Living International Corporate Social Responsibility:

Experiences of workers in an internationalised factory in India

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Thesis Summary

This thesis presents an ethnography of workers' experiences of international Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in an internationalised garment factory in India - a factory that produces ready-made garments for international brands and follows the codes of conduct (CoC) demanded by these brands. The thesis shows that workers' CSR experiences are deeply intertwined with and embedded within ongoing international production processes. The interplay of CoC and production targets results in a working time squeeze, a perpetual shortage of working time, which workers described and termed as *bandish*. The thesis suggests that it is this *bandish* which determines workers' CSR experiences and shapes their physical, psychological, social and financial lives. It argues that international CSR, which intends to improve conditions of and for workers in factories through CoC, is eventually generating 'hidden work' for factory workers, work which is both unrecognised and unpaid. This thesis highlights the analytical value of factory workers' experiences for international CSR and CoC scholarship and contributes to the CSR debates on the tension between profit and legitimacy imperatives by showing their interaction and manifestation in the working and personal lives of workers.

Key words
Factory workers, experiences, codes of conduct, corporate social responsibility, ethnography

Dedicated to BABA

Thank you for standing by my side.
For inspiring me to take challenges in my stride.
You knew I could do this when I had no clue.
I dedicate this and my all other 'grid-searching' pursuits to you.

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List of Abbreviations

CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLS	Core Labour Standards
CoC	Codes of Conduct
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DGM	Deputy General Manager
ESI	Employee State Insurance
FF	Fast Factory
FTSE100	Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 Index
GBC	Global Business Citizenship
GM	General Manager
HR	Human Resources
ICF	Internationally Compliant Factory
IFA	International Framework Agreements
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IR	International Responsibility
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NCR	National Capital Region (Delhi)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OnT	Ontological Turn
OT	Overtime
PO	Purchase Order
PoSH	Prevention of Sexual Harassment
SAM	Standard Allowed Minutes
SMV	Standard Minute Value
T&A	Textile and Apparel
UN	United Nations
UNCTC	United Nations Commission on Transnational Corporations
UNDHR	United Nations Declaration for Human Rights
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
UNGP	United Nations Guiding Principles

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1. Introduction

> *"*If you look at the lives of people like us, and try to understand it, only then can things here be understood. It is easy to say that a factory worker does this and that, but how and why? What does she [he] go through? No one asks these questions…Sometimes I feel those who are well-read hesitate in even talking to us...as if to say that they will get dirty by talking to people like us…"
>
> – Isha (name changed), a garment worker

Isha, who I met in August 2017, has been stitching garments for six years. She works in an internationalised factory, a factory that produces merchandise for international brands in accordance with their specifications and carries out its operations so as to adhere to workplace practices and standards listed in the brands' codes of conduct (CoC), which draw on widely accepted international guidelines and recommendations in pursuit of international Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Bartley and Egels-Zandén 2015; Distelhorst et al. 2015; Locke 2013; Kolk and van Tulder 2005; Kolk et al. 1999). Isha's remarks draw attention to three issues. Firstly, she points out that examining experiences of factory workers are relevant for understanding an internationalised factory and international CSR. Secondly, Isha feels workers' experiences in internationalised factories have been overlooked and thirdly, she attributes this oversight to prejudice. While the reasons for why workers' experiences remain understudied are contested, research scholars have increasingly echoed Isha's views on examining workers' experiences (for instance, Schüßler et al. 2019; Alamgir and Alakavuklar 2018; Prentice and De Neve 2017; Ruwanpura 2016; Carswell and De Neve 2013; Yu 2009). These growing scholarly calls to pay attention to factory workers' CSR experiences underpin the purpose and objective of my thesis.

This chapter begins with setting the background for this study. I present a personal tale of how I arrived at the research question and in so doing provide the context for this research while making explicit my situatedness and motivation. Ethnographers, it is argued, play a role in shaping the phenomena they study, and therefore exercising self-consciousness about what is learned and how is critical to the researcher's knowledge claims (Wolcott 2008; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Richardson 2000b). I have been both a student and practitioner in the garment manufacturing industry and the self-disclosure in this chapter is an exercise in reflexivity that is intended to delineate the vantage point for the work presented in this thesis. After explicating the background and motivation for this study, I highlight the research objectives and then conclude the chapter with a summary of the thesis document.

1.1 Background and motivation for the study

This section outlines the backdrop within which this research is situated. Through a narrative that opens with my initial encounter of a garment factory, I trace both my professional journey over the last decade, from an undergraduate to a consultant in the fashion industry, as well as the emergence of CoC as an expression of international CSR in the industry. The section concludes with a conversation from May 2015 that challenged my ideas about CoC and led me onto a journey where several underlying assumptions of CoC came to be questioned, and in turn discussed, debated, and analysed in this thesis.

1.1.1 The fashion sweatshop/s

"Hurry up Divya, we will miss the bus", my roommate called out. I quickly finished putting on a dress I had bought from a newly opened international garment brand's shop in New Delhi. "Just in time, the two of you", remarked our friend as we took our seats in the bus and I opened the window. It was a hot summer afternoon in 2009 and we were going to visit a factory. "Why the fuss today ladies?" enquired our friend pointing to my choice of clothing for the day. The factory that we were going to produced and supplied wedding gowns to a European brand, *haute couture*[1], and I wanted to be appropriately dressed. I was in a fashion college, pursuing my undergraduate degree, training to be a part of the fashion industry, and I tried not to miss any opportunity, where I thought I could be 'blending-in.'

We had to walk through a narrow street, scattered with litter and open drains, to reach the factory building, which, with mould growing on the side of its walls and worn-off paint was nothing like what I had imagined. I had thought a factory producing fashion garments would be glamorous and fashionable. Situated in the midst of high-rise buildings, posh neighbourhoods, flyovers, and metro terminals, regarded as the signifiers of shining India (Kaur 2016), are located industrial clusters, similar to the one where I stood, manufacturing merchandise for the international fashion and clothing industry. This specific industry cluster is renowned for housing factories specialising in high-embellishment garments, with hand embroidery and sequin work. As I entered the building and walked to the production area, I noticed satin, organza and other exquisite fabrics stacked up. Some fabric was laid out on tables after having been hand

[1] Exclusive and expensive high-quality garments of an original design

embroidered. There were mannequins draped in satin and organza in appealing styles. Each design was different and strikingly impressive. “Our gowns are in high demand in Europe*,”* gleamed the production manager of the factory. The glamour and glitter of European fashion shows seemed to have come alive around me. I was enamoured, and with my initial disappointment of factory building approach lanes fading, I was curious to see how these designer gowns were produced in the factory.

The factory building had three floors and I was informed that only the ground floor and basement were rented by the factory management. The remaining area of the building was rented by another factory, which produced and exported garments to international brands. As I walked down the stairs to the manufacturing area with curious excitement, I was in for yet another unexpected and a rather unpleasant experience. There were nearly seventy people (perhaps more) standing or sitting next to each other, busy cutting the fabric and stitching different panels (parts) of what were to become lavish wedding gowns. Due to the lack of ventilation in the room, both the workers and their supervisors were sweating. The overwhelming stench in the room suffocated me. The people, however, were busy and too focused to get distracted by their new fashionable onlookers. Not getting distracted, it appeared to me, was a sort of a safety measure, especially for those cutting the fabric. Even a slight loss of focus may result in the blade of the cutting machine slicing a finger instead of the fabric (they were not wearing any safety gear). While it is hard for me to comment on the extent of the stress and the nature of the duress the people may have been experiencing then, visibly they were crammed up and locked between tables and machines. Waste fabric and paper were lying all around. Fabric dust covered their hands and hair. It was so conspicuously present that I found it hard to breathe in the room. Having stood for barely three or four minutes next to the staircase, I rushed back up, went straight out of building doors, and hurriedly walked down the street. I wanted to get away as far as I could, and as quickly as I could, from this world I had barely entered. I wanted to erase from my experience and memory this brief unglamorous encounter with an industry that, at the time, I believed was synonymous with glamour. Back then, I was convinced that my brief unglamorous encounter was just an aberration. I was, however, mistaken.

I later learnt that the working conditions I witnessed during my factory visit are referred to as ‘sweating’ (Ross 1997) and considered exploitative. Factories where such work conditions exist have been labelled by scholars, journalists, and campaigners as *sweatshops*, where people work under poor conditions and earn low wages (Arnold and Bowie 2003; Rosen 2002). Such *sweatshops* in the fashion industry are not an

exception, rather, they are allegedly the norm (ILRF 2015), spread across the industry operations and different geographies (BBC 2019). Workers employed in garment factories supplying to the international brands, including in some cases those working in the warehouses of international brands in the UK, it has been reported, are not paid minimum wages, work in hazardous (fire accident-prone) conditions, experience forced overtime, undergo acute stress, and are penalised for even smiling at work (O'Connor 2018; Channel4 2017; Wallwork 2017; Hammer et al. 2015). Similar state of affairs and instances of worker harassment have been identified across fabric mills, leather tanneries and garment manufacturing factories in India (Sathish 2019; ICN 2016), Pakistan (SOMO 2016), Bangladesh (Hammadi and Kelly 2013; PBS 2017), United States (Ellis and Tran 2016), China (WoW 2019), Vietnam (Anh 2019), Lesotho (Hodal 2019), Cambodia (McVeigh 2017) and Myanmar (SOMO 2017), among others (Martin 2019). News media, activists and scholars have repeatedly lamented the ugly, dirty, and dark side of fashion that has an adverse impact on people and the environment (BBC 2019; Danziger 2018; O'Connor 2018; Anguelov 2015; Carlson 2015; Su 1998).

1.1.2 Emergence of codes of conduct

Although sweatshops persist (Anh 2019; BBC 2019; Martin 2019), they do not alone constitute the fashion industry. I visited several garment factories while pursuing my undergraduate studies and experiences of my later visits were nothing like the first. On the contrary, I found these factories to be spacious, ventilated, and clean, with machines for different operations neatly laid out. People wore gloves, and often masks, among other protective gears, and occasionally looked at me. Some even smiled, as I walked around the factory floor. There were signs everywhere to indicate different areas, and in some factories, I came across noticeboards displaying information about different processes. These factories, where I spent between a few hours (during visits) and a few weeks (for my internships), are internationalised factories – factories that organise and execute their operations in accordance to CoC, required by their buyers - the international brands and retailers. CoC are statements that specify ethical norms and values that buyers hold and apply to their trade partners and vendors (Jenkins et al. 2002; Ngai 2005). Such CoC intend to "ensure that conditions within production chains meet basic minimum standards and eradicate the most exploitative forms of labour, such as child and bonded labour, and sweatshops (Zadek et al. 1998: iii)". Buyers of the internationalised factories are large multinational corporations (MNCs), usually high-street brands, who label themselves as 'sweatshop-free' (AA 2012).

After sweatshop conditions were uncovered in the 1990s, international brands and retailers became targets of activism and consumer boycotts (Ross 1997). For instance, global clothing brand and retailer GAP was boycotted in 1995, and in 1996 several demonstrations were organised to condemn Disney as well as Walmart and its endorser Kathie Lee Gifford (Broad 2002). Routinely accused of manufacturing their merchandise by exploiting people, international brands faced criticism for the working and living conditions of the people engaged in manufacturing their products (Bair and Palpaceur 2012; Jenkins 2005; Klein 2000) and were expected to take responsibility (Oonk et al. 2012; Jamali and Mirshak 2010; Sluiter 2009). It was argued that fashion brands, being large MNCs, should ensure decent working conditions in factories, much like they controlled quality and timely delivery of their products, and should assume contract responsibility (Schrempf-Stirling and Palazzo 2016; De Winter 2001).

Expectations from brands to assume responsibility for conditions under which their products are manufactured were initially contested. Some contended that workers in factories are the responsibility of the state, and corporations should pressurise governments to address their needs directly (Abrami and Bierman 2005). Others argued that supplier factories are independent and separate legal entities (Kahle et al. 2000) and one firm could not necessarily be held liable for another (Amaeshi et al. 2008). Some even raised that workers carried out work in such factories willingly and workers' choice could explain and justify sweatshop conditions (Zwolinski 2007). All these views have been contested on ethical grounds by highlighting that corporations have a moral duty to meet minimum health and safety standards and should not engage in exploitative actions (Snyder 2010; Arnold and Bowie 2007; Arnold and Bowie 2003). This emphasis on ethical behaviour, accompanied with illustrations that benefits of regulating sweatshop labour outweigh the costs (Kates 2015), resulted in calls for an 'extended chain of responsibility' (Crane and Matten 2010). In response to such demands and to deal with the impending reputational damage and financial risks (Kang and Hustvedt 2014; Dickson and Eckman 2008; Sethi 2006; 2003; Humphrey and Schmitz 2001), brands developed, adopted, and implemented CoC to illustrate their socially responsible behaviour (Roberts 2003). These debates, investigations and research along with contentions for design, development, adoption, and implementation of CoC involved scholars, policymakers, campaigners, brands, and other industry actors, and are part of the discussions and agenda of CSR. CSR is an umbrella term that refers to concerns about the role of business in society and recognises that companies have a responsibility for their impact on society and the natural environment (Crane et al. 2008; Blowfield and Frynas 2005).

Among others, the international brands claim to incorporate CSR concerns in their international operations and production processes by developing and adopting CoC (Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning 2008). As Nike puts it, their CoC represent a 'longstanding commitment to work with suppliers on improving manufacturing conditions and minimizing negative impacts on workers, local communities and the environment' (Nike 2019). Levis Strauss, followed by Nike, were among the first brands to develop and adopt CoC in 1992. By 2006, several such CoC were developed by companies, including IBM, Walmart, Dupont, Puma and Disney, among others. Over the years, CoC have been established as the way to express and operationalise an international brands' CSR strategy and a key approach of managing their international CSR (Beckers 2018; Preuss 2010; Kolk and van Tulder 2010). Today, CoC are widely accepted as the key approach to address, improve and eradicate sweatshops conditions (Gilbert et al. 2011; Jenkins et al. 2002; Graafland 2002; Winstanley et al. 2002; Frenkel 2001; Nadvi and Wältring 2001; Hale 2000).

1.1.3 A challenge to assumptions

A decade has passed since my first factory visit which challenged my assumptions about the production of fashion garments and yet it continues to remain etched in my memory. While it was brief, it was nevertheless a life changing experience. Having been exposed to the dirty side of fashion in an initial encounter, I lost the desire to *blend-in*. The glamour of fashion, which had once enchanted my teenage self, left me disenchanted. After completing my undergraduate degree, instead of being engaged in fashion production, I chose to pursue a career where I could contribute to and support the factories working with international brands in organising and executing their operations as per the descriptions in CoC documents. This activity of following the expectations expressed in CoC is also referred to as social compliance by the industry insiders (Ambastha 2019; Ripon 2017; SgT 2017; MODINT 2015). Supporting internationalised factories with social compliance has emerged as a career choice over the years, and specialised courses and programmes are offered. I was, however, first introduced to social compliance during an industry event I attended as a student. Through interactions at such events and industry internships, I spent time learning about CSR and social compliance issues in the fashion industry. After completing my studies, I started working as a consultant designing and implementing CoC and related projects, along with designing and delivering training workshops for brands, factories, government agencies and civil society organisations.

Such a career option of becoming a social compliance consultant and trainer is itself a consequence of brands striving “to ensure that they are seen as ethical in the marketplace” (Svensson et al., 2006:390). CoC specifically, and CSR related codes more broadly, are now common in MNCs (Babri et al. 2019). For instance, the Business Development Bank of Canada places adoption of such codes as the very first step for firms “putting corporate responsibility at the heart of your business” (BDC 2019). 95 percent of both Fortune US 100 and Fortune Global 100 companies have developed such codes (Sharbatoghlie et al. 2013). They are a widespread practice across the UK, Europe and the USA. In a Europe-wide survey in 2018, 69 percent of the 6119 employees affirmed that a written standard of ethical business conduct was available in their respective organisations (Dondé 2018). 98 percent of 44 respondents from the UK and Europe in an Institute of Business Ethics survey in 2016 (Dondé 2016) and 90 percent of the 36 multinational firms in the USA in a 2017 survey by the International Bar Association Global Employment Institute confirmed that their companies have such a code (IBA GEI 2017).

It is estimated that there may be close to 10,000 CoC developed by MNCs as well as other organisations that intend to improve working conditions in factories (Dicken 2011; Barrientos 2008). Reporting sexual harassment of workers and suppression of unionisation, an article in the Guardian newspaper emphasised that such “abuses violated workers’ rights under Lesotho’s labour laws, international standards and the codes of conduct of the brands sourcing from the factories” (Hodal 2019). This excerpt highlights how CoC have come to be viewed as a guarantor of workers’ rights and are evoked in the same breath as local labour laws and international labour standards. CoC have not only become established as a widespread practice but have also come to be regarded as a guarantor of workers’ rights (Compa 2008; Compa and Hinchliffe-Darricarrere 1995). The widespread adoption of CoC and views such as that of the Guardian reporter highlight the success of civil society campaigns (Barrientos 2008). They also reflect and underline the widely shared belief that these codes hold great promise for improving working conditions and situations for workers (Ruggie 2004; Zadek 2004) and are a means to prevent a downward spiral in labour exploitation (Barrientos and Smith 2007).

In keeping with these views, one of the areas of my work, over the years, involved working with factory staff to help them develop management systems to implement the CoC requirements so that they could become socially compliant, and thereby an internationalised factory. As I conducted training workshops, designed several forms

and excel sheets, and presented CoC as the factory rulebook, I believed that I was engaged in making factories better and safer for workers, and that the internationalised factories were indeed desirable workplaces for workers.

However, during one discussion in 2015, Rashid (name changed), a factory HR manager, strongly challenged my views. He emphatically stated that "CoC do not come anywhere close to factory workers… what workers want is not covered in them*."* As the nature of my work primarily entailed engagement with brands and factory managers, I had hardly interacted with workers and I found myself ill-equipped to comment on or to challenge Rashid's remark. The realisation that I could not even engage with Rashid's comment alerted me to the observation that all these years I had been busy in creating and enabling 'better' factories for workers, without questioning or thinking about what workers themselves think of such efforts or these factories. Although given my interactions with the executives of international brands, and the stated claims of CoC to protect workers, govern labour relations and safeguard workers' fundamental rights (Egels-Zandén and Merk, 2014; Compa 2008; Sobczak 2003), I did find Rashid's views rather intriguing.

At the time of the discussion with Rashid, I was pursuing my postgraduate studies in the UK, and I took the opportunity of being in an academic environment to better understand CoC and what scholarly studies had to say about factory workers' experiences of CoC. I eventually concluded that while several scholars have indeed expressed scepticism about CoC (Taylor 2011; Rasche 2010; Sum 2010; Hale and Opondo 2005), there are relatively few studies that examined workers' experiences of the CoC. For reasons that will be elaborated in this thesis later, I found this gap to be rather compelling. Rashid's categorical views led to my PhD research and eventually this thesis that examines how factory workers experience CoC and in so doing, in turn, analyses Rashid's views. It explains possible theoretical reasons for Rashid's observations, complements his opinion with an academic analysis of workers' experiences, which reiterates his concerns, and highlights why both his views and factory workers' experiences matter for CoC and CSR scholarship, policy, and practice.

1.2 Research objectives

Triggered by an empirical contention illustrated in the above section (that Rashid pointed out), this research and the thesis is a scholarly journey and endeavour to address three

specific questions. First, what is known about factory workers and their experiences in extant CoC scholarship? Second, how do factory workers experience CoC? And finally, why do workers' experiences in an internationalised factory matter for CoC/CSR scholarship? These questions are addressed through three research objectives.

Firstly, the thesis aims to review existing CoC studies, explicate their underlying assumptions to categorise them, identify how factory workers have been included (or not) in extant work and analyse how factory workers and their experiences have been examined in extant scholarship. It specifically identifies three ways in which workers have been conceptualised based on three dominant ways of examining the CoC. It illustrates how across the entire gamut of CoC studies, while research about workers has been common, workers themselves have been left out. At best treating them as informants, and at worst reducing them to an abstract category, studies about workers appear to have mirrored the very challenges they have identified when examining CoC practices. Secondly, to illustrate the analytical and theoretical significance of studying factory workers and their CSR experiences, the thesis intends to examine experiences of workers in a factory that follows CoC (which I refer to as an internationalised factory), illustrate the nature of the experiences and explain how workers' CSR experiences are constituted. Finally, having illustrated the theoretical and analytical value and relevance of factory workers' experiences, the thesis aims to highlight the implications of such an experience for CoC and CSR theory, policy and practice.

In achieving these objectives, the thesis makes both theoretical and practical contributions. In the first instance, it reviews and organises existing CoC scholarship, problematises the extant studies, and calls for CoC studies about workers to be carried out with workers themselves. Secondly, it identifies *bandish* with an underlying working time squeeze as shaping experiences of factory workers in an internationalised factory and shows how factory workers' experiences are constituted at the intersection of profit-led, efficiency-driven production imperative and the reputation-led legitimacy imperative. The conception of *bandish* draws attention to the 'hidden work' of international CSR and thereby illustrates the theoretical and analytical significance of examining workers' experiences.

The thesis argues that three mechanisms are at play in international CSR generating 'hidden work' for factory workers. These include CSR Responsibilisation, CSR Enactment and Worker Situatedness. *CSR Responsibilisation* refers to process whereby managerial discretion assigns and transfers to workers the responsibilities for

CoC induced compliance related tasks in the making of an internationalised factory. *CSR Enactment* refers to the process whereby managerial perceptions that are acquired and shaped in interactions with international brands and their representatives drive the translation and performance of international CSR requirements to and as everyday compliance rules with the purpose of presenting an internationalised factory as the way factory always is, its natural way of being. *Worker Situatedness* refers to the amalgamated effect of the interplay of workers' needs, desires, compulsions and decisions that encompass financial, social, physical, psychological, personal, familial and temporal aspects of their lives and is enacted through a silent acceptance of the status quo accompanied by conflicting emotions on an ongoing basis. Together, these obscure the fact that CoC compliance work is performed by workers and sustains the 'hidden' work in an internationalised factory. International CSR requirements, which intend to improve working conditions for factory workers, ultimately create 'hidden work' for factory workers, which is unrecognised and unpaid.

In presenting this argument the thesis contributes to the profit and legitimacy debate in CSR scholarship by showing how these imperatives interact and manifest in people's working and personal lives. It also offers an alternative explanation of previously noted CoC effects and proposes a vantage point for scholars to examine CSR experiences in the workplace. As an ethnographic study of a garment manufacturing factory in India, this thesis also responds to the calls for research on small businesses in a developing country context (Soundararajan et al. 2018a) as well as ethnographic studies of CSR (Bass and Milosevic 2018). On policy and practice levels, this thesis contributes to enhancing approaches of CoC development and implementation. The thesis calls for CoC theory, policy and practice to consider the experiences of factory workers when designing, planning and performing initiatives and research in their name and at their behest, in the absence of which, the purpose and impact of any such effort may remain questionable.

1.3 Thesis structure

The next chapter reviews the history and definition of CoC as an expression of international CSR, discusses their purpose and content and undertakes a review of the CoC scholarship. It categorises the existing research on CoC and finds that most studies are concerned with evaluating and assessing the extent of differences CoC make (or not) for workers. Yet, despite being about workers, CoC studies remain focused on the

firm and experiences of workers themselves have rarely been examined. The chapter reflects on theoretical and methodological reasons on why this may be the case and offers theoretical, normative, and instrumental reasons for examining workers' experiences.

Chapter three highlights the analytical significance and characteristics of the notion of experience and presents how ethnography was utilised to examine experiences of factory workers. It discusses the processes of identifying and negotiating access with an internationalised factory engaged in fulfilling both the international CSR and production requirements, generating data, analysing and writing ethnography while also highlighting the assumptions and reflexivity that underlie this study.

The fourth chapter illustrates how factory workers' experiences are constituted at the intersection of international CSR and production requirements in the factory. The reputation-led legitimacy imperative arrives in the factory as CoC and is translated to buyer compliance rules while profit-led production imperative manifests in the factory as purchase orders and translates to production targets. The chapter presents descriptions of workers' CSR experiences, which they term as *bandish*, and examines how the working time squeeze underlying these experiences is generated, shaped, accentuated and sustained.

Chapter five presents what *bandish* entails for workers in their everyday factory life and shows how it shapes physical, physiological, psychological, social and financial lives of workers, how it manifests in working and personal lives of workers and how it evokes both positive and negative emotions for different workers at the same time, or for same worker at different times.

The concluding chapter of the thesis draws together the insights emerging from the work presented in different chapters. It argues how international CSR requirements, despite their stated intentions of improving working conditions in factory, generate 'hidden work' for factory workers which is both unrecognised and unpaid. This 'hidden work' of CSR, and in turn workers' *bandish*, have implications for the ongoing academic debates and future research in the CoC and CSR scholarship which the chapter outlines. The thesis draws to a close by reflecting on the limitations of this study and indicating the implication of the thesis for the policy and practice of CoC.

2. Codes of conduct and factory workers

2.1 Introduction

The Codes of Conduct (CoC) have become established as the primary way in which multinational firms express their social responsibility towards factory workers engaged in manufacturing their products, irrespective of where the workers are located (Beckers 2018). This chapter presents and organises the current state of knowledge about factory workers and their experiences in the CoC literature. It proposes that existing studies can be categorised into three groups based on how CoC have been studied – the organisational, regulatory and practice-based perspectives. Across the three groups, researchers from different disciplines, such as, business and management, development studies, law, economic geography and anthropology have examined CoC, leading to a vibrant and growing area of scholarship. However, while most studies claim to be about factory workers, the analysis presented in this chapter alludes to the contrary. It highlights that CoC studies are largely firm-focused and factory workers, treated as passive stakeholders and beneficiaries to be protected, have been mostly relegated to the background. Few scholars have noted the active role workers can play in CoC implementation, which in turn has implications for the firms. Even this work, however, neither accounts for nor elaborates workers' experiences. Studies *about* factory workers have not been carried out *with* them. Without accounting for, examining and including workers' experiences in their analysis, the extent to which CoC, and in turn CSR, theory and practice can further the interests of factory workers, the ostensibly stated intended beneficiary of CoC, remains questionable. This chapter argues that there are compelling instrumental, normative as well as theoretical reasons for scholars to address this gap and to examine factory workers' experiences of CoC.

I begin the chapter with a discussion on the history and definition of CoC which is followed by an overview of its purpose and content. Having clarified what CoC are and what is included in the CoC documents, the third section categorises the existing studies of CoC and analyses how factory workers have been examined and discussed within each of the three categories. Following the presentation of the three groups of studies, their common research focus is noted and examined. This fourth section discusses studies focused on evaluating CoC for workers, highlights their key limitations, examines the reasons for those limitations and concludes with the research questions this thesis intends to address.

2.2 History and definition of CoC

The concept of codes, in general, refers to a collection of rules and regulations and includes a written set of behavioural prescriptions (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008). They are meant to "provide a clear, unambiguous statement of what the community expects (e.g., with regard to responsibilities, obligations, duties) of its members" (McCabe et al. 1996:462). Business firms are both a member of a community (society) (Jones 1980) and communities in themselves (Solomon 1992). As a member of the society, firms' obligations to norms of the society are discussed in the field of CSR, where it is argued that firms, as members of a community, have responsibility for their impact on society and the natural environment (Blowfield and Frynas 2005; De Winter 2001). CSR codes are developed to codify behaviours that deal with the firms' role towards society (Beckers 2018). As communities in themselves, firms also need to formalise and regulate ethics in the workplace (Khaled and Gond 2019) and codes are developed for the purpose. CSR codes, then, articulate action prescriptions with the intention of moral guidance of a firm and are written documents that lay down required individual or collective behaviours (Vrielink et al. 2011), issued by entities within society, including business firms, business support groups and non-governmental organisations (NGO) (Kolk and van Tulder 2005). Codes, in general, may be defined in terms of the function they perform in society, in terms of what they mean to different actors in daily practice, or in terms of their core elements (Black 2002). Codes are developed for environmental management practices (Nash and Ehrenfeld 1997), fair competition (Marcketti, 2010) and dispute management (Vrielink et al. 2011).

Studies of CoC gained prominence within academic scholarship following their uptake by business and policy actors. While the first textbook on CSR codes, titled Code of Ethics by Edgar Heermance, was published in 1924 (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008), it was only in the 1990s that academic studies of CoC witnessed a steep rise as is evidenced by literature reviews on the topic (Babri et al. 2019; Helin and Sandstorm 2007; Stevens 1994). Following the defence industry price-fixing scandal in the 1980s in the USA (Bellace 2014), a series of frauds, scandals and environmental concerns across business activities were exposed in the 1990s (Crane and Matten 2010). Such exposures added to the growing sustainability critique of corporations and the manner in which they organised society (Kazmi et al. 2016). Responding to the growing criticisms and calls for action, nearly 1000 CoC had been voluntarily developed by multinational firms at the start of the millennium as per the estimates of the World Bank

(Smith and Feldman 2003). This was followed by academic studies capturing and analysing the growth of these codes and their content (Helin and Sandstorm 2007; Kolk et al. 1999).

Knowledge generation in CoC studies reflects the characteristics of CSR as an emergent academic field, particularly, a multiplicity of terms as well as lack of a unified definition (Lockett et al. 2006). For instance, a wide variety of terms have been used in the literature to refer to CSR codes: code of ethics (Cressey and Moore 1983), corporate ethical codes (Stevens 1994; 2008; 2009), honour codes (McCabe et al. 1996), codes of practice (Vrielink et al. 2011), business principles (Sen 1997), corporate credo (Benson 1989), corporate ethics statement (Murphy 1995), corporate codes (Beckers 2018), integrity code or code of honour (Vrielink et al. 2011), international responsibility (IR) codes (Kolk et al. 1999), business codes of ethics (BCEs) (Guzman and van Meeuwen 2013), corporate philosophy and business codes (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008). While some scholars use the different labels interchangeably, others differentiate between more ethical and practical contents, between general and situational applicability and between general ideals and more concrete action prescriptions (Beckers 2018; Vrielink et al. 2011; Carson et al. 2008).

The lack of a single unified definition has resulted in different scholars utilising the same term differently and allude to different starting points. For instance, Compa (2008), a legal scholar defines external orientation of codes based on who develops the code while Kolk et al. (1999) and Kolk and van Tulder (2005), who are business and management scholars, use the notion of external orientation based on who the code is meant for. For Compa (2008), codes developed by the firm, irrespective of the focus, are internal. For Kolk et al. (1999), codes developed by company or any other actor and targeted at entities outside the firm, for instance, suppliers are external. Such differences in conceptions could possibly be explained by the multiplicity of disciplinary lenses. Legal scholars define CoC as a form of regulation where the firm itself is the object of the regulation (Vrielink et al. 2011; Black 2002), while CoC in business and management literature have been viewed primarily as a means for firms to address stakeholder expectations (Leipziger 2016; Milatovic 2015).

Even within the business and management studies, CSR codes are discussed differently. While Carson et al. (2008) and White and Montgomery (1980) use CoC to refer to codes meant for employees, Cressey and Moore (1983) and Stevens (1994; 2008; 2009) utilise the term code of ethics for this purpose. Babri et al. (2019), use the

term corporate code of ethics (CCE) to refer to codes developed by businesses irrespective of who they are targeted at, be it employees or suppliers, while Kolk and van Tulder (2005) use CSR codes and international responsibility codes to refer to externally oriented codes targeted at suppliers. Such variety only underlines the dynamism and multifaceted nature of CoC, and in turn CSR scholarship, with highly permeable boundaries that has continued to attract the attention of scholars across a range of disciplines, including business ethics, international business, strategy, supply chains and operations management, development studies, law, economic geography – each guided by their own methodological and theoretical orientations (Sheehy 2015; Brammer et al. 2012; Crane et al. 2008; Lockett et al. 2006; McWilliams et al. 2006).

There is little agreement among CSR scholars on the extent, nature, and rationale of the obligations of a firm towards society (Lindgreen and Swaen 2010; Van Marrewijk 2003) or even on the very capacity of a firm as societal actor with a moral agency (Ronnegard 2015; Painter-Morland 2010; Phillips 1995; Ewin 1991). As an emergent academic field, CSR is not driven by experimental practices, rather by business, social and political agendas (Lockett et al. 2006). Questions of responsibility in CSR, it is suggested, are best treated as political and negotiated among businesses, stakeholders and the wider society (Jackson et al. 2018). It is the moral and practical views of the people and organisations that shape the business–society relations and in turn the ideas that are examined in academic studies (Knippenberg and de Jong 2010). Both the development of the CSR codes as well the ensuing academic studies of these codes appear to have followed such a trajectory (Babri et al. 2019; Helin and Sandstorn 2007; Stevens 1994).

As its production operations expanded internationally, MNCs outsourced labour-intensive operations to firms and factories worldwide and consequently their relationship with factory workers engaged in manufacturing their products was ‘subcontracted’ (Merk 2011; Merk 2009; Esbenshade 2004b). As news of the exploitation of factory workers in distant and far locations started emerging, accompanied by other environmental and corruption scandals, the growing and unchecked power of corporations was recognised (Crane and Matten 2010; Bakan 2005; Ross 1997). It was realised by civil society, activists and governments, among others, that in the changed production structure spread across countries, MNCs were able to maintain economic control over the factories and vendors without being legally liable for the social and environmental impact their operations were generating (Sobczak 2004; Strange 1994). The MNCs no longer operated under the ambit of the jurisdiction of laws of any particular country vis-à-vis

their international operations. Perhaps, this was the reason the United Nations Commission on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) was established in 1974 as an inter-governmental commission comprising 48 members from across Asia, Africa, Latin America, Western Europe, North America and Easter Europe to develop a code that would hold MNCs accountable (Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning 2008; Jenkins et al. 2002). However, as Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning (2008) highlight, after several drafts of the code and nearly two decades of negotiations, in 1992, the discussions broke down. The authors contend that the primary reason for this break down was member disagreements on the code's legal status and its wording. For instance, while European and American members preferred companies 'should do,' other countries insisted on 'shall do,' and wanted the codes to be legally binding. Language in codes functions to create particular understandings of individuals and groups, how they are interrelated, and how they should behave (Winkler 2011). Certain words being used in a particular way can give rise to specific obligations (Hart 1994; Johnson 1975). It was the choice of words and the subsequently arising legal and moral obligations which triggered a clash of opinions and prevented a single international code for MNCs from being unanimously agreed (Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning 2008).

The failure of the UNCTC to agree on a single international code eventually led to the development of multiple CoC, with different yet remarkably similar content. In response to growing societal demands, individual companies, groups of companies, not for profit organisations (NGOs), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), business support groups and several other actors developed and adopted CoC (Kolk and van Tulder 2005). "In 2000, the boundary of responsibility for companies was largely limited to what they could directly control and manage internally, and often did not include upholding human and labour rights, environmental performance and anti-corruption issues in the value chain… A clear trend in the past 15 years is the increasing number of supplier codes of conduct, covering all issue areas, and there is more monitoring of supplier performance and engagement with suppliers" (UNGC 2015:83).

The CoC, in this thesis, refer to externally oriented codes implemented by MNCs that outline specific behaviours and characteristics to be displayed by factories where the MNCs source from. Such CoC may be developed by MNCs on their own, or together with other actors (Miller 2015; van Tulder et al. 2009; Arthurs 2005). Discussed and defined in this manner, the thesis follows the scholars who view CoC as an expression

of firm's international CSR behaviour (Pisani et al. 2017[2]; Kolk and van Tulder 2005; Kolk et al. 1999) and also echoes the usage and widespread understanding of CoC that persists among policy and practice actors (Nike 2019; OECD 2001). CoC, then, are formal statements that specify the ethical standards MNCs both hold and apply to the factories of their suppliers or their trade partners (Jenkins et al. 2002; Ngai 2005). Developed with an intent to remediate poor working conditions in the international production chain (Fransen 2012; Locke et al. 2009), these specify behaviour and actions that must be either adhered to (prescription) or avoided (proscription) (Fisher et al. 2013) and specify norms and rules by which to evaluate factory performance (O'Rourke 2003). In some cases, they may also include measures for controlling business practices of suppliers, for instance subcontracting (Kashmanian 2018) and can be formal or informal, designed for a specific issue and/or application, contain a lot of detail and specifications on what is to be done and how by the suppliers and factories or be rather broad in their application (Gilbert and Huber 2017). Irrespective of such variety, CoC have a common purpose and largely similar content and this is discussed next.

