

Case study:
Foundation for the realization of Economic Empowerment (F.R.E.E)

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Degree programme International Sales and Marketing.	
Report/thesis title Case study on Foundation for the realization of Economic Empowerment (F.R.E.E).	Number of pages and appendix pages 37 + 6
<p>The following is a case study on a nongovernmental organisation that was founded to promote and encourage economic empowerment with a special focus on women. The foundation for the Realization of Economic empowerment (F.R.E.E) was established with the goal of empowering disadvantaged women, in order to provide or educate them with a way to survive independently.</p> <p>This documented case study is needed as a guide for the organisation as it takes a closer look into what can be done to further help the women empowerment movement in Zambia. The project is aimed at helping the CEO and founder of the organisation to understand which possible steps can be taken and also provide feedback based on research and recommendations suggested both by the author and the interviewed.</p> <p>This thesis is designed to carry out an in-depth study on the organisation from history to the present state, it looks into what work the organisation has done in line with women empowerment and focuses on what else can be done.</p> <p>The objective of the thesis is to study what impact the organisation (F.R.E.E) has had on women empowerment in line with globalisation in relation to international sales and marketing.</p> <p>During this case study, both qualitative and quantitative research tools were used to collect valuable data and insights on the organisation. The research involved a close study by observation during marketing and workshops done for the organisation by the commissioner and a few women. Surveys were created in order to gather primary data through interviews that were carried out within the organisation to find out whether or not the organisation is promoting women empowerment as they claim they are.</p> <p>This case study was written using all the information provided from the qualitative and quantitative data gathered during the research. The final analysis from the research is then given towards the end of the thesis highlighting the key factors that will help in the solution of the problem. Recommendations are provided based on feedback and research on how best to improve the work carried out within the organisation</p>	
Key words Case study, Non-governmental organisation, Women empowerment, Empowerment. Zambia.	

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to create a case study for a foundation called; for the realization of economic empowerment (F.R.E.E) which is a non-governmental organisation that focuses on empowerment with a special focus on women. This topic was chosen because of the desire to see more women taking leadership positions in business in this era provided they have been granted opportunities to do so. This study investigates the history of women empowerment and what changes have been implemented since its ideation in relation to F.R.E.E. It closely studies what empowerment is and how it has been defined from different perspectives.

1.1 Research problem.

In the attempt to narrow down women empowerment, a research question was ideated as follows:

“What impact has F.R.E.E had on the women empowerment movement in Zambia?”

This research question was chosen in order to help provide understanding on how valuable women empowerment is, especially in third world nations like the country in which the organisation of focus is located in (Zambia).

To provide answers to this research question and give valuable information to the organisation, a research needed to be carried out. Therefore, the two types of research chosen for this thesis where; were qualitative and quantitative research; the research targeted the women working within the organisation and the women that have worked and still work with the founder and CEO of the organisation.

Organisations have been founded to promote women empowerment including F.R.E.E, but there has not been any visible proof just yet in the empowerment aspect because nothing has been done.

To help in the research, interview questions were put together based on problems the nation has complained about. For the most part, the questions were sent out via email and social media platforms as these were the most active sources of communication. One interview was carried out one on one with the CEO of the organisation when she visited Finland.

Therefore, the next subchapter will show and explain the questions and reasons for the questions chosen.

1.2 Research questions.

Research questions are often used to help gather information with an aim of tackling an objective or a research problem. They often help in finding answers and providing clarity.

The research questions used for this thesis focused on what people understood about women empowerment and gender equality.

The first set of questions was based on gender equality and its relation to women empowerment, the questions targeted both male and female in order to acquire opinions from different perspectives.

The second set of questions targeted women in general to gather their opinions on women empowerment and what or how it can be done. This research targeted women of all ages, because the author decided to ask any woman willing to share their opinion it involved face to face interviews. To gather different responses, women that worked within the local markets were also interviewed.

The final set of questions was aimed at the women that work within the organisation. Most women were not fully confident in providing answers even though they were assured their names or information would not be disclosed, they feared they would lose their jobs. Some women were proud to share their experiences within the organisations and the impact it has had in their lives.

Since the research question aims at providing understanding on whether or not the organisation has had an impact on women empowerment as supposed, the interview was done within the organisation to obtain first hand (primary) information.

2 Foundation for the realization of economic empowerment.

The Foundation for the realization of economic empowerment (F.R.E.E) is a none governmental organisation based in Zambia. It is designed for the purpose of economic empowerment with a focus on women.

The organisation was founded by an entrepreneur named Dawn Bridget Close. Two weeks after the completion of her master's degree in Marketing she decided to relocate from America to Zambia to establish her career there.

The idea of F.R.E.E began as part of a course work during her studies, it was from there she had the desire to officially institute the organisation. In May 2010 Dawn filed a non-profit company in the United States but after little reception was provided, she then decided to revise the same paper work in Zambia.

Essentially, the organisation was ideated as a non-profit company designed for the purpose of creating profitable enterprises with hopes of empowering women.

Dawns motivation came personal experiences, during an interview she stated that her own struggles led her to see the male dependency and neediness in so many women. The organisation was a way to inspire them and help them realise they have value apart from men.

She decided to educate herself on how to make and design jewellery at a less expense and therefore began to watch tutorials on social media platforms such as YouTube and Websites, books were also a source of knowledge.

To start off the organisation, she began to look for both financially and educationally disadvantaged women and began to teach them how to design and create jewellery from recycled copper and when sold, the profit would belong to them. She did this in order to provide a source of stable income.

We can therefore say, 'F.R.E.E woman' emerged from a group of young women living in one of Lusaka's compounds who had no previous jewellery making skills.

2.1 About F.R.E.E

The organisation is established in a small compound situated in Lusaka, Zambia. The girls and women working within the organisation were chosen because they had hopes of better lives but did not have the means to achieve what they dreamed. The woman behind the organisation was inspired when she realized how willing the girls and women were willing to learn and work to become stable, a passion for independence.

The following sub chapters highlight what F.R.E.E woman is about.

2.1.1 Mission

The goal/mission of the organisation is to educate and inspire women in areas of independency. The women working within the organisation are trained to make jewellery from natural resources such as recycled copper which they acquire from hot water heaters that are not being used anymore and silver, which they mine locally to help promote economic empowerment.

