

Abstract

Most households in urban Pakistan, from middle-class and above, employ some form of domestic labor for assistance. Karachi, a densely populated metropolis, and the financial epicenter of Pakistan, draws a significant influx of women migrants. Many of these women hail from rural regions, seeking employment opportunities in Karachi's expanding domestic labor market. The city exhibits a stark spatial class divide, with the affluent residing centrally and the impoverished migrants relegated to peripheral slums. Despite this pattern of spatial segregation, homes of the upper and middle-class serve as unique spaces where individuals of varying social backgrounds, primarily women, frequently interact. This research explores the nuanced dynamics within these households, focusing on gendered-class relations and the spatial and material factors influencing interactions. The study aims to uncover the delicate balance between proximity and distance maintained by domestic workers and employers, shedding light on how these individuals navigate disparities to sustain working relationships. By delving into micro-interactions within household spaces, the research seeks to unveil the intricate ways in which social differences are perpetuated and shape care labor relations in contemporary Pakistan.