2.3 Purpose and content of CoC

CoC are developed by firms to address the gap created by a deficit of public governance (Bartley 2007; Locke 2013; Mayer and Gereffi, 2010) and to respond to stakeholders' demands and market pressures (Vogel 2010; Sethi 2011). While the reasons why CoC are adopted by firms may shift over time (Altura et al. 2019), the primary purpose of CoC is to address concerns about a downward spiral in labour standards and employment conditions (Barrientos and Smith 2007), to improve material welfare of factory workers and their working conditions (Hoang and Jones 2012: Locke et al. 2007a), to curb the arbitrary and coercive exercise of power and authority of factory management (Hoang and Jones 2012; Ngai 2005) and to substantiate workers' rights to freely associate (Egels-Zandén and Merk 2014). The content of the CoC documents reflects these aims and primarily encompasses three issues, namely decent profit-making, responsibility for people by respecting fundamental workplace standards and responsibility for the environment (Beckers 2018). These issues are set out as guidelines for behaviour that MNC expects its suppliers and factories to adhere to and such adherence is prerequisite for entering into a contract with international buyers (Riisgaard 2009; Jiang 2009;

[2]CSR here, drawing on the CSR literature, is regarded as context-specific organisational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance (Pisani et al. 2017:591).

Beschorner and Muller 2007; Locke et al. 2007a; Locke et al. 2007b; Locke and Romis 2007).

As highlighted, CoC reflects the expectations of societal actors regarding MNCs' treatment of factory workers manufacturing their merchandise and are similar in content (Kolk and van Tulder 2005). Preuss (2009) analysed 44 CoC of FTSE 100 multinational firms and identified two main areas covered by the CoC - employment conditions for supplier employees and environmental protection issues in supplier factories and production sites. The similarity in content of CoC can perhaps be explained by the common sources utilised to develop them, which include core labour standards of the ILO, the United Nations Declaration for Human Rights (UNDHR), the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP), and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) (Tsogas 2018; Rasche et al. 2012; Bellace 2014; Hassel 2008). These guidelines and principles are believed to express internationally agreed norms and values for treatment of individuals by the merit of being human and in the role of workers (Marx and Wouters 2017). Even though not explicitly referred to in all CoC, these serve as a point of international convergence and define a core of acceptable behavioural norms and shared understanding related to business strategies and regulation of working conditions (Hassel 2008).

The different areas covered in the CoC, namely working conditions in factories, environmental concerns and economic issues relating to buyer-supplier relationships, do not necessarily receive equal weightage (Preuss 2009). Working conditions for factory workers have received by far the greatest attention and this could be attributed to the sweatshop exposures and societal expectations surrounding the issue (Jenkins et al. 2002) and the impending threat of reputational damage for firms in case of their perceived inaction (Sethi 2003). The inclusion of the previously excluded workers at contracted supplier factories in MNCs' international production processes through CoC is hailed by some scholars as an expansion of boundaries by MNCs (Egels-Zandén 2017). Such an expansion, following repeated concerns of working conditions for workers, is regarded as an instance of successful application of moral imagination by both individuals and organisations (Arnold and Hartman 2003). Other researchers, however, argue that the growing uncontested adoption of CoC also highlights that CoC reflect the interests of the actors and countries where they have been developed and exclude actors with adversarial views or opinions, specifically from sourcing countries (Jammulamadaka 2015; Drebes 2016; 2014). Such a difference in views, opinions and

perspectives was a key reason for the failure of UNCTC negotiations for developing a single international code for MNCs (Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning 2008).

Notwithstanding the optimism or scepticism regarding the similarity of CoC content, there is agreement that CoC reflect cultural assumptions about moral worth and highlight values and business practices of a corporation (Hitlin and Vaisey 2013; Triponel 2008). The moral meanings embedded in codes, however, are not fixed or static. The ongoing interactions of the business–society interface are dynamic and political (Prakash 2015; Sheehy 2015; Brammer et al. 2012) and render moral meanings changeable (Hitlin and Vaisey 2013). The content of CoC is, therefore, not static or fixed, and expectations, requests and demands by stakeholders may lead to updates and modifications in the code documents (Beckers 2018; Kolk and van Tulder 2005). Such responsiveness of CoC and the ensuing dynamism of its content is often hailed as a key strength of CoC (Braithwaite 2011; Ogus 1995). Having emerged as dynamic documents that reflect organisational, social, and sectoral priorities, CoC with their focus on factory workers engaged in production activities of international brands have continued to attract scholarly interest which is examined next.

2.4 Studies of CoC

Scholarly studies of CoC, as highlighted earlier, became more prominent from early 2000s, following the growth in development and uptake of CoC in the 1990s (Bellace 2014; Kolk and van Tulder 2005). Over the last twenty years, books, journal articles, practitioner reports and working papers dealing with codes of conduct and factory workers have been published. To analyse the extant knowledge on factory workers' experiences of CoC, a systematic search was carried out across the EBSCO, PROQUEST and Web of Science (WoS) databases. The literature reviewed included journal articles (Tranfield et al. 2003; Sartor et al. 2016) as well as grey literature (Adams et al. 2017) comprising book chapters, working papers, media article and practitioner reports. The approach followed for the literature review included a systematic search (Tranfield et al. 2003; Sartor et al. 2016), journal specific searches (Frynas and Stephens 2015), and purposive snowball sampling using Google Scholar (Burritt et al. 2018). The search generated an initial corpus of 225 journal articles which was then reduced to 123 which were reviewed in addition to conference papers and books together covering a period from 2000-2019 (see Appendix 1 for details of the stepwise approach followed for the review of literature presented in this chapter).

The studies of CoC, following the review of literature, can be categorised into three broad groups, based on how scholars have viewed CoC and how factory workers have been conceptualised. The first group of studies examine and study CoC from an organisational perspective and regard CoC as strategy or a management tool. Workers are viewed as stakeholders (Islam et al. 2018; Gilbert and Huber 2017; Milatovic 2015; Yu 2009) and CoC are primarily viewed as a way to remodel corporate activities from the perspective of stakeholders' demands and values (Hemphill and White 2018; Mellahi et al. 2016; Preuss 2010; Preuss 2009; Hughes 2005; Mamic 2005; Bondy et al. 2004; Sethi 2002a; Sethi 1999). The second set of scholars view CoC as regulation, intending to modify and influence behaviours for predefined outcomes (Beckers 2018; Eijsbouts 2017; Martin 2015; Sukdeo 2012; Vrielink et al. 2011; Haufler 2003). Workers in these studies are viewed as a beneficiary of the regulatory approaches (Koenig-Archibugi and Macdonald 2017; Kawakami 2017; Locke et al. 2013; Sobczak 2006). The third set of studies adopt a practice-based perspective and evaluate and scrutinise CoC as a practice that coordinates actors and is in turn shaped by them. Studies adopting this approach predominantly examine the socio-political-cultural aspects related to CoC and are concerned with the interactions between individuals, organisations and CoC (Dolan and Rajak 2016; Ruwanpura 2014; Barrientos et al. 2011; De Neve 2009). Workers are treated as a set of actors interacting with organisations and different groups of people (De Neve 2014; Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010; Cumbers et al. 2008).

This categorisation is based on underlying assumptions of CoC studies and not on topics examined by them, as in previous reviews. For instance, Helin and Sandstorm (2007) categorise studies of CoC in three groups based on the issues examined. The first is content-oriented studies which are concerned with what is in the codes, then output-oriented studies that evaluate effects of codes and finally transformation-oriented studies which examine how codes are put into practice or not. Their review and categorisation builds on the work of Stevens (1994) who first highlighted that CoC studies predominantly focus on the content of CoC and relatively little on CoC implementation and evaluation of effects. Babri et al. (2019), in their recent review paper, also utilise the categories proposed by Helin and Sandstorm (2007). The categorisation proposed here extends the work of these scholars by offering a way to organise the extant literature based on how workers have been conceptualised, drawing on the underlying assumptions about CoC. Such a categorisation, that examines underlying assumptions, is poised to contribute to extant scholarship by furthering a problematisation-driven approach (Sandberg and Alvesson 2011). It also offers an explanation for the divergence of labels used to refer to CoC. For instance, when

externally oriented codes are referred to as supplier codes of conduct (Schleper et al. 2013), ethical sourcing codes (Preuss 2009) and workplace codes (Rasche 2010), they refer to an organisation-oriented approach in defining codes. Other terms, such as global private labour standards (Locke 2013), codes of labour practice (Barrientos and Smith 2007), labour codes (Jayasinghe 2016) and labour codes of conduct (Taylor 2011) point to CoC being viewed as a regulatory tool that convey either the nature of regulation (private) or the purpose of the regulation (labour).

It is to be noted here that while Vrielink et al. (2011) also refer to an organisational perspective when discussing CoC studies, their analysis of CoC itself draws on a regulatory perspective and they utilise the label of organisational perspective to refer to codes developed by organisations with an internal orientation (Vrielink et al. 2011:486). These authors define their categorisation based on who draws up the CoC and for what purpose and not on the underlying assumptions of the study itself which is the focus of the categorisation presented in this chapter. The three categories and the main research themes identified under each category are discussed below.

2.4.1 Organisational perspectives

Studies in this category tend to view CoC as a strategic document and focus on organisational factors affecting the CoC. They evaluate and discuss CoC with a focus on organisational outcomes. Strategy can be regarded as the direction of an organisation over the long term, which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences and is driven by the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations (Johnson et al. 2009). Stakeholders are those individuals and entities who affect or are affected by a firm's activities and purpose (Freeman 1984). Studies in this group regard factory workers as stakeholders of the firm (Yu 2009) in addition to customers, government, and employees, among others. CoC with their intent to protect workers' rights are regarded as a tool for MNC to fulfil the changing stakeholder expectations about the nature of relationship of MNCs with the workers who produce their goods (Bird et al. 2019; Milatovic 2015; Sethi 2002a; Sethi 1999). As an expression of company management's commitment, CoC can allow different actors to hold companies accountable for workplace conditions in international supply chain operations and thereby forge links between factory workers and MNC which have been diminished with the outsourcing of production (Islam et al. 2018; Gilbert and Huber 2017; Merk 2011; Hsieh 2006).

Viewing CoC as embedded corporate strategies and management systems (Hughes 2005), often referred to as non-market strategy (Hemphill and White 2018; Mellahi et al. 2016; Martinez and Kang 2014), these studies are primarily concerned with organisational level analysis to identify factors that can lead to strengthening or impeding of CoC outcomes, primarily for organisations. The issues examined by this group of studies includes what CoC can do for the firms, why do they matter for the firms and how organisations should design, develop, adopt, implement, and monitor CoC (Fransen 2012; Preuss 2010; Preuss 2009; Mamic 2005; Bondy et al. 2004; Sethi 2002a). The main research themes in this category are discussed next.

2.4.1.1 CoC adoption

Many of the studies examining CoC from an organisational perspective are concerned with rationale, purpose, and reasons for adoption of CoC by firms (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008; Hsieh 2006; Bondy et al. 2004; Sethi 2002b). Both strategic and instrumental reasons to safeguard own reputation as well as compelling ethical reasons are offered for CoC adoption (Arnold and Hartman 2006). Firms may adopt CoC for altruistic reasons (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008), to coordinate their duties of rescue and justice (Hsieh 2006) and to demonstrate and manage moral responsibility to contribute to the resolution of social problems (Logsdon and Wood 2005). CoC can encourage companies to adopt widely accepted norms and standards and also allow them to communicate what their organisation stands for (Preuss 2010; Bondy et al. 2004). In so doing, CoC allow a corporation to fashion solutions that are focused, take cognisance of the corporation's special needs and public concerns, and are also economically efficient (Sethi 1999).

Adopted as a voluntary and flexible approach to address societal concerns (Sethi 1999), CoC can enable firms to enhance unity and identity of and in the firm, and also govern individual and organisational conduct in situations of moral ambiguity or conflict of interests (Leipziger 2016). They can also enable increased control over business partners and can therefore become strategic instruments useful for managing business partners and public relations (Kolk and van Tulder 2005). CoC have been shown to improve organisational efficiency, productivity, quality and work climate, lead to new market opportunities, reduce risks and operating costs, ensure consistency across international networks of productions, assist in ensuring legal compliance and other

statutory requirements, garner public trust, enhance the corporate image and the related ability to attract and retain employees and increase sales and customer loyalty (Lau 2011; McDonald 2009; Kaptein and Schwartz 2008; Bondy et al. 2004; Sethi 1999).

These studies, are however, largely focused on why brands and MNCs should adopt CoC. There is relatively limited research that highlights why factories supplying to MNCs should also adopt CoC. Among exceptions is the work by Jayasinghe (2016) who drawing on interviews and surveys with 122 apparel manufactures in Sri Lanka, argues that CoC can constitute an effective human resource investment by factories and can lead to improvements in some operational and financial outcomes by generating a signaling effect and offering a marketing potential to the factories for their business growth. This gap in knowledge has been increasingly noted and Soundararajan et al. (2018a) in a recent review call for scholarly studies to examine CSR motivations of factories and small businesses. The buyer focus in CoC adoption related studies is also retained by those focusing on the design and development of CoC. I discuss this further in the following section.

2.4.1.2 CoC design and development

Scholars in this group of studies examine the content of CoC and reflect on what should be included (Kolk and van Tulder 2005; Sethi 2002a; Kolk et al. 1999). They also study and analyse the processes and factors entailed in development of CoC (Fransen 2012). For instance, Cortill (1996) recommends that MNCs should weigh costs between reputational damage vs. setting and implementing standards. Raiborn and Payne (1990) highlight the vast continuum between the letter of the law (legality) and the spirit of the law (ethics or morality) that need to be traversed as firms draft CoC. Sethi (2002b) offers a framework to this effect, to enable MNCs to both minimise the adverse consequences of, and enhance the positive benefits emanating from, their international production operations and underlines the need for transparency and verifiability. Preuss (2010) highlights how codes form a lattice-work of different organisational codes, including those that are applicable across the entire organisation, sub-organisational codes which include specialist codes targeted at a particular department/issue within the organisation, for instance procurement/ethical sourcing policy and supra-organisational codes which are outside the organisation, for instance the UNGC. Codes across the different levels enable companies to present different messages to different stakeholders. Moreover, the supra-organisational codes and related regulations also

shape and influence the production of CoC as an ethical tool of the firm- how it is drafted and what it may and may not include (Khaled and Gond 2019).

A sub-group of scholars within this research theme analyse existing CoC to propose approaches that may be beneficial when developing and designing CoC while others offer normative frameworks as recommendations for an ideal CoC. Donaldson (1996) reviewed CoC of Levis Strauss and Motorola and argued that developing detailed CoC, treating company values as absolutes and calling for suppliers to do the same provides a clear direction while also leaving room for managers to use their moral imagination and creativity. Raiborn and Payne (1990) concur that the underlying qualitative characteristics of a code necessarily must include clarity, comprehensiveness, and enforceability. Radin (2004) examined codes by Levis and Chiquita to glean and summarise positive lessons. Kashmanian (2018) reviewed fifty CoC to evaluate the extent to which subcontractors are covered by CoC and contends that such an inclusion will strengthen the ability of CoC to protect the company's products, integrity, and reputation/brand and will also increase its competitiveness and resilience.

Logsdon and Wood (2005), on the other hand, identify and illustrate orientation, implementation, and accountability as three attributes of CoC that would reflect Global Business Citizenship (GBC). They recommend that the MNC should become a global business citizen and emphasise that GBC requires a set of values embedded in the corporate CoC that reflect universal ethical standards, specifically: implementation throughout the organisation while taking stakeholder expectations into cognisance; analysis and experimentation to deal with problem cases; and systematic learning processes to communicate the results of implementation and experiments internally and externally. Beschorner and Muller (2007) highlight how CoC can be designed to foster reflexivity in the thinking of the international brands and to encourage dialogue between the firms and their stakeholders. Similarly, Sethi (2011) offers a list of eight conditions to be met by ideal CoC. Almost all studies under this research theme maintain a buyer focus. Though retaining such an emphasis, van Tulder et al. (2009) make a critical observation. They point out that CoC are to be implemented in locations beyond the direct control of the international brands and involving other stakeholders in CoC design and development stages can increase the likelihood of the its acceptance and implementation. Such issues of CoC implementation have itself been a key research area and are highlighted next.

2.4.1.3 CoC implementation

The implementation processes through which CoC are enacted and monitored and the conceptual and practical challenges therein have received by far the most attention in the studies of CoC undertaken with an organisational perspective. Here, too, the focus on the perspectives of international brands and their approaches has remained prominent.

CoC reflect the corporate culture from which the code stems (Raiborn and Payne 1990). As CoC travel through organisational channels, operational level managers influence the nature and design of the implementation of CoC (Sethi 2011b). Consequently, organisational factors and perspectives of managers at buyer firms have been noted to shape CoC implementation (Loo and Nasruddin 2015; Graafland 2002; Kolk and van Tulder 2002). Corporate culture, history, institutional memory, top management's vision, and decision-making style induce a particular type of implementation approach (Sethi 2011b; 2011a). Different kinds of management systems are used by MNC depending on the nature of industry, but the processes generally include creation of a vision, the development of understanding and ability, integration into operations and feedback, improvement, and remediation (Mamic 2005). These mostly entail communication, compliance, and supplier development strategies (Yawar and Seuring 2017).

Two approaches, namely compliance based and cooperation-based strategies of CoC implementation by buyers have been identified in the literature (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2018). The intent under both approaches is to produce what can be referred to as an internationalised factory – a factory that follows and adopts the requirements of CoC. It is the underlying approach to creating such a factory that varies across the two strategies. A compliance-based strategy is driven by brands' interest to safeguard own reputation. Here buyers develop CoC, require suppliers to abide by them, monitor the supplier factories directly or through third parties to assess whether CoC are being implemented, call for remediation of violations and impose sanctions by ceasing to source from non-compliant suppliers (Locke et al. 2009; Kortelainen 2008). Auditors' skills, their gender, prior experience, levels of training and whether buyer or factories pay for the audit, affects the efficacy of the audit and in turn the utility of the compliance-based strategy of CoC implementation (Short et al. 2016). However, excessive reliance on formal compliance and pushing codes down to factories has reduced audits to ritual strategies which are not very fruitful (Islam et al. 2018). The demand to comply on the pretext of potential loss of business does not require a truly responsible decision by

suppliers and is likely to lead to moral mediocrity (Mercier and Deslandes 2017; Rasche 2010).

Such recognitions combined with studies highlighting the enabling role of dialogue and trust between buyers and suppliers (Huq et al. 2014) resulted in development of a commitment-driven strategy for CoC implementation. This strategy, also referred to as the cooperation-based approach (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2014), entails less unilateral extraction of compliance-related information (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2018) and more collaborative engagements where buyers also redesign their sourcing practices. The buyers tend to maintain long-term business relationships and commercially reward suppliers that abide by the CoC (Distelhorst and Locke 2018). In some instances, buyers may involve other actors, for instance civil society organisations, as a part of the collaborative model to participate in different aspects of implementation (Kabeer et al. 2019). This is common for capacity-building programmes that are included under this approach with an aim to improve the work organisation in factories together with worker productivity and labour conditions (Distelhorst et al. 2017; Locke et al. 2009). Recognising the limits of being implemented alone, monitoring is combined with interventions focused on tackling what are regarded as some of the reasons of poor working conditions – for instance poor production planning – and programmes are introduced to enable suppliers to better schedule their work and to improve their production quality and efficiency (Locke et al. 2007b; Locke and Romis 2007). Capacity building and productivity enhancement programmes for suppliers, for instance, lean manufacturing, have been found to reduce serious labour rights related violations by up to 15 percent (Distelhorst et al. 2017). Despite the benefits of a cooperation-based approach for suppliers (Huq et al. 2014; Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2014), such progressive approaches have been noted to be withdrawn if MNC do not see any economic benefit from its proactive stance, when competitors do not seem to suffer adverse consequences for not following suit or when some other pressing issue draws top management's attention (Sethi et al. 2011a).

The extent of the power buyers can apply towards factories also plays a role in CoC implementation and this power tends to decrease as factories start involving subcontractors (Soundararajan and Brown 2016; Lau 2011). Kashmanian (2018) suggests that including an explicit subcontracting clause in the CoC could be way to address this. It has also been highlighted that the extent of buyer’s control over factories that is assumed in CoC design is often misplaced, and factors at supplier factories, including their traditions, beliefs, demands they experience and extent of their

dependence on the buyer, may play a role in how CoC are ultimately enacted (Soundararajan and Brown 2016; Hoang and Jones 2012). Some of these factory-focused issues are elaborated next.

Factors influencing the making of an internationalised factory

CoC intend to influence organisational activities for factories (Sartor et al. 2016). Consequently, some scholars interested in CoC implementation have examined perspectives and behaviours of factories as supplier firms (Young and Makhija 2014). While suppliers tend to agree that CoC can play a role in operationalisation of CSR for their firms (Baden et al. 2009), a range of organisational factors and issues have been identified to either facilitate or challenge CoC implementation (Muller 2019; Perry and Towers 2013).

It has been pointed out that factories mostly tend to focus only on high visibility issues to retain existing or to secure new business (Jamali et al. 2017). This may be owing to the size of the supplier firm (Welford and Frost 2006) or their internal structures including nature of management systems (Bird et al. 2019; Locke and Romis 2007). Characteristics of buyer-supplier contracts, price pressures, production complexity and duration of contracts can also influence supplier commitment (Jiang 2009). Additionally, the factors at the supply side, for instance location of suppliers, input costs including raw material, characteristics of the labour market, worker skills, wage inflations, worker aspirations and the factors related to demand including the market factories sell to, unit price, competition, lead times and seasonality of products, have also been noted to play a role in influencing how factories engage with CoC requirements (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2018).

Some scholars contend that the psychological orientations of management in factories also play a role in their engagement with the CoC (Jaiswal and Ha-Brookshire 2019). Individual owner-managers in factories, it has been argued, actively avoid or circumvent the CoC demands and thereby perform ‘evasion work’ by undermining the underlying CoC assumptions and values, accumulating autonomy and political strength and by emphasising non-occurrence of adverse effects on workers to dissociate consequences (Soundararajan et al. 2018b). These evasive behaviours are characterised by deception whereby actual practices are camouflaged and records are presented as required by CoC requirements, for instance double book-keeping of overtime records and working

hours where one set of records are shown to the buyers and another set of records forms the basis of wage and other calculations (Huq et al. 2014; Egels-Zandén 2007). Some argue that such evasive behaviours are a consequence of contradictions between different CoC (Lau 2011) while others raise the issue of the financial pressures generated by CoC requirements, more commonly referred to as 'costs of compliance' (Sinkovics et al. 2016; Greenberg 2013; Lau 2011). While certain behaviours of factories in enacting CoC and factors influencing these behaviours have been identified, what remains less clear is how CoC are enacted in the factory and what assumptions and perceptions guide and underlie enactment of CoC. This gap is further elaborated under the discussion on making of internationalised factories (see the later section on Examining CoC in this chapter).

Viewing CoC as an organisational strategy, scholars examine the adoption, development, and implementation of CoC and identify the factors that influence the firm, predominantly MNCs, behaviours and outcomes. These studies, however, do not reflect on the nature of the CoC itself and its intent to control and modify the factories and supplier firm/s. Such an analysis has been taken by a group of scholars that study CoC from a regulatory perspective and is elaborated in the next section.

2.4.2 Regulatory perspectives

Studies that examine CoC using a regulatory perspective are concerned with its analysis as a tool for regulation. Regulation is the sustained and focused attempt to alter the behaviour of others according to defined standards or purposes with the intention of producing a broadly identified outcome or outcomes (Black 2002:27). The intended outcome for CoC is to enable worker rights and improved working conditions in factories. CoC are regarded as a means to modify behaviours of factories and to oversee the relations between factory management and workers in their factories. Factory workers are regarded as the beneficiaries (Koenig-Archibugi and Macdonald 2017) while factories and their managers are the regulatory targets and buyers (MNCs) act as the regulator or rule-maker (Abbott et al. 2017b; Heritier et al. 2009). Being a target of a regulatory arrangement entails a specific form of affectedness; that is, the rule [CoC] intends to restrict the range of possible courses of action available to those being regulated, either through prescribing or proscribing certain behaviours (Koenig-Archibugi and Macdonald 2017:43). Targets of regulation can also be distinguished as direct and indirect and suppliers are direct targets as they are formally identified as

holders of obligations and responsibilities in the CoC document (Koenig-Archibugi and Macdonald 2017). Under this category of studies, CoC have also been referred to as a form of private regulation, a type of soft and civil regulation or means of self-regulation by MNC and hybrid regulation (Eijsbouts 2017; Egels-Zandén and Merk 2014; Egels-Zandén 2014; Sukdeo 2012; Vrielink et al. 2011; Vogel 2010; Backer 2007; Murphy 2005). Scholars here are concerned with discussing the regulatory nature of CoC and exploring its promise and limits as a regulatory tool (Martin 2015), assessing the role of CoC in ensuring compliance with labour standards and in turn examining the interplay between different forms of regulation. Each of these is discussed in turn.

2.4.2.1 Regulatory nature of CoC

Sobczak (2006) highlighted that while CoC intend to regulate issues related to factory workers, given its origins that draw on customer and stakeholder demands, it is primarily a form of regulation that is aligned more with consumer laws rather than labour and employment laws. As such, the CoC cannot be considered as a substitute for employment and labour laws or their provisions. Although, as they enable MNCs to maintain control over their supplier factories without being, from a legal point of view, liable for their social and environmental impacts, they may be used to complement the labour and employment laws (Sobczak 2004).

Despite the CoC being labelled as voluntary, a set of scholars in this group contend that in practice, it is not really so. This is primarily in three respects. Firstly, hard laws increasingly stimulate or may even require companies to adopt such codes, though they may sometimes also lead to contradictory requirements (Pagnattaro and Pierce 2007). Secondly, a growing convergence of national and international norms is rendering certain elements of CoC as no longer optional (Eijsbouts 2017). Finally, not only is the absence of CoC likely to adversely impact commercial performance of firms in the event of stakeholder demands being ignored, but CoC themselves may be utilised to invoke a firm’s duty to ensure supplier compliance and some companies have been sued on this pretext (Phillips and Lim 2009; Sobczak 2003). Mark Kasky, a consumer activist, sued Nike in 1998 alleging unfair and deceptive practices following news reports alleging poor working conditions in Nike’s international production operations (BHRC 2014). The Supreme Court of California, in the case of Kasky vs. Nike in May 2002, ruled against Nike underpinning that non-respect by a supplier of a company's commitment in the field of social responsibility was a case of misleading advertisement by the company.

Although not directly enforced by law, publicity of CoC for commercial purposes is considered to have implications under laws regulating representations, advertising and competition (Diller 1999). This further reiterates Sobczak (2006) contention that CoC tend to be aligned with consumer related laws.

Another sub-group of studies have assessed the extent to which CoC can hold in the court of law. Contending that CoC can be viewed as creating a contractual obligation between the MNC and factory workers who are employees of the suppliers of MNCs, lawsuits have been filed against buyers (de Walle 2009). For instance, in 2005, a class action lawsuit against Walmart was filed in the USA alleging use of CoC for public relations and calling for stricter enforcement of CoC among other demands (Ecker 2005; ILRF 2005). In 2015, a lawsuit was filed by victims of a garment factory fire in 2015 against KiK in Germany (Terwindt 2016; ECCHR 2019). Both lawsuits, however, were dismissed. Doe vs Walmart 2009 was ruled in favour of Walmart citing failure to state a claim. The ruling in Jabir and others v. KiK Textilien und Non-Food GmbH 2019 was in favour of KiK citing statute of limitations. Analysts emphasise that the extent to which CoC forge an implied contract between buyers and factory workers will be determined by the wording of the CoC (Kenny 2007). Given the role wording and language can play in legal interpretation (Hart 1994), the contention that was noted earlier about choice of words that resulted in failure of the UNCTC code being agreed underlines the resistance to make CoC legally enforceable (Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning 2008).

While some disagree with such resistance and insist on CoC being legally enforceable (Beckers 2018; Liubicic 1998), others contend that it is well founded and highlight the many advantages of non-legally enforceable regulations, also referred to as responsive regulatory approaches (Braithwaite 2011). A key advantage has been highlighted as flexibility, which enables emerging issues and stakeholder concerns to be integrated fairly quickly (Braithwaite 2011; Levi-Faur 2005). The process of legalisation of codes and imposition of legal sanctions may in fact be detrimental to intrinsic motivations of buyers and suppliers and could lead to unintended effects (Kawakami 2017). For instance, after the Kasky vs. Nike ruling, Nike only became more cautious in its articulation and communication of CoC and related efforts and did not necessarily assume more responsibility for the supplier or for improving conditions for workers (Kawakami 2017). While the case may be regarded as a victory for consumers, what it has changed for factory workers is questionable and therefore, a more facilitative approach is often regarded as more desirable (Kawakami 2017). CoC as a non-legally enforceable regulatory tool, arguably, can allow participation of regulatory targets and

beneficiaries in a way that legal instruments do not (Sukdeo 2012). The extent of such an inclusion, however, remains questionable and will be further elaborated further in the later section on missing worker perspectives. Irrespective of the debates on extent of inclusion of the perspectives of regulatory targets and beneficiaries, CoC are repeatedly offered as a tool that can possibly complement compliance with labour law (Sobczak 2004) and this ability is discussed below.

2.4.2.2 CoC and compliance with labour standards

Compliance refers to responses by actors (regulatory targets) to regulation and is concerned with examining how, when, and why actors respond to regulation (Parker and Nielsen 2017; Parker and Nielsen 2011). CoC, as previously noted in the section on the content of CoC, draw on internationally agreed labour standards. As a result, they play a role in ensuring compliance to internationally agreed labour standards, particularly those enumerated in the ILO Core Labour standards (Rombouts 2019; McInyre 2008; Locke et al. 2007a). Scholars viewing CoC through a regulatory perspective have analysed how and when CoC enable (or not) firms' compliance to these labour standards (Boiral 2003; Compa and Hinchlifee-Darricarre 1995). Research in this group of studies is concerned with assessing how CoC fit into the broader array of institutions, policies and practices aimed at regulating and improving working conditions (Locke et al. 2007a).

CoC may aid compliance as they enable civil society and other interested actors to push for better working conditions and hold MNCs accountable (Venkatesan 2019; Kawakami 2017). The lawsuits filed against companies, discussed in the previous section on the regulatory nature of CoC, underline this point. Chung (2015) highlights that compliance to labour standards can be thick, thin or absent depending on the extent of convergence of interests of the different actors involved and CoC tend to play a critical role in generating an impetus for increased compliance to labour standards. CoC can play a more effective role in ensuring such a compliance when factories supply to buyers belonging to countries where consumers are wealthy and socially conscious, and are themselves located in countries that participate actively in the ILO treaty regime and that have stringent domestic labour laws and high levels of press freedom (Toffel et al. 2015). CoC, however, are only one among other means for furthering compliance to labour standards and their interaction with other regulatory tools also plays a role (Chung

2015). These issues have also been examined by this sub-group of studies and is presented next.

2.4.2.3 CoC and interactions with regulatory tools

CoC as a form of private regulation vis-à-vis state enforcement of laws has remained a key debate in CoC scholarship (Esbenshade 2012). Some contend that limited capacity of the state or its limited commitment (Estache and Wren-Lewis 2009; Laffont 2005; Laffont and Tirole 1993) has led to a retreat of the state and shrinking of its authority (Lobao et al. 2018; Strange 1996), especially with reference to the production structure, specifically, what is to be produced, where, and by whom on what terms and conditions. This has consequently been accompanied by a simultaneous rise in corporate power (Babic et al. 2017) owing to which international firms (brands), through CoC, are expected to assume the role of regulators to ensure adequate working conditions in the factories from which they source (Haufler 2003). CoC have been argued to sometimes complement public regulations and at other times they have been found to act as a substitute (Locke et al. 2013). While voluntary private regulation through CoC has been found to lead to some improvements in working conditions, scholars contend that CoC cannot be regarded as a substitute for the more effective exercise of state authority at both the national and international levels (Roza 2019; Vogel 2010). CoC do not exist in a vacuum and are affected by both state and non-governmental actors (Distelhorst et al. 2015; Goldin and Dowdall 2012; Bezuidenhout and Jeppesen 2011; Baram 2009). Therefore, combining the regulatory power of CoC and public regulations is necessary to improve working conditions and CoC are likely to work best when integrated and reinforced by more effective state-based and enforced regulatory policies at both the national and international levels (Sanders et al. 2018; Underhill and Rimmer 2017; Bartley and Egels-Zandén 2015; Locke et al. 2013; Yu 2008).

CoC, embedded in regulatory contexts can be most effective in reinforcing the respect of national labour laws when the employment-related requirements have been clearly defined (Schuster and Maertens 2016; Ruthven 2010). As a result, scholars in this group contend that local institutions and national context, as against the different organisational factors highlighted earlier in CoC implementation, are a key predictor for state of compliance in a supplier factory (Sanders et al. 2018; Giuliani et al. 2017; Distelhorst et al. 2015). While some argue that the emergence of CoC is linked to retreat of the state, it has been noted that the interactions between public and private

regulations are more complex and driven by different imperatives and the state itself tends to play different roles in ensuring compliance to labour standards (Alford and Phillips 2018; Bartley 2005).

In addition to analysing interactions with the state, scholars have also examined how CoC, as largely unilaterally developed instruments, compare and interact with International Framework Agreements (IFA) negotiated with worker representatives and trade unions (Thomas 2011; Egels-Zandén 2009). Some contend that CoC tend to undermine the role of trade unions (Crinis 2019) and at best only complement strong trade unions (Robinson 2010b; Frundt 2004). It has been shown that although the number of unions does not matter, the presence of unions does improve CoC compliance-related outcomes for wages (record keeping, payment, deduction), working hours (hours of normal work and overtime) and leave standards (holidays and sick, maternity and annual leaves), while health and safety issues are not impacted (Oka 2016). CoC, however, appear to have negative interactive effects on global agreements, such as IFA, and can even be counterproductive for the promotion of workers' rights (Egels-Zandén and Hyllman 2007).

Political factors play a role in these interactions between different actors and regulatory tools (Underhill and Rimmer 2017). Ultimately, the approach adopted by the MNC depends on the nature and extent of societal pressure a firm may be facing through campaigns, combination of public and informal efforts to influence companies, together with pressures from consumers and media, among others (Fransen and Burgoon 2012). Together with firm priorities, a crucial role has also been noted to be played by entities referred to as intermediaries. Between the regulator (firm), regulatory targets (suppliers), the role of intermediaries who provide assistance to regulators and/or targets by translating, interpreting and monitoring CoC, drawing on their own capabilities, authority and legitimacy can be crucial (Abbott et al. 2017a; 2017b). However, despite their utility and promise, fragmentation and diversification of multiple regulatory tools may lead to an incoherent application of the core labour standards (Rombouts 2019). To be able to recognise such limits of regulatory approaches, it is critical to examine CoC as rules embedded in society characterised by power and multi-actor interactions. These issues have been considered by the third group of CoC studies and is discussed next.