The organisation has recently ventured into creating and designing Ankara bags and purses as added profit. Although this may not be their main product, but they choose to market and sale it too. When the women make the jewellery or bags, it is then marketed and sold and any profit that is made from the sale is given back to the women for their personal use.

“Empowering disadvantaged women through value addition of Africa’s natural resources. We are using trade and not aid to lift lives.”

- Dawn Bridget Close

(Founder and CEO of Organisation)

2.1.2 Process

All copper jewellery is **handmade** from copper sheet or electrical wire using simple tools like pliers and hammers. The women have skills in soldering, fold-forming, rolling, etching, enamelling, riveting and patination.

After deciding to start creating Silver jewellery, two women were sponsored to a course that taught them how to silver smith under an Italian Jewellery company. After completion

of the course successfully, the organisation is now making fine silver jewellery. They incorporate semi-precious gemstones into their designs in rough process form.

They have the capacity to produce in quantity (bulk). F.R.E.E transforms their individual style of production into an assembly line ensuring that all women participate in the manufacturing process. Most orders may take up to two weeks depending on quantity.

The water sheets and electrical wire is locally manufactured from recycled copper and locally manufactured copper. The silver is locally mined by small scale miners. The organisation follows fair trade practices and the women that produce the jewellery are the ones guaranteed to profit. This teaches environmental consciousness to the women.

2.1.3 Value addition

The idea is to add value to Zambia's natural resources in order to prosper the nation.

"Zambia has an abundance of copper and semi-precious stones." (Dawn Bridget Close, CEO – F.R.E.E)

The jewellery made by the women is then sold and the money made from sales belongs to the designer of the product sold.

F.R.E.E woman jewellery features a non-traditional look with natural rough gemstones as well as more traditional faceted gems and cabochons.

2.1.4 What makes F.R.E.E unique?

There are several brands that are well known for creating and designing jewellery, they range from metals such as gold, silver and even bronze to varieties of stone.

What makes this organisation unique?

All products are handmade and uniquely designed as each piece is personally ideated.

The jewellery is made from recycled copper obtained from used or reused hot water heaters as mentioned previously, welding and processing is done by hand and was self-taught. The organisation is not just focused on making jewellery, it aims to tell a story with every piece made.

From this organisation, the women have managed to escape abusive homes and been able to sponsor themselves to get an education.

Apart from copper made jewellery, they recently ventured into creating and designing bags made from a fabric known as 'Ankara' and began to make jewellery from locally mined silver.

2.1.5 Restriction's.

The current trends are promoting jewellery made from gold or silver utmost. The challenge is selling the idea of copper made jewellery before selling the actual product. Often, people wonder whether or not the product would have a negative effect on their skin and how inexpensive it may look because it is not as shiny as other metals.

Although they may get this reception towards their products, they have noticed an improvement in terms of how open-minded customers have evolved over the years. The Scandinavian countries have shown more appreciation towards the products offered than the country of establishment; Zambia.

2.1.6 Competition

Despite the fact that F.R.E.E is unique in its own incomparable way, there are several companies creating and designing copper made jewellery. The main competitors at the moment are; 'Bantu Project', 'global girlfriend' and 'Jewel of Africa'. From these listed the Bantu project was chosen as a more suitable comparison as it focuses more on trade within Zambia as F.R.E.E does.

The Bantu project is based United states of America specifically; Washington D.C.

They have set their target market in Zambia mainly and other parts of the world.

It as well aims to create job opportunities and is in connection with a few investors based in South Africa.

The project has gotten more reception from customers than F.R.E.E has since establishment, therefore having more funds and stable establishment. The project has more employees and as a plus, they are able to ship their products world-wide which F.R.E.E has not been able to do just yet.

Although the project is well established, vividly what sets F.R.E.E apart is that it focuses on women empowerment while Bantu project is simply a business looking to provide job opportunities.

2.1.7 Target market

The products designed within the organisation can be used/worn by any gender and age. The products are considered eco-friendly and from feedback, little to no customers have had a reaction to the copper-based products.

When the organisation just began, due to funds marketing was done by wearing the products. A few years later, a local public market designed to provide artists a chance to sell and exhibit their products was opened at a shopping mall within the city.

The founder of the organisation saw this as an opportunity to market and show the products with aims of expanding their market.

From this exhibition market that took place every weekend, the F.R.E.E market expanded and received customers than before they decided to sale their products on an open market. They decided to trade at events held within the country and show case their products at modelling or designing events if given the opportunity.

The organisation has since begun to export products for sale to several countries. In September during the Habitare festival in Helsinki, F.R.E.E got an opportunity to show case their products and eventually sale. This added the Scandinavian countries to their target market because there was an observation of more appreciation than there was in the country of origin (Zambia).

3 Theoretical framework.

This theoretical framework aims at defining what empowerment is. It talks about the origin of women empowerment dating back to when it began and what caused it.

3.1 Empowerment.

“Empowerment is a construct that links individual strengths and competences, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviours to social policy and social change (Rappaport, 1981, 1984/ Douglas D. Perkins, Mark A. Zimmerman, 569) .

Understanding that development can be taken note of when properly tracked, observed or studied, but in the words of Majiv Malhotra (2002, 3) “...Neither the World Bank nor any other development agency has developed a rigorous method for measuring and tracking changes in levels of empowerment.”

While running with the above definition's, the four areas that have genuinely been researched and studied by literature experts based on a research on empowerment were looked into and further discussed below;

Firstly, to fully understand what being empowered means one has to experience constrain, a lack of power or dominancy.

Secondly, people willing to be empowered must take ownership of it.

They must be willing to be empowered in order to experience empowerment in depth. Empowerment cannot be given to someone; therefore, the best way one can contribute to empowerment is by providing a way or an idea to the choice of target which then allows them to empowerment to take place.

Thirdly when empowerment is defined it is usually looked at in terms of decision making and being able to follow through with the choice. Decision making often requires reflection, a sense if meditation and completely assured. This could be for self or for a community. As mentioned previously, empowerment is best addressed on an individual level.

It is safe to say that empowerment has no end and even though many have defined based on their research or understanding, it does not hold a specific definition, it involves development which leads to growth and because growth is constant, empowerment does not end. People can be empowered or disempowered based on individual willingness.

3.1.1 Empowerment and F.R.E.E

The foundation for the realisation of economic empowerment was founded with the idea of providing an economically empowered foundation for disadvantaged people. The focus was set on women because of the personal experiences the founder had that were mainly associated with the fact that she was female.

