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## Changing women's lives? Empowerment and aspirations of fair trade workers in South India

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### ABSTRACT

Fair trade is a new form of commercial partnership whereby actors in the North engage with actors in the South on a number of conditions, including setting a minimum price, a development bonus, and so on. But above all, fair trade organizations in the South are implementing mechanisms that more or less facilitate the empowerment of their members. This article analyzes the empowerment effects of two fair trade organizations in South India. It shows that while positive effects can be seen, the prevailing social norms in India are extremely influential for women at the moment, so that women are putting all their hopes on their daughters through their education.

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International trade is a global ethical issue. Although the notion of global ethics is far from being fixed (Drydyk 2014), it refers to the idea that the major issues we are facing should be addressed from the perspective of interdependencies and interconnections concerning citizens, states (Hutchings 2010) or firms (Buller, Kohls, and Anderson 1991). Global ethics therefore opens the question of how we should behave towards each other in a world where we are inter-connected (Widdows 2011). Such conceptualization, however, leaves aside certain phenomena such as climatic shocks, in which the interconnections are not clear. For this reason, Drydyk (2014) suggests considering global ethics as a set of issues that require cross-border actions and cooperation. In this sense, global ethics is less about the connections we have than about the connections we should have to solve certain problems. International trade is undeniably part of this. One can wonder how to modify the rules of the game in order to make it beneficial for all (Stiglitz and Charlton 2005). One of the proposed answers is the development of movements promoting fair trade. Those movements have had significant success since the 1980s (Brown 1993; Jaffee 2007; Raynolds, Murray, and Wilkinson 2007). Fair trade is conceived as a response to injustices resulting from the globalization of trade (Roozen and van der Hoff 2002; Walton 2014; Ballet and Pouchain 2015). It envisages a new model of commercial partnership (Renard 1999; Raynolds 2000) in which it is necessary to reintroduce equity in global value chains (Carimentrand, Ballet, and Renard 2011), reconnecting Northern consumers

to producers in the South (Jaffee, Kloppenburg, and Monroy 2004) and, more broadly, forming new forms of alliances and networking at the international level (Davies 2009).

Fair trade has grown very significantly since the 1980s, and the issue about the impact of this type of trade on producers in the South has become crucial because consumer purchases in the North are largely conditioned by their beliefs in the effects of their actions on Southern producers (De Pelsmacker, Driesen, and Rayp 2005; Doran 2009; Andorfer and Liebe 2012; Ma and Lee 2012). The multiplication of impact studies and syntheses of these studies attests to this concern (Le Mare 2008; Nelson and Pound 2009; Vagneron and Roquigny 2010; Terstappen, Hanson, and McLaughlin 2013; Dragusanu, Giovannucci, and Nunn 2014; Darko, Lynch, and Smith 2017).

Concerning the impacts of fair trade on women, the main results focus on the improvement in their living conditions and their participation in decision-making bodies of production groups. While the results on living conditions in general are rather encouraging, those on participation in decision-making bodies, and more generally the impact on decision-making, are rather mixed (Aranda and Morales 2002; Langis 2006; Asti 2007; Imhof and Lee 2007; Hutchens 2010; Ruben and Fort 2012; Terstappen et al. 2013; Smith 2013).

However, in these impact studies empowerment is measured in a relatively poor way, i.e. by participation or non-participation in decision-making bodies. Furthermore, they exclusively focus on women who participate in agricultural producer groups (mainly coffee) or are employed in plantations. There is little data on handicraft and far fewer studies on fair trade hired labor systems. Giving voices to women, Le Mare's (2012) research with women handicraft producers in Bangladesh brings a new approach to fill the gap on empowerment. She draws our attention to changes 'at home' and 'beyond home' which the women producers 'feel they are achieving' and how such change is linked with fair trade employment. She reports significant changes in their roles within the home, improvements in their status, greater involvement in decisions and acknowledgement of their abilities (such as educating children). Recognition of the value of daughters is also emphasized. In the workplace, Le Mare (2012) outlines gains in useful knowledge, respect, increased confidence and well-being. The opportunity to meet and share with other women is important in this process.

Following this kind of research, our argument develops as follows. In a first section, we clarify our positioning and we present our methodology for collecting information. In a second section, we present the two fair trade organizations that are analyzed. In a third section, we present and discuss our findings on the empowerment of women working in these organizations. We then conclude on the main features of our study.