2.4.3 Practice-based perspectives

The CoC extend across countries to coordinate relationships between MNCs, their suppliers and workers in supplier factories, with an intention to prevent a downward spiral in the conditions of work and workers and distribute social benefits along the international production processes in the supply chain (Haufler 2018; Bevir 2011; Taylor 2011; Barrientos et. al. 2011; Merk 2009). The third group of CoC studies emphasise on the coordination, activity and dynamism of the CoC, and can be characterised as adopting a practice-based view (Nicolini 2012). Practice-based perspectives are concerned with how people act in organisational contexts, with understanding relations between the actions people take and the structures of organisational life, and a focus on the constitutive role of practices in producing organisational reality (Feldman and Orlikowski 2011).

Scholars who examine CoC from a practice-based perspective capture the various dynamic interactive aspects including how CoC emerged, how they have sustained and grown over time, how they interact with different actors and their relationships (Bevir 2011; Esbenshade 2008; Bartley 2003). Factory workers, under this category of CoC studies, are viewed as actors capable of resilience or getting-by, re-working towards improving their material conditions and resistance by challenging the state of play (De Neve 2014; Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010; Cumbers et al. 2008). Scholars in this group have focused their attention on the power dynamics between different actors and negotiations between them, the influence of actor and organisational interactions on the CoC and the role of CoC in organisation of production and conditions of work.

2.4.3.1 CoC and power relationships

The recognition of the ability of MNCs to influence factories and their working, the power they wield in a firm–supplier relationship, has underpinned the development of CoC (Amaeshi et al. 2008). Power within buyer–supplier inter-firm relationships can be used to drive working conditions either up or down (Gereffi and Lee 2016; Robinson 2010a). CoC language itself may maintain existing asymmetries and build new ones between the different groups (Winkler 2011). CoC are, however, not only shaped by power relations but are also constitutive of such relations (Haufler 2018; Ruwanpura 2016; Tighe 2016; De Neve 2014; Ruwanpura 2014; Lamrad 2013; Dolan 2010; De Neve 2009; McEwan and Bek 2009; Nadvi 2008; Blowfield and Dolan 2008). The way CoC

are framed, implemented and negotiated depends on the aspirations and interests of the different actors including buyers, suppliers, trade unions, civil society organisations, among others, and the relationships between these actors (Tighe 2016; Lamrad 2013; Egels-Zandén and Hyllman 2011; Braun and Gearhart 2004; Compa 2004). While some scholars, especially those analysing CoC from an organisational perspective, accept these power relationships as given and naturalise them (for instance, Soundararajan et al. 2018b[3]), scholars who examine CoC from a practice-based perspective problematise them. Reflecting interests of a particular group of people, the CoC further certain values (Jammulamadaka 2015; Drebes 2014; Ruwanpura 2014). Consequently, they generate both hierarchies of values (one set of conditions of work is better than the other) and hierarchies of actors, based on their levels of compliance with the CoC (Dunn 2005). One set of firms as more powerful actors exert control at a distance (Raj-Reichert 2013; Ponte and Gibbon 2005) and become 'inspectors' for another group of firms along the supply chain to monitor compliance (Heritier et al. 2009). Although, the ability to enact such a role remains contested (see section 2.5 on evaluative studies).

As the CoC help firms to generate measurable and auditable changes in conditions of work, they not only help produce particular kinds of goods in particular kind of workplaces but also mould and structure relationships between different actors, further the inequality between the buyer, supplier and other actors and ultimately generate new social regimes of power and inequality (Sehier 2019; Alamgir and Banerjee 2019; Goger 2013; De Neve 2009). One of the consequences of such a regime is that voices of some actors dominate while those of others may be suppressed (Drebes 2014). Perspectives of suppliers often tend to be ignored or overlooked and result in CoC and in turn CSR being considered a part of the wider historic project of Western imperialism in the developing world through which economic resources are extracted from local manufacturers while their perceptions are delegitimised (Khan and Lund-Thomsen 2011; De Neve 2009). Moreover, CoC include some suppliers and workers in their remit of influence while excluding others. For instance, home-based workers tend to remain excluded (Pearson and Seyfang 2001). Such 'responsibility boundaries' drawn up by firms can have consequences for who is included or excluded (Egels-Zandén 2017).

[3] The authors regard buyer demands of improving working conditions as a given with their starting point as the 'how owner-managers flout institutional demands' (pp:1303). Apparently, such a framing does not accommodate the possibility of considering perceptions and views of owner-managers on an equal footing. Buyers' demands are seen as constituting 'the institutional demands', and the possibility of the CoC being a negotiated tool is undermined. My research, offering perspectives of the people from internationalised factory, aligns with scholars who, instead, problematise such views.

This may leave the overall conditions of work in any particular location unchanged thereby raising difficult questions for the project of CoC itself (Koenig-Archibugi 2017). Another set of difficult questions for the CoC has also been highlighted by scholars who have taken further the analysis of power relations to analyse what the CoC mean for organisation of production and the actors involved. This is further discussed in the following section.

2.4.3.2 CoC and the organisation of production

The impetus for suppliers to attract more orders and expand into new markets has resulted in a rapid and widespread process of formal institutionalisation of procedures and systems in the factories to demonstrate CoC compliance (Ngai 2005). Much of these systems have been developed at an organisational level in terms of paperwork procedures and management practices and have shaped, as well as been shaped by, intra- and inter-firm dynamics (Tighe 2016; Ngai 2005). This is perhaps why the analysis of CoC using an organisational perspective, discussed earlier, tends to dominate the extant CoC scholarship. However, implications of CoC are by no means limited to organisational boundaries, rather they may far exceed it. Scholars adopting a practice-based perspective focusing on actor interactions raise, debate, and contribute to these aspects.

Mayer and Gereffi (2010) highlighted that the implications and consequences of CoC depend on four key factors. These include the structure and organisation of international production processes; the extent to which demand for MNCs products rely on its brand identity; the extent to which commercial interests of MNCs align with social and environmental concerns; and the possibilities for collective action by consumers, workers or other activists to exert pressure. The first three factors concern the motivation and power of a MNC to influence the internationalised factories, while the fourth factor is concerned with the ability of societal actors to influence the MNC. While the nature and extent of such influences continue to be scrutinised (Kumar 2019; Mezzadri 2016; Merk 2014; Bulut and Lane 2011; Merk 2009; Nadvi 2008), it is evident that the employment relationship between the internationalised factory worker and its employer is no longer limited within organisational boundaries (Lipschutz 2004). The CoC play a role in mediating the quality of employment for factory workers (Barrientos et. al. 2011). Multiple actors, including consumers, investors, civil society organisations and media, increasingly speak and act on behalf of the workers in internationalised factories (Tran

2011; Esbenshade 2004a; Lipschutz 2004; Hale and Shaw 2001). However, the implications of such a shift remains to be fully examined (Riisgaard and Hammer 2011). If the CoC serve to normalise and regularise power relations in trade between the West and the rest, then what does their implementation mean for factory workers (Du Toit 2002)?

This issue of what the CoC do (or not) for internationalised factory workers has attracted attention of scholars not just in this category of studies but across all three groups of studies. In fact, evaluation of the CoC and assessing its effectiveness for workers characterise the most vibrant debate in the CoC literature (Esbenshade 2012). Given its primary research interest, I refer to this group of studies as evaluative studies and discuss further in the following section.

2.5 Evaluative studies of CoC

A common and predominant theme across the three sets of CoC studies focuses on evaluating, explaining, discussing and assessing CoC and its effects for workers. Some have referred to these assessments and evaluations of CoC for workers as CoC effectiveness (Egels-Zandén 2014; Boiral 2003; Kolk and van Tulder 2002). The concept of effectiveness includes both actual effectiveness and potential effectiveness (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008). Both empirical (which comprised nearly 70 percent of the corpus) and conceptual studies examined and analysed in this review (refer Appendix 1), either explicitly discuss the issue of making CoC effective for workers or implicitly focus on how CoC can be made more effective (Schuster and Maertens 2016; Sukdeo 2012; Yu 2008; Roberts 2003 and others). For instance, Huq et al. (2014), by examining perspectives of supplier factories in Bangladesh, intend to “understand the extent to which codes of conduct developed in the west apply to developing country suppliers with different cultural and socio-economic values; and, how they can be effectively implemented” (pp: 616). This finding is aligned with identification of a similar trend in recent reviews of CoC literature. Babri et al. (2019) found 60 percent (twelve out of twenty) supply chain related CoC studies analysed in their literature review, which included 103 research articles in total, were explicitly output-oriented and focused on studying the effects of CoC.

Scholars examining CoC across multiple sectors including textiles and apparel, cut flowers, fruits and wine, bananas among others, have identified uneven effects of CoC

for workers across multiple geographical locations, ranging from positive in some areas to no change or even negative in others (Bartley and Egels-Zandén 2015; Egels-Zandén and Lindholm 2015; Riisgaard and Hammer 2011; Robinson 2010b; Marther 2004). While some have found that CoC improve working conditions substantially over time, delivering positive results (Egels-Zandén 2014; Compa 2008), the broad consensus is that the success of CoC in delivering for workers is patchy and limited (Jamali et al. 2017; Brown 2017; Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012; Barrientos et al. 2011; Crinis 2010; Wells 2007; Ngai 2005; Marther 2004).Its claims of protecting workers' active interests notwithstanding, some note that CoC remain a tool serving corporate interests (Merk 2009; Braun and Gearhart 2004).

The unevenness of observed impacts in of CoC has been noted to vary across different issues listed in CoC (Tighe 2016; Yu 2015; Barrientos and Smith 2007). For instance, Barrientos and Smith (2007) identified that the physical conditions of work, namely outcome standards have been visibly improved while enabling rights, for instance workers' rights, to organise, have made relatively little progress. The unevenness in impacts has also been noted when examining the role CoC play with regards to a single issue, for instance trade union rights. While some contend CoC play a role in enabling workers to organise and make a positive contribution (Riisgaard 2009; Kocer and Fransen 2008; Kearney and Gearhart 2004), others argue it is rather limited (Anner 2017; Anner 2012; Egels-Zandén and Merk 2014) including the contention that in some instances CoC make no difference to workers' rights to organise (Wang 2005).

Such limited impacts of CoC are attributed to a range of factors, including among others, the imbalance of power relationships in addition to issues of CoC design, adoption and implementation, buyer motivations, supplier behaviours, challenges with auditing among others (Egels-Zandén and Merk 2014; Kocer and Fransen 2008). The identification of the reasons for uneven and limited impacts of CoC is accompanied by proposals and suggestions for enhancing and improving impacts of CoC for workers. In doing so, scholars have engaged with CoC in two ways. One set of scholars is rather optimistic and expresses an inherent belief in the potential of CoC to be effective, even commending companies for adopting CoC and taking a hands-on approach for worker well-being (Abrami and Bierman 2005). Such optimistic studies believe limitations of effectiveness can be addressed and make suggestions for improving CoC (Yu 2015; Egels-Zandén 2014; Sethi 2011). On the other hand, another group of scholars, having observed mixed effects, are rather reserved with some even questioning the very ability of the CoC to be effective and adopt a cautionary tone and approach (Ruwanpura 2016;

Blowfield and Dolan 2008). Both sets of scholars, adopting either an organisational, regulatory or practice-based perspective, have made a range of observations but agree on the primary reason for limited impacts of CoC for workers – the missing perspectives of workers themselves – which is explained next.

2.5.1 Limits of CoC: Missing perspectives of workers

Workers, it is argued, have no real influence over the trajectory of CoC (Rodriguez-Garavito 2005; Esbenshade 2004a, 2004b, 2001; Hale 2000). CoC are developed and introduced on behalf of, and for, workers without their knowledge, consent or participation, with an assumption that workers should see this initiative as being in their interest, while workers themselves may not even be aware of CoC (Sehier 2019; Merk 2009; Ngai 2005; Hale and Shaw 2001). Even where some awareness of CoC has been noted, understanding of the associated processes and their purpose, for instance auditing, is negligible with confusions regarding who the visitors to the factory are (Bezuidenhout and Jeppesen 2011). Hence, the development and implementation of CoC has noted to be largely a process dominated by buyer firms and NGOs while workers' perspectives remain missing (Ruwanpura 2016; Goger 2016; Reinecke et al. 2012).

As a tool of MNCs CSR, adopted in pursuit of buyer firms' strategic goals, CoC undermine the broader stakeholder concept (Bondy et al. 2012). Although theoretically workers are dependant stakeholders with urgent and legitimate claims (Mitchell et al. 1997), with hardly any power to influence the CoC design, development, or implementation, they remain a fringe or non-stakeholder (Yu 2009). Reduced thereby to passive beneficiaries in the CoC (Egels-Zandén and Merk 2014; Yu 2008), workers are considered victims rather than potential agents of change involved in the regulation of their own working conditions (Merk 2009; Yu 2009; Sum and Ngai 2005; CCC 2005). Unless workers' perspectives are included, the extent to which CoC play a role in furthering workers' interests remains questionable (Ruwanpura 2016).

To make CoC effective *for* workers, scholars repeatedly underline the need to *include* workers (Ruwanpura 2016; Sluiter 2009; Hale and Wills 2005; O'Rourke and Brown 2003). Workers have to be recognised as active agents who can play a role in shaping the organisation of international production networks (Ruwanpura 2016; Lund-Thomsen and Coe 2015). When workers have been included in CoC implementation, some

encouraging results and improvements have been noted. Hofman et al. (2014) find that a collaborative approach to CoC implementation involving capacity building, employee-controlled worker committees, and a confidential workers' hotline enabled Chinese workers to voice their concerns, which led to enhanced worker satisfaction and reduced overtime. As opposed to the arms-length approach to monitoring (akin to compliance-based CoC implementation, discussed above) or the coordinated approach to monitoring (aligned with the cooperation-based approach) where buyers support capacity building of factories, an approach to monitoring that intends to include the key stakeholders (workers) into implementation processes, it is argued, may be more useful (Hughes 2005). Such an approach - also referred to as the developmental approach to monitoring - offers workers a degree of representation in CoC implementation through organisations that work more closely with them (Hughes 2005).

Rainnie et al. (2011) call for workers as the ultimate source of value to be included in organisation of production, including in the processes related to the CoC. Yu (2009:239) argued, "It is impossible to achieve a legitimate, sustainable, and effective implementation of CSR policies designed to protect workers' interests until workers are empowered to become real stakeholders and participate actively in formulating and monitoring of codes of conduct. Other stakeholders should join the struggle for better labour practices with equal partnership with workers, rather than on behalf of workers." Integrating workers' perspectives could be crucial to achieve the aspirations of the international CSR-driven change (Kazmi et al. 2016).

Given the emphasis by scholars on including workers' perspectives in the CoC design, development and implementation, one may expect that studies that are focused on evaluating the CoC for workers would examine and incorporate workers' experiences of CoC in their analysis. This, however, is not the case and is explicated in the following section.

2.5.2 About the workers, but without them?

The focus in much of the evaluative studies that examined and assessed the CoC and its impacts on workers, continued to be on the firms and the CoC and their mutual interactions, rather than on workers themselves. Given the primary orientation and perspectives of the three groups of studies, this is not surprising. Only 12 percent of the total studies reviewed for this chapter discuss and include workers' experiences in their

analysis. The research assessing adequacy of CoC for workers, while about workers, appears to have not adequately engaged with workers themselves.

This trend is in keeping with wider CSR literature which, it has been repeatedly noted, pays little attention to individual perspectives. Only 17 articles (4 percent of 508 articles and 102 books) in the multidisciplinary CSR review undertaken by Aguinis and Glavas (2012) focused on individual actors; and these too were mainly CEOs and managers. In another review of CSR literature, Frynas and Yamahaki (2016) concur that CSR scholarship ignores the significance of individuals in shaping CSR. However, when proposing further research, they too refer only to leaders and managers, apparently reinforcing a firm-focused approach in extant CSR research (Hillenbrand et al. 2013; Lee 2008) which has mostly examined environmental and ethical issues (Lockett et al. 2006). Given that employee's perspectives and experiences often tend to be overlooked or taken for granted, even in the wider business and management debates (Noon et al. 2013), this is not unexpected. Such oversight has, however, been increasingly noted and has led to growth in studies which are interested in examining effects of individuals on CSR and the impacts of CSR for individuals. Referred to as micro-CSR, or micro-foundations of CSR, this is an emerging and growing research area focused on experiences of persons (Jones et al. 2019; Gond et al. 2017). However, even this upcoming research area, despite emphasis by some to undertake studies of the effects and experiences of CSR on individuals across stakeholder groups (Rupp and Mallory 2015), studies continue to focus on firm employees, managers and leaders (Jones et al. 2019; Gond et al. 2017). Factory workers as a stakeholder engaged in international production processes of MNCs have not received any attention.

Contemporary CSR scholars have been noted to show relatively little interest in labour-related issues (Marens 2010). Little, if anything, has been discussed about labour as an active constituent of the global economy, rather than the passive victim of restructuring processes (Cumbers et al. 2008:369). "Insofar as workers are present in this literature, they appear as passive victims as capital seeks cheap labour" (Smith et al. 2002:47). Existing research on CoC specifically and CSR more broadly has paid insufficient attention to workers (Selwyn 2013; Marens 2013; Marens 2012). Despite repeated calls by some CSR scholars, one wonders, what may explain such insufficient attention to factory workers in extant research. Some of the possible theoretical and methodological reasons are identified and discussed next.

2.5.2.1 Theoretical and conceptual explanations for exclusion of workers

The CSR-led reformist agenda (Kazmi et al. 2016) seems to deny any tension between profit making and wider societal good and remains largely concerned with practical problems without challenging the systemic contradictions (de Bakker et al. 2020; Cederström and Marinetto 2013). This denial of the fundamental tension, some allege, is intrinsically linked to the dominant role played by the corporation that has subsequently resulted in the lack of attention to 'the labour question' (Marens 2013, 2012; 2010; 2004). This gap, specifically in the American CSR scholarship, is the result of the triumph of the autonomous American corporation leading to the domination of a periodically changing view of what responsibilities should be attached to the corporation (Marens 2010). Marens (2010) contends that workers' issues and their interests were indeed raised and discussed by academics when industrialisation was at its peak as the corporation was looking to establish its legitimacy in the society and needed a consideration of 'the labour question'. However, since the end of the Second World War, cost pressures reigned supreme and any view that did not endorse the status quo could not be furthered in a world that was dominated by the corporation, and as a result, CSR scholars also seem to have ignored these discussions (Marens 2010). It then follows, both from Marens' contention as well as the review thus far, that scholars examining the CoC as a tool of CSR have predominantly analysed CoC as a tool itself and focused on organisational outcomes and factors associated with it. While a group of scholars did raise the issues of interactions between different actors (see section 2.4.3 on studies undertaken with practice-based perspectives), and some have even acknowledged factory workers as an actor (Hoang 2019; Ruwanpura 2016; De Neve 2014; Ruwanpura 2014), much of the analysis has remained largely top-down, in keeping with the approach of CSR itself (Kazmi et al. 2016).

The managerialist orientation of CSR literature (Jackson et al. 2018) and firm-focused view that persisted in CSR research, arguably, is intrinsically entwined with the way workers have been considered and conceptualised. Factory and farm workers engaged in supply chain operations of firms have been predominantly referred to as a stakeholder. While several critiques of stakeholder theory-based approaches have been highlighted, Greenwood and Mir (2019: 46) crucially point out that "the very idea of conceptualizing of humans as stakeholders, whether in theory or in practice, seems intrinsically at risk of universalizing, simplifying, and institutionalizing human interaction". The way workers have been reduced to an abstract category and treated as victims and passive beneficiaries is, perhaps, a result of such a conceptualisation (Tsogas 2018; Yu

2009; Sum and Ngai 2005). Apart from the issue that a firm-focused conception of worker as stakeholder ignores the power dynamics, which tend to eventually reduce workers to a non-stakeholder (Yu 2009), Kazmi et al. (2016) question the very comparability of workers, whose labour results in the accumulation of capital, with any other stakeholder. Capitalism is premised on two protagonists – the capitalist and the worker as the wage earner who sells his/her labour (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005) – and treating workers like any other actor in the firm's sphere of action and influence raises several questions. While some have offered suggestions as to why and how stakeholders could be integrated into capitalism (Freeman et al. 1997), such attempts have been known to fail, as groups of stakeholders, especially those with divergent interests, do not act together through the corporate form or as a unified group agent (Mansell 2015; 2013). While this debate is likely to continue, for the present purposes it is clear that the existing approaches of conceptualising workers appears to have raised more questions than answers.

Moreover, treating workers as stakeholders, besides limiting the very way workers may be seen, with its predominant focus on the firm orientation, also contributes to the limited impacts of the CoC. Even an inclusive and developmental approach to the CoC implementation, which is proposed to address the challenges of compliance-based approaches for implementing CoC discussed earlier, is still rooted in a buyer-led trading context where the way monitoring and capacity building for both suppliers and workers are carried out continue to further and promote the 'Western' models of development (Freidberg 2003). Not only does this risk a paternalistic approach (Ngai 2005; Crossley 1999), it can also lead to a misalignment between the requirements of the CoC and the cultural and socio-economic environment of the factories, and crucially those of workers themselves (Jaiswal and Ha-Brookshire 2019; Sinkovics et al. 2016; Huq et al. 2014).

The other dominant theoretical perspective adopted in CoC studies is the institutional theory-based approaches (Arora et al. 2020; Jamali et al. 2017; Egels-Zandén 2014). This follows the trend of wider CSR literature where stakeholder theory, institutional theory and legitimacy theory have dominated CSR studies over the last 25 years and there has not been much focus on individuals in applications of these theories (Frynas and Yamahaki 2016). Only 2.8 percent of institutional theory and 5.3 percent of stakeholder theory applications were identified to be oriented towards individuals, from the total 462 articles that Frynas and Yamahaki analysed. While both stakeholder and institutional theories allow the classification of actor types manifested through levels of salience (legitimacy, urgency, and power) or institutional logics (routines, rules, laws,

conventions, paradigms and so on), the mechanisms of interaction amongst actors are largely ignored (Johnsen et al. 2017:140). This may also explain why the studies undertaken using an organisational perspective or regulatory perspective have rarely raised any of these issues. Both these perspectives suffer from viewing workers as informants and respondents and treating them as victims, and workers' ability to act, and in turn their agency, remains both under-conceptualised and under-studied (Tsogas 2018; Hoang and Jones 2012; Yu 2009). Studies analysing CoC from a practice-based perspective and viewing the worker as an actor has brought some of the interaction-based concerns to the forefront. Interestingly, however, while in these studies workers' agency is acknowledged (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011; Coe et al. 2008; Castree 2007; Lier 2007), it has been conceived primarily as collective agency (Graz et al. 2019; De Neve 2014). As such, these studies "overlook worker agency that is not articulated as collectively organised political strategies" (Lier 2007: 829). Consequently, the focus, as highlighted earlier, has remained more on examining the CoC impact on unions and interactions of CoC with unions.

In addition to the theoretical lenses and the way workers have been conceptualised, the review undertaken for this thesis also highlights that the methodology adopted for these studies may also have a role to play in the exclusion of workers from the scholarly analysis.

2.5.2.2 Methodological explanations for exclusion of workers

CoC intend to extend protections to workers who have also been claimed to be the focus of much existing research. While studies claim that workers are at the centre of their work, a closer review highlights that they are in fact relegated to the background (Alamgir and Alakavuklar 2019; Tsogas 2018). The so-called focus on workers is rather implicit in much of the studies where it is audit reports that serve as primary data for analysis (Bird et al. 2019; Short et al. 2016; Bartley and Egels-Zandén 2015). While challenges of using audit reports and its suitability for assessing CoC compliance characterise an ongoing debate in CoC scholarship (Terwindt and Armstrong 2019; Distelhorst and Locke 2018; Le baron and Lister 2015; Anner 2012; Locke et al. 2009; O'Rourke 2003), the critical issue is that when audit reports are used as primary data, what workers themselves make of CoC and its compliance remains unanalysed.

Some studies address this gap by using qualitative research methods to assess the extent of a factory's compliance with CoC. However, primarily these include interviews with buyers, factory managers, industry experts and representatives of unions, not-for-profit organisations and worker organisations. Only few have included workers in their research and analysis. However, such an inclusion too is limited to assessing workers' awareness of CoC (Bezuidenhout and Jeppesen 2011) and evaluating perceptions about the presence or absence of the particular set of working conditions as defined in CoC through surveys (Kabeer et al. 2020; Kabeer et al. 2019; Giuliani et al. 2017) and interviews (Egels-Zandén 2014). Workers, it seems, have been regarded as passive beneficiaries (Yu 2009) not only in practice but also in scholarship. This approach of using workers as informants and respondents about specific set of conditions in the factory (Esbenshade 2004a), that has been contested by critics of CoC audits (Le Baron and Lister 2015; CCC 2005), appears to persist in the scholarly studies.

With predominant emphasis on either evaluating their awareness of CoC or capturing perception of changes based on the criteria listed in the CoC, the possibility that CoC may themselves be playing a role in generating specific experiences for factory workers has not been sufficiently explored. Instead, experiences of factory workers are concealed in studies dominated by a managerialist focus, primarily interested in examining processes and procedures of CoC development and implementation (Tsogas 2018).

Possibly, the methods remain limited to largely using audit reports, interviews and surveys due to the challenges faced in generating appropriate access to the workers. As some scholars have highlighted, insisting on including factory workers in the studies is tricky for the researcher and could also have implications for the workers themselves (Egels-Zandén 2014; 2007). Despite these challenges, few studies have undertaken in-depth qualitative case studies (Hoang 2019; Barrientos et al. 2003), including focus group discussions, interviews and observations. A handful of studies have successfully undertaken ethnographic research and made insightful contributions (Prentice et al. 2018; De Neve 2014; Ruwanpura 2016; 2013; Rodriguez-Garavito 2005; Prieto-Carrón 2008; Prieto-Carrón 2004). A close observation of the everyday lives of people in farms and factories in these studies is well suited to draw attention to issues that may otherwise be either overlooked or taken for granted (see next chapter on ethnography) and has led to some critical questions raised in the existing scholarship of CoC. These studies have also pointed towards what may be gained when studies that are *about* workers also include workers and are carried out *with* them.

2.5.3 Why study CoC with workers?

There are instrumental, normative, and theoretical reasons for carrying out CoC studies with workers. CoC are developed, designed and adopted by MNCs while working together with, or as a response to demands of other actors, primarily including civil society and activist organisations (Kolk and van Tulder 2005; Kolk et al. 1999). Such a patronage of the more powerful actors, at the behest of workers, even if it leads to some improvements, may at best only be a short-term approach (Braun and Gearhart 2004). Unless workers are themselves included as a key set of actors, achievements of CoC and its potential is likely to remain suspect (Alamgir and Alakavuklar 2018). The instrumental reasons for including workers' perspectives in CoC design, development, implementation and enforcement have been repeatedly highlighted by scholars (see above section 2.5.1 on missing workers' perspectives). Research on factory workers is therefore required for problematising and appropriate framing of CoC and related research (Prentice et al. 2018; Yu 2009).

CoC, as a managerial tool of CSR, at best deliver only patchy and limited results for workers, sometime even leading to adverse consequences for workers (Jamali et al. 2017; Sinkovics et al. 2016; Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). It is possible that CoC may not be delivering for workers because knowledge about them is not included. If critical knowledge about workers is ignored, their situation is also likely to be ignored (Ruwanpura 2016; Prieto-Carrón 2008; Hale and Shaw 2001). That CoC in such a situation may generate adverse effects is not surprising. It would be naïve to assume that CoC can engender positive work conditions without taking into account workers' perspectives (Carswell and De Neve 2013). Exclusion of workers from CoC research needs to be remedied "to offer the people who actually produce the goods and services a more considered share in the determination of those actions which promote and those which offend their dignity, worth, and well-being" (Leahy 2001:39).

Moreover, if a person as an active participant and agent is rejected, the basis for human experience is also undermined (Frie 2003:3). Treating workers as victims and passive beneficiaries (Yu 2008) may then only contribute towards hardening their already reified and commodified status (Tsogas 2018). Added to this, there are two more compelling reasons. Firstly, overlooking what CoC mean for workers and their experience of the same can raise questions about the reform agenda of CoC and in turn about the CSR-based change itself (Kazmi et al. 2016). Secondly, when workers and their experiences

are included, they can contribute to extending, expanding and problematising the existing academic insights on CoC. These two reasons will now be discussed further.

2.5.3.1 Implications for CSR as a potential spirit of capitalism

CoC, as a key managerial tool to operationalise international CSR (Beckers 2018; Preuss 2010), arguably, can be seen as part of a wider reform agenda that intends to address the sustainability critique of corporate capitalism (Kazmi et al. 2016). Corporate capitalism is an imperative for unlimited accumulation of capital (financial capital) manifested in and through the corporation as a legal personality with a large hierarchal and multi-divisional organisational structure (Blanc 2014; Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). The widespread criticisms of MNCs, discussed earlier, for use of sweatshops, triggering ecological disasters, erosion and destruction of the environment, accompanied by detection of fraud and corruption scandals compounded the critique of unsustainability and moral emptiness of corporate capitalism (Kazmi et al. 2016; Chiapello 2013; Crane and Matten 2010). This 'crisis of sustainability' (Kazmi et al. 2016) and 'ecological criticism' (Chiapello 2013) is, however, not the first challenge capitalism has encountered. Notwithstanding its critics, capitalism has been noted to have an unlimited capacity to reinvent itself (Rodrick 2009) and thereby integrate its critiques. Such reinventions are made possible through transformations in the set of beliefs that justifies engagement in capitalism, also known as the spirit of capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005).

Such a spirit of capitalism responds to opponents' critiques so that capitalism can continue to be seen as a legitimate and worthwhile way to organise society and to gain and maintain commitment of both the capitalist and the worker (Kazmi et al. 2016). As a set of inscribed beliefs, bound up in action and anchored in reality, the spirit of capitalism contributes to shaping new corporate practices and in turn leading to newer forms of capitalist organisation (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). Undertaking an analysis of capitalism from 1900 till 2005, Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) highlight three spirits of capitalism that addressed conservative, social and artistic critiques and enabled capitalism to sustain and defend itself (see Appendix 2 for details). Kazmi et al. (2016) posit that CSR, with its intention to reform the existing role of business firms in society, in response to the contemporary sustainability critique, could also possibly be a spirit of capitalism (refer Appendix 3).

The CSR-based justification to become a spirit of capitalism needs to be able to offer excitement, security, and fairness to workers (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). Excitement entails convincing workers how working within a capitalist system would animate and enliven them; security is about showing how they and their families would be protected; and fairness is about demonstrating how capitalism contributes to the public interest and common good. Satisfying the three criteria has enabled previous sprits to successfully reinvent and sustain capitalism as the dominant order (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). If CSR-based justification is found to be satisfying the three criteria, one can reasonably expect CSR to be the fourth spirit of capitalism.

CoC is a specific practice within CSR-based management model (Kazmi et al. 2016), and arguably the only one that ostensibly claims to place workers at the very centre. The very genesis of this practice lies in its aspiration to provide security and guarantee certain freedoms to factory workers. CoC, in making MNCs responsible for conditions of factory workers in their suppliers' factories across multiple locations, enacts the responses of CSR as a potentially new and fourth spirit of capitalism (Kazmi et al. 2016). Specifically, such a response of CSR includes widening the socio-economic functions and goals of corporate activities, remodelling corporate activities based on addressing new stakeholders' values and demands and reorganising corporate governance (Kazmi et al. 2016). By including factory workers employed in supplier factories as a stakeholder, CoC widen the remit of goals and functions of the international production operations and processes of MNCs (Barrientos et al. 2011; Barrientos and Smith 2007; Marther 2004). The design, development, adoption, and implementation of CoC remodel the operations and way of working of MNCs as they integrate, incorporate and respond to the demands and values of their multiple stakeholders (Sethi 2011a; 2011b; 2002a). By making MNCs open to scrutiny, and in turn accountable to multiple actors for the working conditions in its international production operations, CoC also reorganise the governance of MNC, specifically in context of its profit-led production processes (Egels-Zandén 2017; Locke 2013; Vogel 2010).

Kazmi et al. (2016) highlight that while the three criteria of security, fairness and excitement are addressed for capitalists and managers in CSR-driven change, the same cannot be argued to be true for workers, who hardly receive attention. The authors caution that, "workers seem to be the discounted stakeholder in the proposed CSR-driven change; without their involvement, however, CSR may neither grow into a new spirit of capitalism nor induce changes in corporate practices" (Kazmi et al. 2016: 756). Indeed, as has already been noted, worker involvement in CoC is severely undermined.

Not only does such an exclusion explain why CoC may not be delivering for workers, it also places the significance and relevance of CoC itself under question. Unless we know what factory workers make of CoC as a practice of the CSR-driven change, and to what extent it offers them security, fairness and excitement, the prospects for CoC, and in turn CSR as a spirit of capitalism, may remain suspect.

Workers are a key protagonist under the order of capitalism in which CoC operate and reducing workers to discounted stakeholders can have implications for not just the effectiveness of CoC but for the very CSR-based justification of the capitalist system. Such observations have led to scathing critiques of CSR being a smokescreen that conceals exploitation (Fleming et al. 2013; Banerjee 2007) and some commentators pre-empting the limitations, have even pronounced the end of CSR (Fleming and Jones 2013). Despite such pronouncements, the uptake of CSR-based approaches by managers and companies has not only grown, rather it continues to rise (Agudelo et al. 2019; McPherson 2019; Lindell 2018). It may, then, be worthwhile to make practical, empirical, and theoretical contributions that question existing management practices and aim to encourage the development of practices that challenges social injustice and environmental destructiveness of current corporate capitalism (Adler et al. 2007; Spicer et al. 2009). “Putting workers at the centre of this critical CSR project and facilitating bottom-up processes might be a good starting point” (Kazmi et al. 2016:756). Inspired by these views and in keeping with the arguments of Kazmi et al. (2016), this thesis considers CSR as a potential source of change, examines factory workers’ experiences of CoC and explores implications of such experiences for the CSR-driven change.

In addition to having implications for the wider CSR-driven change, as pointed earlier, examining CSR experiences of workers can also contribute to existing debates and this is discussed further in the following section.

2.5.3.2 Problematising the CSR CoC Literature

An academic field of study can become locked in by how it frames issues, and analysis that sheds light on what we as scholars are doing, or what we could be doing differently could lead us to appreciate new dimensions, possibilities and alternative ways of approaching both policy and theoretical issues and provide a means for becoming more self-reflective about our own thinking (Evered 1983). The few studies that have been carried out *with* workers have served such a purpose. These studies have contributed

crucial insights and pushed the boundaries of CoC scholarship by shattering previous myths in CoC research. Further, these studies have illuminated effects of CoC beyond the binary analysis of whether CoC deliver or not and most crucially have challenged the passive role and the narrow focus on collective agency assumed and adopted in much of the existing literature.

For instance, a key assumption dominating much of the literature and the practice is that the participation in international trade will not only lead to economic improvement for factories and their workers but also will improve conditions of work and result in an overall improvement in workers' lives. Referred to as 'upgrading' (Gereffi 1999; Humphrey and Schmitz 2002), this idea has long underpinned much of policy and scholarly literature. While some scholars have noted that the firm upgrading (economic upgrading) may not necessarily lead to improvement for workers (social upgrading), it has however been emphasised that it can do so under appropriate conditions (Barrientos et al. 2011). Scholars who examined workers' experiences have destabilised such assumptions of win–win processes and outcomes in the economic–social upgrading literature, calling for a fundamental re-evaluation of these notions (Ruwanpura 2016). They have repeatedly highlighted that how the notion of upgrading may bear out for workers depends on the relationship between capital, labour and state (Selwyn 2012; 2013; Carswell 2013). As a top-down conception, the notion of upgrading itself has been noted to be analytically weak to comprehend the nature of capitalist exploitation and indecent work, and politically weak as it proposes improvements to workers' conditions to be delivered by collaboration between elite bodies, namely firms, states and international organisations (Selwyn 2013). It is, then, no surprise that workers tend to perceive the impact of CoC, and in turn that of internationalised factories, which draw on such notions as negligible (Bezuidenhout and Jeppesen 2011). Bottom-up conceptions that place workers at the centre and are rooted in the analysis of the capitalist labour process with an intent to facilitate changes to workers' conditions by a balance of power between labour and capital may be able to go further in making CoC effective for workers (Kazmi et al. 2016; Selwyn 2013). To arrive at such bottom-up conceptions, however, it is critical to examine and include experiences of workers in existing scholarly analysis, conversations, and debates.