She stated in an interview how most people would not take her seriously when she applied for leadership positions in companies mainly because she was female. It was from here that she decided to turn to entrepreneurship and build a platform she can use to empower women, so they did not have to go through the same predicament she had been through.

The organisation takes empowerment as a means of providing and ensuring stability, with an aim of eradicating the line of poverty one day at a time by using and taking ownership of the resources the nation has and furthermore using that as a source of production to secure a stable income.

To help the economic empowerment process, all products used for the produce of the organisations merchandise is mined and recycled locally. Both the silver and copper are mined from Zambian mines and this is done to promote the nation's economic movement and growth.

It was stated during an interview with Miss Close, that Zambia has no idea how valuable their minerals are and what they can do with it in order to help with the economic development. Instead, over the years the trades for copper and silver to mention the least are being carried out for money. This is normally done with international countries that have managed to see how important the minerals are.

Instead of ensuring that the money is staying within the country, more resources are being sold, resulting in the selling of the actual mines instead of stone.

The organisation took the milestone of thinking, "What if we sold products made entirely by the minerals, would this promote economic empowerment?"

It has seemed that most neighbouring countries or continents see the value of the natural products in Zambia while the nation is only focused on money. This ignorance is what keeps Zambia with the title 'third world nation' regardless of what natural richness the land may have.

3.1.2 Empowerment organisations in Zambia.

For many years the nation of Zambia has had traders and interested buyers come and go. From tourists and vacations to investments and debt collectors, the people of the nation have cried out to the government to change the system and have continued to blame them for the poor state of the economy.

After pleas and violent riots, the government decided to allow the creation of organisations and movements that will work in line with the development of the nation financially and economically.

Non-governmental organisations were also created for the personnel that believed in a different movement and believed that the economic stability will only take place when the nation realises its value.

These organisations were created to empower the nation and provide ways to make things better economically. The organisations will not only offer hope but provide jobs for people and promote local investments.

Some of the well-known organisations and a summary of what they do for the nation are listed below;

- 1. International Youth foundation. (IYF)**

This foundation focuses on the problems the youth in Zambia and other nations are facing. To create awareness of common diseases and decent ways to obtain money, the organisation creates events, research platforms and initiatives on how to empower and keep the youth empowered.

- 2. Non-governmental gender organisations' council. (NGOCC)**

This organisation focuses on encouraging women empowerment as well as gender equality and equity. The organisation aims at contributing to the gender equality agenda in line with the human rights movement.

They focus on women empowerment, governance and women in leadership, sexual reproductive health and human rights.

- 3. United Nations development programme. (UNDP)**

The organisation focuses on promoting gender equality and economic development. They provide platforms for people to help in sustainability and stabilised income. They promote education and fight against gender-based violence. The organisation was founded to help economic growth and erase dependency on other nations or continents.

The above-mentioned organisations are only a few of many that have been designed to help in the economic development of the nation.

3.2 Women empowerment/Gender equality.

The history of women's rights activism (Women empowerment) in the world in general can be traced back to the 18th century and beyond, though the actual foundation of feminism was gradually staged in the second half of that century (Joseph Wanashe, History of Gender equality: Non-governmental organisations, Page 31)

Other than the fact that most women are not as financially stable as men are, it is believed that men are more emotionally stable compared to women and this is why most men are granted leadership positions.

Women have made tremendous progress toward gaining economic equality during the last several decades. Nonetheless, throughout the United Nations women earn less and are less likely to own a business and are more likely to live in Poverty than men. (Caiazza, Shaw and Werschkul 2004, 4).

Women are said to be paid less than men are, probably because men are given more opportunities to excel and show ability than women are. If given a platform and chance, women would develop incredibly as well as help the development of the nation and by doing this, poverty can be reduced. Founding their own businesses enables women to use, satisfy and maintain high levels of skill as perhaps they could not when working for a corporation (Alvarez and Meyer 1998).

Since organisations over the past years have played a vital role in gender equality and women empowerment, we can say gender equality and women empowerment may work side by side. According to Mosedale, Sarah (2005; 243) the common factor is that, as women, they are all constrained by the 'norms, beliefs, customs, and values through which societies differentiate between women and men' (Naila Kabeer 2000, 22)

"Development without seeking to eradicate inequalities between men and women leads to both partial development and partial poverty reduction" (Dobra, 2011, page 136,137)
This can be argued differently based on culture and ethics, different nations have experienced women empowerment and gender equality in various ways.

Empowering women through education has been mentioned several times but looking at this angle alongside gender equality 'Where women's role in society is defined purely in reproductive terms, education is seen in terms of equipping girls to be better wives and mothers or increasing their chances of getting a suitable husband' (Naila Kabeer 2005, 16) this can mostly be seen by women in third world nations.

A vivid example would be the history of women empowerment and how it began; women were not allowed to provide their opinion on politics or any governmental situation in the 19th century hence, the term "gender equality" was introduced in line with the empowerment of women allowing them to vote and participate in general elections. (Selin Dilli, Sarah G. Carmichael & Auke Rijpma 2018, 1)

Now we may ideate a definition of women's empowerment based on the above definitions and research:

Women's empowerment comprises women's education and knowledge to enhance her understanding about her surroundings, her ability to control her life, freedom from domination by not depending on anyone else's income, her ability to participate in decision-making process, her capability to make independent decisions and finally her independence in terms of mobility. (Sayma Rahman, P. N. Junankar & Girijasankar Mallik 2009) Factors influencing women's empowerment on microcredit borrowers: a case study in Bangladesh, *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, 2009, 3)

3.3 Women empowerment and F.R.E.E

The inspiration of economic empowerment with a special focus on women started off as a personal experience of gender barriers. The founder of the organisation was not able to achieve some of the goals she set for her career due to the prohibitions most companies would address. Most of these would be that they were looking for someone "strong", emotionally intelligent and capable of being a leader and some plainly stated; they were looking for a man for the position and not a woman.

This led to the realisation of the level of ignorance the nation holds. A woman can be a leader, she can be emotionally intelligent and is certainly able to lead a company or nation.

After years of gender discrimination, Dawn settled to create an organisation that would help women of all ages understand the 'power' they possess. Most women in Zambia are dependent on men for financial stability and are taught to believe from an early age that a woman's place is in the kitchen as well as the maintenance of the home, while the man leads and provides financial support.