## 1. Positioning of our research and methodology

In this section we describe succinctly the concept of empowerment and then underline the specificity of our study. We continue with a brief presentation of our survey methodology.

### *On empowerment*

While the idea of *empowerment* has multiple origins and seems to date from the Black Power movement of the 1970s, the formal appearance of the term 'empowerment' in

the field of international development can be attributed to the feminist movements in the countries of the South, particularly India. For the Indian feminists at DAWN (*Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era*), reinforcing women's power is not only a question of gaining access to an income and fulfilling basic needs, in other words resolving practical issues or those related to survival. It also involves an awareness of strategic interests and provoking a radical change in the economic, political, legal and social structures that perpetuate gender-based domination, as well as domination based on ethnic origin, class and caste, in order to establish egalitarian relationships in society.<sup>1</sup> Thus feminists popularized the concept of empowerment based on the principle that it is a multidimensional, bottom-up process of transformation that allows women, or the poor, to individually and collectively become aware of the relationships of domination that result in their marginalization.

This concept, which conveys the idea that people become agents of their own development, is, however, particularly complex (Drydyk 2010). It refers on the one hand to a normative dimension, to a goal, that people improve their capacity to shape their lives. On the other hand, it refers to the empirical point of view on the means to achieve this goal. However, the correspondence between the means and the goal is far from being so obvious (Drydyk 2010). Some empirical studies have shown, in the case of India, that apparently favorable means of empowerment, implemented for example in the case of microfinance, are very far from achieving the desired result (Hofmann and Marius-Gnanou 2005). However, it is important to adopt a dynamic view of empowerment, which is not a state to be achieved, but a complex and non-linear process that can adopt a wide variety of forms. Over the course of this process, women acquire or extend their right to speech, their social recognition and their power to act. It is also crucial to underscore the contextual specificity of empowerment, which is on the one hand dependent on the sociocultural and political conjuncture, and on the other, on the women's own willpower. It is impossible to reinforce their power to act if they do not desire it.

During this dynamic process, several empowerment mechanisms are at stake. Mayoux (1998) and Kabeer (1999) distinguish between four categories of empowerment mechanism, each relying on a form of power: (a) *power within* that corresponds to the will for change at the individual level; (b) *power to* in relation to the capacity for change at the individual level; (c) *power over* relating to the reduction of obstacles at the household or community level; and (d) *power with* corresponding to change at macro-levels due to change in the social role women play and the collective action they take. Following this categorization, Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) covered a wide range of empirical studies and have shown that very few focus on *power within* and *power with*. The ascertainment remains the same according to O'Hara and Clement (2018). However, as Rowlands (1995) stressed, empowerment should be considered not only through decision-making capacity, but on the basis of the critical consciousness women have about their decision-making capacity. Without critical consciousness, women's empowerment could turn out to be a reinforcement of the hegemonic patriarchal system (Charmes and Wieringa 2003). *Power within* and *power with* constitute the cornerstone of empowerment.

Moreover, *power within* and *power with* are critical determinants of aspirations. Eger, Miller, and Scarles (2018) underline that changes from within directly affect the ability to make choice, whereas conscientization, and then *power with*, impact the capacity to aspire. Both are active in the consciousness women have that they can change their

life. *Changes from within* modify the way women think about what they can decide to do, including what they aspire to. *Changes with* open the aspirations of women for themselves and other women. Their own aspirations, developed thanks to changes from within, are no longer seen as unreachable because the aspirations for women in general have widened.

Focusing on the two dimensions of empowerment that are *power within* and *power with*, we analyze whether the different methods of women's empowerment lead them to develop different aspirations or, on the contrary, whether these aspirations are relatively standardized in a given social context. We thus draw the link between empowerment and aspirations.

### **Methodology of the survey**

Our study is based on fieldwork conducted in 2017 in southern India. The study focuses on two different groups of women.