2.5.4 Examining CoC experiences of factory workers

So far, it has been established that the studies of CoC *about workers* that are also carried out *with the workers* are relevant for theory, and yet current scholarly efforts in this direction are limited. The insightful contributions by few studies in this direction, which challenge the way workers and their needs have been made secondary to firms, also point out how some of the existing conceptions may be flawed and need further examination (Rainnie et al. 2011; Selwyn 2013). There is, therefore, a need to examine workers' experiences. In doing so, in addition to opening up avenues for the CSR-driven change and extending the existing academic insights by problematising, we may also begin to answer some of the unanswered questions, which persist in the CoC literature. Four such research gaps in CoC studies that emerged in the review of literature are discussed below. The identification and discussion of these existing limitations in the CoC scholarship further underlines the relevance of examining factory workers' experiences.

2.5.4.1. Making of internationalised factories

Compliance with CoC in the factory requires a 'fresh judgement' every time they are applied (Rasche 2010). However, this aspect has received less attention in existing analysis. Interpretivist studies of compliance may have much to add in this direction and can illuminate what factors/drivers/behaviours are involved in making an internationalised factory, one which is CoC compliant, and in generating effects of CoC (Parker and Nielsen 2017). Much of the research so far, as discussed above, has primarily been concerned with identification of antecedents and consequences, factors and determinants of adoption, design, development, and implementation of CoC. How CoC makes an internationalised factory, and how international CSR requirements are translated in the factory, has received relatively little attention to date. An emerging group of scholars have been arguing for analysing processes involved in CoC implementation to identify how CoC come into practice. Babri et al. (2019) characterise such studies as transformation-oriented and identify only five studies out of the one hundred CoC-related studies they reviewed to have examined these issues.

The manner in which reflexive and active agents practise CSR codes, both individually and collectively, shapes their organisational experience (Mercier and Deslandes 2017). Viewing CoC as a management idea, a prescription for organisations and control of

firms, Helin and Babri (2015) trace the journey of a code from a MNC head office to its subsidiary in China to the auditing process at the supplier firm. Following the code, their study highlights that the ethics of CoC is itself negotiable, and caution against it being completely undermined when efficiency and contractual considerations become dominant. Such observations may have crucial implications for CoC implementation as well as on CoC outcomes for workers. However, while the journey of the translation of a code from MNC head quarter to the subsidiary to the assessment of a supplier has been analysed, little is known about what goes inside the factory from the time it receives the CoC from the buyers till it is assessed. How does an internationalised factory become such a factory?

While we know that CoC are influenced by the country contexts and factories' institutional and normative environments (Lamrad 2013; Bartley and Egels-Zandén 2015), we do not yet know the processes and interactions entailed in the constituting and making of an internationalised factory. Examining such processes can be valuable in this area. By studying processes involved in the implementation of a MNC code of ethics at its subsidiary, Jensen et al. (2009) identified how meaning of ethics itself gets transformed during implementation of CSR codes. Their study not only highlights how CSR codes can 'bend moral spaces' but also draws attention to the 'side-effects' of such codes. Undertaking studies that illuminate the processes in an internationalised factory, then, is likely to contribute to the knowledge about both the CoC implementation in factories as well as its possible 'side effects.'

Moreover, CoC have also been shown to draw on power asymmetries to reproduce hierarchical relations (Goger 2013; Winkler 2011). The design as well as implementation of CoC have remained top-down processes, where workers are not included (Raj-Reichert 2013; Hale and Shaw 2001). Implemented as a top-down regulatory process, they perpetuate authoritarian factory regimes, in which, from a distance, MNCs appear to play a paternalistic role in 'protecting' workers from exploitation, while exploitation and inequalities continue to persist (Ngai 2005). The persistence of exploitation points towards a lack of understanding of the relationship between CoC and intra-firm processes in factories and the social context of workers and the factory which needs to be understood better (Nadvi 2008). For CoC to be able to address the persisting exploitation it is critical that processes inside an internationalised factory and its embeddedness be better understood. Examining such processes will also highlight whether and how the factory deals with the tensions between profit-led and legitimacy-

led demands which has been frequently pointed out as a reason for the uneven impacts of CoC for workers. This tension is elaborated further in the following section.

2.5.4.2 Tension between the profit and legitimacy imperatives

Economic upgrading that is set into motion when a factory participates in the process of international production, it was pointed out above, does not automatically translate to positive outcomes for all workers across all international production processes, operations, and geographical contexts (Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). When guided by ideas that economic upgrading will lead to social upgrading, CoC are likely to remain at best a partial exercise (Miller et al. 2009), and at worst are likely to fail in their agendas (Selwyn 2013). Upgrading, Goger (2013) has concluded from a multi-site ethnographic study across nine factories, is not some generalisable technical fix. Rather, it is an embodied process occurring in everyday settings (Goger 2013). This necessitates an examination of the nuances and contradictions entailed within the different economic and social processes of international production, along with the effects they generate for people and places (Tokatli 2013; Werner 2012; Pickles et al. 2006).

Legitimacy is a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions (Suchman 1995:574). CoC are able to provide legitimacy to MNCs by incorporating the expectation of MNCs' stakeholders and communicating to them that MNCs assume responsibility for situation and working conditions of the workers manufacturing their merchandise (Sethi 2011a; 2011b; 2002a; Arnold and Harman 2006). While CoC emanate from and respond to the legitimacy imperative for MNCs, they do little to address their existing commercial and procurement practices and exploitative prices (Alamgir and Banerjee 2019; Barrientos and Smith 2007). As buyers drive down costs to benefit consumers, it is workers who seem to be ultimately paying the price (Robinson 2010b). As competition between brands increases, the MNC buyers continue to drive down consumer prices and put pressure on producers to reduce costs (Robinson 2010a; Yu 2008). The cost pressures and risks, passed on from the MNC buyer to suppliers, may eventually be pushed towards workers (Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). On the one hand, cost pressures serve as a disincentive to strengthening workplace protections (O'Rourke and Brown 2003). On the other hand, these pressures coupled with short lead-time and smaller quantities generate efficiency-led production imperatives for the factory and may result in violation of CoC in specific areas, including

working hours and verbal harassment and may further precarious work arrangements (Ruwanpura 2016; Robinson 2010b).

There seems to be, then, an inherent tension between the requirements of reputation-led legitimacy imperatives (CoC) and the profit and efficiency-led production imperatives (Bird at al. 2019; Barrientos 2008). CoC seek to satisfy legitimacy demands rather than to promote transactional efficiency as they intend to protect reputation and preserve legitimacy and not to improve productive efficiency (Bird et al. 2019). With this tension in the backdrop, CoC may lead to only partial compliance as any initiative that threatens the very basis of restructuring of MNCs' international production operations is likely to be undermined (Anner 2017; Taylor 2011). These observations and the persistence of the inherent tension calls not only for an urgent need to open up scope for engagement and contestation around the implementation of CoC (Du Toit 2002), but also the need to better understand this tension and the everyday reproduction of the accompanying social relations (Goger 2013).

The tension between production and legitimacy imperatives also entails conflicts between different justificatory principles - those who extol efficiency as an end in its own right and others who advance different moral ideas as more ultimate goods (Boltanski and Thevenot 2006; Hitlin and Vaisey 2013). However, specifically in the context of CoC, it has been pointed out that this conflict may have far reaching consequences and that the impacts of CoC are uneven due to this tension between the profit and legitimacy imperatives (Ruwanpura 2014; Taylor 2011; Yu 2008). CoC, it is argued, not only draw on the power relations and stratification of firms according to size, productivity and labour conditions but also actively shape such processes (Ruwanpura 2013; Taylor 2011). While on the one hand NGOs have suffered managerial capture to become corporate apologists (Sethi and Rovenport 2011), on the other hand, the commercial imperatives of MNCs appear to have reigned supreme and their intentions to improve working conditions in factory remain constantly suspect (Yu 2008).

Despite repeated recognition of conflict between the pursuit of continuing competitive accumulation through profit maximisation and pursuit of social value through CoC, we know little about how this tension plays out in the factory. In what ways do these imperatives manifest in everyday factory life and what consequences do they (or not) generate for workers. Does this tension disappear? Does it get dissipated? Does it transform into some other conflict or not? Ruwanpura (2016) contends that production targets can realign conditions under which codes are implemented. But how does this

happen? And what do workers make of it? When production targets have to be met, workers are forced to work overtime and may facing punitive measures, that is, deduction of unpaid leave days, or they get into unpleasant arguments with supervisors, line leaders or floor managers – outcomes workers do not appreciate and which press against the spirit of the code on the prevention of forced labour (Ruwanpura 2016). Could this be because of the inherent tension, or not? These issues need further study and raise yet another critical issue which follows: what do CoC do for workers?

2.5.4.3 Illuminating the effects of CoC

CoC not only fail to deliver positive outcomes for workers, it has been noted that they may even generate adverse consequences. As CoC travel under competitive pressures of international production, across countries and factories, their implementation is messy with a lower prioritisation of workers' needs and often accompanied by contradictions and tensions for workers (Chowdhury 2017b; Ruwanpura 2014; 2013). There is a risk that CoC may worsen social and environmental conditions for workers and communities (Lund-Thomsen 2008). For instance, as CoC stipulate limited number of working hours a week, they contribute to reduced family incomes (Sinkovics et al. 2016; Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). Yu (2015), examining a factory in China, illustrated that while CoC led to an improvement of working conditions, workers were ultimately forced to work harder and faster and yet earned less money.

Sinkovics et al. (2016), in a qualitative case study of three factories in Bangladesh, highlight how suppliers' pursuit of compliance with international CSR requirements may lead to destruction of existing social value for workers and may ignore workers' needs and priorities - a prayer room was converted into a crèche and provision of complementary cooked meals as withdrawn to deal with cost pressures of compliance. Insistence to work in a specified manner under particular circumstances can also result in loss of a source of income for some. For instance, creation of internationalised factory settings for football stitching deprived women stitchers of the flexibility where they could previously work at home (Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). In another instance, technological upgrading by a factory to cope with 'cost of compliance' resulted in exclusion of unskilled workers in Bangladesh (Sinkovics et al. 2016).

Indeed, CoC implementation can make some categories of workers particularly vulnerable (Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). Both legitimacy-driven CoC as well as profit-

driven buying practices of MNCs have a significant impact on the labour-hiring practices of factories and may contribute to precarious employment patterns (Underhill et al. 2018; Marther 2004; Ngai 2004). As commercial dynamics play a role in increasing pressures for CoC implementation and protect a certain group of workers, another group of workers employed through labour contractors face worse employment conditions, and this vulnerable and insecure workforce is referred to as the 'Achilles' heel' of CoC (Barrientos 2008). While CoC tend to offer better conditions of work to permanent workers, the conditions faced by workers in insecure forms of employment often tends to be overlooked (Barrientos 2008; Dolan and Opondo 2005).

As CoC generate different consequences for different workers, their gender, nature of contract and location of worker in the international production operations, all tend to play a role (Greenberg 2013; Prieto-Carrón 2008; Barrientos et al. 2013; Hale and Opondo 2005; Hale and Shaw 2001; Barrientos et al. 2000). For instance, experiences of women workers may not necessarily be the same as others. Women workers tend to be concentrated in lower paid, more fragmented, and insecure employment practices (Greenberg 2013). They are more pressed to find ways to combine childcare and household chores with full-time work in centralised factory settings and the nature of factory-based work can be incompatible with their broader family responsibilities (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2018; De Neve 2014; Lund-Thomsen et al. 2012). Life cycles of workers, broader family relations, and positioning within local communities, all play a role in how workers experience international CSR initiatives and how they may contribute to shaping international production processes (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2018; De Neve 2014).

The manner in which CoC address gendered concerns is variable (Dolan and Opondo 2005; Barrientos et al. 2000; 2003). A critical observation has also been made regarding the ILO Core Labour Standards (CLS) that form the premise of many of the CoC. Elias (2007) contends that CLS have privileged a specific set of labour standards as possessing some kind of universalistic qualities, but what these mean for workers, specifically women workers, has not been examined. These standards themselves may well be laden with gendered assumptions and power relations and their meaningful relevance to workers' reality is contested (Elias 2007; 2003). CoC that draw on these standards have only served to marginalise the concerns of women workers in particular (Elias 2003). Recent work has highlighted how CoC and associated compliance regimes are resulting in (mis)representation and (non)recognition of the women factory workers (Alamgir and Alakavuklar 2018). It is, therefore, important to listen to women workers'

grievances, acknowledging that these may differ from the established demands of male workers, and facilitating mechanisms through which grievances can be addressed (Hale and Opondo 2005). And further research that examines workers' experiences of CoC is critical so that situations of women workers as well as other workers can be accounted for (Prieto-Carrón 2008; 2004).

As highlighted earlier, several evaluative studies have repeatedly pointed out that CoC do not deliver for workers. Apparently, it is assumed that the working conditions described by CoC are not only inherently good, possible, and desirable but also static and attainable, and that CoC only can lead to these conditions. Put differently, much research has been focusing on what CoC ought to do for factory workers, and why CoC do not deliver. However, we know little about what CoC really do for factory workers. For instance, studies that have examined workers' perspectives have illuminated how CoC can further marginalise workers by leading to withdrawal of previously offered facilities and can generate paradoxical effects for workers (Sinkovics et al. 2016; Yu 2015; Ngai 2005), be of limited use for foreign workers and migrants (Crinis 2010) and lead to disciplinary effects (Raj-Reichert 2013). These observations highlight that CoC can indeed generate a wide range of effects, and these issues need further examination. How do workers experience these unintended consequences? And how do they engage and deal with these effects?

Calling for attention to the cultural and socio-economic spaces and places in which CoC are enacted, Ruwanpura (2014) illustrates how the very mechanisms, techniques and instruments set in place for workers can become a barrier to bringing their interests to the fore. Without examining workers' experiences, it is neither possible to arrive at such a conclusion nor to contribute to these contentions. Examining workers' experiences is also important as it allows workers to be understood and viewed as active participants rather than being relegated to the background. This is elaborated further in the following section.

2.5.4.4 Workers as active participants, not passive beneficiaries

Language is regarded as a social practice that contributes to creating a particular understanding of individuals and groups, how they are interrelated, and how they should behave (Winkler 2011). Texts of codes can, then, produce a particular understanding of workers. As has been highlighted, CoC do not represent workers as a group that is

empowered. Instead, workers are positioned as passive receivers of rules and regulations (Tsogas 2018; Winkler 2011; Yu 2008; Hale and Shaw 2001).

Combined with how workers are represented, the current approaches to auditing may also have a role to play as they serve to conceal exploitations of factory workers (Ballinger 2011). Even most rigorously conducted audits are unable to identify worker rights violations, such as those affecting freedom of association and discrimination (Distelhorst and Locke 2018; LeBaron and Lister 2015; Egels-Zandén and Lindholm 2015). Questions have been raised about capacity, objectivity, independence and skills of auditors (Short et al. 2016; O' Rourke 2003). Auditing itself relies on a top-down procedure with limited stakeholder participation, meaning that issues which workers may consider important to their well-being might not even be recognised as part of the auditing process (Lund-Thomsen 2008). There are also communication challenges when CoC are in a language not known to the workers, in some cases due to workers literacy levels (Lau 2011). Even though training programmes for workers have been noted to address some of these issues (Kearney and Gearhart 2004), ensuring workers' understanding and integrating their concerns remains unaddressed by CoC (Raj-Reichert 2013). In much of the work on CoC implementation workers are assumed to be passive, however, such assumptions have been increasingly problematised. A recent study drawing on the concept of workers' agency and the theory of reciprocity has illustrated how workers actively participate with factory managers to violate some aspects of the CoC and deceive buyers and auditors, and in return of such cooperation they negotiate with their managers and employer (Hoang 2019).

Workers have also been noted to find ways to express dissent of CoC by resisting or choosing not to work in large internationalised factories that comply with the CoC. De Neve (2014), drawing on an ethnographic research in Tirupur in India, illustrated how CoC further a Fordist regime creating factories where workers feel 'like a bird in a cage', with their autonomy and freedom restricted because of various rules. He argued that workers who can afford to avoid working in large factories, do so and actively choose to work in small workshops and sub-contracting units instead. Such a decision, however, is highly gendered with young girls preferring large factories, while men and women with family responsibilities opting for smaller workshops. While this study is illuminating and raises important issues, it does not explain why workers feel restricted in an internationalised factory. Which factors are at play in such decisions of the workers? What lies behind the generation of 'bird cage' experience among workers?

Through decisions of avoiding working in an internationalised factories or choosing to work there, workers and their decisions play a role in shaping the landscape of international production (Ruwanpura 2016; Newsome et al. 2015; Coe and Hess 2013; Riisgaard and Hammer 2011; Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011; Riisgaard 2009; Brown 2009; Cumbers et al. 2008). A better understanding of worker experiences, motivations and lives (Ma and Jacobs 2010) can help explain worker' decisions on the shop floor and illuminate the rationale, context and nuances of their needs and decisions (Ruwanpura 2016; Hoang 2019). There also remains an urgent need to understand everyday lives of workers and move beyond existing de-politicised emphasis on CoC compliance (Prentice et al. 2018). There is a need to understand workers' own perceptions of the changing nature of labour relations and their roles (potential or actual) in CoC compliance regimes, and their own ethical understandings of CoC (McEwan and Bek 2009). Such issues can be better understood and explained through examination of workers' experiences in an internationalised factory.

2.5.5 Examining factory workers' CoC experiences in an internationalised factory

It has been established in this chapter that despite being the stated focus of CoC, as well as of the evaluative studies of CoC, factory workers' experiences have received scant attention. This gnawing gap between abstract discussions of CoC and workers' experiences needs remedying if CoC are to remain relevant (McEwan and Bek 2009). An optimum point for CoC, and in turn ethical international trade and production, driven by workers' perspectives, is yet to be identified (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2018). Whether such a point may ever be located is itself an open question. However, such questions cannot be answered unless we research workers' priorities (IMPACTT 2011; Prieto-Carrón 2008; 2004) and explicate the experiences of factory workers. There is, therefore, a critical need to study CoC not only from a distance but more closely, engaging with those who are involved in working with it in their everyday lives (Merton 1967).

This research and the thesis is a step in that direction, and with an intention to include workers in CoC research, addresses the research question, *how do factory workers experience CoC?* Examining factory workers' experiences will also address the four interlinked research gaps that have been noted in the CoC literature. Studying workers' experiences in a factory that deals with international CSR and production demands will

illuminate the processes inside an internationalised factory and allow a better understanding of the translation of international CSR requirements. Examining these processes inside the factory and factory workers' experiences will also contribute to the debates about the tension between profit-led and legitimacy imperatives in international production which has often been identified as a key reason for limited impacts of CoC. Further, examining workers' experiences will extend the discussions on the effects of CoC, and most critically will also highlight workers' needs and motivations to ultimately allow their perspectives to be better understood.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented CoC as a tool of expression of MNCs international CSR commitments, behaviour and practices, and argued that while factory workers are ostensibly the stated beneficiaries of CoC, they have remained excluded not only from CoC in practice, but also from the CoC scholarship itself.

After presenting the history, definition, purpose, content and the underlying politics of CoC, the chapter presented a review of the extant studies that discuss factory workers and CoC. Based on how CoC are viewed, the existing studies have been categorised as undertaken from organisational, regulatory and practice-based perspectives. While majority of the studies have focused on the firms and CoC, the evaluation of CoC impacts for workers, referred to as evaluative studies, has retained a prominent research focus. These studies, while about the workers, have not been carried out with them. Workers themselves seem to have been excluded from these studies and theoretical and methodological limitations and reasons for such an exclusion were noted.

The chapter argues that examining workers' experiences of CoC is relevant and important, and offers instrumental, normative and theoretical justifications for including workers in CoC research. It identified four research gaps in the CoC literature and argued that examining workers' experiences can contribute valuable insights. It can not only identify worker perspectives and motivations as they work in a factory that follows CoC and illuminate how CoC generate effects for workers, but can also can shed light on how CoC that enter the factory as an international CSR requirement are translated, and identify what becomes of the frequently noted tensions between profit and legitimacy-led imperatives in this translation. This thesis intends to contribute to CoC and CSR scholarship by examination of factory workers' experiences of CoC and in turn,

international CSR. The next chapter elaborates the methodological approach adopted for this study.

3. Studying CSR experiences of/with factory workers

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present ethnography as my approach to studying factory workers' CSR experiences in an internationalised factory. I begin by establishing the significance of the notion of experience and then discuss the relevance of ethnography for my research interest and question. I then briefly discuss the philosophical assumptions that have informed my work. Having clarified the specific tradition and assumptions within which my study is located, I explain how I constructed the field, negotiated access, generated data, undertook analysis, exercised reflexivity and wrote my ethnography. Finally, I reflect on the limitations and strengths of my research approach and conclude the chapter.

3.2 The significance of the notion of experience

The previous chapter established how research on the notion of workers' experience could potentially contribute to the CoC research agenda. Understanding the experience of actors that constitute international production operations can offer insights into how state, market and civil society operate in international production processes (Alamgir and Banerjee 2019). As a point of sociological enquiry, experience has played a crucial role in generation and expansion of new theoretical avenues (Campbell 1998). A case in point is the feminist theory where experience as an analytical concept has been constitutive of feminist criticism towards hegemonic forms of science as well as intrinsic to the development of feminist thought (Mulinari and Sandell 1999). Examining experiences of women and bringing to light the politics inherent in it has constantly pushed the boundaries of contemporary scientific knowledge. Over the years, specifically in the feminist scholarships, the study of experience has moved from an unproblematic description of 'shared experiences' to more reflexive accounts which reveal the power relationship between the researcher and the researched and challenge the universalisation of experience of a particular section over others (Mulinari and Sandell 1999). The work on making experiences themselves a primary focus of research to highlight what makes an experience, in subsequent years, has reversed attention from experience as the origin of explanation, where individuals *have an experience*, to experience itself being the object of explanation, where the subjects are constituted *through* experience (Scott 1991). Such a reversal has challenged any unity in

experience, highlighting it as always in process and always contested (Mulinari and Sandell 1999).

The significance of experience primarily draws on its ability to problematise existing assumptions (Sandberg and Alvesson 2011) which itself draws on how it is defined. The minimum analytical unit of experience is conceived as an interaction of self with the world (Dewey 1980). Examining worker-in-the-factory as an undivided unit of analysis transcends the two sets of debates that have largely occurred independently thus far: those that have either focused primarily on workers' agency and their motivations of why they do what they do (Hoang 2019; De Neve 2014; Carswell and De Neve 2013), and the majority of studies that focus on regulatory forces, power and other structural and interactional factors examining CoC from organisational, regulatory and practice-based perspectives. As a unit of analysis, experience includes people (their intellectual, affective, and practical characteristics), their material and social environment, their transactional relations (mutual effects on each other), and affect (Roth and Jornet 2014).

As such, an integrated construction fashioned out of the interaction between a person's organising cognitive schemes and the impact of the environment on his or her sense apparatus, experience is meaningful and integrates the physical–practical, intellectual, and affective moments of the human life form that interpenetrate each other (Roth and Jornet 2014; Polkinghorne 1988). Meaning is an integrated ensemble of connections among images and ideas that appear in various modes of presentations, such as perception, remembrance and imagination (Polkinghorne 1988). Stratified across mental, physical, and organic realms, our human existence acquires meaning when our cognitive schemes actively organise and interpret our encounter with the environment, both internal and external (Polkinghorne 1988). The layered structures of cognitive schemes can undergo modification in the interchange with the linguistic and natural environments (Polkinghorne 1988). Therefore, while human experience is enveloped in a personal realm that emerges from our body, it is also different from it, and is an ongoing integrative process that continues to be constantly enlarged through new experiences and refigured through recollections and reflections (Gadamer 2004). Characterised by such a flow, it is a moving force (Dewey 1980).

Indeed, while experience 'had' arguably is more fundamental and rich than experience observed or experience articulated, and there may be experiences that are incoherent and even unspeakable, it is the narrative form which primarily makes experience meaningful (Gavin 2006; Polkinghorne 1988; Dewey 1980). 'Experiencing,' and 'what is

experienced,' however, cannot be separated (Muhit 2013). There is no experience which is not thinking, and nothing experienced which is not thought, and no experience which is not a world of ideas (Oakeshott 1933). The realm of thought (and meaning) itself is often best expressed using the qualitative nuances of its expression in ordinary language and narrative can organise elements of awareness into meaningful episodes (Polkinghorne 1988). Narrative form assists in organising and describing experience. Therefore, while acknowledging the wider debates, for this thesis, it is workers' own descriptions, behaviours, actions, and their verbal and non-verbal expressions that formed the primary point of enquiry to follow, capture, interpret and analyse what they make of CoC and their everyday lives in an internationalised factory. For such close observation of the everyday lives of factory workers and their CSR experiences, as the following section explains, ethnography was identified as the most appropriate research approach.

3.3 Ethnography and CSR experiences

Ethnography allows a researcher to understand people's actions and their experiences of the world (Brewer 2000) and is used to explicate experiences of social phenomena (Bass and Milosevic 2018). This is achieved by being immersed, over periods of fieldwork, within the natural settings of the people that the researcher wishes to study, transcending objectivity and distance (Wolcott 2008; Neyland 2008; Bloor and Wood 2006). Management researchers have undertaken ethnographic studies to understand how managers manage, how organisational change comes about, how micropolitics operates in workplaces, and how employment relationships are shaped and maintained (McCabe et al. 2019; Down 2012; Watson 2011).

Ethnographic studies of CSR have been carried out over the past decade to study the ways in which corporations use language and practice of ethics to contain and respond to different kinds of challenges and conflicts generated by their activities (Dolan and Rajak 2016). The focus of these studies has been on 'tracing how responsibility is practiced in the everyday routines of organisations and differentially grounded in particular social and material realities' (Dolan and Rajak 2016:2). Ethnographies of CSR have been carried out across several sectors and industries, including coffee (Onyas et al. 2018), bananas (Brisbois et al. 2018), fisheries (Freduaha et al. 2018), mining (Macintyre 2018; Welker 2009), oil and gas (Shever 2010, 2008), horticulture (Dolan 2005), tea plantations (Seneviratne 2010), pharmaceuticals (Ecks 2008) and consumer

goods (Cross and Street 2009). These studies help illuminate how culture, practices and interactions shape CSR (Bass and Milosevic 2018), and how individuals in organisations understand, practice and resist CSR (Costas and Kärreman 2013) and enables researchers to delve into previously uncharted territories, often inaccessible to other research methods, techniques and approaches (Kalyta and Malsch 2018).

Among others, one focus of the ethnographic studies of CSR has been the lives and experiences of people in organisations and communities who are directly or indirectly impacted by a firm's CSR activities. Ethnography is increasingly utilised to bring to the fore the less heard voices in CSR literature (Lauwo 2018). It is, then, well-suited to inform how international CSR is enacted in factories supplying to international brands and to examine how workers in such internationalised factories, who have so far received scant attention in extant literature, experience CSR (Bass and Milosevic 2018; Watson 2011). Ethnography has been utilised to examine lives of people working in the garment industry in Sri Lanka and South India (Ruwanpura 2016; Ruwanpura 2015; De Neve 2014; 2009; Seneviratne 2010). Intriguingly, however, despite the growing prominence of ethnography in business and management studies, its use in CSR research has been relatively limited. Bass and Milosevic (2018) in their recent review of methods in CSR research identified only nine articles that utilised ethnography out of a total of 169 articles using qualitative methods. This thesis, in addition to applying ethnography to answer the research questions, also contributes to the nascent and emerging management scholarship on ethnographic studies of CSR.

3.4 Undertaking a study 'with' the workers

An ethnographer intends to capture and convey how things and events appear to those whose lives are examined (Atkinson 2015). Such a feat cannot be achieved without ethnographic imagination, which entails an ethnographer's understanding of the *others'* understandings of the everyday practices made up of an understood ('conceptually held') world (Willis 2000). An ethnographic way of seeing allows access to the conceptual world in which the *others* live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them (Geertz 1973). However, how does one gain such access; what does it means to engage that 'conceptual world in which our *others* live; and, most importantly, in what sense might our endeavors enable us to 'converse' with them (Yanow 2012)? These questions are answered by clarifying one's assumptions of reality, knowledge and truth for 'the way we see anything is affected by what we know

or what we believe' (Berger et al. 1972:8). The way of seeing the *other*, then, is inextricably connected with our assumptions of reality, knowledge and truth.

Located within the constructivist-interpretivist approach (Yanow 2013), this thesis recognises research and writing as itself a way of world-making, a construction. It does not admit to any real structure of the world and contends that the social world external to individual cognition is made up of names, concepts and labels that are used to structure reality (Burrell and Morgan 1979). There is, then, no one single reality, but rather, multiple realities (Creswell 2007). The world, as regarded in this approach, can only be understood from the point of view of individuals who are directly involved in activities to be studied (Burrell and Morgan 1979). It is in this underlying concern with *others'* worlds and interpretations that ethnography finds its orienting and overarching purpose (Wolcott 2008).

Codification of reality is culture, a symbolic system that transforms physical reality into experienced reality (Lee 1959). Bound by the conceptual framework of one's culture, its laws of logic, principles of cognition and defined limits of validation, one holds a strongly bounded and pre-categorised view of reality and perceives his/her own behaviour differently from the way people in another cultural framework might view theirs (Lee 1959). Ethnos, a Greek term, denotes a people, a race or cultural group. When ethno- as a prefix is combined with -graphic to form the term ethnographic, it literally refers to a particular kind of writing: a written account (graphein) of people (ethnos) (Yanow et al. 2012). As such it entails immersion with the people an ethnographer wishes to study (Bloor and Wood 2006), a close contact with '*other*' lives (Wolcott 2008; Neyland 2008; Geertz 1988).

Ethnographic knowledge is produced intersubjectively, during the course of fieldwork, with the *other* (Fabian 2014). It is made possible through a series of exchanges between ethnographers and their interlocutors in time and space that are shared; it is knowledge that is intersubjective (White and Strohm 2014). Despite this, in ethnographic representation '*others*' almost always appear as spatially and temporally distanced groups, never as immediate partners, and are often denied the status of a subject who acts and interacts with the ethnographer (Fabian 2002). Existing ethnographic studies of CSR have also predominantly focused either on the apparatus and architecture of CSR, or on its local effects, impacts, contestations, outcomes and responses. However, little, if any, attention has been paid to actual corporate structures that produce these effects (Dolan and Rajak 2016). CSR in these ethnographies forms a part of the

backdrop instead of being the focus of the studies, and is “portrayed as a reified set of global structures, principles, or frameworks, rather than a constantly evolving range of practices that corporate actors deploy in pursuit of particular goals” (p.16). There is a need for studies that focus on the various ways in which practices of CSR play out (Dolan and Rajak 2016), which is an objective of my research. It is in order to avoid the dominant reification of CSR that I asked how factory workers experience CSR and focused on workers’ lived experiences. It is also for this reason that, while being aware of the different conceptualisations of CSR, I did not start with a fixed definition of CSR. Instead, I opted to focus on how things work in the factory to present a grounded account (Watson 2011) drawing on the tradition of the ontological turn in ethnography.

The ontological turn (OnT) in ethnography is a methodological proposal and a technology of ethnographic description (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). It entails keeping constitutively open the question of what any given object of ethnographic investigation might be and, therefore, how existing concepts and theories have to be modulated in order to better articulate it (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). The image of a detached, dispassionate, unbiased, authoritative ethnographer has been critiqued to recognise the value-laden, political nature of ethnographies marked by a crisis of representation (Clifford and Marcus 1986). Ethnographers have long dealt with the question of how to neutralise the danger of one’s own presuppositions constraining or even predetermining one’s capacity to describe, interpret, explain and analyse the ethnographic phenomena. An OnT-informed approach transforms the epistemological problem of how one sees things into the question of what there is to be seen in the first place. According to Holbraad and Pedersen (2017), it involves three analytical practices of reflexivity, conceptualisation and experimentation. These analytical practices have guided and shaped my research, and I will discuss them in the following sections, which will explicate in detail how I carried out my ethnography.

3.5 Doing Ethnography

In this section, I will present my process of applying ethnography as a research approach. I begin with presenting the preparatory work for my research including locating an appropriate research site, identifying my assumptions, and undertaking an initial visit. I then present my approach to conducting my ethnographic dialogue, which comprises data generation and analysis. I then demonstrate how I dealt with the ethical and emotional dilemmas that arose during the conduct of my ethnographic dialogue and

how I exercised reflexivity. At the end of this this section, I explain my approach to writing ethnography.

3.5.1 Constructing the field: Locating the other

I identified a garment manufacturing factory - henceforth referred to as Fast Factory (FF) - located in Northern India, as the main site of my research. FF manufactures garments for several international clothing brands and retailers and belongs to the parent company Mystral. It employs over 3500 workers, nearly 70 percent of whom are women. FF has different sections including the storage area, sampling, production and dispatch. In addition to these, there is a canteen, a medical room and a crèche. The factory has different departments based on different functions: Human Resources (HR) and Production comprising Cutting and Fusing, Sewing, Kaj Button (Buttonholing), Finishing and Packing. There is also Industrial Engineering, Maintenance, Quality and Administration. The sewing department is split across three floors and in total has 38 assembly lines. Called lines (see Appendix 4 for a visual representation), in each of these, around 47 workers work together. A row of machines is set up and each worker performs a specific activity, referred to as an operation. Some work on machines and others supports the sewing operations. The remaining workers are engaged across different departments in the factory. These workers are the *other*. It is their world including people (managers at FF, managers at Mystral), places and objects that comprises the world my ethnographic project seeks to understand and examine.

The process of locating the workers as the other for my research project is what I refer to as the process of constructing the field. Indeed, the boundaries are arbitrary for beginnings and ends are blurred and fieldwork among the others extends to thinking through it elsewhere (Oakley 2007).

Initially, I approached a few companies in Northern India that supply to international brands like M&S, H&M, Target, C&A, Walmart among others. After two rounds of follow-ups and meetings, one company, which I call Mystral, showed interest. After I explained my project, addressed all confidentiality concerns and shared the research ethics guidelines of Aston Business School (ABS), the management finally agreed. Mystral is

a garment manufacturing company with multiple factories[4] which supplies ready-made garments to international clothing brands.

The textile and apparel (T&A) industry is labour intensive (Rossi et al. 2014) and an apt example of buyer-driven international production (Mayer and Pickles 2014; Gereffi 1999). The debates of CSR have been prominent in the sector for the last 20 years (Locke 2013) and the claims of international CSR on securing workers' rights continue to be challenged (Appelbaum and Lichtenstein 2014; Plank et al. 2012). The issue of alignment between specific values propagated by CoC and those of workers employed in this industry have also been raised (De Neve 2014; 2009). Animated by such debates, the T&A industry offers an appropriate and interesting context for my research, which aims to understand the experiences of people working in factories subjected to international CSR practices.

India is the second largest textile exporter in the world. In 2017, India's share of global trade of textiles and apparels was approximately 5 per cent (IBEF 2018). The T&A industry is also the second largest employer after agriculture sector in India and employs over 45 million people directly (IBEF 2018). The working conditions of workers in garment factories in India, supplying to international brands and following the brands' CSR codes, continue to attract attention (Nagaraj 2019; Bhat 2019; ILO 2017). I chose to carry out my fieldwork in Northern India as I know the local language (Hindi). Moreover, I am myself from northern India and well versed with the culture, practices and life in the region. This proved helpful in allowing me to embed myself among workers and managers with relative ease.