The goal of the organisation is to educate women and men alike on the importance of empowering a woman especially out of home duties. The organisation teaches the women to support themselves financially, so they do not have to be dependent on anyone.

It has taught young women the value of education and a stable income, understanding that even if they are disadvantaged education wise and perhaps are not able to fund their studies, they can find a way to acquire a safe and legal form of income using their talents and furthermore build a successful future.

Testimonies were given during interviews of how a few young girls had hope of better education and eventually managed to support themselves in school and provide for themselves after being recruited and trained. Dawn mentioned that instead of just giving the women money each time they asked, she would rather they learnt how to secure that money for themselves and she had made it clear to the women that if they didn't work, they would not receive any money.

Teaching the women to have a voice and allowing them to learn that they can be independent and did not have to depend on anyone was Dawn's way of empowering them. The organisation; F.R.E.E has taken families off the street through the women that have worked within it and girls have been able to graduate from high school and enrol to universities that they believed at some point, would never be able to attend.

Dawn believes that empowerment is not just financial, it can be confidence and emotional encouragement and her end goal is not only promoting economic empowerment through the build-up of women, but to provide a platform for the women that are called 'disadvantaged' so they can make the most of their talents and lives and in doing so become independent.

4 Methodology

For methods of data collection, the author decided to do a case study on the organisation and use qualitative and quantitative tools for data collection and finally use them to help summarise results at the end of the study.

4.1 Qualitative research

Often defined as the ‘visual inspection with a small number of instances’ a qualitative research can be defined as a process of naturalistic enquiry that seeks in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting (University of Utah,2015).

A qualitative research can be broken down into five parts:

- Ethnography
- Narrative
- Grounded theory
- Case study
- Phenomenological

This thesis is based on the case study type of research and was chosen in order to carry out an in-depth study of the organisation.

To gather more insight and data, the qualitative: observation type of research was carried out as well as the face-to-face interviews as a quantitative type research.

4.2 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is often defined as the analysis of data that has been collected from different sources, in this case an analysis of the qualitative data that has been collected.

For this research, a face to face interview was conducted within the organisation and to the businesses that work or have worked closely with F.R.E.E.

Due to the fact that most interviews were done face-to-face, a number of questions were written down in word format and later printed to have the hard copies as reference when conducting the interviews.

The first list of questions typed were sent to the founder of the organisation by email because both parties were in different countries at the time. The questions asked were focused on both the history of the CEO and the organisation. This was done to understand why the organisation was created in the first place and what the end goal is.

The second interview held between the two was done face to face during a work shop where the qualitative research was also done using the “observation method” to study what was being done in person and compare it to the reports and survey answers that were provided during the interviews.

The interview questions directed to the women within the organisation were conducted face to face due to technological barriers. Most women had no knowledge or interest in emails or using their social media platforms for the interview. The elderly women within the organisations had no access to the internet or social media platforms because they saw no use for it.

For most of the women that refused to take part in the interview's for personal undisclosed reasons, agreed to let the author of this thesis observe their work and what they did at the organisation and further use the information gathered during the observation as research data.

4.3 Case study

Case studies have been used several times by various communities in the business industry. It has been said to be the most powerful way of gathering information or data that is of importance. A case study will not only benefit the receiver of processed data, but also benefits the researcher as they will experience real life scenarios that are often relatable. It helps in eradication of ignorance and helps expand wisdom.

Despite the fact that it may be a more intricate way of research because it involves interviews that take time and require a level of skill to be able to conduct an acceptable interview, not forgetting that if proper attention is not given the final data may not be relevant; It continues to be seen as a research that has proven to provide good results.

This type of research is believed to be a theory building study that eventually leads to the 'exploratory' case study which helps to answer the "why" questions that are normally asked during interviews.

The term "case study" can be defined as an in-depth study. It is a method that is used to simplify or narrow down a wide field of research or collected data into one summarised yet informative topic. "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" – Robert K. Yin (2009, 18)

Every business needs to undergo a case study occasionally, this will help monitor the company's progress, hence the aim was to write a case study that will provide data that gives useful information to help with the organisations progress and development of the women empowerment movement in Zambia.

A case study was chosen for the research of women empowerment because after noticing that not much has been done so far to empower women, most cases led to the fact that due to the fact that this movement was not taken seriously no one had the desire to study and do an in-depth research.

A case study was seen suitable because it allows the intense study of what women empowerment means acknowledging what implementations have been taken to further emphasise its importance to a nation in terms of economic stability.

4.4 Research methods: Qualitative research.

To conduct a proper qualitative research, a visual study was conducted by closely monitoring and following what was done within the organisation. The monitoring of how girls/women are recruited to work within the organisation, how their work is done and whether or not they personally feel empowered regardless of what the organisation claims its purpose is about. This was done in order to find the problem/s (if any) within the organisation and provide a solution.

4.4.1 Marketing Observation

The research began during a sales meeting at the “Angel’s nest” store in Helsinki. The founder of F.R.E.E was scheduled to meet up with the shop owner to advertise and market the products created by the girls who work for the organisation. This part of the research was focused on observing what is involved in the marketing aspect and if women empowerment is highlighted during the trade.

Dawn Bridget Close introduced the organisation as a group of disadvantaged females and made it clear that she did not appreciate them being called “poor” as this was how they were labelled when spoken of on national television. She stated that the fact that the women are being labelled as poor discourages them and they tend to feel embarrassed causing them to want to withdraw from the organisation to avoid shame.

After introducing the organisation to the targeted store, she showed the products and explained what most of the initials on the jewellery symbolised. She stated that the women add their name initials to add a feel of ownership to it and this gives them pride in what they have made and therefore it inspires them to do more.

One surprising observation was that she did not know as much about the products than she was expected to, and she stated that the women would know more as she only handles marketing.

The second study was done at a Finnish event called “Habitare” which is an interior design and furniture event which run from the 11th of September to the 15th of September at ‘Messukeskus’ convention centre in Finland. The same pattern was carried out by Dawn, she marketed and sold the products only that this time, pictures of the girls modelling in the jewellery they designed were put up and this captured people’s attention.

Customers were inspired with the story behind the movement and some decided to partner with the organisation in support of women empowerment and development.

4.4.2 Organisation observation.

During the research at the organisation, observation was carried out before doing the interviews to compare what was seen and what was being said.

The women working within the organisation are of different generations and therefore share different views. Most elderly women chose to work for the organisation in order to provide for their families and this encouraged them to work hard and consistently.