The first one is a group of women who, with the help of an NGO, set up a self-help group for the fair trade of handicrafts in the city of Vellore, in the state of Tamil Nadu. For this self-help group, we proceeded through a focus group with several women at their production site. During the focus group, a representative of the NGO which had helped to launch this group was present. The focus group was an open discussion about their lives and what fair trade had changed in their lives. It was conducted in the women's native language, and occasionally the NGO representative also spoke in English. All the women understood English, but they felt more comfortable using their native language, Tamil. As one of us speaks Tamil, it was not always necessary to translate the discussion. During the focus group, we did not record the discussion to avoid making the participants feel uncomfortable, as a few of the women were a little intimidated when the discussion started. However, within a short period of time, all women engaged in the discussion very freely. As we did not record the discussion and only took handwritten notes, we cannot use quotes from these women in the results section. Rather we synthesized their statements. Their words were completed by those of the NGO representative who put the information into context.

The second group was made up of women employed in a fair trade textile factory in the city of Pondicherry. For this group, we proceeded by individual interviews, also at the production site. We had the agreement of the founder and manager of the factory, a woman. She placed a specific room at our disposal for the interviews, away from the noise of the machines and the eyes of others. An important aspect of these interviews was that the time spent by the women being interviewed was not deducted from their working time; they could participate without losing pay. Furthermore, the founder and manager of the factory explained to them that they were free to participate or not. The interview was not an obligation and only those who wanted to participated. The nine interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis and were also recorded with the agreement of the interviewees, so that we could use quotations from these women in the results section.

The interviews, sometimes quite long (around one hour), were conducted using a semi-directive questionnaire with open-ended questions. This questionnaire allowed us to assess whether the women involved in fair trade felt they had changed their lives through fair trade, and whether they saw their fair trade action as a way to change the

lives of others. We combined the individual and community aspects of empowerment. The interviews were done in their native language, Tamil, as most of them were not very comfortable with English. The recordings made post-interview translation possible.

In addition to these interviews, we followed the actions of the founder and manager of this factory for a period of five months to understand how she involved her employees in the fair trade movement. This manager is indeed a local fair-trade manager-activist in the sense that she participates in one way or another in all actions related to fair trade at the local level. Specifically, we observed the ways in which she involved her employees in actions promoting fair trade at the local level. This observation was, for us, an important source of understanding of how employees can be engaged in the movement which, of course, can have an impact on their sense of empowerment.

This period of observation was of course preceded by an interview with the founder-manager, who on this occasion expressed to us her deep motivation to bring her manufacturing into the fair trade movement. We use the interview of this manager, in the next section, to characterize her commitment within the fair trade movement.

## 2. The two fair trade organizations and the way women are empowered

In this section, we present both organizations on which our study is based. Beyond the presentation of the organizations, we discuss the way they empowered women. Our findings are based on interviews and observations as described in the methodology section.

### *The organizations*

The first group is a women's self-help group (SHG) for the fair trade of handicrafts, in the city of Vellore, in the state of Tamil Nadu. The concept of SHG was born in the 1990s in the framework of the former rural development agendas intended for families of low castes and scheduled castes living below the poverty line. SHARE, an acronym for Self-Help Association for Rural Education and Employment, was created in 1992 with the help of the Christian Medical College in Vellore. Its aim is to steer development towards empowerment to change the lives of children, women and the disadvantaged in local communities. SHARE has developed handicraft production centers, primarily palm and coir for baskets and Christmas decorations, in 27 villages in the Kaniyambadi block of Vellore taluk. Their national and international sales through fair trade value-chains reach about 35 lakhs (2017) (i.e. 3,500,000 Rupees). SHARE is a member of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO). Women working in SHARE are mainly dalits, a socially disadvantaged caste group. SHARE not only provides microfinance and employment for women from the villages, but also conducts awareness campaigns on the prevention of abuse of women and children, education, and other activities for children and women. As they state, 'SHARE is of women, for women and by women.' The organization is comprised of, and run by, women. The gender profile of the organization is 100% women. The executive committee of the organization is also composed of craft women only. It defines the policy and strategy of the organization. During our interview, the group of women was composed of executive members and women working in the center where the interviews were conducted.

The second organization is a firm: Mandala Apparels. Mandala Apparels is an export-oriented fair trade and organic clothing factory located in Pondicherry. The factory was founded in 2002 by a woman and employs 200 women and 50 men. This enterprise produces clothes made from fair trade certified cotton. Mandala is also certified fair trade by the WFTO, and the founder and CEO associates fair trade with a broader ethical concern and spirituality: 'We believe that FT is the next way of doing business.' (Anjali, 24 January 2017). On the website, the enterprise is presented as a 'socially conscious business.' The founder is a member of the Confederation of Indian Industry, and as such, is a member of the commission on corporate social responsibilities of the Confederation, and leader of the sub-commission on women entrepreneurs. At Mandala, the executive secretary and the human resources director are also women.