FF has been engaging with international CSR and international production requirements for more than a decade. It supplies ready-made garments to the leading international brands who claim to champion the cause of CSR, including those of factory workers. Working at the interface of international production and CSR requirements, FF undergoes several CoC related social compliance audits conducted by brands and their representatives every year. It is a factory where the penetration of international CSR through both CoC and CSR projects has been intensive, and it has developed management systems to enact them. The HR manager at the FF has over 15 years of working experience in the T&A industry, dealing with the demands of brands' legitimacy-

[4]The exact number of factories and all other identifying characteritistics, including date of establishment, location, customers, turnover, size etc. have been concealed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

driven imperatives, and has been with FF for over five years. The FF, therefore, was a suitable research site to examine everyday lives of workers to address the research questions of this study. Choosing any other factory, for instance one which was too new, or one which did not have enough engagement with international CSR requirements, would not have been suitable for examining workers' CSR experiences and illuminating the workings of CoC, and in turn CSR, in the factory.

3.5.2 Knowing myself to know the other

The ontological turn that guided my research, is not so much a matter of 'seeing differently,' but rather a matter of seeing different things (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). The central concern is about creating the conditions under which one can 'see' things in one's ethnographic material that one would otherwise not have been able to see. It calls upon the researcher to neutralise the danger of one's own presuppositions, constraining or even predetermining one's capacity to describe, interpret, explain or analyse the ethnographic phenomena with which one is confronted. In a way, it can be argued that it is important for the ethnographer to know herself to be able to know the *other* and see *their* world. It is important for an ethnographer to know and engage with her own assumptions for it is assumptions that shape what researchers do, why they focus on certain aspects of the phenomena, what they see as more or less salient, how they design their study and what they find (Morgan 1983).

Reflexivity is the key analytical practice under OnT and requires the ethnographer to work with her assumptions. How do I neutralise or otherwise hold at abeyance or in continuous suspension my assumptions about what the world is, and what could be in it, in order to allow for what is in my ethnography to present itself as what it is, and thus allow for the possibility that what is there may be different from what I may have imagined (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017:5-6)? If it is prior assumptions that get in the way of seeing new things, then those assumptions need to be made explicit before being scrutinised and changed. In keeping with this reflexive commitment to allow myself to 'see' the world of workers, I started my research by writing up a reflexive narrative that traced my introduction to the notion of CSR, CoC and the fashion industry. I then examined this narrative to make my assumptions explicit. During my MSc, I had drafted a reflective essay on my values. I examined this essay along with my experiences of garment factories, including factories that are certified to CoC and other CSR codes. Before starting my PhD, between 2012 and 2013, I had carried out a project at one of

Mystral's factories. I therefore also compiled narratives of my first impressions and experiences with Mystral's management and representatives of other factories.

In writing up my assumptions before starting my fieldwork, I generated a write-up of approximately 6000 words. Some of the presuppositions I became sensitized to through this exercise include: my implicit belief at the time about CSR as 'innately good' with an 'emancipatory potential for workers' that also needs 'voices of suppliers from global south'; my opinions of two staff I had previously met as 'non-believer in the CSR agenda', 'passionate and driven'; and my impressions about Mystral's CSR work based on past engagement as 'good with action but poor with presentation' and 'fragmented work lacking consolidation'. In addition to allowing me to identify my preconceived notions about CSR and Mystral, this exercise also allowed me to identify other assumptions including how I regarded factory as a 'fixed site in a fixed physical location', how being a woman, I was 'sympathetic, biased, emotionally driven with passionate value laden ideas about women in the workplace and beyond'.

Becoming aware and sensitised to my own presuppositions, I was careful not to impose these during the fieldwork and analysis. For instance, I deliberately did not adopt a feminist approach to my study for I knew as a novice ethnographer it could prove to be an intense experience. Identifying and holding my presuppositions in suspension allowed me to ask ontological questions to explain my ethnographic observations and created the possibility for new insights to emerge. Holding my assumptions in abeyance, played a role in allowing me to 'see' the working time squeeze and arrive at the 'hidden work' of CSR.

3.5.3 Orienting myself to the field and them

After having selected the industry and location and negotiated access with Mystral, I decided to undertake an initial visit to orient myself to the contemporary issues in the T&A industry, the company and its factories. The purpose of the trip was to meet industry representatives, company representatives, visit the factory and determine the preparations I would need for organising transport, accommodation, and spending time in and around the company. Such visits have often been carried out by ethnographers and some have even referred to them as ethnographic reconnaissance to get one's bearings and make better informed decisions on how to proceed (Wolcott 2008:188). My visit lasted for two weeks over the Christmas and New Year break in 2016. During

this period, I met two industry experts, two representatives from Mystral, undertook a tour of one of the two factories, where we discussed I would be spending my time and surveyed the area in which the factories were located. During the discussions with industry representatives, a managing director and an HR manager (from two different companies, other than Mystral), I focused on gathering insights about contemporary issues on CSR and factory workers and other industry issues in the region. During the introductory meetings with Mystral representatives, I spent time clarifying questions on confidentiality and research ethics, arriving at an agreement that I would not be under pressure to reveal names of any individuals during my research or in my report and presentation to them at the end of my PhD. I also took detailed notes during my factory tour which not only allowed me to develop a sense of the people and the place but were extremely useful for the approval of my ethics application by the Aston Business School (ABS) Research Ethics Committee. I also gathered initial information about factory size, number of workers, shift timings, among others, to be able to plan my own logistics for the field trips.

3.5.4 Pursuing their way of seeing: The ethnographic dialogue

Ethnographic research aims to explicate the ways in which people in particular situations come to understand, account for, take action and otherwise manage their day-to-day situations (Neyland 2008; Van Maanen 1979). It entails describing what people in particular situations ordinarily do, and the meanings they ascribe to their doing under ordinary or particular circumstances (Wolcott 2008). Ethnographic research, then, is a pursuit of *their* way of seeing. Such a pursuit requires entering a dialogue with the others that draws on intersubjectivity and is a manifestation of communicative ethnography (Fabian 2014). The commitment to OnT necessitates constant experimentation with fieldwork, while also consistently reflecting on what the field, fieldworker, people in the factory, ethnographic data and concepts might be (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). In this section, I present my approach to the ethnographic dialogue that I carried out to actualise my commitment to the *other* and explain how I planned, conducted and analysed this dialogue. I discuss the processes of data generation, recording and analysis that allowed me to ultimately arrive at insights that describe, interpret, examine and explain the intersubjectively seen and known world, the world of the workers at FF.

3.5.4.1 Generating data

Data in ethnographic research 'is really our own construction of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to' (Geertz 1973:9). It is generated in the liminal space of the encounter of the *other* with the ethnographer (Rabinow 1977). Following my initial visit in 2016, I engaged in data generation over a period of fourteen months from July 2017 to August 2018. During this period, I gathered and collated documents, attended industry events, undertook two field trips comprising conversations, interviews, shadowing and participant observations, held multiple phone-based interactions (instant messaging conversations using WhatsApp and in-depth phone interviews) during the period between the two field trips and recorded my ethnographic dialogue. Based on the nature of access to people, their lives and views, the quality and extent of information I gathered and feedback from everyone I interacted with, I regard my ethnographic dialogue as successful. In the sections below, I re-trace my journey to, into and around the factory and discuss the different methods and techniques I adopted to collect and record lived experiences in the factory to generate data.

a) Introduction to the factory

My first trip to India was in July 2017. In the first week, I familiarised myself with Mystral, the people at the company and its work environment. I spent time at the head office which included departments such as merchandising and accounting. While the manufacturing operations took place in the factories, including at FF, the coordination with brands was centrally channelled through the head office.

At the time I visited, Mystral senior management was engaged in efforts to align the several ongoing worker-related initiatives that had been initiated based on their own initiative as well as on buyers' demands. This team comprised Shubha, Dev and Nikhil (names changed) among others. I spent time with Shubha discussing a range of issues, attended several meetings where ongoing and planned buyer projects on CSR and Mystral's own CSR initiatives were discussed. I gathered information about Mystral's organisational structure, its people, tried to understand about the inter-departmental and inter-factory politics and learnt about the challenges with the buyer's CoC and CSR projects. I also met a Director at Mystral and the person responsible for training activities.

Towards the end of my first week, I was introduced to the senior management representatives of two factories, both next to the head office.

My engagement style in the initial interactions in the first week and beyond, particularly transparency about my work and intentions, appreciation for everyone's time, respect for confidentiality and the approach to share what I knew about the industry and issues and learn what I did not, helped me generate confidence among the Mystral and FF staff in a relatively short period of time. These characteristics of my engagements were acknowledged and appreciated by a company representative in a reflective conversation towards the end of my second field trip. Perhaps, and encouragingly, it was because of my engagement approach that by the end of the first week, Shubha, after securing all necessary approvals, also agreed to maintain a research diary for me. She agreed to record all CSR projects and initiatives she handled along with their specific progress indicators and reflections on challenges based on her observations and experiences. Shubha maintained this diary from July 2017 till September 2018 in a template we developed together. We had several friendly interactions, which allowed me to gather insider perspectives on multiple issues. I was able to also reach out to her for information and clarification, irrespective of where I was, as and when the need arose, during and after the data generation phase.

b) Entering the factory world

I started my second week with meetings in the two factories. As I was introduced by a representative of the head office, I was welcomed by the staff at the factories. However, in my initial conversations with the HR managers in the factories, initially a sense of scepticism and hesitation was apparent. I was aware from my previous MSc research interviews that some factory managers in the industry had felt betrayed by journalists and researchers. Therefore, I dealt with the scepticism and hesitation by spending time with the HR teams in the factory. These teams were responsible for managing all worker-related issues, in addition to managing the international CSR requirements of buyers including CoC and CSR projects. I spent half a day in each factory for three days, after which the teams in both factories warmed up. However, I received exceptional support in the second factory, FF, which remained my main site of study for the entire duration of the fieldwork. It is also relevant to note here that I continued to visit the other factory whenever I wanted to gather multiple perspectives on key issues, or when I wanted to explore how similar or different experiences of people in the factory were. I allowed the

people's concerns and their issues to guide my pursuit and remained cautious about defining any rigid boundaries of the 'field.'

The HR manager at FF, Mahesh, convinced with the need, as well as being excited by the possibilities of my research, introduced me to his team, including those responsible for managing HR issues on different production floors, along with the production teams. He also supported me by vouching for me with his colleagues. He explicitly requested everyone to carry on with his or her work and not to try to hide anything from me as I could be trusted. He seemed to have gained this confidence in me and my work after our two fairly long and in-depth conversations, where he wanted to hear about my interest, my approach and my views on a range of industry issues. Apart from my engagement style that had worked for me at the head office, my understanding of the industry, its dynamics, sensitivities and politics, and my credibility from previous professional work contributed to generating the trust. Having established my credibility, following Mahesh's enthusiasm and encouragement, with his and the HR team's support, over the next year I conducted my ethnographic dialogue at FF.

c) Ethnographic way of looking at/with the people in the factory

My ethnographic dialogue drew on a range of techniques and methods and the ethnographic ways of looking (Wolcott 2008). I looked at the people and I looked with the people in the factory. I will discuss these in the following sections.

Ethnographic examining (document review and analysis)

I gathered several documents including company reports, policies, documents, brands' CoC and the participant research diary. I examined these documents asking ethnographic questions of my texts (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Silverman 2001). For instance, how are the documents written, who has written them, what is included and what is excluded, what reality the documents intend to create and what is taken for granted. In the case of CoC, I followed this with content analysis to determine the extent of emphasis on the categories that had been identified (Silverman 2001). When examining company and factory documents, I also paid special attention to identifying the membership categorisation to understand how the factory management organises its world (Silverman 2001). More broadly, for each document, in keeping with my commitment to ethnographic dialogue, I examined the role it plays in the interactions

between people in the factory and how it contributes to the organisation of people, objects, processes, place, time and their mutual interactions.

Ethnographic enquiring: conversations and interviews

I met over 150 people during my time at Mystral and FF and had conversations ranging from brief 10-minute chats to interactions spanning two hours. In keeping with the grounded approach of my ethnography (Watson 2012), I allowed each preceding conversation, meeting and experience to guide the subsequent one. I did not predetermine any specific area or issue to focus on a priori, but rather I used 'imaginative practices' (Elliott and Culhane 2017) in my way of looking. My ethnographic interviews emerged as specialised conversations between co-creators where context and relationships between researcher and research participants significantly shaped the content (Elliott and Culhane 2017:12).

I identified some key people at FF and had repeat conversations and interactions with them. This identification was shaped through mutual interest. There were some people, both workers and managers, who wished to meet me again, and there were others with whom I wished to continue my conversations. I developed a rapport with many people in the factory, including workers across different departments, production managers, production in-charges[5], supervisors and security guards, among others. These multiple interactions allowed me to clarify perspectives on many issues and triangulate information as and when necessary. During some interviews, workers and managers also shared epiphanies and critical incidents and events (Denzin 2001), that allowed me to understand the multiple perspectives. I established relationships with people in the factory, which allowed me to have interactions inside the factory based on their availability and during the second field trip, even outside of the factory, including in some cases, in their homes.

Ethnographic experiencing: Participant observation and observation of participation

The physical and sensuous presence of the ethnographer allows observation and use of the five senses (through experience) to capture what are the agendas, de-codings,

[5] Production In-charge is a middle manager who report to the Production Managers, and are responsible for handling and managing 2-5 assembly lines each. Supervisors of each assembly line report to a designated Production In-charge.

stories, uses of objects and artefacts of social actors (Willis 2000). The ethnographer is herself the instrument to observe, listen, question, participate and write (Richardson 2000a). As Ingold (2017:23) has highlighted, “To observe is not, in itself, to objectify. It is to notice what people are saying and doing, to watch and listen, and to respond in your own practice. That is to say, observation is a way of participating attentively, and it is for this reason a way of learning.” While undertaking such participant observation, I did not take a detached approach or view of the situation, rather I was conscious of my own emotions and my own role, and I observed my own participation in the interactions and reflected on it (Tedlock 2001).

I spent time sitting and/or standing in several locations in the factory observing daily routines of the people in the factory. Whenever I got a chance, I asked questions to clarify any doubts I had. Given the nature of my research questions, I spent a lot of time in the HR room of the factory (see Figure 3.1), where I observed the interactions between workers and managers, learnt about the nature of issues workers experience, and gathered evidence of and for manager’s discretion, interactions and perceptions which turned out to be critical for this research (see chapter 4 for the role managerial agency plays in shaping workers’ experiences).

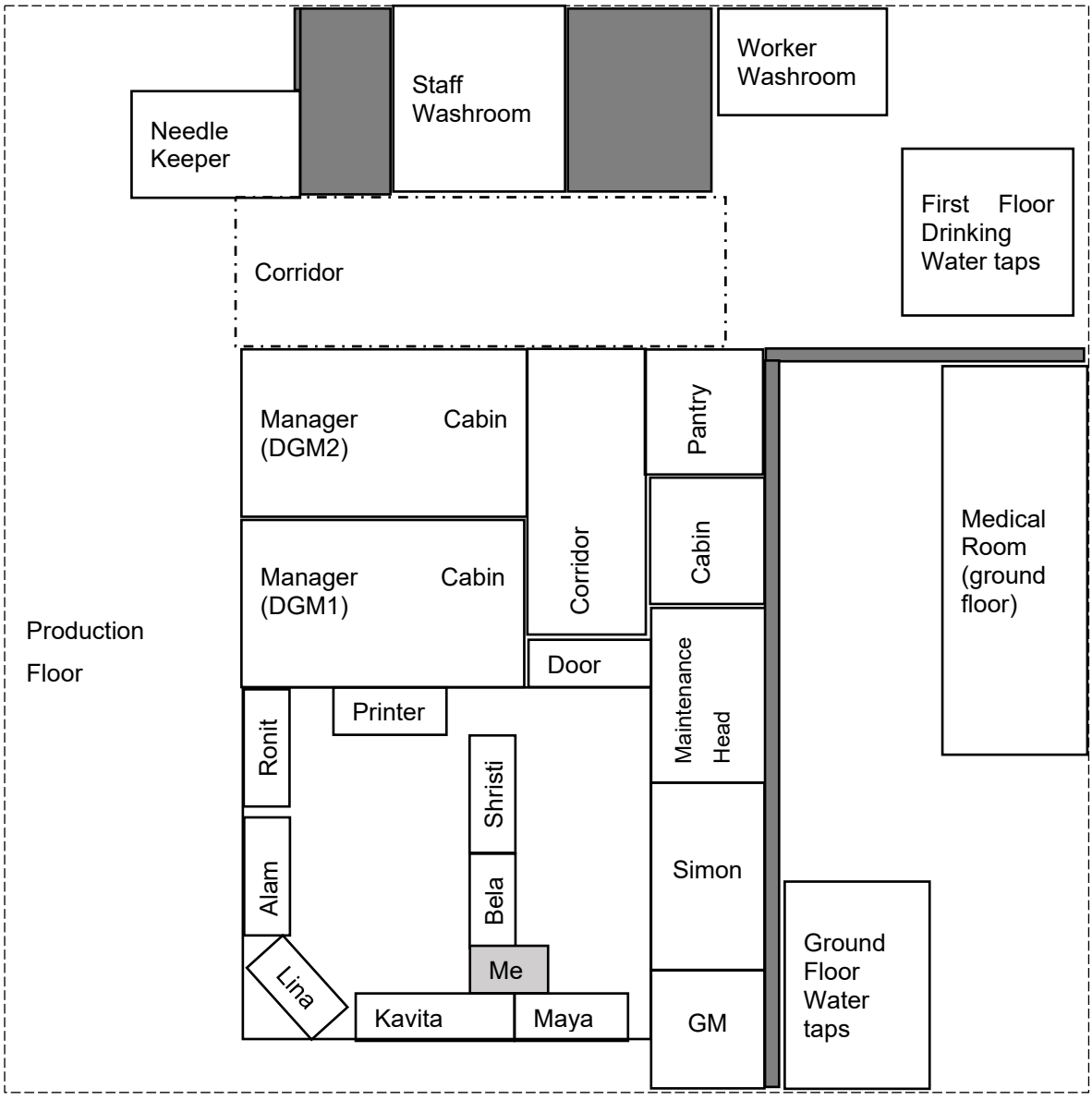
I also participated in several meetings at FF and Mystral including worker-manager committee meetings (on prevention of sexual harassment and safety) and managerial meetings on operational matters. I observed worker training (on quality, safety, awareness of menstrual hygiene and health-related issues) and attended events (certification distribution ceremony after completion of a skilling programme, a birthday celebration in a crèche, and presentations by Mystral’s interns). I also witnessed social compliance audit preparations and auditor visits at the factory.

Ethnographic walking: Shadowing

In addition to Wolcott (2008)’s enquiring, examining and experiencing, I also adopted ‘walking’ (Moretti 2017) as my ethnographic way of looking. I took a walk on the production floor, paying attention to sights, smell and sounds, watching people engrossed in their work, observing different interactions. I also shadowed (Czarniawska 2014) people working in different roles (HR Officers, Safety Officers, Production Managers, Security Guards) on the factory floor, and *walked with them, in their shoes*, observing what they do, how, with whom, and when, and tried to re-construct the factory world from their point of view. Doing this with workers was the most demanding, for it

was physically and emotionally tiring. I only shadowed some workers for a brief period during their working day. This is also because engaging with them, despite the unrestricted access I had secured, owing to production pressures, was not easy. In the following, I further discuss my engagement and dialogue with workers.

Figure 3.1: The HR room in the factory



Engaging workers during work hours

As my primary site of study was the factory, I engaged with the workers in the factory and during their work hours. With most managers and executives, after Mahesh's introduction to his team members, I managed to get an appointment for a dedicated

conversation. Due to my unrestricted access, I also often managed to speak with them, at their workstations, without prior appointments. However, with workers, matters were not as straightforward. I did not want to approach workers through their immediate supervisors, production in-charges, managers or even through HR as I suspected that might generate trust deficits. I did have permission to visit any place within the factory and speak to anyone and I decided to utilise this privileged access for my outreach with workers. I had initially planned to start from the canteen, but I soon realised that after 4-5 hours of hectic work, workers had only 30 minutes for lunch and the canteen would not be the ideal place to have conversations. Workers were rushed, often tired and it did not seem appropriate to bother them during their meal and their only break.

After my first few days in the factory, exploring different places and work areas, I discovered the medical room. I noticed that all pregnant women regularly visited the medical room between 10 am to 12 noon to take a protein drink offered by FF, and sometimes also to rest. Since they were expecting mothers, they were allowed a brief additional break (15–30 minutes). When I first met these women in the medical room, they seemed relaxed and more than willing to talk. Usually, they used to sit around in groups and talk among themselves. I introduced myself on the first day, and they asked me to come along the following day. I managed to start my outreach with the workers in the medical room, and within a week of my first visit, I knew almost every woman worker in the factory who was pregnant. Every day, I walked back with one of them to their workstation and when their peers noticed me with them, they also showed interest in talking to me and were mostly open and candid in sharing their perspectives. I had already addressed their key concerns and questions in the medical room and if any worker asked me a question, I responded candidly. For instance, once as workers were standing in a group, waiting to go for a training session, I was ‘hanging -around’ and chatting with some them. One worker asked what workers would gain from my research and why was I allowed inside the factory by the management. While I had been dealing with similar questions in individual conversations, I was not prepared for a response to a joint group of workers as well as their manager. However, I responded that I had no preconceived ideas about anyone’s gain or otherwise, that I neither had all solutions nor all the answers and I was in the factory to hear and learn from them. Kashish (name changed), who had put me on the spot, later became one of my key contacts, I even visited her home and met her family and we continue to stay in touch. I was also put to the test by some workers, who told me things about others (including both workers and managers) and waited to see if I would share anything with anyone. After I won their confidence, for I never named anyone in my discussions in the factory, they were

forthcoming with their views and perspectives. Some even shared with me their concerns and issues at work and beyond in personal lives.

After the initial trust building and confidence generation efforts, I could easily move around the factory floor and even speak to them while they worked. Workers engaged with me like they sometimes spoke to their peers, while working. Often, I assisted them in some way to avoid the ire of the supervisor or production-in charge. Within my two weeks in the factory nearly all production managers and supervisors recognised me and if I was chatting with someone, they did not object. From the third week onwards, I spent most of my time on the factory floor talking to workers. Not everyone was always working and gradually I figured out the windows of time and activity when they would have relatively less work pressure. For instance, whenever there is a bottleneck in the sewing line some workers have to wait for pieces of garment to come forward, or when machines are being repaired some sit idle. Similarly, when a new style is being introduced, it starts from the end of the production line and workers towards the middle of the line would be idle (the ones towards the end would still be busy with finishing the previous style). In this way, I also identified the windows of time when I should not approach any worker on the factory floor (for instance, in the mornings, during overtime hours, or when they are dealing with a bottleneck situation). I therefore split my time between reaching out to managers when workers were busy and approached the workers only at times that were relatively convenient for them. I managed to talk to over 110 workers on the factory floor for durations ranging between 15 minutes to an hour and later met few of them at their homes for even longer discussions (up to 2–3 hours).

d) Away from the factory, in the field

During my first field trip, of nearly eight weeks, my approach to engaging with people and data collection was open-ended and flexible. There was a gap of nearly nine months between the first and the second field trips, and I spent this time generating and recording my data, analysing documents, following the research diary maintained by Shubha, and engaging with workers and managers through instant messaging (WhatsApp) and phone. I had exchanged my mobile number with some managers and workers, and we maintained frequent contact. In our conversations, on WhatsApp chats or phone calls, we discussed changes that were happening in the factory, their thoughts and views on issues including developments in their personal life (the birth of their children and illness in their family, among other issues). During these engagements, I

also shared themes emerging from my initial analysis and we often had discussions around them. Such interactions allowed me to plan my second field visit focused on the issues I had identified in my interim analysis.

e) Co-creating perspectives

I went back to the factory in July 2018 for another five weeks. During the second trip, I spent all my time in the factory (with only occasional meetings at the head office) mostly having discussions with people I had met earlier, but also meeting some new people. I visited the homes of eight workers and spent a minimum of 2–3 hours with them and their families on Sundays. Many more had invited me, but I had only four Sundays during the entire trip. My approach was guided by the funnel approach as I started broad and became increasingly focused (Agar 1980; Strauss and Corbin 1998). In all my conversations, I began with sharing my broad emergent arguments which we then debated and discussed. Often recent incidents or experiences were also included in our conversations. I occasionally sought more information where there were any gaps in my understanding. As I presented my analysis of groups of workers to individual workers, individual managers and to groups of managers, their agreement or disagreement with my emerging analysis created scope for discussions. Most importantly, such interactions revealed strongly held but less frequently voiced assumptions and beliefs. Our continued engagement allowed multiple reasoning and positions to emerge. People in the factory were involved as an 'engaged reflexive subject, who cannot be a mere informant or subject of research, but in some sense, must become involved in its intellectual work and scope' (Marcus 2007b). Very often, in these engagements, new themes and perspectives emerged, which both of us agreed with, hence the label co-created perspectives. My interest in co-production of ethnographic knowledge led to an interactive Self-Other dialogue (Tedlock 2001). This is similar to what Lewis and Russell (2011) refer to as embedded ethnographic research. It is these co-created perspectives along with my observations and interpretations that I have presented in the empirical and discussion chapters.

f) Redefining boundaries: Co-designing the fieldwork

An ethnographic project is a concatenation of different interactions with the *other* – some in the customary field site which entails encounters, and others, more physically distant, in the library and in conversation with colleagues including the activity of evaluation,

articulation, thinking and rethinking of what one has already encountered and what one is likely to encounter on the go (Faubion 2009). “The field can never be just a physical site. It is in the head, whole body and beyond one designated locality” (Oakley 2007:360). It is not FF alone that defined the field for my research. My fieldwork extended beyond the time I physically spent at the factory. It was spread across time and locations, involving use of WhatsApp chat conversations, phone calls and multiple visits. Wulff (2002) refers to this as ‘yo-yo’ fieldwork.

However, rather than a conscious pre-determined ‘design process’ (Marcus 2007a), my time and approach in the field emerged during the ethnographic dialogue. In keeping with the commitment to OnT, I experimented with what a field may be (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). I shaped and designed my fieldwork in dialogue with the workers and managers at FF and managers at Mystral, responding to their availability, seeking their feedback on my views and following their interests. Subject to these different forces, my fieldwork was dynamically shaped, and this ongoing transformation continually influenced my ethnographic dialogue and all of the characters in it, including myself as the ethnographer (Sriram et al. 2009). The conception of fieldwork as continuing, interactive communication is a commitment to dialogical anthropology and self-reflexive ethnographic praxis (Fabian 2002). Indeed, no dialogue and associated with it no fieldwork, can be said to be fully complete, and driven by time and resource constraints; the necessary ‘incompleteness’ might as well be accepted as the ‘norm’ of fieldwork (Marcus 2007a).

g) Field notes

Field notes are usually prose texts that record observations or impressions and are intended to describe events, recollections, thoughts and feelings (Johnson and Johnson 2001). Ethnographers ‘inscribe’ social discourse: they write it down and in so doing turn it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in the textual inscriptions and can be reconsulted (Geertz 1973). I took down descriptions (of events, behaviours, conversations and activities), inscriptions (of my mental notes and of what I noticed to be important to people) and transcriptions (a running record of what an individual says) during conversations or over a period of observation (Le Compte and Schensul 1999). Indeed, inscription, transcription and description as different types of notes are artificial separations, but they

do destabilise the misleading unity of 'fieldwork' (Clifford 1990) which in my ethnographic dialogue, as discussed earlier, spanned different activities, locations and time periods.

Language creates a particular view of reality (Richardson 1995). In taking my notes, with an aim to understand as fully as possible the world of the factory and the people in it, I kept in mind the three language principles outlined by Spradley (1980). The first is the principle of language identification which implies that often reducing conversations to the ethnographer's own language may eventually lead to distortions. I therefore tried to retain the words used in the field (in Hindi) when taking notes. The second principle is the verbatim which enables the ethnographer to capture the participants' words as they were spoken. While this was at times highly constrained, I tried to capture verbatim statements whenever possible. I also paid attention to the pauses and emotions and captured the change in tone, particularly the conversations between workers and the managers. Whenever I was able to use a digital recorder, I later transcribed the discussions verbatim. Following the third principle of description of practices, I captured my observations about events and actions in the factory in as much detail as possible.

h) Putting notes to work: Generating confidence

Field notes can have an influence on the relationships between ethnographer and *the other* by disrupting the flow of conversations, arousing suspicion and even generating ethical dilemmas when the ethnographer's presence with his/her notebook is forgotten (Jackson 1995). Indeed, my field notes influenced and shaped my interactions and experiences and had a far-reaching effect on how I defined the field and the tales I chose to tell. However, I also put the field notes to work to shape my ethnographic dialogue.

I always carried my notebook and pen in the factory. Over the first few days, I realised that the notebook and pen and the act of taking field notes can disrupt the flow of an ongoing conversation, especially if it's over lunch or group discussions. Moreover, moving around the factory floor with a notebook and pen in my early days at the factory, I was likely to be mistaken as some kind of informer, as someone asked me on my second day at the factory. I dealt with these issues by making the notebook and pen a part of my introduction. Everyone I met, I first introduced myself, and explained my methodology, and why I carried around the notebook, and why I took notes and how it would help my purpose. Given I was the first ethnographer to ever visit the factory, on one occasion I even asked by some HR staff members if they could see my notebook. I

was appreciative of the curiosity and did not hesitate and briefly shared the notebook with them for a quick peek. However, as I handed it out, I reiterated to them my promise of confidentiality to them as well as to others. They understood and refrained from detailed examination of my notebook, flipped it over and handed it back to me. However, such interactions on my part did contribute in my acceptance and relationship-building with the managers.

Eventually, I was accepted with my notebook and pen and was even fondly called by some of the HR staff as 'the lady with the notebook'. However, despite this, noting down everything I heard, experienced and witnessed was a challenge. Audio or video recording was not always possible. While the notebook and pen were eventually accepted as non-threatening, audio-visual devices seemed to generate tension. While I had in principle permission from senior management for such recordings (I had secured this in the early days of negotiating my access), I did not want to impose my needs or myself. I was careful not to come across as insensitive to people's individual comfort levels. While I could have cited head office and Mystral management permissions to insist on recordings, I decided not to. Such decisions to respect individual comfort levels went a long way in generating trust with people and towards my acceptance in the factory.

It is also to be noted that while the primary focus of my research was factory workers, spending time with managers and staff and working to gain their trust in different ways as have been noted, allowed me to gain support and generate confidence across different managerial levels at Mystral and FF which ultimately resulted in me gaining and retaining unrestricted and unmonitored access to the workers. Moreover, gaining trust of managers allowed me to gain insight into their everyday, observe their views and gather their perspectives on a range of issues, which when combined with those of workers, strengthened my research and analysis.

i) Crafting the field notes: Shaping the field

Unable to audio or video record most interactions and interviews, I had to rely on my memory, speed of writing, listening skills, observational ability and the recorder on my phone (for audio notes). I used shorthand notes during observations, meetings and interactions. During lunch discussions and casual tea break conversations, I would listen attentively and scribble brief memos and jottings as soon as I could. On hectic days, I

used to take short breaks and record my notes on the voice recorder on my phone. I would reach the factory most days around 9am and left at around 6pm, usually for all six days of the week. I was mostly with people all day; I even had lunch with the HR team every day. While this kind of embedding was immensely useful, it was also exhausting. While on some days I made my notes in my diary at night, most days I audio recorded my thoughts in the cab on my way back, or after dinner. On my way to the factory in the mornings, I used to review my notes from the previous day to ensure I had recorded everything and, if not, I went back to the place or person to clarify any gaps.

Where possible, I drew sketches and diagrams. I used all my senses – the sensory, the visual, the auditory and the emotional (see section 3.5.5 for how emotions were used) – to capture my experience. I crafted the notes, and in crafting them I also shaped the field. I always made a point to mention dates and location. Towards the end of my fieldwork, I finally went around taking pictures and making short videos after assuring Mahesh and his team that I would only use it for my reference and would ensure confidentiality if I use anything in presentations or the thesis document. Juxtaposing the field notes with pictures of places, people and objects transposes me to the in-between world, between my experience and notes. It has re-defined the field for me which is not simply ‘out there’ but also embedded in shaping and shaped by my notes. This shaping continued as I undertook an exhaustive ethnographic recording of my notes and observations on my computer after my return to the UK.

j) Ethnographic recording

In taking my notes, I adopted a comprehensive approach (as opposed to the salience hierarchy approach where only what an ethnographer finds interesting is captured) (Wolfinger 2002). This aligned well with my grounded approach and the ontological turn which informed my research. I used Microsoft Word to convert my shorthand notes, brief memos, scribbles, drawings, sketches and audio/video recordings and pictures (wherever available) into a detailed document. I systematically and comprehensively described everything that happened during my field trip. Where I felt I had missed a crucial detail, I used a subsequent chat conversations or phone calls with a manager/worker to address the gap. I clarified all my notes in as much detail as I could. My notes in most cases were in the local language (Hindi) and I typed in Hindi using the English alphabet. I chose to do this transliteration instead of translation to avoid

meanings, emotions and expressions getting lost in translation before my analysis (Regmi et. al. 2010).

I compiled this document in a chronological order and organised my notes into four sections, namely observational, methodological, emotional and theoretical (Gobo 2008). The observational section is the most exhaustive and comprises all interactions, conversations, interviews, observations and experiences in the factory. In the methodological section, I took notes of my dilemmas, frustrations, challenges and reflections on my role as a fieldworker and ethnographer. Many of these are my everyday reflexive accounts. In the emotional sections, I included all personalised memos, including where I was sad, depressed, upset, and angry. Indeed, there were days when I cried too. The personal stories of many of the women I met were filled with experiences (and horrors) of domestic violence and abuse. These notes were very useful in exercising reflexivity when analysing my data. I took special care to be critical in my reading of the notes from days, incidents and interactions where I was extremely emotional. Finally, the theoretical section included my reflections on notions and concepts including those of work, CSR, CoC, performance measurement, international production and capitalism. While I was not imposing any particular definition during my fieldwork, I had engaged with the literature and often I would reflect back on what I had read with reference to what I had seen. In total, my notes span over 350,000 words in about 1000 pages (800 pages of word document and 200 pages in my diary).

This ethnographic recording was the final step in what I label my data generation while simultaneously being the first step in data analysis. It is important to note that while I discuss them in two sections for clarity and to aid readability, data generation and analysis were not separate and linear processes. They were inextricably connected and often overlapping, simultaneously shaping the field, the fieldwork and the fieldworker.

3.5.4.2 Finding patterns: Data analysis

Hanson (1958) held that through the work with empirical material, at a certain point a pattern emerges, and this pattern finding is at the heart of science. Ethnographers look for repetitions in their field sites in the form of ethnographic patterns (Pedersen 2019) and infer patterns from what one has observed (Wolcott 2008). In fact, fieldwork itself has been argued to be an embodied attempt to comprehend and fit in with patterns in social life, including those of recurrence and repetition (Bandak and Coleman 2019). In

this section, I will present my work towards identifying patterns that eventually allowed me to craft my ethnography.

a) Analytical choices in ethnographic recording

The ethnographic recording discussed in the previous section was the first step in my analysis. In the organisation of my note taking, I had already started interpreting my data. I chose to record my data sequentially and temporally ordered it according to the date and time of my interactions, interviews and observations. Since I had not entered the field with a preconceived category of knowledge or people, I used the temporal flow of my own experience to organise the notes. Indeed, factory work is a simultaneous performance. While I was observing one activity and interaction, several others were going on. I managed to capture this dynamism and simultaneity to some extent in my observations of the factory floor and the HR room where, at one time, several conversations and activities were going on. Sometimes I recorded multiple interactions and activities at one point in time (see excerpt 1 in table 3.2), and at other times I focused on a single interaction and followed it until the end (see excerpt 2). Recordings that capture multiple actions together proved extremely useful during the later stages of my analysis where I used these to undertake multiple readings of one place or one interaction.