The younger group of females were not as consistent as the older women. Some claimed to have school or never showed up at all. The elderly women found it hard to learn how to make the jewellery and this caused frustration and often withdrawal.

A week after closely monitoring the women, attention was drawn to one girl named ‘Margaret’ that started her work at the organisation not long after the research began. From observation, she showed confidence increase and more social interaction. Her attitude changed towards the work she was doing, and determination showed a positive impact and it’s safe to say a percentage of empowerment.

4.5 Research Method: Quantitative research.

To conduct an acceptable quantitative research, interviews were conducted face to face, through phone calls, emails and text messages. The idea was to find a suitable way to conduct the interviews and be able to overcome any barriers.

The first set of emails were sent out to people that worked with the organisation and the public, they were sent out in form of questionnaires. The first step was finding out which organisations or companies have been able to do business with the organisation, also finding out who has participated in the growth or any events that involved F.R.E.E . The public were interviewed to find out if they had any knowledge of the organisation being studied; F.R.E.E and if they knew what the empowerment and women empowerment movement was about. This was done to properly conduct a research that involved obtaining answers and studying (observatory research) in order to help understand if the organisation was only focused on the women they had managed to reach or the women empowerment they speak of targets all women. If the goal is to empower all women, then what have they done about it? Do people know of the organisation? If not, what are the recommendations the author can provide as help to the organisation? The interviews were divided into two parts: Organisations and the public.

The third questionnaire was sent to the founder of the organisation to find out the history behind the organisation. To understand what drove her to create the organisation and what the goal of the organisation was. To follow up, another email was sent to understand their marketing value, why they targeted the Scandinavian region for business and if this would benefit the organisation in any way.

The fourth and final list of interview questions was targeted at the women and girls that worked within the organisation. This research involved both interviews and observatory research.

The main aim for the use of quantitative research was to compare the data that was provided from the different interviews conducted in order to provide a solution to the objective.

4.6 Research results.

The following are the results from the interviews conducted and the questionnaires sent.

4.6.1 First Interview/s: Organisations & Companies.

The first interview was carried out using surveys. The questions as mentioned previously, were sent out by email as this was the easiest way to reach the targeted personnel. This group of people included organisations that worked side by side with F.R.E.E or that have worked for the organisation.

The organisations that worked besides F.R.E.E claimed they were only considered for business purposes. Often times there would be a collaboration between F.R.E.E and another organisation, it would most likely include an event that involved the show case of the products made by the women. They stated that this was the only encounter they have had with the CEO of F.R.E.E and have never discussed the idea of empowerment.

Some organisations claimed to not know the goal of the organisation was to encourage and empower women, and that it seemed like more of a business with workers than an organisation designed to empower. One organisation stated that, they rarely see the women behind the products in the spotlight and have no knowledge of who designs them. Countable times, photos of the girls are put on display but that's all they know.

When asked if the idea behind the organisation which is empowerment is being carried out, responses stated the idea of 'disadvantaged' women being made to work for their livelihood seemed like empowerment while some would think it is just another company owned by a foreigner employing labourers claiming to help the women. Regardless, if it is designed to empower women then they should take the spotlight while Dawn can manage the business transactions as most of the women may not have the knowledge to do so.

The organisation has worked with several companies both within Africa and other parts of the world. An extract table from the feedback when asked if the organisation was living up to their name of women empowerment is shown in the table below.

Question: "Do you think F.R.E.E is an organisation that is focused on women empowerment?"

Response options	Number of times chosen
Yes	5
No	6
No Idea	3
Sometimes	0

The table shows that only 5 people that have worked with the organisation believe it is designed to empower women and agreed that this is vivid in the way the CEO does her work.

One of the organisations explained that Dawn has taken up a cafeteria within the premises of a local church and allowed two women from the organisation to work and obtain

their funds from the cafeteria instead of the jewellery making. They stated that they believed Dawn worked with women's strengths and 'empowered' them by doing so.

The 'No' option was chosen by 6 people and as mentioned previously, their reason for the choice was that they are uncomfortable with the fact that the women that designed the jewellery are barely present during marketing exhibitions, and that they should be so that they can learn how to carry out their businesses for themselves and this would empower them with a substantial level amount of knowledge they can use for personal growth. This will encourage them to not be entirely dependant on Dawn therefore allowing them some percentage of independence. They explained that although Dawn mentions the designer or creator, they would rather she is present during the trades.

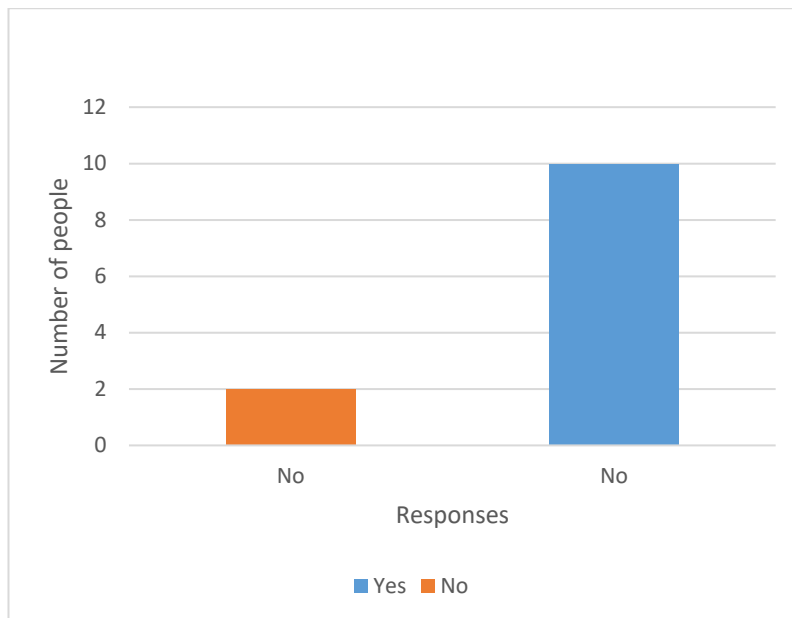
3 people had no idea what empowerment was and had no interest in speaking if it. They stated that they have worked with Dawn for business purposes only and that is what they are focused on.

4.6.2 Second interview: The public.

The second interview was done face to face and targeted the public. Questions were asked to locals of every age to collect answers from different perspectives.