### *The way women are empowered*

By promoting fair trade, SHARE is offering better remuneration for handicrafts to its members. Through the self-help groups, women are experimenting with mutual help, public speaking, experience sharing, decision making, etc. In 2002, 800 women were involved in palm leaf basketry, sisal fiber work, milch animals and micro-enterprises (turmeric processing, village pottery, bamboo craft work, etc.) with SHARE. This development pattern is ailing and only 150 women are still involved in 2017. Paradoxically, the drop in the number of women members of SHARE is one of the results of the empowerment process. We will come back to this fact in the results section.

For SHARE, women's empowerment is a process, and an important aspect is the participation of women in the decision-making bodies. In fact, the executive committee, as well as other decision-making bodies, is composed only by handicraft women who are members of SHARE. Women do not only produce; they also decide what they produce and for whom. In this role, they must gain market share into the fair trade market. This involvement is explicitly conceived as a way to promote *power within* and *power with* of women.

In contrast, at Mandala Apparels, if laborer women are part of the same entity, they do not have any decision-making power. The founder and executive manager takes all decisions. She has created a standard hierarchical structure. However, the factory is managed in a very specific spirit. All women we interviewed told us that Anajali, the CEO, is a kind of 'big sister' for them. They consider Anjali as a model for their own lives. To illustrate this, here is what a female worker, Vanitha, said when we asked her if she felt proud to work in this factory and to rate her feelings on a scale of 1–7. 'There is a lot of pride and few words to say it. As Madame Anjali is also a woman like me, I say it loudly, I put 7. We can even put the note 10. I love this factory.'

Furthermore, at all key positions in the hierarchical structure, we can find women. The 50 male employees are also under the hierarchy of women. In the enterprise, women are therefore considered for their skills and not according to gender.

Concerning fair trade, Mandala Apparels' employees are all trained in fair trade and all receive training on their work and in safety. All the women surveyed also pointed out that a considerable difference with other textile factories where they had worked was that at Mandala Apparels there were no work-related accidents.

Finally, some collective events are organized by the CEO of Mandala, for instance for the Rana Plaza commemoration day, which memorializes the death of over 1000 garment



workers in a building collapse in 2013, or for the promotion of the Fair Trade Town initiative the CEO is also leading. All laborer women are involved in these collective events and, as we observed, women marched and proclaimed slogans during the events, such as 'we are fair trade, we want fair trade'. Although they do not make decisions, employees are therefore invited, on the one hand, to change their views of the comparative place of men and women, and on the other hand, to take part in collective actions aimed at raising awareness about bad practices and the possibility of putting in place better practices in international exchanges. These actions may also be thought to influence the *power within* and the *power with* women employed in this factory.

We will now discuss the effects of these empowerment mechanisms on women's feelings about their lives.

### 3. Empowerment and aspirations of women, results and discussion

This section presents our main results on empowerment of women. To tackle the issue, we consider both organizations' effects separately before stating the points of convergence and divergence.

#### *Empowerment at SHARE*

During the focus group, women largely mentioned the feeling of well-being they have when they are at SHARE. This feeling is related to sharing and friendships between women in the workplace. They can share their difficulties and their happiness between them. Another important element is the observation that the SHARE activity allows women to leave their homes. They emphasized that the process of acceptance by their husbands has not always been easy, but that finally the activity, and the gain that it allows, constitutes in this sense a significant progress. Many of them were not allowed to leave home without their husbands before performing this activity.

Beyond personal feeling, the organization's leaders have acquired a great stature in the community and nine of them have been elected to the panchayat, e.g. to the traditional town council. More widely, many women of this organization have become leaders in the village community.

However, the empowerment effect also has a flip side. The number of women at SHARE has steadily decreased in recent years. Although it had reached 800 members a few years ago, they are now only 150. The explanation given by women is that their daughters and young girls do not want to do as their mothers had done. This is of course a positive observation in the sense that the girls seem to have acquired a more emancipatory view of their future lives. But in another sense, the women in the focus group also stress that it worries them because they wonder if the work toward emancipation for which they struggled is not likely to diminish. In short, the improvement of the *power within* is certain, but the *power with* risks being lost in the long run.