Table 3.2 Research Diary Excerpts

<table>
<tr><td colspan="6">Excerpt 1 from research diary (all names changed)
25th July 2017, 10:15 am</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lina</td><td>Kavita</td><td>Bela</td><td>Maya</td><td>Srishti</td><td>Others</td></tr>
<tr><td>Talking to a worker about her leave form</td><td>Opening worker's leave record to discuss unplanned leave</td><td>Telling a worker about documents needed for some scheme she wants to apply for</td><td>Counselling for poor performance (non-delivery of production target on previous day)</td><td>Asking a worker why she has been missing the CSR training</td><td>Simon – working on computer
One worker waiting as Kavita has asked her file to be brought
Alam, Ronit working on their computers.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Excerpt 2 (Observations on the factory floor while shadowing Bela) on 29th July 2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">"As we stood in one place while Bela was on call with the Administration in-charge reporting about the washrooms she found to be smelling, I looked around. There was a specific rhythm to the sound of machines whirring and clicking and people murmuring and talking. Thousands of people on a single floor. Wearing colorful garments and making garments of multiple shapes, size and colour. It was an overwhelming sight, so much to grasp, so much to capture – one supervisor talking to someone in one sewing line, another, explaining an operation to a worker by demonstrating it himself and the third one talking to the worker. The feeders running around, noting down pieces, carrying bundles, trims and accessories. With heads down, sewing operators focused on producing their targets, helpers standing and doing their tasks (marking garments, cutting extra thread, ordering pieces according to number on stickers on garment panels). Some workers talking, some smiling, some looking tensed. So many stories, so many lives, so many individuals…all tied together through a single style in one straight line</td></tr>
</table>

and 15 lines under a single roof…this is a world on its own. As I looked on observing the movements, passing of garment pieces, it dawned on me, this is the world I want to know more about, a world, which has a language of its own… Target is a number, but it is also the overarching goal, every single person in this world is chasing… and the entire world and all systems are structured around it".

Moreover, as discussed in the previous section, I segregated the notes of my ethnographic recording in four parts. This choice had two objectives. The first was an attempt to separate (albeit artificially) the field from the researcher and to segregate voices in the field (indeed as seen and heard through my person) (observational notes) from my own voice (as captured in my emotional, methodological, and theoretical notes). The second objective had a connected third purpose - it was an attempt to separate my researcher self (in methodological and theoretical notes) from my emotional self (in emotional notes) as an exercise of reflexivity.

b) Open-coding and initial memoing

Having compiled the ethnographic record, I read and re-read the notes of my observations and interactions to identify concepts/categories/themes which could possibly explain a specific observed phenomenon. A search for regularities is informed by an active categorisation of what recurs (Bandak and Coleman 2019). While Le Compte and Schensul (1999) refer to this as an item-level of analysis, Gobo (2008) refers to it as open coding (deconstruction). In identifying these codes and items, I asked questions of my field notes (Emerson et al. 2001) focusing on processes and practical concerns with an attempt to specify the meanings and points of view of the workers and the managers. Ethnography involves so much more than a recording of words. Local categories do not exhaust the world, and native voices never tell the full story about the world as for them, their culture is referentially transparent – it is not 'seen' but 'seen with' (Hastrup 1995:149). Questioning of my ethnographic recording allowed me to identify the taken for granted assumptions in the factory world : for instance managers appeared to believe giving a job was a great thing they were doing, they almost always thought that when asking for leave worker may be lying and workers always seemed to be conscious of 'their place'. In addition to subjecting my own assumptions (which were compiled at start of fieldwork) to critical scrutiny as I reviewed the field notes, I also undertook conceptualisation to generate new kinds of, and instruments for, thinking out of my ethnographic materials (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017), to develop new categories instead of imposing pre-existing ones. For instance, CoC audit as a game in the factory,

workers as pawns for managers, internationalised factory as a glass box were some of the categories and working concepts that I experimented with.

To avoid being frustrated with open coding of all the notes at once, I adopted the strategy of selective open coding (Emerson et al. 2001) in which I read different sections of the notes at different times and coded them. Along with engaging with my notes and coding, I also wrote memos on insights about what is going on in the data and I wrote these initial theoretical memos alongside the coding. This initial memoing allowed me to identify and develop broader analytic themes and arguments (Emerson et al. 2001) which I later reduced to theme selection and axial and selective coding.

c) Axial coding and integrative memoing

After writing up the initial memos and having identified a first set of themes, concepts and categories, I undertook what Le Compte and Schensul (1999) refer to as pattern level analysis where I collated related themes and sought to identify patterns and axially code them. In doing so, I tried to give significance to the perspectives of workers and managers. This process is a constructive phase (Gobo 2008) where the attempt was to develop a story of what is going on in the data. In keeping with OnT, I experimented with data and concepts (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017) and subjected my own thoughts and concepts to experimental intervention along with scrutinising narratives of my assumptions.

The coding at this stage was supplemented by extensive integrative memoing where relationships between codes and themes were explored and theoretical connections between field notes began to be developed. Writing the integrative memos which outlined relationships between different codes also necessitated a selection of some themes while others were left out.

d) Conceptual memoing: towards theory building

The essential task of theory building in ethnography is not to codify abstract regularities but to make thick description possible, not to generalise across cases but to generalise within them (Geertz 1973). Ethnography is never a description but a theory of describing (Nader 2011: 211). Having developed the integrative memos, based on the relationships identified, I abstracted the relationships to arrive at mid-range concepts which answer

the research questions, identify workers' experiences, and explain workers' experiences. I also undertook conceptual memoing to outline relationships between with selected themes and codes. In doing so, instead of using existing theoretical approaches to explain my observations, I explored what notions and ideas could best explain the ethnographic descriptions and these attempts allowed me to identify the explanatory concepts in my data.

e) Constant iteration

While the three phases above have been discussed separately, they were interwoven, and iterative and I did not work in a linear manner. After the initiation of the first round of open coding, all three phases were almost simultaneous, overlapping, and messy. This messiness, it has been argued, is to be celebrated as the hallmark of ethnography as ethnographers work conceptually during fieldwork and think empirically when writing up (Decker and McKinlay forthcoming). I analysed the documents to identify themes and included it in my analysis along with additional interviews and interactions. After I arrived at an initial concept which seemed to tie together the narrative of the people in the factory, and I was convinced that this would be a story worth telling, I went back to some workers and described my main argument to them. Their emphatic expressions of agreement with my conceptualisation was motivating for it is workers' voices and experiences that this research wishes to contribute, to the extant literature and scholarly debates.

A dialogue with the *other*, however, almost always entails emotional experiences and ethical dilemmas which underpin the need for reflexive dialogue with the self. It is to this discussion of managing the intersection of the three that we now turn.

3.5.5 Mediating the intersection of ethics, emotions, and reflexivity

Ethnographic research often entails managing a tripartite division between our selves: research-self (doing the research), personal-self (brought to the field) and situation-self (created in the field) (Reinharz 2011). The three selves are not always aligned and often, when in tension, it can take a toll on the researcher.

I was committed to the ethical considerations in my research. I read all guidelines and took ethical approvals, prioritised participant well-being, informed consent, and

anonymity (all names and details have been anonymised). However, being ethical as an ethnographer is not simple (Ferdinand et al. 2007) and being in a factory gave rise to ethical dilemmas. Learning about discrimination against pregnant women, witnessing how one worker was denied access to a crèche while other received it were some instances which generated an ethical dilemma when I felt my research-self confronted my situation-self. To what extent should I give in to the 'ethical impulse,' should I or should I not intervene? These were some of my constant dilemmas. My situation-self wanted to help, my researcher-self regarded it as overstepping the boundary and my personal-self was overwhelmed. Ultimately, the research-self prevailed. In the interest of respecting the confidentiality of my participants, I decided not to intervene in matters of the factory. Whether that was the right thing to do or not, is still a question (Ferdinand et al. 2007). The sense of having failed workers was frustrating and overwhelming, similar to what Chowdhury (2017a) describes when discussing his fieldwork with garment workers in Bangladesh. While I have detailed notes and reflections on such instances, they hardly capture my lived experience and my personal-self still wonders, what if I had intervened.

Similar to ethical dilemmas, I also had many emotional encounters. Experiences of women who were victims of domestic violence and abuse, and their tales of friction with their in-laws, not only impacted my emotional state but also fostered a bond with them, where they continued to reach out to me to share their concerns. I assumed the role of an 'agony aunt' for women in the factory, including both workers and managers. I engaged in many such emotionally demanding conversations, while in the factory, and over calls when away, because I wanted to somehow be of help. An added effect was that such conversations strengthened trust between us. However, such encounters also resulted in me being embedded and entangled in the world of the factory and its people and my three selves seemed to converge. To deal with this and create a distance between my research-self, situation-self and personal-self and to mediate the tensions when analysing and writing up, I undertook a detached scrutiny of "what I know and how I know it" in recognition of how knowledge is actively constructed by the researcher (Finlay 2002). Such scrutiny was made possible because of the active dialogue with myself that I undertook throughout the research process.

As already described earlier, I began my research with making my prior assumptions explicit, and in the field, I took extensive text and audio notes.There were occasions when I was extremely overwhelmed emotionally and on such occasions, I used poetic

expression in Hindi to express and capture my emotionality. In a way, to deal with the tension between the three selves- I identified a fourth self, the 'poetic-self'.

The reflexive ethnographer does not simply report 'facts' or 'truths' but actively constructs interpretations of his or her experiences in the field and then questions how those interpretations came about" (Hertz 1997: viii). Revisiting these poetic notes during analysis not only allowed me to cope with the tension between my selves and exercise everyday reflexivity in the field, but an analysis of these poetic expressions also allowed me to practice ethnographic imagination (Willis 2000). Echoing Mills' (2000 [1959]) calls for a sociological imagination, Willis calls upon ethnographers to establish connections between everyday practices, to juxtapose the reporting of everyday reality with imagination, seeking to transcend the everyday to set the range of imaginative meanings within social thought. It was my poetic expression that allowed me to practice ethnographic imagination - for instance, revisiting the poetic couplets I had written on workers' everyday relationship with targets enabled me to identify the notion of working time squeeze and eventually the 'hidden work' of CSR (see chapter 4,5,6).

Since these poetic couplets were originally written in Hindi, translation was not deemed appropriate to communicate the intended meaning, emotions and depth of expressions. However, I do reproduce an attempt at translation of a few lines to only highlight how using such expressions for capturing workers' everyday life allowed me to practice, juxtaposition, conceptualization and eventually ethnographic imagination as it allowed workers' *bandish* which is presented in the next chapter to come alive:

> I get so lost and engrossed with your [target] fussing
> That you become my only world, everything else is nothing
>
> The relationship of ours
> Leaves me with many scars
>
> I walk away, with a sigh, wishing it were my final goodbye
> And yet again the very next day, am here again, to say hi

In addition to my observations and experiences, I often also captured my own conflicting emotions through poetic expression. When crafting my ethnography, I used my own experiences, captured and recorded in poetic couplets, reflective memos and audio and text notes, also as a topic of enquiry (Denzin 1997). Reflexivity, in whatever one is doing, is to be attentive also to the manner in which one does it – its conditions of possibility (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). I paid such attention during construction of empirical

material, its interpretation and as well as its writing (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009), which I discuss in the following section.

3.5.6 Showing their world (and mine): Writing ethnography

Ethnography translates experience into text (Clifford and Marcus 1986). There is, however, no direct link between experience and text. Rather, the experience is created in the text written by the researcher (Denzin 1997). This has also been referred to as the 'crisis' of representation (Geertz 1973). The intersubjective world is a negotiated, constantly changing world where nothing is ever just revealed, rather we come to know this world through our representations of it (Denzin 1997). Production of ethnography, then, is not a unidirectional process; it works (starting at the moment when we take notes or make texts based on recordings) from both ends, research and writing (Fabian 2014). Ethnography, then, is a creative process where a new reality takes shape as it is conceptualised. The 'other' world is simultaneously discovered and defined; observation and theory are one.

The worlds we study, as discussed, are created in part, through the texts we write about them. These texts are always dialogical – the site at which voices of the 'other,' alongside the voices of the author, come alive and interact (Denzin 1997). The problem of voice is a problem of multiplicity as well as a problem of representation (Appadurai 1988:16). One cannot claim to *know* the *other* as subject except for as a part of a communicative space and therefore their voice must be heard and respected and not violated by textual mercy (Hastrup 1995). Reflexively acknowledging the world of betweenness established in the field, while also admitting the distinctness of the interlocutors and seeing from a point that epitomises the contact zone with the others, I have crafted my ethnography to examine documents, conceptualise and narrate the workers' experiences and the context in which it takes place.

The empirical section is written to produce an embodied, subjective understanding and aims to bring the reader more directly into the contradictory, shifting, fragile worlds of experience in the factory (Denzin 1997). It has been inspired by the reflexive, messy text (Marcus 1994) that make the writer a part of the writing project and move back and forth between description, interpretation, and voice. Such texts aim to produce local situated knowledge about the practices of a given group of people, in this case the people in the factory. The ethnographer becomes the writer-as-scribe for the other, voicing

interpretations about the events recorded and observed, recreating the social world as a site where identities, cultures, practices are negotiated and given meaning (Denzin 1997). The empirical chapters present how workers' experience is constituted and what they make of it. A process narrative utilizing conversations and quotations alongside short vignettes and composite narratives (Jarzabkowski and Bednarek 2014) has been crafted to highlight how workers' everyday experiences are constituted and generated. The sections highlighting workers' experiences are crafted as a collective story (Richardson 1988) intertwined with the voice of the researcher as the narrator and reflector (Tedlock 2004). They intend to draw attention to what workers make of their everyday factory lives. Finally, the sections that intend to draw attention to the context in which workers' experiences take place are crafted as a composite narrative that draws on characters and events from multiple ethnographic observations (Jarzabkowski and Bednarek 2014).

3.6 Reflections on my ethnography

A way of seeing is also a way of not seeing – a focus upon object A involves a neglect of object B (Burke 1984:49). Ethnographic knowledge is constructed from within the conditions of fieldwork and ethnographic dialogue is a constitutive element of knowledge production (Fabian 2002). As Fabian (2014) has argued, conception of an ethnographic dialogue entails it can be manipulative and deceptive; or may even entail selective emphasis, secretiveness, withholding information, and even outright lying. While I have tried to be truthful and nonmanipulative in my dialogue, however, my selection of issues, driven by my own interests, tacit knowledge and worldviews inevitably may have resulted in selective emphasis (Hegelund 2005) and there is no claim here to any 'neutral' data. Observation is never neutral; the gaze is directed from a particular point of view…There is no way of seeing from 'nowhere in particular' (Hastrup 1995:4).

The choice of context by ethnographers is necessarily arbitrary, in the sense that a host of different stories could be told about any situation, each one placing it in a different temporal and spatial context. From this perspective, ethnography is simply one means among others for telling stories about the social world, stories that need not be seen as competitive in epistemic terms (Hammersley 2006:6). Regarding data as hybrid of our theories and our sense data implies that different researchers may present different ethnographies and these different perspectives offer us new ways of seeing the world

(Hegelund 2005). My ethnography is one way of seeing the factory world and workers experiences of international CSR and CoC.

The underside of the ethnographic work entails moral dilemmas as ethnographers take events, conversations, contextualise and package them to eventually transform them into meaningful patterns, which inadvertently exclude other patterns, meanings or causes (Fine 1993). Such a transformation is about hiding, about magic and about change (Fine 1993). The narrative, descriptions, examples, characters and interpretive commentary are woven together (Atkinson 1990). What results from a particular ethnography represents a coming together of a personality and particular biography in the persona of an ethnographer, interacting in a particular place in a unique way, for the purposes of preparing a study framed broadly by an academic tradition and more narrowly by how the assignment is perceived by the ethnographer and others in the setting (Wolcott 2008:94). It is exactly the particular, individual point of view, with all of its subjective biases, idiosyncrasies, and distortions that gives the ethnography its edge, its enlightening effect, its power (Hegelund 2005:660).

As intersubjectively produced knowledge, the experiences presented in this thesis are but fragments of reality. They are interpreted slices, glimpses of interactions exhibiting interpretive sufficiency (depth, detail, emotionality, nuance, coherence) and representational adequacy (Denzin 1997). Yet triggering recontextualisation in the shared experiential spaces of the field (Hastrup 1995), they are, arguably, also whole. The experiences presented in the following chapters are experiences of the worker-in-the-internationalised factory as an undivided analytical unit and highlight working lives, emotions and everyday priorities in an internationalised factory.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented ethnography as my research philosophy and methodology, as my way of seeing and knowing the world and has outlined my assumptions and orientations which have guided my research. The chapter also highlighted the relevance of ethnography to the research questions and explained how ethnography studies with the *other* to generate knowledge intersubjectively. I also elucidated my approach to constructing the field, undertaking my ethnographic dialogue explaining the specific methods and techniques that guided my research, shaped the field, and translated experience to text. I illustrated how by defining the fieldwork together with the other,

employing technology to enhance two-way communication, prioritising trust-building and individual wellbeing over my research objectives, I successfully gained access to the world of the factory and the people in the factory. While I discussed data generation, analysis and writing separately, indeed these are overlapping and not conceptually or practically distinct (Kunda 2013) and I drew attention to this messiness of ethnographic research both in analysis and writing. The chapter also explained how I exercised reflexivity to navigate the messiness and dealt with ethical and emotional dilemmas and reflected on the limitations and strengths of my research approach.

The meaning of the text goes beyond its author (Gadamer 2004). The reader of an ethnography is himself/herself engaged in the interpretation of the world of the others (re)constructed by the ethnographer (Atkinson 1990). The next two chapters of the thesis present my ethnography which presents factory workers' CSR experiences, how it is constituted and how it interpenetrates their working and personal lives.

4. *bandish*: international CSR and workers' experiences

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines and explains how CSR experiences of workers are constituted in an internationalised factory. Factory workers described their experiences of international CSR as *bandish* - a Hindi and Urdu word which has no exact translation in English. The closest words in English which describe workers' expressions would be restriction, denial, knot, restrain, act of tying (Khan 1959). In the absence of an exact English translation, the original word has been retained.

The chapter illustrates that workers' *bandish* refers to and emanates from a working time squeeze, a constant ongoing shortage of working time, that is generated as the legitimacy-driven imperative of international CSR manifested as CoC interacts with the profit-driven imperative of production targets in the internationalised factory. The chapter further emphasises that managerial discretions, interactions, and perceptions, which underpin the enactment of CoC in the factory, play a distinctive role in shaping, accentuating and ultimately sustaining the working time squeeze and in turn workers' *bandish*.

The first section of the chapter introduces Fast Factory (FF) and presents how CoC are translated to and applied as buyer compliance rules in an internationalised factory. This section is presented as a composite narrative and draws on characters and events from multiple ethnographic observations (Jarzabkowski and Bednarek 2014). The following section presents workers' descriptions of *bandish* and their experiences of CSR in an internationalised factory. This is presented through a collective story (Richardson 1988). The third section explains how the working time squeeze underlying *bandish* is generated, shaped, accentuated and sustained in the interaction of CoC conduct, manifested as buyer compliance rules, and purchase orders, manifested as production targets, in the factory. This section is crafted as a process narrative presented through snapshots of specific conversations and quotations alongside short vignettes and composite narratives (Jarzabkowski and Bednarek 2014).

4.2 Fast Factory: an internationalised factory

Spread over nearly 18,200 square meters of land, inside the FF, nearly 3500 people, speaking different languages, belonging to different socio-economic status, castes, and religions, gather under one roof to achieve one purpose, to manufacture and ship garments. Their job is to make garments or to make sure that garments are made. Irrespective of where one comes from, the language one speaks or one's religious beliefs, everyone can belong to only one of the three categories of people inside the gates of FF. You can be staff, a worker or a visitor. In either category, entry into, as well as exit, from FF is regulated. Visitors have to sign in and sign out on entry registers at the gate. There is a biometric system for regulating entry and exit of workers and staff. The visitor category includes anyone coming to visit FF for a short time. A delivery truck driver, a researcher or a representative of the buyer firm are all visitors. Staff are the people who occupy the managerial positions in FF including production floor supervisors, production in-charges, managers of different functions including quality, production, Human Resource (HR) and maintenance, among others. The highest position in FF belongs to the General Manager (GM). Staff earn competitive wages and enjoy several benefits. The category of staff includes anyone who holds the rank of supervisor or above and spends his/her days overseeing the third category of people, the factory workers. Workers either sit next to sewing machines or stand next to the ironing table. They either stitch the garment, iron it, check it for any quality issues or assist its production and packaging in any other manner as advised. They earn minimum wages[6] and occupy different roles including helper, feeder, pressman (woman), operator, checker (initial, final, in-line, end-line[7]). All of them report to the staff, who define the limits what workers can and cannot do.

Everyone in FF spends their time sorting and working on machines and material. Big fabric rolls and loose pieces of trims (buttons, laces, and strings, among others) enter the factory gates and wait in the store, till the time they are called out as per the

[6] At the time of fieldwork in 2017, the basic minimum wage for factory workers varied from INR 7600 (approx. GBP 81) for workers in unskilled category to INR 9700 (approx. GBP 104) for workers in the skilled category. After the mandatory social security deductions the take home wage for workers ranged between INR 7133 (approx. GBP 76) to INR 9106 (approx. GBP 98) per month. Minimum wages are guided by provisions of The Minimum Wages Act, 1948. Wages of garment factory workers in India are locally defined by the respective state governments where the factory is located.

[7] Checking of garments is undertaken at different stages of the garment manufacturing process and workers performing this task are accordingly referred to as initial and final checkers in finishing and in-line and end-line checkers in sewing lines (See Appendix 4 for a visual representation of sewing line)

production plan of the specified garment (style) which has an identifier, the Purchase Order (PO) number. The fabric rolls are then carried to cutting departments by a few people where they are cut into garment panels by cutting machines or manually using scissors based on garment patterns which have been previously created by technicians in the head office of Mystral (FF's parent company). The cut garment panels are then picked by a few people and taken to the sewing department (called the shop floor or factory floor) where people can be seen sitting one behind the other and on either side. This arrangement is called a sewing line (see Appendix 4 for an illustrative image). At FF, sewing lines comprise of 47-52 people. Each person working in the sewing machine in this arrangement performs one or two stitching operations and is commonly referred to as operator. What starts as a cut fabric panel on the first machine is a fully formed garment by the time it reaches the last machine in this sequential arrangement of people and machines. Each person seated or standing in this arrangement is required to deliver their production targets, that is, they have to perform the task they have been allocated on a fixed number of garment pieces in a fixed amount of time.

FF produces garments for several international buyers and brands based in the United Kingdom, Europe, and United States of America. It follows all buyer requirements including the CoC which, as highlighted in Chapter 2, are an operationalisation of international CSR. Designed, developed, and adopted by buyers as a response to increasing pressure from consumers and other actors to assume responsibility for workers engaged in manufacturing their products, CoC are guided by a reputation-led, legitimacy imperative (Bird et al. 2019) (see Chapter 2).

At the time of the fieldwork, five international brands were sourcing from FF. All five CoC documents include a statement about the buyer and their commitment to CSR and ethical and responsible conduct. The content of the five CoC is very similar. As described in Chapter 2, all five CoC list the desired conduct as compliance with local law, protecting the environment, upholding integrity, and maintaining healthy workplaces. Specifications of working conditions constitutes 50 percent or more of the content of the five CoC (for more details see Appendix 5).

Specifically, the CoC refer to three issues. Firstly, it promises to ensure certain freedoms for workers including freedom of employment, movement, speech, and expression as well as freedom to associate (refer to Table A5.1 in Appendix 5 for details). Secondly, it lists protections for factory workers which include protection from harassment, overwork, wage-related exploitation, discrimination of all kinds, unsafe working conditions and

workplace hazards (refer to Table A5.2). Protection of vulnerable workers including pregnant women, migrant workers and temporary workers is specifically underlined. Thirdly, to ensure freedom and protection for workers, all five CoC recognise transparency as a starting point to address industry-wide CSR challenges and call for factories and suppliers to demonstrate transparency, honesty, ethics, integrity and open behaviour with a commitment to continuous improvement (refer to Table A5.3).

CoC have been noted to be intricately linked to business for factories like FF as they are often a prerequisite for buyers entering into contract with the suppliers (Gilbert and Huber 2017). CoC documents of brands' sourcing from FF also mentioned sanctions in case of factory's failure to adhere to CoC ranging from reduction of business with the brand to the termination of the business relationship. Sometimes buyers of FF also insist that in case expenses are incurred, including loss of revenue/profit, from violation of CoC, it will be FF as the supplier who will be liable for the damages. There is a huge emphasis for suppliers to comply with the CoC and all the five CoC documents of buyers sourcing from FF repeatedly outline this expectation. Noting the insistence, FF translates the reputation-led international CSR CoC to buyer compliance rules on the factory floor. This is discussed next.

4.2.1 Translating international CSR: Making buyer compliance rules

> "We get orders after proper checks and audits, when buyers are convinced that we are doing all work properly." (Shanti, a HR officer)

Buyers approve a factory before it can begin production for them. The duration of the approval process generally depends on how urgently the buyer needs to start production in a new factory and can range from anywhere between one week to one year. In the vendor approval process, the factory has to be assessed against the buyer specifications and requirements. Mahesh, the HR manager, explained the process of getting approved by a buyer:

> "The marketing team at Mystral indicates the factory's availability to a prospective buyer. The interested buyer then sends us a factory profile form. This profile form asks for various details about the factory along with details of authorised persons for liasoning on various matters. For CoC related matters, it is mostly the HR manager who is the authorised representative. After the filled in profile form is submitted, a representative of the buyer firm or buyer authorised third party sends us the CoC document. I read the CoC and assess the requirements. I am also informed about the level of audit, whether it will be

> announced/unannounced or semi-announced[8] and I accordingly prepare the factory for the audit[9]."

Mahesh went on to explain that if the audit is passed, other production and costing factors being aligned with buyer requirements, the factory can begin to receive the purchase orders. If the auditor finds anything amiss in the factory with regards to the CoC requirements, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is shared and the factory is approved only after the non-conformances raised in the audit are all addressed. Such audits are conducted not only at the time of starting production with a factory, but at regular intervals which can vary between a year to three years depending on buyers' rules and the factory's performance in past audits.

Audits conducted by buyers and their nominated representatives assess the factory against the specifications listed in CoC documents. To become an internationalised factory, FF has to demonstrate compliance to the requirements listed in the CoC and clear all audits. In the process of becoming such a factory, to fulfil buyers' requirements it has to make the required changes. Mahesh explained:

> "We have to decide what needs to be done…what needs to be procured, what needs to be hidden, what needs to be to be managed and how…It is my neck that is on the line and I have to make sure that we pass the audit".

The HR department led by Mahesh is responsible for ensuring that the factory adheres to CoC. CoC as rules are generalizations about factories and require interpretation to be followed (Black 1997). Mahesh, together with his team and other managers, interprets the CoC and thereby reimagines FF as an internationalised factory. They determine what needs to be done in FF so that it is CoC compliant. Treating CoC as describing requirements of a particular state of the factory, HR defines rules to be followed in FF to achieve such a state to thereby be in compliance with CoC. CoC are referred to as 'buyer requirements' in the factory and consequently the rules defined to implement buyer requirements under CoC are referred to as 'Buyer Compliance' or 'Compliance' rules. In outlining CoC requirements, as highlighted in Chapter 2, buyers act as rule makers for factory and factory managers. In making FF an internationalised factory, one that follows the CoC, it is the factory managers, specifically HR, who define the rules for the factory.

[8] Some buyers inform before conducting an audit (announced), others indicate a timeline of a few days (semi-announced) and some just come without advance notice (unannounced).
[9] Audit is the practice where the buyer or buyer nominated representatives visit the factory and evaluate if the work in the factory is carried out according to their specifications as listed in the CoC.

These buyer compliance rules are prescriptive, intending to guide, control, or change the behaviour of workers and sometimes also that of managers (Schauer 1991). For instance, these rules define how the factory should appear, how workers should sit, what safety gear must be worn and how production should be carried out. The place and manner for carrying out every activity in the factory is specified under these rules. Paramjit, who is engaged in checking garments on the factory floor, together with her peers gathered around her checking table, explained some of these compliance rules:

> Paramjit: It should not be that garment pieces are being thrown around or lying on the floor, it is about cleanliness and quality. It is also about how we operate the factory. If the machine is clean or not.
> Nimmi: All should be in its place… Nothing should be scattered around…We must sit within the marked yellow lines (demarcation of areas) and aisles (spaces between machines/tables) should not be blocked.
> Roli: There should be no noise on the floor…They (auditors/buyers/visitors) should not point out any issues... Our work has to be proper.
> Anvi: One more compliance issue is that needle guard should be down, needle should not be lying around loose, we should use rubber mats, wear masks and slippers.
> Sarla: There should be no dump anywhere, all the boxes, and machines, should all be within the yellow lines.

Such buyer compliance rules are different from descriptive rules which refer to an empirical regularity or generalization. Instead of reflecting and describing a particular world, prescriptive rules apply pressure to it (Schauer 1991). Such rules either attempt to *change* a pre-existing pattern of behaviour (by making a course of conduct that an actor may select less eligible or a course of conduct he/she may not select more eligible) or intend to *prevent such a change*, maintain a norm and guard the status quo against threat of individual deviations (Schauer 1991). Managers thereby interpret the CoC and define buyer compliance rules as a set of do's and don'ts for workers at the FF. As the content of CoC is largely similar, a rule once outlined serves the factory to adhere to requirements of other CoC documents. As additional requirements are encountered, rules are accordingly formulated by managers. Such subjective rules intend to direct, guide, and constrain the action of workers in the factory (Sidnell 2003; Lange 1999; Schauer 1991).

These buyer compliance rules for workers are, however, not written anywhere. They are communicated through word of mouth during training and manager-worker interactions. Anvi explains how she knows what she does about compliance:

> Jeetu Sir [production manager] shares all this [referring to the understanding highlighted in previous exchange with group of workers] and other information about compliance with us buyer and auditor visits. He briefs us. HR department also briefs us. They call a meeting. All feeders[10] go to meeting. So, I go as well. Feeders know this stuff better because we are briefed by managers. Operators know what we tell them. Feeders have to see compliance is okay in our lines [assembly lines]. We are told about these things every time there is a compliance [when an audit/visit is scheduled].

While feeders often serve as a channel of communication through which HR communicates the buyer compliance rules to workers on the factory floor, much of the communication to workers is undertaken directly by HR during the process of enacting the rules.

4.2.2 Enacting buyer compliance rules

> "Compliance is a big deal in the factory. If there is no compliance, there will be no order," (Rita, assistant HR manager)

HR managers view enactment of buyer compliance rules as critical for the factory. The key practice for enacting compliance rules in FF is the practice of 'counselling' during which one or more representatives of the HR department interact with one or more workers to explain the rules, stress workers' mistakes and ensure minimisation of violation of the rules by taking any and all necessary action including scolding, demanding apology letters, issuing warning letters and financially penalising the workers.

One late afternoon, in the HR room Kavita and Bela, two HR officers were talking to two people and a third person was also standing with them (the feeder of the assembly line of which the two workers were a part). One woman had left her workstation (outside of the lunch hour) and had brought back a bottle of cold drink which she was drinking, while working, and had also offered it to her co-worker who also drank it. On being asked by the HR the first woman explained she was fasting and felt weak and had therefore brought herself a drink. The HR team was annoyed.

> Kavita: *What do you mean, you didn't pay attention? Give me your card [referring to the employee ID card – confiscation of ID card is the first level of punishment as it regulates entry into the factory]*
> Woman: *Sorry*
> Kavita: *Nothing doing*

[10]Workers responsible for 'feeding the assembly line', that, is running between procurement, cutting, and sewing departments to ensure other workers have the material they need for carrying out their work.

Woman*: Won't do it again madam*
Kavita: *Why did you do it today?*
Bela: *Did you not see medical room? Do you not know about it? Go home for now, we will see later. We have to make sure that we don't create scope for more people behaving like you.*
Woman: *Please forgive*
Bela: *Sorry, can't forgive (voice rising) … we have to handle 3000 people.*
Kavita: *And imagine who caught them – their production manager! No fear...no sense...no concern for anything.*
Bela: *You have become too smart... How old are you?*
Woman: *27*
Bela: *Do you have any sense?*
Worker: *Have never done it before.*
Bela: *So, did we call you ever before for this issue? You did a mistake and so you are here.*
Worker: *Won't do it again.*
Bela: *That we will see. Today you will not be forgiven. You will get our company closed down…that's the kind of work you are doing.*
…
Kavita: *Why did you get cold drink from canteen? Why have we provided thousands of seating places in there? I do not understand*
Worker: *Madam I actually didn't tell the master [supervisor] and go, so I rushed back.*
Kavita: *So, the other huge mistake you have done is that you did not even inform supervisor and left the line without his permission*? Really?
Woman: *I don't ever do this.*
Bela: *Don't sing this song that we never ever do this. If you had never done it, you would not have been here.*
….

This interaction is an excerpt of the session which lasted for almost thirty minutes and is prototypical of a 'counselling' session conducted by HR, particularly on issues related to compliance rules. Often referred to by the HR staff as 'tudai' (breaking), 'thukai' (hammering), 'jhadna' (scolding), 'samjhana' (explaining), such interactions between workers and HR staff are common in the HR room. This practice has acquired a unique meaning at FF over the years:

> Rita: Counselling was introduced somewhere around 2011 when we introduced a daily practice in HR of engaging with workers and dealing with their issues...Someone proposed this word and then it stuck around.
> Kavita: Since I joined in 2014, I have heard this term in the factory. Everything that happens with workers is now called counselling. Even production people refer to their interactions as counselling, as if 'talking' is no more a term…To me it seems that convincing for what is required has come to be known as counselling – be it compliance, attendance, production, efficiency, quality, discipline – if there is any talk with workers regarding these requirements, it is called counselling. While it was meant to be about handling workers' grievances, most of what we do under counselling is about staff grievances related to workers.

Rita highlighted the purpose of these sessions and the choice of the word when it was first introduced was to deal with workers' issues. However, over the years the practice

has acquired a new meaning – it is now about engaging with workers to ensure they create no more issues by not following rules. How a worker should be ‘‘counselled’ regarding their mistake is however not standardised. How the worker should be made to realise his/her fault depends on the individual discretion of the HR staff dealing with the matter and the perceived severity of the issue at hand. It also depends on the individual worker’s record (performance track, leave record, late coming behaviour, previous mistakes), frequency of counselling (how often the HR staff have met with them to ‘explain’ to them) and the impression amongst HR about the worker’s attitude. In several interactions that were observed it also appeared to depend on workers’ demeanor, their body language and tone, how soon they said ‘*Sorry’* and how readily he/she accepted their mistake/s. Kavita emphasised in several of her counselling sessions,

> “If you talk improperly to any senior, if you show attitude, if you refuse to improve your own mistakes and work, then again you will be standing here*.”*

Workers who speak out of turn in trying to reason or explain his/her point of view or defend his/her position were more speedily escalated to the next level of manager as well as higher penalisation, termination being the most severe. The ultimate objective of the counseling session by HR is to get the worker to understand the rules at FF and recognise and accept their mistake.

