

Women Garment Workers' Struggle in a Capitalist System

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to investigate the othering of textile workers in the global capitalist system. The fashion industry is notorious for human rights violations, which disproportionately affects women, 85% per cent of garment workers being women in the Global South, face layers of discrimination and marginalization. The research is guided by a theory-informed approach, basing my research on theory on labour struggle and underdevelopment and the process of Othering, relating theory to empirical information described in reports on labour conditions and labour struggle in the garment industry in the Global South.

The double pressure from capitalist exploitation and Othering forms a structural challenge for the women fighting for their labour rights. This double pressure of capitalism and Othering mutually reinforces and strengthens each other as capitalist exploitation can seem legitimate when racist Othering dehumanizes the people in the global supply chain.

This research contributes to the theorization of the labour struggle of women garment workers in the Global South with a critical focus on how capitalism and Othering reinforces each other forming a double pressure. To understand the dimensions of this structural challenge is essential to move towards responsible and respectful production of garments and overcoming the human rights violations faced by women garment workers every day.

Keywords: Textile workers, women, workers' rights, human rights, Othering, capitalism, neoliberalism, neoclassical economics.

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