#### *Empowerment at Mandala Apparels*

As we proceeded by individual interviews at Mandala Apparels, we are using the results of these interviews here. Of the nine interviews we conducted, each life story was different

but the similarities were often strong. To contrast the situations somewhat, we chose to retain three women with very different statuses: Mary, a 50-year old widow; Barati, an unmarried 23-year old; and, Vanitha, a married 31-year old. Age and status regarding marriage seemed to us to be important elements of the differences we encountered during the interviews.

Following Conradie and Robeyns (2013) on the link between aspirations and agency, we used a question close to theirs and which was worded as follows: 'Imagine 20 or 30 years later, you are celebrating your birthday surrounded by your family. What would you think you had accomplished in your life?' To make sure that the interviewees understood the question, we added a comment stating that it was a question of what they wanted for the future (*yedru kallam* in Tamil, meaning the future times). After this question, we asked for information about their past and where they are now in relation to their projected future, and what was blocking them. Finally, we went on with a question about what work at Mandala Apparels brings to them.

We first present some elements extracted from the interview with Mary (50-year old widow). Mary is the typical case of a woman who seems to have accomplished what she has set as an objective and who does not want much. 'I have no dreams, I just want my children to be good and help them to have a comfortable existence.' 'I was able to achieve 75% of my goals. The remaining 25% is to install my daughters in life.' Mary's goal was to educate her daughters and to install them in their lives. The first one is 25 years old and is a teacher. The second is finishing her BSc in nursing and is 22 years old. The third is 20 years old and is studying for her BA (Bachelor in a field of human sciences).

She used to live in Mumbai with her husband. In 2000, her husband died in an accident. She came to Pondicherry because education was cheaper than in Mumbai and she had family here. Since then she has raised her children alone and their education has become the sole goal of her life. She feels very good at her job but does not talk much with other women and does not share much with them. Her sole concern is to have enough money to finalize her goal of getting her daughters into life, now that they have finished or almost finished their studies.

Mary is a special case in that she has complete control over family decisions, her husband having died and the rest of her family not caring about what she does. There is no stake on *power to* and *power over*. But her work at Mandala Apparels is nothing more than income for her. She does not seem to care about the awareness generated by fair trade nor does she weave a link with others in the workplace. Both the *power within* and the *power with* seem to be absent. She appears resigned and expresses no desire other than to install her daughters in their lives.

Barati (23 years old and unmarried) is our second case. Barati represents a stark contrast to Mary. Barati, on the question related to her aspirations:

I will tell myself that I will be in a good situation. I really want to study and learn things. After graduation, I will have to take care of my family, but I want to be able to offer them the best. And when I cut this cake, the memories of my success will come back to me and I will be very happy.

However, her aspirations are for the moment thwarted: 'I would very much like to study nursing. As there is no money, I resigned myself to learn stitching and came here to

work.' Since her parents cannot pay for her education, she had to accept to work. She shares her salary with her parents. She hopes, however, that the situation will improve over time. But for now, she does not talk about her aspirations to anyone because she is afraid that others do not understand. Barati: 'If I tell someone, the person will understand something else or will not understand, so I do not tell anyone.'

If there is a contrast with Mary on aspirations, she seems to converge with her on the perception of what brings her to work at Mandala Apparels. She feels good but shares very little with other women. It is above all for the salary that she is here, and she does not understand what fair trade means. Like Mary, for Barati *power within* and *power with* are not the core of her work at Mandala Apparels.

Vanitha (31 years old, married, with two daughters) is our third case. She is representative of women in the same situation we have interviewed. When answering the question on aspirations, she answers more about how she sees life; Vanitha: 'When someone does things well, she may at the end of her life have joy. I did everything right, so I can have that joy.' In fact, her aspirations are quite simple. She hopes to be able to offer a better life to her daughters than the life she has had. As she defines herself as someone who moves forward despite the difficulties, the sentence about her aspirations reflects the fact that she is doing everything to help her daughters lead a better life. She married young, at age 15, because she became pregnant. Her husband did not want her to work, but eventually gave in. Vanitha:

It's true that there were a lot of problems not to work. After he said to himself: 'It does not matter, we have to pay the rent, take care of the children.' And I went to work after arguing with him. I stood up to him and said, 'But, even though I am like that, I cannot let my children become the same. It's very humiliating. They too, growing up, will ask to buy something. How will you do?' After that, he calmed down a bit. It's been nine years that I work outside.