Counselling sessions are conducted with workers to ensure buyer compliance rules are followed. In addition to counselling, HR staff take factory ‘rounds’ where HR staff visit every part of the factory to identify any existing or potential compliance issues and to ensure that all is as it should be in accordance with the CoC requirements.

The enactment of buyer compliance rules through counselling and factory rounds contributes to shaping workers’ experiences, which are presented next.

4.3 bandish: Working at Fast Factory

This section presents a collective story of factory workers’ CSR-related experiences. We meet Salma and her peers who introduce us to their everyday life in the factory and show what characterises workers’ *bandish*. We witness how in following buyers’ CSR requirements a piece of sewing needle transforms into a stress trigger (‘a real pain’) and contributes to Salma and her co-workers feeling confined to their workstations (‘seat-bound’). We notice how CoC-related requirements take added effort and observe how

Salma and her peers experience added restrictions on their action and feel enclosed in a box (boxed-in) as compliance-related changes are introduced. Finally, we hear from Pallavi and her co-workers how they constantly struggle to balance CSR and production responsibilities and ultimately feel 'tied-up' trying to cope with the pressure.

4.3.1 'It's not a needle, it's a real pain!': Where CSR is a stressor

Salma joined FF in 2011. Since then she has been working as a 'needle-keeper.' The sewing machine needle is integral to the stitching of garments (see diagram in Appendix 6) and critical for timely delivery of the quality target. It is also an integral component of buyer compliance rules. As a part of their safety-related requirements, buyers' demand that all pieces of a broken needle must be accounted for in order to reduce any possibility of a needle fragment being left behind in the garments. As a needle-keeper, Salma is responsible and accountable for each and every needle on the factory floor including all pieces of broken needles. She has to maintain needle reports whose formats are all specified by the factory's buyers. Standing at her table, she issues needles, collects broken needle pieces, pastes pieces of each needle and makes reports for each of the fifteen sewing assembly lines she is responsible for every day. Sometimes, while working, Salma sits on the black metal stool lying next to the table, but mostly she stands. Under the table, she has some space to keep her registers, magnet sweepers to collect needle pieces, garment markers, and stickers (which she also distributes) and her bottle of water.

Every few minutes, a worker walks up to Salma to hand over broken needle pieces. Salma examines the pieces. She can readily recognise which part, if any, is still missing from among the broken pieces, knows which needle runs on which machine and can merely take a glance at the needle and know what its type is. If all pieces are complete, she issues a new needle. Otherwise, she emphasises, "These are not all the pieces". A plea from the worker ensues, "Please behen (sister) give me a new needle, I really need to finish my target". Often such requests also require intervention of line-supervisors and even floor-in-charges. The production targets for the day must be achieved. But Salma is herself bound by the buyer compliance rules. With the new buyer coming to FF, rules for needle management have become all the more strict. If all broken needle pieces cannot be located using the magnet sweepers, five pieces of garment kept next to the operator have to be taken to the needle detector machine and if the piece is not located even then, the in-charge of the needle detector machine, the needle keeper, line

supervisor and floor in-charge/manager, all need to sign for a new needle to be issued. All these processes must be documented. Salma must maintain elaborate reports. During buyer and auditor visits, it is these reports which are reviewed and checked. And such paperwork is critical in 'clearing' a compliance audit.

Picking up a needle in her hand, Salma emphasised,

> "It's a 2.5-inch-long needle. But losing it, stock being over, breaking it …drives me crazy...When I obsess over it and chase for each little piece, people might think I'm mad and insane, but what can I do! If I don't bother them [the workers], then the buyer will bother the company and the company will bother me. Sometimes I see the needle even in my dreams. Since last six years my world is my needle only. Imagine, people want jewellery and what not, and I want a needle!!!"

Salma cannot issue a new needle unless all broken needle pieces are handed to her and she sends the workers back to locate the pieces. If supervisors insist, Salma has to escalate matters to production managers. She has to decide whether to maintain relationships with peers and colleagues or to do her job as per the brief. Although it is not always that she is faced with this choice. Sometimes workers simply come and ask for the magnet sweeper to go back and locate needle pieces. Often supervisors and co-workers also assist in looking for a needle piece. During one such search, Bina who stitches garments, sounding worried, remarked,

> "I really do not know why all this [needle management rules] has been introduced... I have now already lost 15 minutes looking for the piece and now with all this new process [referring to the garment scans], am sure I will lose another fifteen, or who knows, maybe more, till I finally get a new needle. The clock is ticking! Tell me who will complete the target? Who will compensate for the lost pieces? Supervisor will shout at me only. It's not a needle, it's a real pain…"

4.3.2 'Seat-bound': Where CSR confines

Delays due to buyer expectations of ensuring strict adherence of its broken needle policies often necessitates the need for overtime in factories (Ruwanpura 2014). However, in FF, an internationalised factory which has cleared several CoC audits, overtime hours have also come to be highly regulated. Allotment of overtime hours is strictly controlled and monitored and scheduling overtime hours in the factory without senior management approval is not an option[11]. When overtime for workers cannot be

[11] The top-management involvement in approval of overtime budgets has resulted in the process becoming rigid and any change to hours once signed-off requires approvals at the highest levels. An unintended consequence of this rule is that if a supervisor or production in-charge makes a mistake and forgets to mention the name of a worker who stayed back for overtime, both

approved, supervisors often have to stay back and finish the pieces. Jamal, a supervisor, working on a sewing machine after workers had left for the day, complained,

> "At the end of day, I only sit and do alters[12]...during shift hours, If I can, I give it to the operators to do. But the production target is supervisor's responsibility. We get pulled up…I used to be an operator. I was told then I was doing good work as and so they [managers] then gave me a line [sewing assembly line] to handle…Now I often think this is such a wasted role … so much to handle and manage…being an operator was much better...But what to do, this is what is my work now."

Jamal and his peers do not enjoy having to sit to finish off alters if overtime cannot be scheduled. They place much emphasis on targets being completed during work hours. In such a situation, delays caused by looking for needle pieces create much pressure for workers. They often also result in angry supervisors. Bina and her colleagues get scolded for not completing their target. She commented how if supervisors see people returning after drinking water, they make statements like:

> "Why have you come here madam? Go and sit at home only. Whole day you drink my blood, why do you now need to drink water?"

Subjected to comments like these, workers are eager to finish their target and often avoid leaving their seat for any reason, for as long as possible. Even when they are not subject to such observations, they are still constantly under stress to deliver targets on time. Non-delivery of targets will lead to a poor production record which may lead to repeated counselling sessions and ensuing penalisation. Often, some take off the needle guard (a compliance requirement) for they think it reduces their speed. Others take off slippers (yet another compliance requirement) because they are sweaty and inconvenient. Mostly, they just stay in their seats working, sometimes even at the expense of drinking water, eating food or even visiting the restroom (see next chapter). And this is not just the case for machine operators. Needle keepers, like Salma, are also, in the words of Kavita from HR, "seat-bound'.

Salma cannot leave her seat because she says there is too much pressure to issue needles on time. Much like her peers (operators, checkers, and helpers), she too has a role in target delivery. Every minute of the hour is accounted for and everyone is

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production and HR teams are hesitant to go back and make the change. They therefore ask the worker to adjust. Sometimes workers are asked to let it go based on their relationship and on other occasions to compensate for their oversight, they ask workers to stay for overtime another day but keep their work-load light.

[12] 'alters' is the term which in FF refers to alterations. During production if there is any mistake in stitching operations, it needs to be corrected. The previous stitches have to be ripped open and correctly stitched.

connected in a chain. If one delays, the entire series of activities is affected. If Salma goes missing from her seat, her peers will not get a needle when they need one and production time will be lost. She emphasised,

> "If I even go to the washroom, often a crowd of workers builds up. If this crowd is noticed, I am pulled up. Now, I am also human, I need to go to the washroom. I'm telling you, on Friday, I could not go almost all day. It feels like *bandish*. I only went around lunch time and then only once later in the evening. At times I feel I am literally boxed-in."

4.3.3 'Boxed-in': Where CSR restricts

The table Salma works from is surrounded by five panels. Each panel is half glass (upper horizontal half) and half-aluminium (lower half). The right side is a single large panel while the front and left side is made of two panels each. The fourth side, facing Salma's back, is the brick wall. A poster of the 'Broken Needle Policy' of the company is mounted on the wall next to a whiteboard on which some rules for needle management are hand-written. The area inside of the panels measures approximately 30 inches by 36 inches and has only enough space for two people to stand inside with nearly two-thirds of the space occupied by the table. The edges of the table align with the aluminium base and only glass walls are visible on all sides from the inside. There is no roof overhead and a fan is suspended from the ceiling, next to a tube light. Salma refers to this construction as the 'dabba' (box) (See Appendix 7 for an illustrative sketch and few images). There are two semi-circular openings, one on the left side and one on the front, just above the table, to enable Salma to collect needle pieces and to hand out needles and magnet sweepers. The fifth panel on the right side is the door with a bolt.

Construction of 'the box' itself was a 'buyer compliance requirement'. Maya from HR pointed out:

> "When a new brand started sourcing from the company, they asked for it. The needle keeper room had to be built to stop needle pilferage and unauthorised picking of needles that could previously happen when the needle keeper was busy with others and people crowded around her. You see, needle contamination is a big no-no, especially with kids-wear. We cannot afford to have a needle left in a garment for any reason whatsoever."

Salma reminisced about her days before this box was constructed:

> "First, I used to sit in the open on my table, then it was nice, but now I am in this 'dabba (box)'. When I wasn't boxed-in here, people used to always stop by and talk to me. Now people don't do that… Some used to come and share issues for instance their pregnancy, or piece being spoilt or inability to understand what supervisor was saying. Some used to come and seek my advice if they had issues with their supervisor or any other matter, for instance canteen-related

> issues of food quality. I used to direct them to Bela ma'am in HR or suggest whatever I could. But now I can't even talk from this box. With these walls around me, people can hardly hear me…In fact, no one can hear what I have to say from inside this box! Everyone in HR checks me for my loud pitch. They say my voice can be heard at a distance too, far till the pantry room. I don't know what to do about this. Since I'm in this box and people cannot hear me, I have to shout. I bend low, down to this (pointing to the small semi-circular gap in the glass wall) but it's hard to communicate even then. People can't hear me if I speak at my normal pitch. So, I have to speak loudly. And I cannot but help speak to ask people repeatedly for needle pieces! When I do that, the voice carries, and you can hear me even at a distance. Tell me, what can I do?"

Since the construction of the 'box', Salma's relationships with her managers and her peers have altered. She is now pulled up for her loud pitch, despite being good at her job. Moreover, her old table was an integral part of the factory floor. And this made her also feel like she was an integral part of it. It has all changed for her now as she pointed out, "Ab main dabbe mein band hun (I am now boxed-in)".

She also has to keep the box locked at all times and also has to manage the keys for the box. Salma is to work from her box and can only step out during work hours if she has to visit the washroom, if a manager or senior calls for her, if she needs to visit the store to get needles or if she has to go to the needle detector machine to scan a garment. Just as Salma has to be in her box, others have to be at their specified places and can only move with permission (as was also witnessed in the case of workers being counselled for getting a cold drink). They are not allowed to walk around in the factory. For every activity, a place is specified and for every activity a time. These restrictions go up on special occasions, for instance when a compliance audit is underway:

> Sarla: Sunita didi (sister), they are not letting me go to the washroom. In-charge Sir saw me and asked me where I was going. I told him but he said no, you don't have to go anywhere now, go, and sit on your seat.
> Sunita: I think the auditors are in the factory.
> Sarla: But didi, we don't know when compliance will come here [on this floor]. Does that mean I can't go to the washroom?

Kali, another sewing operator, shared that when the auditor was in the factory and expected to come to the shop-floor, floor-in-charges asked workers not to make noise and not to leave their seats or move around[13]. While Salma is visibly boxed-in, her co-workers feel boxed-in by such rules and restrictions imposed on their movements and action. Kali, a sewing machine operator summed it up:

[13] Alim, a Floor-In-charge, explained this practice: If the auditor found the worker walking around and started talking, workers might say something which could possibly lead to unwanted complications, so the risk was best avoided.

> "There are so many dos and don'ts in the factory. There is too much *bandish*. I feel confined. At times I feel, I can't even breathe freely!"

Compliance rules and compliance requirements generate more tasks, take more effort, and also invoke their own sets of challenges. Not only does Salma have to put in more effort to be heard, her pitch itself has now become an issue. Much like the need to locate all needle pieces, and construction of a needle keeper room, other changes have been introduced at FF in becoming an internationalised factory. For instance, all sharp tools (scissors and thread cutters) have to be kept tied at workstations at all times. This has created more work for quality checkers who trim extra threads in the finishing department. Previously they could move around with their cutters. Now tying the cutter takes time and when a worker has to shift from one line to another, the cutter has to be moved around. If one visits the HR room or goes to the restroom, they have to deposit the cutter with their supervisor or anyone else who may be designated this responsibility. If an untied sharp device is found, workers will be counselled. Following compliance rules creates more work, takes more effort, requires more coordination, and as Bina highlighted, takes up time. It also leads to workers feeling tied-up and squeezed.

4.3.4 'Tied-up either way': Where CSR generates work pressure

Pallavi was hired as a helper in the unskilled category of workers. However, since she had completed her studies till class 8, the production manager asked her to take up the role of a feeder. In this role, she has to feed the assembly line she is responsible for with cut pieces and accessories (in case of sewing). If she was working in finishing, she would have fed the line with finished garments from the sewing department. In addition to running around and ensuring all lines are fed in a timely manner, Pallavi also has to maintain the hourly production report. These reports have to be shown to the supervisor and updated on the production boards mounted on either end of the lines. Supervisors often scold her for mistakes in reports or delays in getting the material and sewing machine operators get into arguments with her – given her involvement in so many activities, it is quite easy for her to be blamed for mistakes related to production. She is, however, the point of call for her line when it comes to buyer compliance rules.

She has to ensure that there is needle guard on all machines, all sharp tools are tied, everyone is wearing slippers and that machines are cleaned. She has to arrange for spare fabric for cleaning the machines. Additionally, she is also supposed to take an operator to HR for counselling if the operator is not delivering his/her target or not

adhering to compliance rules. She is also responsible to collect all leave forms, fill these in for people who cannot read and write, and submit them to HR. Pallavi, along with other feeders, is also invited to committee meetings. Previously she was nominated but after the recent elections, she is an elected member. She engages closely with HR and supports in other HR activities as well, for instance collecting phone numbers of workers or informing each worker about a working Sunday in lieu of a compensatory day off. HR expects her to be their extended arm and to inform them of any violation of compliance rules. Rita shared:

> "We have developed our feeders. They are now like class monitors. We have invested in them and prepared them – now they are ready to roll and are able to do all that you now see them doing."

But for Pallavi this entails a constant juggling between the demands of compliance and production. On the one hand she has to attend the meetings and ensure compliance rules are followed and on the other she has to also complete her production reports and make sure all raw material is available for garment production, all within the same amount of time. Pallavi describes her *bandish*:

> "We are tied up either way. If operators don't clean their machine, we are pulled up, if my report is not complete, I am pulled up, if I skip the meeting I am pulled up, if I am late to do my work because of being at the meeting or training, I am pulled up. I am constantly trying to balance, what other choice do I have? I can't really say anything, so I do what I can."

While working to deliver the production targets and accomplish production related tasks, workers also have to follow all buyer compliance rules. They have to ensure machines are clean, all broken needle pieces are found, cutters are all tied, stickers are not thrown around. And if either of the two sets of expectations are not met with, if a target is not met or if compliance rules are not followed, there are consequences.

The failure to either follow compliance rules or deliver targets leads to workers being pulled up in the name of misconduct. In FF, failure of the worker to follow the rules that have been made for them by the management is regarded as misconduct. In the FF Standing Order[14] document, 102 clauses of misconduct are defined. These range from extremely broad clauses, such as obey all orders, to extremely specific ones, as smoking and lottery is not allowed in company premises. Some of them, like "refusal by

[14] The Indian Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act 1946 requires all employers in industrial establishments who employ more than 100 people, to formally define conditions of employment under them. The Standing Order has to be certified by an officer of an appropriate rank at the Labour Department (Labour Commissioner or a Regional Labour Commissioner or any other specified) and must include conditions for suspension or dismissal for misconduct, and acts or omissions which constitute misconduct, among others.

workman to do any work or job, contempt of rules or disrespect to authority, refusal to accept any order or communication from the Management" offers enough discretion to management. It offers the factory management the flexibility to enact both production and CSR-related compliance requirements. Such an enactment generates for workers the experiences of being stressed, seat-bound (confined), boxed-in (restricted) and tied-up (under pressure). These feelings are further strengthened when workers have limited space to express themselves. Pinki was brought to the HR room for counselling as her purse was found next to her workstation and it is not allowed. During the counselling she pointed out:

> "But madam no one listens to us. Even HR people do not listen to us. We work under pressure and you only say what you have to, we have no one to listen to us. You know..."
> Mahesh overheard the remark and interrupting her and the ongoing session with Kavita called her to his cabin: "Madam if we did not listen, you would not be here in this room, isn't it? Now go and do you work."
> After she left, Mahesh to Kavita: "Keep an eye out for her She is potential troublemaker."

If a worker tries to explain their point of view, the view is that they are "talking too much", "showing attitude", "not regarding senior as a senior" and are a "potential nuisance" or "troublemaker*".*

The pressure to do it all and to do it right while following all rules with hardly any space to express themselves leads to workers feeling tied up and characterises their *bandish*. The next section shows how workers' *bandish* is generated as the international CSR requirements of buyers interact with international production processes in the factory.

4.4 Constituting *bandish:* Working time squeeze

This section argues and illustrates that workers' *bandish* refers to and emanates from a working time squeeze, a persistent ongoing shortage of working time. Constantly working under the expectation to do it all and do it right, specifically having to deliver targets and follow compliance rules, leads to *bandish* because there is never enough time. And there is not enough time because compliance time, the time taken by compliance activities, is not accounted for.

This section first illustrates how purchase orders are transformed into targets and how a working time squeeze is generated when compliance time is not considered. It then stresses the role managerial discretion plays in shaping and determining the extent of

working time squeeze in an internationalised factory. Not only does the working time squeeze underlie workers' bandish, it also triggers tensions between HR and production departments resulting in managers imposing conflicting demands on workers which, as the third section explains, driven by differences in managers' priorities, individual differences between managers and their power-plays, further accentuate workers' *bandish*. Finally, it is highlighted that managerial perceptions of CoC as 'foreign' in an apparently internationalised factory result in the working time squeeze being sustained and persisting in the factory.

4.4.1 Purchase orders to production targets

A Purchase Order (PO) is the confirmation of an order that FF receives from a buyer. Usually received after the exchange of samples and price negotiations, the purchase order confirms the style, choice of fabric and accessory details, quantity, price, delivery date and destination, washing, packing, and shipping instructions. It communicates the garment production-related specifications and expectations of buyers. These specifications vary depending on the purchasing practices of buyers which constitute the processes of international production in the fashion industry (Dickson 2019; 2018a, 2018b).

After the PO is received, FF sets into motion different processes to ensure production of garments. Machines and people are arranged to set up an assembly line of operations (see Appendix 4). The crucial thing in this arrangement of people and machinery and associated objects (tables, bins, sewing-aids) is the imposition of a time-discipline (Thompson 1967). Production schedules specifying what will be produced, when and in what quantity is driven by an objective, linear, homogenous clock-time (Reinecke and Ansari 2017) where every minute is accounted for. Standard Allowed Minutes (SAM) or Standard Minute Value (SMV) are calculated for each garment based on time and motion studies of garment manufacturing operations (Das and Patnaik 2015). Generic data is available today for each operation in the industry as General Sewing Data, which specifies how much time a standard operation by a standard operator should take (Das and Patnaik 2015). This data, however, is generic and each factory defines its own SAM values for production of each garment. Raj, an industrial engineer at FF, explained:

> "At the time of product costing, we take an approximate SAM value, based on industry guidelines. SAM indicates to us how much time it will take to produce a garment and we cost man hours accordingly... However, the management always wants to produce the garment in lesser SAM value than quoted, that's where the margin can be made."

Driven by the principles of scientific management, with an intent to enhance productivity and profit, time, and motion studies for different operations in garment production are undertaken (Taylor 1911). Taylor argued that "human activity could be measured, analyzed and controlled by techniques analogous to those that had proved successful when applied to physical objects" (Nelson and Campbell 1972:2). His proposal was to systematically identify best practices by decomposing work tasks, depersonalising work processes in order to optimise them (Hill and Van Buren 2018). While it remains disputed whether Taylor's scientific management advocated extreme forms of division of labour to minimise waste and strive for conservation or to focus on efficiency alone as is primarily understood (Cummings et al. 2017), the idea of a standard way to do a job has become widely adopted.

> "During sampling we generate the operation bulletin and then using SAM values for each operation, set targets for each operation and each worker."
>
> (Raj, Industrial Engineer)

These operation bulletins, Raj alludes to, play a role in defining who will sit/stand where and do what (this is presented in a line layout document), when and in how much time with an objective of delivering and producing the required production target for each style of garment for the day. Ultimately, targets are allocated for each and every worker in the factory, whether ironing a garment, assisting by marking a collar as a helper or performing an operation on the sewing machine as a sewing operator. The factory has to produce a given number of garments for each style each day. For instance, at the time of fieldwork, women's tops were in production and targets ranged from 120-160 pieces per hour.

Each worker in each department, then, has a defined production target and this target also becomes a means of evaluating the performance of individuals, teams, departments as well as the factory. Achieving the hourly, daily, weekly, monthly targets with quality is the primary objective in FF and the main activity that occupies everyone's attention. As required, technical training is organised for specified groups of workers to help them acquire requisite skills needed for the production of a specific order. Raju, the Production Manager (PM) explained:

> "We train workers as required. Sometimes there are quality training organised for everyone". Raj, the industrial engineer, added, "sometimes, we give specific training based on operations and machinery."

In order to ensure that purchase orders will be adhered to, the production of garments is constantly evaluated against fixed time. How many pieces are produced in an hour, a

day, a week, a month is all measured, evaluated and monitored through different production reports. An hourly production report for each operator along with a daily production report chart are updated by the feeders in FF. Ongoing quality checks also accompany the production monitoring on the factory floor. Garment checkers are a part of assembly lines, examining partly stitched garments; they stand at end of the line before the garment is sent to finishing and then finishing checkers check the garment before it is packed.

The arrangement of man and machine is revised in FF not only when a new purchase order is received but whenever any worker is absent, a machine breaks down or any other activity or action occurs that may interfere with the flow of production. To assist in such rearrangements, a production meeting is held every morning. The primary focus in these meetings is the delivery time and production of the planned number of garment pieces each day. Mahesh explained,

> "Every day in the morning we have a production huddle. In this meeting all managers, from all departments in the factory, meet to take stock of targets and to discuss any major issues. For instance, if workers are absent on any particular line, then replacements are arranged and negotiated. Or if there is an urgent shipment or other issues – all of these are discussed."

The PM is primarily responsible for ensuring that orders are delivered as per schedule and that the production is generated at the planned efficiency. Led by a profit imperative, efficiency in production is the effective utilisation of the total time invested by workers towards production. The defining of production targets is driven by the intent to maximise efficiency and profits. Roopali, another industrial engineer, commented,

> "We assume a certain efficiency of the assembly line when defining targets. The efficiency depends on the style. When targets are set, companies like to maximise margins and want to use the maximum time available. Five minutes per hour are included as allowance to accommodate for breaks which may be due to machine downtime or visiting washroom or any other reason. This five-minute allowance, however, is not fixed. I have worked with different companies and different factories based on management discretion consider different allowances."

Roopali underlines three important points: firstly, that companies intend to maximise profits and for that would like to achieve the targets; secondly that a time allowance is included in SAM and in turn target setting to accommodate activities that take away time – for instance, biological breaks, breakdown of machines and other delays; thirdly, she emphasises that in her experience the extent of allowance time is discretionary. This draws attention to a key issue which Bina had briefly alluded to when complaining about the needle breakdown procedure : buyer compliance activities and fulfilling international

CSR requirements also takes time. The time taken in following the buyer compliance rules is neither measured nor accounted for. It is not included in the production time calculations, ultimately resulting in a working time squeeze that is discussed next.

4.4.2 Working time squeeze

'Time squeeze' refers to concerns about shortage of time (Southerton and Tomlinson 2005; Southerton 2003). Working time squeeze refers to a constant shortage of working time. This is generated in the factory as compliance time, that is, the time taken in compliance rule-following and in turn fulfilling buyer's CSR expectations, is not accounted for. On one hand, there is the requirement to deliver targets on time. The time duration of all activity is defined in the factory, including lunch that lasts for 30 minutes. Bells are rung to indicate the start of the day, the start of lunch, the end of lunch and the end of the day. The time for doing everything is fixed. Similarly, the movements of people and material are also fixed. There are rules for entry to the factory and exit. No one can stay longer than 15 minutes after the shift-end time unless there is overtime. Within a stipulated amount of time, a fixed number of pieces have to be manufactured. Yet while time for all activities is fixed, the compliance time is not accounted for. Overlooking this compliance time eventually generates a shortage of time as workers have to do more work now in the same amount of time as before or, to put it another way, as buyer compliance activities take away time, less time is available for the same amount of work. As a result, Bina feels she loses time because time is taken away in locating a needle piece and getting a new needle to get the machine working again. Salma and her co-workers feel that they are bound to their workstations to ensure they complete their all their work, including both production and CSR CoC compliance-related tasks within the defined and allocated time. Pallavi and her peers feel tied up as they juggle between production and buyer compliance responsibilities to make sure everything happens *on time*.

Bina, Pallavi, Kali, Salma and their peers observed that over the years their production targets have gone up. Together with their co-workers, they repeatedly raised the issue of ever-increasing production targets, describing their target as 'limitless', 'unreasonable', 'always increasing'. Veena reminisced about her old days at FF from 2008:

> "Now buyer is coming creates so much pressure. Compliance is coming is heard just too often… Work used to be fun in those days. I didn't feel any such pressure then. There was no shouting, unlike these days. Target was also not there the

> way it is today…So, I liked it… It's all changed now". Kali added, "Initially target was lesser and is now always increasing. Previously even two people used to do one operation. Even if 40-45 pieces were made it was fine and now 120 pieces are being demanded from one person. Today, even if you give 100 pieces, they [managers and supervisors] will pull you up."

Managers contested such views of workers on production targets and argued that:

> "Targets are based on calculations and industry standards. They are not discretionary. Yes, you are right that targets have increased but the increase is a consequence of improved machinery and better techniques of production and other efforts that have been taken to enhance efficiency" (Raju, PM).

Working time squeeze offers a possible explanation of how both views of workers and managers co-exist. As machinery and production techniques improved, more work could be done in the same amount of time. Targets were increased by managers to accommodate improved efficiencies. However, as noted by both managers and workers, CSR-related demands and buyer compliance-related requirements have also increased in the last decade but compliance time is not accounted for. This results in a working time squeeze leading to workers' experiencing pressures to deliver targets in less time in practice than the time that was budgeted for when defining the targets. As compliance time is not identified, considered, or accounted for, workers tend to attribute these pressures to the higher target number. This working time squeeze that underlies workers' *bandish* and their views on production targets is generated, as the next section examines, when targets and buyer compliance rules intersect in the making of an internationalised factory.

4.4.2.1 Generating the squeeze: Making of an internationalised factory

FF is constituted as an internationalised factory as two sets of buyer requirements, purchase order and CoC, driven by different orientations and guided by different objectives, are manifested as production targets and buyer compliance rules (see Table 4.1 for a brief summary). By explicitly defining and implicitly determining the social and material conditions in the factory, they generate the primary conditions for workers' experiences in an internationalised factory. Translated by production and HR departments, led by their respective managers, the two imperatives for the factory, efficiency-driven targets, and legitimacy-driven buyer compliance rules, intersect.

Targets require workers to operate from a fixed position in a particular way and deliver a specified number of pieces each day. Buyer compliance rules, driven by international

CSR expectations, specify how an operation should be carried out, what safety gear should be worn or not and in what way the pieces should be produced. While production monitors targets, the HR team undertakes internal audits and factory rounds where HR managers visit different sections of the factory to confirm all work is carried out as per the prescriptions of buyer compliant rules.

Table 4.1: Making an Internationalised Factory

Making an Internationalised Factory		
Buyer requirement	Purchase Order	Code of Conduct
Driven by	Efficiency imperative	Legitimacy imperative
Link to profits	Direct	Indirect
Manifestation on the Factory Floor	Target	Buyer compliance rules
Key responsible	Production Manager	HR Manager
Managerial emphasis in translation of the requirement	What would it take to produce a particular kind of garment; number of pieces to be produced per hour	What would compliance to CoC look like
Enactment	Arrange machines, material, and people to deliver defined number of pieces in defined amount of time (Worker training/briefing; Machine layout according to operation bulletin; Quality checks)	Arrange machines, material, and people to be a CoC compliant factory (Worker training/briefing; Machine arrangements to ensure cleanliness and movement; Safety precautions and equipment; HR Factory rounds)
Managerial focus	Ensuring delivery of target	Enacting buyer compliance rules
Measure of managerial competence	On time delivery with quality (product focused)	Clearing the audit (paperwork/process focused)
Orientation	Clock-time orientation whereby time for each activity is fixed for	Task orientation: manner of doing each task is fixed

There is a difference in underlying time-orientation of production and HR and in turn targets and buyer compliance rules. While targets are about time-disciplining, driven by a clock-time orientation, buyer compliance rules place emphasis on completion of a particular set of tasks and the time is not defined. As such, it arguably displays a task-orientation to time (Thompson 1967). And these rules, as against counting or evaluating

performance against time as in the case of targets, are enacted by checking if rules are followed. Working time squeeze is a consequence of this difference in time orientations. Production targets are the primary focus in FF. The raison d'être of FF is to achieve production targets to deliver orders on time. Jeetu, a PM, emphatically stated:

> "We can compromise everything, but not target. New orders will be received only when existing orders are shipped on time. If we don't ship on time, we may have to send by air, that is awfully expensive and we will have to pay from our end, so that will lead to a huge loss for us. Further, if we delay, it is also bad for our business with the buyer."

These production targets draw on and impose a clock-time orientation in the factory. Following buyer compliance rules takes away time and this compliance time remains unaccounted for, ultimately leading to a working time squeeze. The extent of time that will be taken away in rule following also depends on the rule itself, which in turn is determined and influenced by managerial discretion.

4.4.2.2 Shaping the squeeze: Managerial discretion

Translating international CSR to buyer compliance rules and enacting these rules entails the use of discretion by Mahesh, the HR manager and other factory staff. As highlighted earlier, in workers' descriptions of being 'tied-up', buyer compliance and other rules in the factory are implemented by defining any undesired behaviour and action under the category of 'misconduct'. Misconduct is defined in an unwritten manner based on managerial discretion – either one has to follow the rules as managers say or else be penalised. Managers enjoy discretion in not only defining and identifying misconduct but also in determining the appropriate counselling session and ensuing penalisation. Buyer compliance rules, then, draw on and reinforce power differences between workers and managers in the factory. It is only when authority is asymmetric that rule-makers, in this case managers, can induce rule-takers, the factory workers, to relinquish their own best judgement and simply follow the rule, by punishing and imposing penalties (Schauer 1991).

Discretion by managers plays a role in shaping the working time squeeze. It is the discretion of an individual manager or a group of managers that defines what counts as a buyer compliance rule and desired behaviour. Buyer compliance rules herein defined do not take away the same amount of time from production. Compliance time varies between different rules as they entail different actions, movements and activities and take different amounts of effort and this variation in compliance time in turn shapes and

influences the nature and the extent of the working time squeeze. The case of the rule imposing restrictions on keeping water bottles at workstations is a case in point.

The curious case of the bottle of water

During a CSR training session on workers' health and well-being, Shristi, the HR officer emphasised the importance of drinking water. A worker immediately reacted sharply,

> *"*But we are not allowed to drink water, cannot keep it on the line!"

The worker was referring to a recent rule which had been introduced. This rule prohibited workers from keeping water bottles with them while working on the assembly lines. Shristi, responding to the worker's remark, explained that drinking water is allowed but water bottles must be kept in bags (which are kept in the area demarcated for the purpose) and that it is not allowed on the machines which are electrical devices. She reiterated,

> "We are not monsters; this is safety issue!"

This claim to this rule being a 'safety issue' was contested by almost all workers. Some commented that in other Mystral factories there was no such rule. Sita, a sewing machine operator, explained,

> "See, now the target pressure is very high. The water stations are there but getting up, going to drink water, we lose at least five minutes which means my target will get reduced by 5-8 pieces. And if there is a queue at the water point, which is now longer due to no one being allowed to keep water bottles, I may lose more time. Now supervisor won't accept this explanation. They need their targets. When we could keep a water bottle, it was much better. Not everyone kept one. But we coordinated in small groups. One person kept it and we shared it and then on a rotation basis one could go and fill the bottle. We also managed our target output accordingly. But now we can't even drink water.*"*

Sita also contested the claim of this rule being a safety issue, which Shristi and HR staff repeatedly emphasised:

> "We don't keep broken bottles and we keep it below the table. And the electric line runs along the centre of the table side panel. See there has no power below this (pointing to the enclosed wiring on the supply table that runs between two parallel sets of machines on the assembly line[15])."

It later emerged in conversations with HR that this rule of not keeping water bottles on assembly lines did not emanate from a buyer requirement. Kavita clarified,

[15] See Appendix 4 for a visual representation of the assembly line.

> "Actually, the thing is that GM Sir[16] did not like bottles being kept next to machines. It looked untidy to him and so he said no water bottles to be kept on the sewing machine lines."

The prohibition to keep bottles next to workstations, as Sita explained, leads to taking away more time for water breaks. This rule was defined by FF's general manager based on his preferences and the role of his discretion was emphasised when workers repeatedly pointed out that there was no such rule in other Mystral factories.

In addition to how managerial discretion influences working time squeeze, this case also stresses how, in the name of safety and in the name of buyer compliance, managers' personal preferences and requirements may be imposed on workers. Indeed, the discussions on health and safety issues reflect particular and deeply ingrained values, which when regarded by organisations and managers as vital to their ability to meet their goals, lead to increased workplace controls (Conrad and Walsh 1992). The impact of such health and safety discourses can then ultimately be more far-reaching than workplace health advocates could ever have intended or even imagined (Conrad and Walsh 1992: 7).

Similar to the water bottle rule, rules of not keeping workers' handbags next to workstations and not eating chewing gum or toffees while stitching garments are not listed either in CoC or the FF Standing Orders. They are neither a buyer requirement nor the decision of the company's top-management. These rules were outlined based on managerial discretion. However, it is noteworthy how introduction and implementation of all these rules is carried out *in the name of buyer compliance*. The same set of rules and norms that guide or inform action also guide or inform reasoning about action (Heritage 1984). Buyer compliance, then, becomes the determinant of action as well its justification. Further, formulation of rules and their application is recursively linked i.e. the formulation of rules (possibly) constitutes their application and vice versa (Ortmann 2010). This ultimately creates a situation where compliance rules are created and then they have to be followed and as they are followed their importance is reinforced.

Managerial discretion by determining the buyer compliance rules plays a role in shaping the working time squeeze. While the working time squeeze underlies workers' CSR experiences in an internationalised factory, it also generates pressures for management

[16] Referring to the General Manager at the FF.

which in turn plays a role in accentuating the squeeze and workers' *bandish*. This is discussed and examined in the next section.

