, and transportation while at each location. The amount of time for conducting the surveys will be fairly undetermined, so length of stay is also unknown. As stated earlier, access will be gained by using an employee roster. There may be challenges in collecting data from all of the respondents due to lack of interest in completing the survey or

perhaps their unavailability. Conducting these surveys away from the work setting will reduce pressure associated with a desire to reflect what their employers may want versus what the respondents are actually feeling.

Other logistics include the fact that the survey must be written in Spanish as well as English so that all factory workers in the sample may be included. If persons in the selected sample speak a language other than English or Spanish, the researcher will accommodate.

After the data are collected, they are entered and basic analysis can occur including; comparing the basic measures of central tendency and looking for patterns within as well as between the two data sets. As a reflection of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, the association will be measured using the correlation coefficient. With a range of -1 to 1, a strong correlation would be in the range of .20 to .65. The output correlation will reveal the strength and direction of the relationship.

Once the correlation is determined, a multivariate technique will be used to analyze the relationship between three or more variables. By running a multiple regression analysis, one may determine if the relationship still holds when other variables including age, hours worked per week, and wage are taken into account. If a significant correlation still holds true, there will be statistical support for the hypotheses.

LIMITATIONS

Although this is a well thought out and planned survey, there are, like in any research project, problems the researcher encounters. Three major problems arise with

the proposed method. First, the companies were not selected randomly. Instead, purposive selection was used. There is a secrecy surrounding the production of garments, thus, it was necessary that the choices came from a collection of businesses that were accessible. Although comparisons were made on many factors including type of work done in each factory, there are still obvious issues with selecting the companies using a nonprobability method. For instance, the companies that do allow access may have a better reputation for job satisfaction and safety. However, since both were identified rather easily, they both may fall under the same circumstances.

Secondly, because of both time and monetary constraints, the sample is rather small. I will survey forty women in each factory, and assuming not all will be available or willing to participate, it may be a smaller sample. However, because it is a smaller sample, the survey is set on a seven point scale so that there will be more statistically precise information to analyze.

Thirdly, language should be seen as a cultural artifact and it must be considered what affect the researcher may have on persons of her own race and nationality, as well as peoples of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. Although many people believe that a researcher is capable of creating better rapport with her respondents, this will not affect the respondents enough to necessitate a separate interviewer for women of the factory located in Mexico. Furthermore, as a female researcher, gender will facilitate the social connection to the women and help gain trust and thus access to pertinent information.

Although these are relatively important factors, they are not substantial enough to affect the outcome of the project. As stated, every plan has its limitations. Since the

limitations have been recognized, they may be taken into consideration and ensure that biases will be avoided.

CONCLUSIONS

In each project, there are evident goals of which one hopes to accomplish. Obviously, a researcher hopes to find support for her hypotheses and a find a nonspurious correlation between the variables. Although I wish that all women were equally highly satisfied and secure in and in connection to their workplace, I know that there are discrepancies, and I wish, through my research and analysis, to uncover some of the issues behind this topic.

With my survey and analysis, I will simply measure job satisfaction and feelings of safety at two different garment factories, one located in Mexico, the other in the United States. Although this is a start, this questionnaire does not lend it self to answer why women have these attitudes or why they differ between the two factories. With further investigation, I hope to conduct follow-up interviews as well as conduct observation of both companies and the factories themselves.

My survey is somewhat narrow in scope, however, it must be taken into consideration that this is exploratory research, and my hypotheses are merely the preliminary stages of what I hope will be a further investigation of the affects of factory work on the lives of women. Thus, my findings, however minor, will have implications on the future of the topic. These are not merely topics of women in the workplace; they are issues of culture, oppression, and globalization. No matter the result of my findings, I

will have provided information to further the knowledge of the social sciences, and thus have taken one step closer toward change to improve our society.

The issues of globalization are so broad that it can easily become overwhelming. The purpose of this proposal is to examine merely one area that is affected by neo-liberalism ideologies and increased globalization. Key players in this arena include employers, governments, and laborers. This proposal focuses merely on the laborers and the infringement of their rights. The conclusions of this proposal are limited; however, the information is vast. I draw my conclusions based on the information obtained.

Although these are preliminary conclusions, the information gathered leads us in the direction of improved sustainability, both of employment and environment. There are a few key factors that we may look to as goals to decrease the detrimental effects of globalization. There must be a focus on waste minimization, as well as hazardous waste transportation insurance. Also, there is an immediate need to make corporations responsible for their action by internalizing costs. To curb these issues it is imminent that we promote public awareness. While knowledge is merely the first step, it is, nonetheless, necessary if we are to end the devastating consequences of neo-liberal policies and the negative effects of globalization.

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Appendix A

Survey

Name _____ (optional)

Date _____

Phone/Contact number _____ (optional)

Place of employment _____

Job Title _____

Gender: Female ___ Male ___

Age: _____

Directions: Please circle the answer or number that best describes you, your feelings, or attitudes toward the statement.