The first questions asked to local traders was "what is empowerment and what does it mean to you?", followed by the paramount question; "Do you know an organisation called the foundation for the realisation of economic empowerment? Commonly known as F.R.E.E?"

The author then put together a chart displaying responses to the question of if they know of the organisation. The chart is shown below:



The chart above shows that only two people had heard of the organisation. When asked where they had heard of it, one mentioned jewellery and the other had seen an advertisement on national television but other than that, they had no knowledge of what it was about.

The number of people that had no knowledge of the organisation amounted to 10. They claimed to not have an idea of women empowerment-based organisations and would therefore not know an organisation that is not as “popular” or well known as organisations owned by the government are.

The results from this interview showed that people had no knowledge on what women empowerment means.

In one of the interviews, a member of a community known as ‘Mtendere’ situated in Lusaka province – Zambia insisted that women should not be allowed to be dominant for any reason, women are designed to follow, and empowerment is teaching women disrespect and has made Zambian men not want to approach them because of dominance.

Most responses stated that women are designed to do house duties and not engage in politics or businesses. It was argued by most elderly men that for a woman to lead the nation would be an abomination and that the country is most likely to fall apart.

The only definition of gender equality was violence related, reasons given were pointing toward educational systems claiming that little to no knowledge was given on the two topics; gender equality and women empowerment.

The results from this interview showed that women were not educated on what being empowered meant. Some stated that the government has created organisations to help run with the idea of women empowerment, but they have never seen any changes.

In one of the interviews, a female trader (who asked to keep her identity hidden) stated that “the Zambian government keeps saying they are making organisations to help women and children in order to receive more funds from the sponsoring countries and it ends up being used for unnecessary things that evidently only benefit the people in power while the rest of us are left to suffer.” (Female citizen of Zambia, July 2018)

In support, fellow traders responded saying the government must give as much attention as they do to politics to women empowerment because educating and empowering a woman is empowering a nation.

Over the years, workshops promoting and supporting the women empowerment movement have been carried out to try educating the ignorant about the essence of empowerment. The nation has not valued these workshops because they have not been able to see the significance of the movement. The women suggested the government should look into sharing the knowledge in schools and universities so that the idea of empowerment can be embodied at an early stage.

4.6.3 Third interview: Dawn Bridget Close.

This interview was carried out to gather data on the history behind the organisation. To understand what prompted the ideation and creation of the organisation.

The email sent involved questions that required answers to focus on the goal of the organisation.

Although the organisation was established 9 years ago in Zambia, there has not been as much growth as expected. The idea was to provide a means of help for women that were in need.

Dawn did not have much interest in listening to women’s complaints on how they lacked and had no means of provision, because she had been in that situation before and believed differently. So she set out to encourage women to use their natural talents to help them have a source of income. She remained passionate about this because she knew

what it was like to be dependent on someone else, especially men and she did not want to see another woman go through the same thing as she did.

Like any other start up, having a smooth foundation was difficult. Hence, Dawn had to rely on the funds provided to her by her father for a few years to cover utilities such as rent and food.

The idea was to create a product that will be made from material that is not hard nor expensive to find. Dawn then settled for recycled copper, not only will it be easier to source, but it will benefit the economic growth of the nation.

The answers from the questionnaire sent to Dawn explained the goal of the organisation, which is to empower women in line with business. Most of the questions were answered successfully. Despite the fact that there were no answers provided for the last questions and no reason was given, even though a follow up was carried out concerning the last questions no response was given till date.

Most results were obtained through the authors findings during research and study.

4.6.4 Final interview: Women and Girls at F.R.E.E.

The final survey which was carried out within the organisation and the questions targeted the women that worked with Dawn. Most women stated that they had no idea they were being “empowered” and that they simply looked at the position they were in as a job opportunity and even though they were grateful for it, felt that the organisation can do more if it is empowerment they wish to execute.

One of the girls told her story that she was able to fund both her family and her education after she started working at the organisation. She stated that Dawn ‘motivated’ her to work hard and encouraged her through the process, she considered that as empowerment.

Apart from the main objective of the thesis, a new problem arose halfway through the research; how can these women be empowered when they have no knowledge on what women empowerment is?

The organisation has been successful in empowering the women by providing them with opportunities and exposure, but most of them have no idea what empowerment means. The elderly women and men that have worked within the organisation alike, still believe

females are not equivalent to males and believe that whether or not they have been provided a way to ensure a stable income (which involves working for the organisation) they still feel obligated to submit to men as this is their culture. They strongly believe they are not able to survive without a dominant man leading them, they are convinced their role is to do as told and follow behind.

From the feedback and responses given during the interviews, the author observed the need for workshops to help spread knowledge and hopefully provide an understanding of how important it is to be empowered as a woman especially in a developing country.

5 Conclusion.

The results from the research showed that there has not been enough marketing of the organisation and it shows that the women empowerment idea for the organisation focuses on the women within the organisation or the 'disadvantaged' women within the compound the organisation is located in.

There has also been an observation that there is more focus on the business aspect of the organisation than there is supposed to be on empowering women. There are several women within the country that are disadvantaged but have no knowledge of this organisation. It has not put effort into reaching out too many citizens in need of empowerment.

The most that is known about this organisation is that they create jewellery using copper and not the fact that the production is part of the women empowerment programme. The marketing of the organisation needs to take a turn if they choose to continue down the road of women empowerment. If they are not able to do so they should reconsider the goal of the organisation and focus on the jewellery production instead and perhaps economic growth as well because they promote the use of Zambia's natural resources.

Although the organisation has developed since the time of creation, it is most likely to remain stagnant if not marketed and that involves the clarification of what it has been designed for. Without the right marketing, they will not be able to attract more of their target which is disadvantaged women.

The women need to be handed the spot light more often, this was feedback given by one of the organisations that has worked with F.R.E.E. The exposure will then help them gain confidence and be able to carry out business trades which is most likely to result in them gaining more knowledge through experience.

It is understood that the creation of jewellery is the sole of the company which means the idea of empowerment comes second. There is a way to have both aims as the headline of the organisation if they are considered of equal priority.

Despite all of this, the women within the organisation mentioned there is a great improvement in the recognition of women growth at F.R.E.E and they are grateful for the effort put into their lives. They believe the organisation is capable of making a huge impact on the women empowerment movement but only if they high light that quality as much as they highlight copper made jewellery.

