Book Reflection on “Downwardly Global: Women, Work, and Citizenship in the Pakistani Diaspora

 Name (First M\_Last)

 Institution Name

 Lalaie Ameeriar in Downwardly Global scrutinizes the intercontinental migration of the labor of Pakistani Women to Canada, Toronto. My reflection paper will start with summarizing the main findings and arguments of the research; it will describe what this book is arguing. Then, it will cover how the research of the author helped me understand ethnography as a research method. I will enlighten what the researcher did, what were the ethnographic methods how did she build relationships, how did she get information and how long it took for the researcher to conduct this research. It will furthermore illuminate how ethnographic methods lead to a greater understanding of the issues she is studying, and her relationship with the group being studied. I will discuss what I learn about the personality of the researcher and how she described herself. At the end, I will discuss the greatest strengths of this ethnographic research project and its limitations.
 This book illuminates that despite being expert professionals in various fields including medicine, law, education, and engineering, they face high levels of poverty and unemployment. It juxtaposes experiences of the Pakistani immigrant women in state-funded redundancy workshops, where these women are ordered not to dress ethnic outfits or not to smell like traditional Indian food, with the experiences of them at cultural festivals, where they are heartened to promote these similar differences. This kind of multiculturalism, Lalaie Ameeriar divulges whiteness of privileges while using gender, cultural difference, and race as an accused of the catastrophes of the Canadian neoliberal policies.
 The book Downwardly Global compellingly explains how these immigrants are coached for citizenship by their ability to labor. The author argues that yearning for paid-work is essential to her conversers’ identities, a desire Ameeriar describes as the “post-Fordist effect.” It explains how discourses of the culture enlighten identities of immigrants as laborers; excesses of their smell and dress must be disciplined and made pleasant to the work environment. However, there are few systemic blockades averting them from inflowing into the proficient work force that can even not be upgraded by cultural training. Therefore, many interlocutors of author turn to the survival-jobs with not as much of cultural capital and mounting economic kinesis, than those they apprehended or coached for in Pakistan (end of page 157). Ammeriar’s arguments are persuasive and are backed up with nice and subtle descriptions and statistics. She has poured her experiences compellingly in this book which delivers the sense of hopelessness and humiliation experienced by the Pakistani women, as the realization originates that chances of their searching jobs that are suitable to their qualification and expertise move far into the distance.
Ameeriar’s ethnographic descriptions of training and resettlement centers show how comportment is regulated bodily, how bodies of immigrants are instructed to not give masala smell, rehearse new accents, no wearing of hijabs, make eye contact and have strong handshakes. By addressing this recalibration of bodies of immigrants “sanitized sensorium,” Lalaie Ameeriar emphases her examination on olfactory and visual regulations that are dictated in training, although as we hear regarding to showers, grip, accent, flavors and sweat, other senses are invoked. Author’s analysis places white and masculine codes simply that govern the “professionalism” hegemonies as well as the sexism and racism in a diversity of industries of Canada.
 While discussing sanitized sensorium, Lalaie Ameeriar regards the choosy nature of the regulation of culture. For instance, in the expedient appeal of the clothing of South Asia and exhibition of food at the city and state-sponsored heritage festivals, but rejecting this on South Asian bodies in the work environment. This shows the two-faced and hypocrite policies that are imposed on the immigrants. Sanitized sensorium also explains how immigrant labors are categorized into affective systems. In chapter 2, the author focuses on the nurses training program and explains how immigrant women are coached by the instructor to interact with the clients in the hospital. If the nurse gets frustrated or angry with a client in hospital, she should avoid becoming confrontational, take a deep breath and relax (“DOWNWARDLY GLOBAL: Women, Work, and Citizenship in the Pakistani Diaspora | By Lalaie Ameeriar | Pacific Affairs,” n.d.). The author argues in a shrewd analysis of this management of emotions that such training antedate racism in the workplace against the minority women, but place regulation on these immigrant women to manage and comply racist harassment (“DOWNWARDLY GLOBAL: Women, Work, and Citizenship in the Pakistani Diaspora | By Lalaie Ameeriar | Pacific Affairs,” n.d.).

Moreover, these sessions assume that there is an essentialist division between immigrant and Western emotional registers (“‘Downwardly Global’ | The UCSB Current,” n.d.). Authors enlighten that when she was discussing restraining processes, the instructor was invoking conventions of cruel non-Western people when they thought that Pakistani women have experienced and perceived more tough handlings “at home.”
 Research of the author shows clear results that the nursing programs have higher success in employing Pakistani immigrant women workers than any other career training organization for immigrant labors. The author argues that nursing is gendered already, therefore somewhat cooperating of their identity. Hurdles to the placement of the jobs emerge from the licensing bureaucracy that condenses the expert migrants uncertified in regulated professions like law, social work, and education, amongst the others (Chaudhary, 2018). In addition, some of the certifications charge a lot of money and many years of reeducation which leads migrants to pick survival jobs temporarily, but they end up sticking to these jobs which are not appropriate according to their expertise.
Moreover, those who successfully acquire the certification, they continuously and repeatedly face the solid barriers on their entry new work environments (Ameeriar, 2017). Lalaie Ameeriar’s analysis grasps the Canadian settler state responsible for not only recognizing gatekeeping bureaucracies but also for presenting how its celebrated-multiculturalism support racial difference to unclear white privilege. Ameeriar details in chapter 4, the congratulatory and flattening rationalities of multiculturalism, involving the use of the category of “South Asian” uncritically, obscure the religion, faith, and class struggle that Pakistani immigrant women are facing (Khubchandani, 2018).
 Ameeriar spent more than a year in interviewing several policy makers and activists and in attending courses. She herself is a daughter of a skilled mother, and she understands the struggles and efforts Pakistani immigrant women are having in Toronto. In her book she offers many close encounters with all her interlocutors individually, reading her book one can clearly feel their struggles for the striving of justice, dignity, and legibility in their interviews. It reminds of “diva citizenship” of Lauren Berlant (Ameeriar, 2017).
 Lalaie Ameeriar’s explanations of the living conditions and biographies of these Pakistani immigrant women clear the dangerous situations these women are facing, from post-partition disarticulation to workplace and local abuse and harassment, and the deskilling of the workers that entire book documents. However, the testimonials of Pakistani immigrant women, their evaluation of training programs, other forms of racism, descriptions of elderly and artist collectives, book of Ameeriar echoes a significantly important exhortation from feminist scholars, claiming that in spite of the several measures at which violence and disenfranchisement function, migrant women of Pakistan ingeniously find ways to stand, survive and continue.

References

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