Which best represents your race or ethnicity:

- 1) American Indian or Alaska Native
- 2) Asian or Pacific Islander
- 3) Black or African American
- 4) Latino/a or Hispanic
- 5) Middle Eastern
- 6) White or Caucasian
- 7) Other (please specify) _____

How many hours do you work per seven day week?

- 1) 0-15 2) 16-30 3) 31-45 4) 46-60 5) 60+

Which of the following best reflects your satisfaction with your job?

Satisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Satisfied
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Attitude towards work environment:

Good	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Bad
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Quality of work environment:

Good	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Bad
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Treatment of managers toward employees:

Fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unfair
Positive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Negative

Treatment of co-workers by other co-workers:

Fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unfair
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------

Positive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Negative
----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------

Comfort level with managers:

Very Comfortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very uncomfortable
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------

Comfort level with co-workers:

Very Comfortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very uncomfortable
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------

Have you ever felt mistreated at work?

0) no 1) yes

Extent of mistreatment:

Minor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Serious
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Have you ever felt threatened at you work place or in connection to work?

0) no 1) yes

How serious was the threat?

Not very serious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very serious
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------

Have you ever felt sexually mistreated or abused at or in connection to your workplace?

0) no 1) yes

Extent of abuse or mistreatment

Minor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Serious
-------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------

How comfortable would you feel to report the mistreatment or abuse?

Very Comfortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very uncomfortable
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------

Have you ever been injured at work?

0) no 1) yes

Fear of injury:

High	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Low
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

How comfortable would you feel relating safety concerns to management?

Very Comfortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very uncomfortable
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------

How confident are you that these issues would be resolved?

Very confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very unconfident
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------

You are satisfied with the wages you receive:

True	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	False
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

You receive fair wages for your work:

True	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	False
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

You are the main financial contributor in your household:

True	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	False
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

You are satisfied with the benefits you receive:

True	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	False
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

You receive adequate sick leave:

True	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	False
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

You feel there is room for positional advancement:

True	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	False
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Please write any additional information you would like to share.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in taking this survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated! Please know that all of the information you provided is confidential. Also, please feel free to contact me with any additional questions or concerns.

Briana R. Henscheid
(712) 234-5678 or briana@uni.edu

Appendix B

Sondeo

Nombre _____ (opcional) Fecha _____
 Teléfono _____ (opcional)
 Lugar de trabajo _____
 Titulo de trabajo _____
 Genero: Mujer ____ Hombre ____
 Edad: _____

Direcciones: Por favor, en circulo la contesta o numero que describe si, sus sentimientos, o actitud hacia la declaración.

¿Cuál es tu raza?

- 8) Nativo Americano o Nativa Alaska
- 9) Asiático o Isleño Pacifico
- 10) Americano Africano
- 11) Latino/a o Hispánico
- 12) Centro oriental
- 13) Caucásico
- 14) Otro (especifica por favor) _____

¿Cuántas horas trabaja durante un semana de siete días?

- 1) 0-15
- 2) 16-30
- 3) 31-45
- 4) 46-60
- 5) 60+

¿Cuál reflexión de su satisfacción con su trabajo?

Satisfecha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No Satisfecha
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Actitud hacia su ambiente de trabajo:

Buen o	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mal
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Cualidad de su ambiente de trabajo:

Buen o	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mal
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Trato de jefes hacia empleados:

Just o	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Injusto
Positiva	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Negativa

Trata de colaboradores hacia otros colaboradores:

Just o	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Injusto
Positiva	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Negativa

Nivel de comodidad con jefes:

Muy confortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Muy inconfortable
--------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------

Nivel de comodidad con colaboradores:

Muy confortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Muy inconfortable
--------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------

¿Sienta maltrato a su trabajo?

0) no 1) sí

Gradado de maltrato:

Chico	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Serio
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¿Tiene miedo en conexión a su trabajo?

0) no 1) sí

¿Como serio?

No serio	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Serio
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¿Sienta maltratos sexuales a o en conexión a su lugar de trabajo?

0) no 1) sí

Gradado de maltrato:

Chico	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Serio
-------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

¿Tiene cuanto comodidad reportar los maltratos?

Muy Confortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Muy inconfortable
--------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------

¿Tienes heridas a su trabajo?

0) no 1) sí

Miedo de herida:

Alto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Bajo
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------

¿Tienes cuanto comodidad en relatar problemas a los jefes?

Muy Confortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Muy inconfortable
--------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------

¿Tiene cuanto confianza que los problemas resolverán?

Muy seguro	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Muy inseguro
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

¿Es satisfecha con su salario?

Cierto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Falso
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Recibe salario justo para su trabajo:

Cierto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Falso
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Es el donante principal en su casa:

Cierto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Falso
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Tiene satisfecha con sus beneficios:

Cierto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Falso
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Recibe tiempo demasiado para salir enfermada:

Cierto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Falso
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Sienta que hay la posibilidad de una promoción:

Cierto	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Falso
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------

Por favor, escribe más información que quiere compartir.

Muchas gracias para su participación. Recuerda que la información es confidencial.
También, si tiene preguntas llama o escríbame:

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(712) 234-5678 o briana@uni.edu