However, the situation with her husband remains very complicated. He is violent and monopolizes the money that she earns. All use is a source of dispute, but she holds on because her goal is to pay for the studies of her daughters. She manages to save a little for that.

Her work at Mandala Apparels is, for her, a haven of peace, contrasting with her situation at home. Answering our question about the change produced since she is at Mandala Apparels, Vanitha states:

There has been a lot of change. Coming here, I have no more debts whereas before if I had an extra expense, I had to borrow for it. When I worked elsewhere, I had to manage the budget by borrowing. While working here, I no longer have this problem. I have reached a stage where I can even save. In the same way, no matter how much suffering I have at home with my husband, coming here as you may have seen, I'm always joking and cool. I make sure that others are good. I am very happy in this company but the words are missing to say it.

Finally coming back to her aspirations, she said:

To build a home. My daughter wants to study medicine, so I want to give her the opportunity to study. The other wants to become a scientist. Although I may not be able to do as much, I wish they could at least take their life in hand and I want to raise them by instilling boldness and courage.

Her personal aspirations, then, focus almost exclusively upon her daughters. These are typical aspirations expressed in the interviews we conducted.

Vanitha, like others, expresses a contrast between her work life, which is more about sharing and joy with other women, and her life at home, where she has to endure her husband. Another woman told us that her problems would be resolved the day her husband died. Their work at Mandala Apparels is a space of liberation. Vanitha:

When we are in a problem, talking about it allows us to discharge our burden, to feel more relaxed, even if we do not find a solution for that. If consciousness is released, the brain can work better. So I share, not with the members of my family, but with my friends, yes, I share.

Mandala Apparels becomes a place of expression among women where they can become aware of themselves, where they are from. But unfortunately for them, they cannot take that feeling home.

To summarize the case of women like Vanitha, Mandala Apparels provides a space of increasing *power within*, but that is confined to their workplace at Mandala Apparels. Anjali, the CEO of Mandala Apparels, represents a model for them which cannot go beyond the walls of the factory. In the absence of being able to improve their own fate, women postpone their own hopes and project them onto their daughters while trying to finance their studies.

### *Points of convergence and divergence*

What seems to contrast the experiences of SHARE and Mandala Apparels is the much stronger feeling of *power with* at SHARE. This has resulted in the appointment of SHARE women to the panchayat. The *power within* is improved in both cases. However, we must draw nuances because, without wanting to generalize and draw hasty conclusions, we can still think that older women like Mary have weak aspirations. The youngest ones, like Barati, keep their aspirations to themselves and do not dare to express them too much. It is women who are already married and who have children who express themselves, share and become aware of the changes. But whether at Mandala Apparels or SHARE, the family can be an impediment, and especially the position of the husband can remain a thorny point. In this context, they postpone their own hopes and project them onto their daughters.

## **4. Final remarks**

Our study sheds light on three issues concerning fair trade and the empowerment of women.

First, even if women are empowered, they are facing social norms that are very detrimental to them. Empowerment through participation in fair trade organizations clearly can lead to improvements in their own lives, but changes in life at the community level appear unattainable for them, even if they participate in actions whose effects on the community are not directly and immediately measurable. From this point of view, the SHARE experience seems more favorable than that of Mandala Apparels.

Second, due to their feeling that changing their lives at the community level is not reachable right now, they project their aspirations toward their daughters. What they do, they do not do for themselves but for their daughters. Fair trade changes their own

lives, but they do not revise their aspirations toward themselves; the revision of their aspirations is turned toward their daughters.

Third, we cannot prejudge long-term effects. The experience of SHARE shows that young women benefiting from the action of their elders do not continue the commitment for the recognition of women. Of course, their future positions in the world of work may be able to bring about positive changes since they will have more education than their elders. However, on the side of Mandala Apparels, the model of the entrepreneurial or business woman, although it currently does not produce visible effects, could be a vector of radical change.

## Note

1. See <http://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/about/history>

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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