The Zambian organisation needs to improve the services provided to citizens. It is a shame to see that there so many women in need of help but are not able to locate the organisations designed to provide them with the help they need reason being, they have no idea what organisations offer help and are not educated on the women empowerment movement.

There are non-governmental organisations that have been founded to help with the women empowerment movement, but there has not been any vital action as some are expecting women to run to them without a proper marketing and assured tactic.

The research showed that there has not been any workshop designed to provide knowledge to the people that are unaware of what the movement is about. After studying closely during the observatory research, women decide to take matters into their own hands and often find themselves victims of gender based violence. Even then, they still have no organisations or council to run to for aid.

This has resulted in most women living in fear, from one of the interviews it was clear to see that the women of the nation are frustrated and cannot ask for help any longer because as stated; the government will not do anything about it. Funds cannot be the problem because the nation has received financial aid from investors and supposedly debtors with the reason of economic empowerment which the nation has not seen. Therefore, citizens of Zambia, women and men alike are convinced money provided for the organisations to function gracefully is being used for other reasons.

This research has provided the author with an understanding of what women empowerment really means. There has been an opportunity to look at Zambia economic and women empowerment from the citizen's point of view. When the research began, the author believed that the only way one can attract or attain empowerment is by personally seeking it and finding a way to acquire it. It has been understood that if not marketed well no one can really know where to find the help they seek.

There is not much belief in the organisations as expected due to fear of disappointment because this has been the case over the years. Women empowerment is not based on financial status, it can be educational and emotional. Women need a voice and these organisations are supposed to provide them that channel but alas, they have not been successful in doing so and do not seem to see any problem with it.

Besides the idea of women empowerment, marketing plays an important role in the development of organisations and companies alike, if not marketed properly as shown by the study and research results both the founders and customers are bound to suffer. Both parties lose out on growth and this will continue unless addressed by taking different routes of organisation/company management.

6 Discussion.

“Organisations that empower folks further down the chain or try to get rid of the big hierarchical chains and allow decision making to happen on a more local level and up being adaptive and resilient because there are more minds involved in the problem” (Steven Johnson, Media theorist, The Balance careers, Business quotes)

To empower means to give authority and power to someone that has none, or believes they are not capable of such possession. It is to build up and inspire what was not before and ensure that it becomes as successful as anticipated. It involves dedication and participation, submission and dominancy, knowledge and a freedom foundation.

The aim of this thesis was to carry out a case study on an organisation called the ‘Foundation for the realisation of economic empowerment’ (F.R.E.E). The main goal and problem that needed solving was to carry out an analysis using all the collected data in order to establish whether or not the organisation has been living up to its purpose which is the empowerment of women.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of research were used to gather information and helped both the author and the organisation to realise the essence of women empowerment from Zambian women’s perspective and developing countries. This also helped in summarising all the information collected from the research and providing the final results to the organisation in order to help them continue promoting and supporting the empowerment of women alongside economic empowerment.

This case study, as mentioned previously is designed to also help organisations that work towards women empowerment by providing first-hand information on what areas need attention from the people of the nation, this will help them know what steps to take and what kind of empowerment is needed. There cannot be an impact if the empowered do not have a voice and this case study is the foundation for awareness.

Although the nation has observed the need to empower females, some citizens and parts of government are still ignorant to this idea. While some citizens of the country are not so much as ignorant to the idea as they are against it, refuse to give women the upper hand in any area of financial or educational success and continue to state that the house hold duties is what women are good for.

Despite the differences in belief, organisations were funded to start in order to promote the empowerment movement and this has been part of the nation's contribution to this development.

Based on the responses given during the research interviews, a couple of recommendations were put together for both F.R.E.E and other organisations that support the women empowerment movement.

Recommendations for F.R.E.E are summarised into three points that the women continued to emphasise as follows:

- a. Educate the women within the organisation on what women empowerment is and what it means.
- b. Discuss the financial aspect of development with the women within the organisation.
- c. Financial freedom: The women do not expect micro-management on how and when they spend the income acquired from the sales of the products and Dawn has a tendency of tracking how their money is spent.

The women complimented the effort that Dawn has shown and stated that not only does she empower them financially but educates them on the aspect of business. She has made it clear that if they desired to branch off from the organisation, they would still be able to survive and remain independent.

Recommendations for organisations and the nation (in general) were summarised as follows;

- a. Educate the nation on the importance of women empowerment: workshops and meetings can be held to educate and provide valuable information on women empowerment because results from the research showed that not many knew of it and its importance.
- b. Listen to the public: Different people have an opinion on how best to empower females and although not all opinions are applicable it is from here that they would know how to empower women.

- c. Enquire: Most people stated that the organisations assume what kind of empowerment is needed often times they provide support by distributing food and clothing when they may be a need for something else such as educational or medical support.
- d. Provide equal opportunities to women as provided to men. Give women the chance to lead.
- e. Consistency: The main complaint was that the organisations look into the beginning by providing opportunities and funds but never follow through to see if the results and expectations are successful.
- f. Find a way of marketing the organisations and explain what the purpose of the organisation is. Most people are unaware that there are organisations that can offer help right next to them.

For the organisations to do better and develop the nation, they can start by encouraging women empowerment but keep in mind that they need to consider the requests of the national people.

The Zambian government needs to take time to listen to what the people of the nation have to say about the empowerment movement. It is from here they can gather information on what kind of empowerment is needed and whether or not people know of the empowerment movement; the government can organise educational workshops.

There should be a close management on all governmental-organisations that are built for the women empowerment movement, a close study to see what they are doing and what they are not doing to help them work in line with what they were created to do.

This thesis has taught the author the importance of women empowerment and the knowledge of it. Referencing the famous quote “knowledge is power” (Francis Bacon, 1597), the research allowed the author to see what the empowerment movement meant from different perspectives and what impact it has had on the nation of Zambia.

Besides the knowledge obtained during face to face interviews within the organisation, the observation research has also taught the author that one can learn a lot by observing and in doing so, understand that regardless of how many organisations can be created the voice of the nation must be heard to successfully sow seeds of empowerment.

This study has shown that empowerment cannot be forced on people, therefore if the level of women empowerment is to escalate in Zambia; the women need to be educated on its importance and by providing understanding perhaps the desire to be empowered will stand and women empowerment can take place.

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Appendices.

Appendix 1. Organisation interview questions.

First Interview Questions: The Organizations.

1. Have you worked with F.R.E.E?
2. How was your experience working with this organization?
3. Are you aware of what the organization is about?
4. From your observation, has the organization contributed to the economic growth of the nation?
5. Have you heard of what empowerment is?
If yes, what does it mean to you?
6. Do you think empowerment is equivalent to the idea of women empowerment?
7. Are you aware that F.R.E.E. is an organization founded for the purpose of economic empowerment?
8. Do you think the organization promotes a sense of empowerment?
9. What's your take on the women empowerment movement in Zambia?
10. How can a woman be empowered without taking away her feminine attributes or duties in her home?
11. How can women empowerment be promoted within Zambia?
12. Are there any recommendations you would be willing to give to the F.R.E.E organization based on the knowledge you have?
13. Are there any recommendations you would be willing to give for organizations or the government of Zambia based on your response on question 8?

Appendix 2. Public questions

Second Interview questions: The Public.

1. Have you heard of the term 'women empowerment?' if yes, what does it mean to you?
2. How best can you define "women empowerment"? does it involve gender equality or is it more than that?
3. Have you heard of an organisation called foundation for the realisation of economic empowerment? commonly known as F.R.E.E.
4. Do you know of any organisations that have helped the woman empowerment movement in Zambia?
5. Do you think women are capable of being leaders? Why?
6. Do you think men and women should be treated equally? Why?
7. Based on the knowledge you have about the women empowerment movement in Zambia, do you have any recommendations to give?
8. What do you think an organisation like F.R.E.E that is starting up should do to gain public awareness?

Appendix 3. Questionnaire questions & answers: Chief executive owner of F.R.E.E.

Image 1. Screen shot of questions sent to the founder of the organisation.

I put together a few questions I was hoping you would provide answers to inline with my research.

I am writing about both you and F.R.E.E so my research questions are based on both.

1. History:

- When did you move to Zambia?
- How long did it take for you to start the organisation?
- What made you want to start? (Motivation)
- Were you already educated on how to create the products or did you have to learn?
- How has the employment process been since you started the foundation? (Recruitment process)
- Did you encounter any struggles along the way? If so please mention a few perhaps the paramount ones if any.
- Is the outcome what you had set a goal for by this time?

2. Market entry:

- To which countries and why?
- Partnerships : Have you had any unsuccessful ones? What would you say was the cause?
- Development journey.

3. Target Market

- Who is your target?
 - Why?
 - When did you realise this? When and how do you market?
-

Answers.

1. History:

- When did you move to Zambia? I moved to Zambia in May 2010. I had just finished by masters degree. I studied international development at the University of Pittsburgh. It was an executive masters, not MID (masters international development). Because of my 25 years experience in my field, they let me do the executive program. So after graduation, I came to Zambia 2 weeks later.

2. - How long did it take for you to start the organisation? I started the organisation while still at Pitt as part of my coursework. I had a capstone class that I used to do a lot of the thinking through the mission, vision, writing up the articles, etc. I filed a company in the US and got nonprofit status. Then in Zambia I revised the same company papers and registered as a company limited by guarantee. Essentially a non profit that was formed for the purpose of creating profitable enterprises
- What made you want to start? (Motivation) I've always had an interest in entrepreneurship. I see money making opportunities everywhere I look. I wanted to take that interest and apply it to my desire to improve women's lives. My own struggles with being a woman had given me much more love in my heart for my sisters. I'd gone from being someone who couldn't really relate to women. Didn't have much to say to them because they seemed to be living such trivial lives. I wanted to be in the lounge talking business with the men instead of in the kitchen talking about children with the women. But that gradually changed and I began to relate much better to women. I realised the need to have a man in my life had driven me to some poor choices and I'd suffered for it. I see that male dependency and neediness in so many women and I long to inspire them to realise they have value apart from men. Not that they shouldn't marry or have relationships, but that those relationships should not be out of need, but from a position of strength.
-

- Were you already educated on how to create the products or did you have to learn? I learned. I'd only strung some beads once in Botswana. I made a necklace with a friend coaching me. In Zambia, once Linda and I decided to make copper jewellery, we got books and found tutorials online about how to make the jewellery. We were looking at the book and teaching at the same time. I'd watch a Youtube video and then teach the women what I learned. It's been that way with most of our skills. I did have a farm girl background though. I had used some tools before. I took welding in high school. But I still found some of it scary and I had to force myself to be brave to do it. Like connecting the gas bottles so we could solder. Hissing gas has never been a welcome sound. The first time I connected the bottles the gas was escaping. I called a man I knew and he said, "Shut it off before you blow up the building!" But over time I've gotten more confident and learned I don't need to be afraid.

- How has the employment process been since you started the foundation?
(Recruitment process)

- Did you encounter any struggles along the way? If so please mention a few perhaps the paramount ones if any. Money has been a big struggle. I have always had a place to stay and food to eat but I've not had a salary for most of the years I've been in Zambia. Only when there was Finnish embassy funding earlier this year. For six months I had a K7,000 salary. Prior to that, my labour was the local contribution to match the Finnish embassy funding. My Dad gave heavily to help me get going, the first five years I was in Zambia.

- Is the outcome what you had set a goal for by this time?

- Is the outcome what you had set a goal for by this time?

3. Market entry:

- To which countries and why?

- Partnerships : Have you had any unsuccessful ones? What would you say was the cause?

- Development journey.

4. Target Market

- Who is your target?

- Why?

- When did you realise this? When and how do you market?

Appendix 3: Final Interview questions: the women at F.R.E.E

Final interview Questions: The women at F.R.E.E

1. How long have you worked with F.R.E.E?
2. How did you start working at F.R.E.E? Did you hear of it before your recruitment? If yes, from where?
3. How has your experience been working with this organization?
4. Do you know what this organization was created for?
5. Have you heard of what empowerment is?
If yes, what does it mean to you?
6. Do you believe in the idea of women empowerment?
7. In your opinion, how can a woman be empowered?
8. Do you think F.R.E.E. is an organization founded for the purpose of women empowerment?
9. Do you think the organization promotes women empowerment?
10. What's your take on the women empowerment movement carried out within this organization?
11. How can a woman be empowered without taking away her feminine attributes or duties in her home?
12. Do you believe you are being empowered by working at F.R.E.E?
13. Are there any recommendations you would be willing to give to the F.R.E.E organization based on the knowledge & experience you have?