4.4.2.3 Accentuating the squeeze: Managerial interactions

Production and HR managers are mainly responsible for the translation of the purchase order and CoC requirements of the buyer in the factory. The translation to production targets and buyer compliance, as highlighted, entails defining rules and specifying what activity can be carried out in the factory, when and where. As Table 4.1 highlighted, the time-orientations in the translations of production and CSR requirements of buyers is not similar. In fact, the difference in orientation to time results in a working time squeeze in the factory. For managers in production and HR departments of the internationalised factory, working with and through these differences is a matter of cordial working and understanding each other. Negotiations between them, as the below clarification by a production manager underlines, often entail managers deciding the priority for the day which eventually determines which requirement will prevail:

> On a humid Tuesday morning in August 2017, the production floor in FF looked unfamiliar. Several workstations were empty. Almost 150 workers had left their machines to attend a training session that the HR manager was conducting. HR department representatives walked around conducting compliance checks. They were out on a factory round. Compliance briefing gatherings of supervisors, feeders and even workers were being organised in the HR room as well as on the production floor. It was visible that production activities were disrupted while the clock was still ticking. Raju, the PM, explained his decision,
>
> > "See, production goes on and we manage it through the year, compliance [compliance audit] happens once in few months, 3 months or 6 months or sometimes once a year. I can't ignore compliance. I get orders because of compliance. If something goes wrong, then my orders may get affected. So, I have to support audit preparations."

There are such days when production understands the HR department's priority. There are also days/months when HR accommodates and expresses an understanding of production needs and priorities. The HR manager shared information about the latest challenge that emerged during audit preparations:

> Mahesh: It is Brand Z that is due to come for audit. They are a brand, which wants us to be transparent. They have sent me their updated CoC. It mentions that no one should be working for a continuous period of 7 days as a zero-tolerance clause now. A one-day break over seven days is mandatory…

Divya: Is this something you learnt about only today?
Mahesh: Not really. I had been flagging this issue to the production all this while. I had asked my team to keep a tab and had been compiling and sending to production lists of people whose seven continuous days had been booked. But production teams do not listen! We insisted, pleaded with them – please ask others to do the overtime instead, make a pool of operators who can do overtime, but that did not happen[17]. I do understand they are under pressure and they have their compulsions. So will have to do something now.
Divya: Now what?
Mahesh: I will find a way to manage.

Such a stance by Mahesh is regarded as cooperation and understanding by Production. Raju regarded Mahesh as an understanding HR manager and Mahesh viewed Raju as cooperative and supportive. As both Production and HR cooperate, they are aligned in the demands placed on workers. However, all managers do not have views similar to either Raju or Mahesh and managerial negotiations are not always smooth or straightforward. Comments such as, "he/she just does not understand, he/she is not being reasonable, he/she simply does not get it" were common as HR and Production managers described their negotiations and interactions with each other. Differences between managers ultimately result in conflicting demands being placed on workers.

It is noteworthy, however, that the question of whether managers are aligned or not and to what extent, makes little difference, if any, to workers' experiences. Either way, whether facing aligned managerial expectations or conflicting demands, workers' *bandish* and working time squeeze only tend to be accentuated. This is illustrated and explained next.

a) Aligned expectations

"Orders are placed only when audits are passed" (Pran, head of Sampling).

CoC compliance is important to secure orders and HR is able to secure the support of the senior management for any investment that may be needed, for instance, purchase of any material or machinery (for example, fire hydrants) or changes to be made to the building or the shop floor. Raju and his colleagues in production, as we saw earlier, also offer their support for audit preparations. However, CoC compliance also entails enactment of buyer compliance rules in daily factory life and this can be challenging.

[17] It emerged in later conversations that for reasons of efficiency and work performance, there are some people who are preferred for overtime and since these preferred workers earn more, they also happily consent.

Targets tend to gain priority and buyer compliance rules may be ignored by production staff themselves. Shyam, the safety officer, offered an explanation when, during a safety committee meeting, representatives of the production department did not attend:

> "See, there is always a lot of pressure of production. We have to adjust."

Kavita, on another occasion, noticed the wrong placement of sewing machines during preparations for a CoC audit and remarked:

> "They [Production Staff] just don't listen. They can only think target and feel target. I keep telling these production people. But no one pays attention to what I say!"

Faced by such behaviours, HR is engaged in finding ways to work with the tensions between compliance requirements and productivity demands (O'Donnell et al. 2019). A creative way they have devised is use of the instant messaging service WhatsApp. An online group of all managers across production and HR departments including the FF General Manager has been created. WhatsApp allows participants of the group to share pictures, videos, text messages and voice messages. HR staff make use of this. During factory rounds (internal audits), they take a picture or record any issue they find amiss and instantly capture any violation of buyer compliance rules. The picture/video is then uploaded on the group and made visible to all production department representatives, all HR department representatives and the General Manager. This not only enhances managers' ability to simultaneously see and take note of any compliance rule violation irrespective of their physical location (Verbeek 2001), it also creates peer-pressure on PMs to urgently deal with issues raised. Consequently, it enables enactment of buyer compliance rules leading to FF retaining its position as an internationalised factory. However, this attention also serves to further the working time squeeze for workers.

Compliance time, as previously underlined, is not accounted for in targets. When production staff also ask workers to follow international CSR-driven CoC compliance rules, it only adds to the pressure workers face. The previous expectations of the target are unaffected. Rather, now workers are pulled up by production for compliance-related behaviour and activities as well. The two workers whose counselling we witnessed in section 4.2.2 when discussing enactment of buyer compliance rules, were in the first instance caught violating the rule by their PM and then sent to HR. As expectations are aligned, production itself plays a role in enforcing buyer compliance and contributes to accentuating workers' *bandish*.

The experiences of Pallavi, the feeder we met earlier, underline this point. She feels tied-up in juggling production and CSR responsibilities. As production assumes a role in ensuring buyer compliance rules are followed, she and her feeder peers feel stretched in multiple directions and are susceptible to being blamed, almost always. If there is a production line issue and the supervisor is pulled up, he comes and scolds the feeder. On matters of compliance, too, it is the feeder who is pulled up by both HR as well as production staff. In an internal audit, one worker was found pasting stickers on her machine instead of on wastepaper as was instructed and the feeder was penalised. Often, in addition to HR and production, workers also pass the blame to the feeder. During a factory round, HR clicked a picture of water on the floor and posted it on the WhatsApp group. Jeetu, the production manager noticed it and came on to the production floor. By then HR had moved on to the next issue. Jeetu joined in the round.

> Rita (to worker): Your machine is very dirty! Have you not cleaned it?
> Jeetu (to worker): Why is your machine dirty? Why do you not clean it?
> Worker: Sir, Pallavi did not give me waste fabric to clean machine
> Jeetu (called Pallavi who was updating production reports): Why did you not give her the fabric?
> Pallavi: Sir Rakesh in cutting refused to give it to me
> Rita: Pallavi, I don't expect this from you. Find a way.
> Jeetu (in an angry tone): Do not give me these excuses. Why did you not tell me if he was not giving? Do your work properly!
> …..

In a later conversation, Pallavi clarified:

> "That cutting guy is not listening to me. I went upstairs thrice but he has been postponing. Tell me what can I do? I'm sort of caught between everyone, I have to do everything. And this Shilpi also (referring to worker). She could have borrowed the fabric from someone or asked me again and I would have figured out. But why would she. It's all my responsibility. What to do! Such is my life."

With production also playing a role in enforcing compliance, Pallavi and her co-workers now have two sets of eyes watching them and they are likely to be pulled up twice for a mistake and likely to be scolded and counselled twice. And the time that goes in being scolded and counselled is also not accounted for. Ultimately, all these factors combine to accentuate the working time squeeze. With production being aligned with HR on compliance without considering compliance time, alignment of managerial expectations seems to have only led to furthering workers' *bandish*. WhatsApp plays a role in accentuating the working time squeeze by enabling managers' expectations from workers to be aligned. While such alignment is achieved sometimes, it may not always be so. Managerial differences continue to persist, and these differences often lead to generating conflicting demands for workers in their everyday work.

b) Conflicting demands

Conflicting demand is a situation for the worker where he/she is expected to fulfil managerial expectations that do not reconcile. Such conflicting demands play a role in accentuating the working time squeeze and workers' *bandish* by placing the onus on workers to find a way to reconcile the demands or else be penalised for a failure to do so. For instance, any observed reluctance of workers to follow compliance rules owing to production pressures and stress, for instance removing slippers as it gets sweaty or not using needle safety guards believing it reduces the target, is considered an 'attitude issue' of workers' that needs work. CSR training is organised to influence these 'attitude issues'. For instance, a training session was organised to advise to workers that they should not control the urge to visit the washroom and also drink enough water. Shrishti emphasised during a training,

> "We should drink at least 2 litres of water daily. Women should consume 2.2-4.5 litres and men 2.9-4.5 litres. When we don't drink enough water, we get headaches, dizziness, weakness, fatigue, can't hear properly, can't focus, there is dryness in skin and other related issues."

Through such training, compliance briefings and counselling sessions that were noted earlier, it is made out to be workers' responsibility to strike the balance. Not only is compliance time not included in SAM calculations, the conflicting demands they face are also not acknowledged. Workers, as a result, feel they have no option, they are confined, restricted and tied-up and the working time squeeze is only accentuated.

The conflicting demands workers face are triggered due to three managerial interactions: managerial differences in priorities, differences that arise due to managerial power-play and differences between individual managers. Each of these is discussed in turn.

Difference in priorities

The priority for the PM and the production department is timely delivery of the order, which is contingent on hourly, daily and weekly production targets being met. For the HR manager and HR department, it is critical that CoC audits are cleared and no issues arise during any buyer visits. Driven by their own priorities, as illustrated in the encounter below, the briefings they give to workers may conflict:

It was a usual busy day on the production floor. Shanti was sitting between two machines, busy assisting in folding of a particular garment part before it was sewn together with the garment panel. It was convenient for her to pick the part from the operator on the left and then fold and pass it on to the operator on her right. The HR team was on a factory round. Rita, the assistant HR manager called out to Shanti:

> "Madam how are you sitting? How will you move out in case of any emergency? Do you not know that there has to be freely allowed access for you on at least one side? You will get us pulled up in compliance! If I catch you like this once again, you will write an apology letter."

As Rita walked away, Vinita, Shanti's co-worker, observed,

> "Now please tell me, how was this Shanti's fault? She was told to sit there. We will only sit where we are asked to. We can't sit anywhere else. The industrial engineer (IE) and supervisor say, sit here or there and we sit!"

Faced with conflicting briefings by managers that are triggered by differences in priorities creates a situation for workers where they are caught between the differences. As Kali put it succinctly,

> "Hum Idhar se bhi fasenge, usdhar se bhi (no matter what we choose, we will be pulled up either way). What can we do!"

As Kali highlights, such instances add to the work pressure and often become stressors. Such an intensification of workers' *bandish* is not only a consequence of a difference in priorities, it is also often the result of a power-play between managers, more frequently between HR and production. This is presented next.

Power-play

Rules are devices of allocation of power and they apportion decision making authority among various individuals reflecting decisions about who will decide what, who is to be trusted and who not, who is to be empowered and who not, whose decisions are to be reviewed and whose are final, and who is to give orders and who is to take them (Schauer 1991:173). As has been stressed, HR itself, for instance, becomes powerful and also makes feeders powerful by allotting them a role in enforcing buyer compliance rules. However, in playing the role of 'compliance monitors' for HR (which Rita described earlier), feeders are caught in the crossfire of a power-play between HR and Production. Observations from a worker-management committee meeting illustrate this point:

It was a pleasant afternoon in July. The Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) committee meeting was underway. This committee comprises of HR women staff as well as women workers and convenes once a month to discuss matters regarding treatment of women in the factory. Both as per law as well as under buyer compliance requirements, women have to treated in an appropriate manner and not be subject to any form of harassment (see Appendix 5). During the meeting, when HR staff enquired if all was fine with the committee members, Anvi, who is a feeder, like Pallavi, gently spoke up.

> Anvi: Madam, if I say something in this meeting, how does my floor in-charge figure out who said it? How did my floor in-charge know that I had raised a complaint? Every few days this issue is back, and he tells everyone, be careful of this one [referring to me]. When he gets angry, he taunts me. And when he says so in front of all supervisors, I don't like it.
> Aarti (another feeder): When I had complained last time, Jeetu Sir (floor manager) had also scolded me a lot. I cried a lot. Even the floor manager scolded me and said, you should have ignored all this [referring to the issue of harassment she had raised against a supervisor]. You should not have paid attention. If my wife is teased, would I go and fight with that person. I told him, Sir you are wrong. Many others on the floor also said to me that you should not have done this. I said, well I have now complained, now I cannot do anything and am not saying anything.
> Anvi: Jeetu sir said to me if something happens with you, will go to Sarpanch (head of village) or will you call Modi (prime minister) directly?
> Aarti: He told me the same thing and added, if you have some problem on the floor, will HR people listen to all your problems? I told him, Sir what I thought was appropriate, I did.
> Anvi: I apologised to Jeetu Sir and said I won't go to HR directly now. Will first discuss it on the floor.

The HR clarified that they don't give names but everyone knows which workers are in the committee since HR has to get them excused so that they can sit in the meeting. And when actions are taken following issues raised, production staff can easily conclude that it has to be one of the committee members.

While HR's response put an end to the issue raised by Anvi in the meeting, it did little to resolve the everyday power-plays she and her colleagues' experience. While being appointed as feeders gives Anvi, Pallavi, Aarti and their peers more authority compared to their co-workers and offers them spaces, such as meetings with HR, to candidly express their views and raise concerns, it also generates dynamics for them with their production supervisors and managers. The production staff regard them as their team, their feeders, while HR views them as compliance monitors (refer to Rita's observation in *tied-up either way* in section 4.3). As is evident in this exchange, production staff may take offence and sometimes view them as tale tellers or that they are escalating matters

to HR without discussing with them. If, however, they don't raise matters, HR is unhappy and insists that they need to fulfil their duty and responsibility as a committee member. Invoking the analogy of whether to raise matters to the Village Head or the Prime Minister of the country is telling. Production regards HR as an escalation point and would prefer if matters of the production floor were resolved directly instead of involving HR. Kavita confirmed that this view persists among production staff and highlighted HR's preferences:

> "They [Production staff] often think why should we involve HR. Maybe they think if HR is involved then our mistakes will also come to light and be revealed so better to handle the matter ourselves. But we are conscious and aware of this reluctance and we insist that matters are brought to us in the first instance. Why wait for issues to get more complicated? As the emphasis on harassment, specifically PoSH related, has increased, cases are brought to us. But there is a reluctance. We know it, we can see it."

Caught at the intersection of these dynamics emanating from the power-play where each department would like to be the first port of call, Anvi and her co-workers are faced with an added set of conflicting pressures. Even the task of raising issues to improve their working conditions and situations generates its own complications and only adds to their *bandish*. It accentuates the working time squeeze as the manager who feels they have not been given due importance is likely to, as Anvi and Arti stress, taunt, impose more restrictions, add more work, and find reasons and ways to get back at the workers. Shaila, describing production staff, commented,

> "These production supervisors and in-charges say that if they want, they can make anyone rise up and above in the sky and if they want, they can kick anyone of us outside the gate. This is the power they think they wield, and this makes them so proud."

While production wields power over workers, HR does too and caught in the middle of power-play to enact buyer compliance rules, workers' *bandish* only magnifies. In addition to such power-play, the individual differences between managers also plays a role in furthering workers' *bandish*.

Individual differences

The individual differences between managers often influenced how managers engaged with workers. In particular, if HR has a particular view or past experience with the concerned line supervisor or line in-charge or manager, they deal with the worker in a particular way. As Salma's experience presented below highlights, the consequence of

managerial differences is workers getting caught in a crossfire, having to compensate for the differences with their own time and at their own expense:

> Everyone in the HR room had just finished having their tea. Mahesh had left the room and the rest of the HR team was facing each other having a casual chat when Salma walked in.
>
> > Salma (to Kavita): Ma'am, how do I photocopy on this machine? I have to copy these reports.
> > Kavita (in an irritated tone, looking stern): This machine does not have A3 paper.
> > Salma (softly): Ma'am, the auditor is sitting with Punit Sir, and I need to deliver a copy of the reports as soon as possible. From where I will get the paper or where can I go?
> > Kavita: You should know this when you set out to do a work. Go and ask your Sir. He should be telling you!
> > …
> > Salma quietly left the room.
> > …
> > Awkward silence
> > …
> > Kavita (turning to Divya): You see, Punit (Salma's manager) always does this. I really don't understand the way he works and operates. He never gives proper briefing to his workers. Now I have scolded Salma, so she will tell him, and he will guide his team properly from next time.
> > …
>
> Later in the day Salma shared that Punit had scolded her for not being able to get the reports on time. On being asked why she did not explain to Punit what happened in the HR room, she remarked,
>
> > "What can I say! What can I do!"
>
> In running around from one manager to other, she also did not even have time to eat her lunch. She was unable to fathom what was her fault and why was she denied access to a photocopy machine. She was not even aware of the issue Kavita had with Punit. All she knew was she could not get her work done for reasons she did not know, got scolded from two seniors and missed her lunch. It was not a great day. And she did not know what she could do about it.

Due to issues between Kavita and Punit, Salma got scolded, lost time in running around and also missed her lunch. Individual differences between managers then seem to accentuate the working time squeeze and amplify workers' *bandish*.

Thus far, it has been discussed how the working time squeeze is generated as compliance time remains unaccounted for as production targets interact with buyer

compliance rules in FF, an internationalised factory. The role that managerial discretions play in shaping the working time squeeze and managerial interactions, manifested as conflicting demands, or aligned expectations play in accentuating the working time squeeze was then highlighted. The next section examines and reflects on the continued sustenance of the working time squeeze in an internationalised factory.

4.4.2.4 Sustaining the squeeze: Managerial perceptions

This section argues that managerial perceptions appear to be integral in sustaining the working time squeeze. While the squeeze is generated because compliance time is not accounted for, workers' *bandish* has itself been normalised by factory insiders, both managers and workers, and appears not to have been noticed by visitors, specifically the buyer and auditors. This section proposes that this may be owing to managers' perceptions of CoC as 'foreign', which plays a role in two ways. Firstly, since CoC are viewed as foreign, they are regarded as a buyer requirement that needs to be fulfilled to be able to sustain the relationship with the buyer. The sanctions listed in the CoC that FF receives reiterate this view. Viewed as a buyer requirement to be fulfilled, they are handed over to the HR department which ensures they are followed and finds ways to enact them. They are not internalised in the factory systems and production targets and buyer compliance rules remain parallel processes resulting in a working time squeeze, as has been explained earlier. Secondly, the perceptions around foreignness get coupled with the interactions with buyers and auditors leading to audits being viewed as a game where HR is busy devising winning moves. The consequence is that workers' *bandish* and the working time squeeze which underlie it are concealed and remain largely undetected.

a) CoC are 'foreign'

As the staff at FF located in National Capital Region (NCR) in India transact with the staff and representatives of brands, almost always located in other countries, the buyer requirements, including the CoC, are predominantly regarded as belonging to a distant location, and treated as 'foreign'.

> "The clothes manufactured here are mostly sold outside India", shared one of the production supervisors, "in a foreign country by a foreign company and it is foreigners who wear them". "It is foreigners who define what is to be made and how. It's about what they want" emphasises Sujoy who works in the Sampling department. Pran, Head of Sampling, referring to CoC and compliance audits,

added, “Buyers are the ones who come to check it. It’s about what they want. It came with the buyers. It is of buyers.”

Having arrived with the international buyers and as their requirement, CoC are regarded as foreign. The content of CoC adds to their perception of being ‘foreign. Managers’ view the content of CoC as going above and beyond encompassing more than what the national laws require. Manish, a welfare officer, explained,

> “See the Factory Act in India has outlined what both industrialist and worker should do and under what conditions work should be done. All industries fall under this and it is applicable across India. Then there are factory rules which are developed by government of each state[18]. These rules are specific to the region they apply to, are contextualised to local conditions, and specify everything from leave encashment[19], health and safety provisions, working hours and welfare related matters. Then there is the buyer…. Now foreigners have a thinking which is bigger than us. They don’t believe in what factory act or rule says. Rather they say, we have that and also some additional terms and conditions**.** These requirements differ across buyers. While similar to factory rules, they also include issues like there should be a secondary exit where there are more than 10 workers working, exit doors should open outwards etc. These are buyer requirements. The buyer wants to see what other facilities are there. They want to see that where their garment is being made, no worker is being harassed. That there is nothing in the garment that would create problems for the people of the country of the brand. Problems could be related to garment, stitching, washing or quality and the buyer would not like to go and work in such industry [factory] where any worker is facing any kind of harassment. They focus a lot more on social part. Social part includes, wages should be timely, minimum wages should be paid, Overtime (OT) rules should be adhered to, leave encashment should be timely, bonus is paid as planned.*”*

Manish regards the repetition of issues covered in national laws as indicative of buyers’ distrust of national systems and argues that the additional content that goes beyond local laws reflects a ‘bigger’ thinking. It is regarded as ‘bigger’ as it appears to exceed the local standards and practices Manish and his colleagues are familiar with. Rekha, Manish’s colleague, and another welfare officer who used to be a sewing operator in the past, thought buyers’ requirements for CoC, specifically around workers, were a result of differences in practices.

> “See, in buyer countries people work for only 6-7 hours so they want to see that workers are not under pressure when they are working here.”

Manish, Rekha and their peers point out that it is such differences in workplace practices that result in buyers’ defining the requirements the way they do. As those requirements stand out from their local practices, managers tend to view these demands as distant

[18] There are 29 states and 7 union territories in India.
[19] If a worker does not take the leave, he/she is able to get money for those days on a pro-rata basis.

from them. They are unfamiliar and foreign. Such views of HR were further strengthened when a local Indian brand started sourcing from FF. Kavita shared,

> "These days we are making garments for Brand L. They did not give us any CoC or anything and have no such compliance requirement."

Manish points out that worker related requirements in CoC are a consequence of buyers' emphasis on 'social' issues. These issues are viewed as important for buyers, something they emphasise. Raju, the Production manager raised:

> "See buyer tend to speak for workers…they want provisions for workers, they ask for these on behalf of workers..."

Buyers demanding provisions and change on behalf of workers, when workers do not raise them, only reinforces the perceptions of CoC as being foreign and more so when people at FF feel buyers are foreigners who do not appreciate their challenges and only want everything to be according to their specifications. Mahesh regarded the buyers and their auditors' insistence that even workers engaged in temporary loading/unloading of material in the factory must be authorised and checked for their age, as highly impractical:

> "Tell me from where will the daily wagers, who are selling their labour on the roads every day and sleeping on streets get their identity cards!? Is this even practical?"

Mahesh thought that the expectations from the buyers were 'ridiculous' with little concern about how things actually worked or not in the factory. He expressed his dissatisfaction:

> "If one fire alarm does not work, they [buyers/auditors] raise an issue of alarms not working. It's ridiculous. They don't raise it in context, say one out of total number of alarms is not working, however, management has assured, it will be rectified. This is not a violation! We have around 4.5 acres land! Same with emergency lights. That lady, Madhu comes from that Buyer Z. I know her from last 15 years and she will check each emergency light and if one doesn't work, we are gone. She will make an issue with me, shout at me and then also raise an observation! She won't write that one out of total number, say out of x number of emergency lights, one was not working. If one is not working for some reason, but others are, it will not be pitch dark on the floor! But I don't think they care about the floor. Often, auditors and buyers come and say double exit is missing! I would rather prefer if they do an evacuation drill and see if people can evacuate or not. If they cannot, then an issue can be raised, but no, they won't do that !"

Such experiences of the FF managers of buyers insisting on their requirements without listening to FF's views and challenges are not just limited to audits. Interactions with buyers, even on capacity-building programmes, which buyers offer under their cooperation-based approaches and which were discussed in Chapter 2 (Locke 2013; Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2014), leave the FF managers with similar perceptions. Factory management is neither given a choice on whether or not to implement such

programmes nor a great amount of say on how these are to be carried out. Nikhil, one of the directors of Mystral, commented:

> "When we told them [brand c] that we don't think we need to implement that programme [on manager-worker communication] in our factories as we already had systems and other programmes in place for issues which the programme wanted to offer training for, we were threatened with business withdrawal."

In this instance, Nikhil shared that the buyer concerned was not even willing to listen to what the factory was doing, let alone discuss alignment. As he put it, 'they simply wanted their way'. Mystral's experience of the much sought after cooperation-based approach (refer to chapter 2) appears to be no different than the audit-based approaches. Such insistence by buyers to do things their way has even been labelled as 'imperialistic' (Khan and Lund-Thomsen 2011). Faced with insistence from buyers to do the things they want and the way they want it, Manish and his colleagues at the FF feel buyers are foreigners who are unable to appreciate FF's perspectives and challenges. As a result, CoC and other international CSR initiatives of buyers are largely perceived as 'foreign'.

It is this perception of CoC as foreign that underlies the making of buyer compliance by HR at the FF (discussed earlier). Parth, a trainer at Mystral, pointed out that these rules are focused on making the buyer happy and not on the factory itself:

> "All compliance has been reduced to be an exercise of buyer satisfaction. It is all about how the buyer wants the factory to be. The entire focus is on whether a point has been raised or not [non-conformance issue raised by buyer/auditor]. The entire system in the factory, starting from the GM to HR is only worried and working on that – working towards and hoping no point will be or was raised. We don't really care about the factory and how it really is, we are dependent on the buyer and are busy trying to make the buyer happy."

Maya, a HR officer shared Parth's views. Sitting in a worker-management safety committee meeting where upcoming audit visits were being discussed and planned, she raised:

> "But Shyam (safety officer), why are we doing all of this for compliance only? Can we not think beyond and try and integrate?"

Such questions by Maya, however, remain unanswered, primarily because Parth and other colleagues, drawing on their interactions with and observations of buyers and auditors, had come to the conclusion that FF's views, its challenges and what it does or not is of little significance. Parth explained:

> "It all depends on the buyer's/auditor's mood. Whether we will get a point raised or not, whether they will click the picture or not, whether they will let a particular thing pass or not."

While Parth thought it was buyer's mood that determined the consequence of an audit and whether a non-conformity would be raised or not. Mahesh and others in HR contend that it is rather about how FF plays the 'game'.

b) Audit is a 'game'

Mahesh and his team were excitedly preparing for an audit scheduled for the following day. Plans to present the factory as clean and disciplined were developed. In the discussions it became apparent that audit is a game for HR and making the right moves entails managing what the auditor can see, what he/she can notice and what is 'allowed' to come to their attention. An excerpt from two discussion draws attention to this point:

> ..
> Rita: Sir is with the auditors at all times.
> Mahesh: Yes, I cannot leave the auditor. If I leave the auditor, my whole game will be over.
> …
> Rita: Mahesh Sir handles auditors very well
> …
> Mahesh: (smiling)… I don't let the auditor work only. I make him/her kind of go blind. I get them entangled in different matters so that they quickly move on, click pictures if they have to and leave
> …
> ….
> (On a later day, during an ongoing audit)
>
> …
> Rita: These auditors have become smart. It's two of them today and they are each going to different departments. Sir cannot be with both together! Hopefully, we will manage.

During audits, the HR and production staff are on alert throughout the factory. All staff are on the factory-floor. And this itself is a message for workers who become aware. Salma shared:

> "I am not told but when I see increased movement of staff on the floor, I know someone is going to come."

The HR manager accompanies the auditor/s at all times. During floor rounds, the respective HR representatives who are in-charge walk behind the team closely, ready to offer any explanation and to manage any suggestion. In addition to this, the group on the instant messaging application WhatsApp is actively utilised to communicate auditor movements till they leave the factory. When playing the game, everyone in the factory is team. All differences in expectations, priorities, and personalities cease to matter for the few hours of play.

Seen from the managers' point of view, audits display certain basic characteristic of a game: it has a fixed number of players (factory, buyer /auditor), lasts for a defined period of time (1–2 days, depends on number of workers and number of auditors as audits are measured in man-days) and is characterised by a set of rules (guiding the moves and strategy of managers which are constantly shaped in interactions with buyers and auditors) (Elias et al. 2012). The one who wins the game is the one who has the right strategy and plan, is able to anticipate the behaviour of the other player and makes no wrong moves. This view has been only strengthened in FF managers' interactions with buyers. Nikhil, recounting his experiences of buyer interactions, highlighted,

> "Buyers seem to believe that managing CoC compliance and audits is a reflection of suppliers' intelligence and abilities and they themselves want suppliers to game the system."

Being viewed in this manner, FF managers place emphasis on presenting FF as an internationalised factory. Lalit, a supervisor, explained:

> "It is similar to presenting a newly wedded bride[20]. Someone comes from outside, you will dress the bride up, deck her up and present to outsiders. Compliance is much the same!"

Viewed in this way, the focus is on clearing the audit by focusing on presenting the factory in a particular way[21]. Specifically, the focus is on managing visibility of people and processes in FF that ultimately contribute to sustaining the squeeze by concealing workers' *bandish*.

Paperwork

Paperwork refers to compliance files including factory policies, legal certificates, minutes of meetings, employee files, records of training among others (see Appendix 8) that are meant to illustrate how CoC are enacted in the FF. As a product of human action, paperwork, and other compliance artefacts exist independently of managers, are aimed

[20] This is a reference to an old Indian custom where after the bride reaches the home of her in-laws, for the next few days, people in the neighbourhood and friends and family of the groom visit the house of newly wedded couple to see the bride. She is dressed up to look her best in order to be presented to those who wish to offer her gifts and blessings.

[21] Such efforts to 'manage' rule-following have also elsewhere been labelled as creative compliance (Black 1997), mock compliance (Huq et al. 2014; Baden et al. 2009) and 'evasion work' (Soundararajan et al. 2018). Soundararajan et al. (2018), Huq et al. (2014) and Baden et al. (2009) have highlighted a range of strategies that internationalised factories deploy to manage audits. However, in keeping with the overall objective and focus of the chapter, only the strategies that were observed in FF to be playing a role in concealing working time have been discussed here.

at satisfying a specific need (Gagliardi 2017) and are used to (re)present an internationalised factory (Cooren 2004).

Paperwork allows a showcase of a factory's credentials (legal certificates), articulates the factory's values and way of doing things (policies), reflects different operational processes (recruitment, grievance handling) and presents specific activity (training, meetings). On paper, through text, numbers, and visuals, they make and represent an internationalised factory. These documents remain active as long as they are recognised or not destroyed, and as such have a staying capacity (Cooren 2004). For this reason, all minutes of committee meetings are taken by HR staff and vetted by the HR manager before being filed. The staying capacity of documents also necessitates that some documents be manipulated and others be hidden away. For instance, files with overtime (OT) calculations are put into sacks and are kept hidden. During a factory round, while preparing for the audit Rita walked across the shop-floor, opening drawers of each of the garment checking tables in each assembly. She explained:

> "At times, auditors ask for even drawers on the factory floor tables to be opened and if anything was to be found of OT calculations or Sunday working, we would be in trouble". Coming across a piece of paper on which some numbers were scribbled and scolded the worker, "This 90-45, what is this? The auditor may assume it is OT, don't write all this and leave around. Go, throw it away."

In keeping with the same idea, multiple user interfaces have been developed to auto-adjust the online attendance and work hour logs in order to show that hours worked adhere to legal minimum and CoC requirements. This ensures that any excess work done by workers is concealed. Further, terminations are enacted by asking workers to write resignation letters which are filed. Instances of penalisation through firing and terminating worker contracts is, as a result, never detected. Much like the discrimination against recruitment of pregnant women cannot ever be identified.

While on one hand, FF affords the required protections listed in CoC to pregnant women including flexibility with leaves and paid maternity leaves, these privileges also serve as a deterrent to hiring women who are suspected to be already pregnant. During recruitment, along with being asked to give a sewing trial, there is process of medical check-up where the factory nurse measures blood pressure and asks about any chronic diseases etc. Women are asked the date of their last menstruation cycle and if it is suspected that the woman may be expecting, she is not recruited. Maya clarified,

> "See hiring a worker who will go on six months leave after few months of joining will block a position in the allotted man-power budget[22]."

There is however no documentation of this recruitment decision. It is only recorded as trial not passed. The buyer compliance rules, as was noted earlier, are unwritten and no paperwork is available for compliance rules. Counselling sessions are also not recorded anywhere. What is recorded are apologies written by workers and warnings issued to them, which forms the 'record' of a worker and often serves as a form of justification with both the buyers as well as the labour courts. Paperwork is therefore utilised to manage the visibility of factory's way of working. This is in addition to the presentation of the factory, specifically during audits.

Presentation

During audits, Mahesh and his team are vigilant and alert attempting to distract and draw attention away from anything that they believe can create any potential 'compliance' issue. In addition to OT paperwork, additional processes, for instance chemical spotting, which are usually carried out in the open are temporarily paused. All extra machines are removed from the floor to clear all aisle blockages. Specifically, work-in-progress bundles from assembly lines are removed and placed at the feeding tables, where all cut panels are placed. Presence of work-in-progress bundles with sewing operators may raise questions about work pressure, which managers at FF want to avoid.

Presenting the factory in a desired way takes effort and time. A consultant at Mystral highlighted:

> "The head of production reckons that the HR people spend 3- 4 days a week dealing with audits and associated forms and reports. In fact, Mr. Dua [director] said that if they were not occupied with audits, they would do their job which they are trained to do."

The CoC and associated audits have come to be seen as not 'real work' but rather an imposition which cannot be actively resisted. Therefore 'gaming' is deployed as an informal approach to subvert the CoC audit expectations. The labels of 'ridiculous', 'brouhaha', 'messy', 'madness' for CoC audits are common among factory managers. Viewed as foreign, and not 'real work', managers somehow find ways to manage it.

[22] Every factory has a budget sanctioned by the Mystral management according to which only a fixed number of people can be on the factory's employee roll. This is linked with the factory's legal license as well as costing considerations of the company.

These ongoing, informal, non-confrontational ways of managing CoC, perhaps, could also be characterised as a form of 'pragmatic resistance' in the everyday factory life that emerges under conditions that are under-reported and poorly understood for they reside in the shadowland of organizational life (McCabe et al. 2019:3).

The consequence of the presentation and paperwork is that working time squeeze, and in turn *bandish*, are both concealed. The signifiers of the pressure that results from the working time squeeze, specifically the records of overtime hours, work-in-progress bundles of cut garment panels pending to be sewn and contract workers employed to work late nights and odd-hours, are all hidden. Further, the manager–worker and manager–manager interactions that primarily influence workers' *bandish* are not recorded anywhere and on the day of the audit such interactions are moderated and controlled. Driven by the move to manage what is visible, the game approach towards CoC compliance audit ultimately contributes to concealing the interaction of targets and buyer compliance rules as well as the managerial discretion and interactions that generate, shape and accentuate working time squeeze and ultimately contribute towards sustaining it.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented how workers' CSR experiences are primarily the workers' experiences of CoC translated to buyer compliance rules which are embedded within and intertwined with production targets, and has emphasised the specific role that managerial discretions, interactions, and perceptions play in constituting these experiences in the internationalised factory.

As buyer compliance rules interact with production targets in an internationalised factory, compliance time remains unaccounted for, ultimately generating a working time squeeze that underlies and constitutes workers' *bandish*. Managerial discretion in the factory plays a distinct role in shaping and determining the extent of the squeeze. In the interplay of buyer compliance and targets, working time squeeze also triggers managerial differences in priorities and power-play which combine with individual differences between managers to generate conflicting demands for workers which leads to accentuating the working time squeeze and, in turn, workers' *bandish*. This working time squeeze is sustained in the factory as a consequence of managerial perceptions. Viewed as foreign, CoC requirements are treated as 'theirs', not ours, which results is

buyer compliance remaining an independent process, running in parallel to other processes, rather than being internalised and integrated in production processes. This itself might be a key reason why compliance time is not on the radar of factory management. Further, such a perception of foreignness results in the CoC audits being regarded as a game where managers steer a play of what is visible through paperwork and presentation. Such play ultimately ensures that working time squeeze remains concealed, contributing further to its sustenance.

The next chapter will examine how workers deal with this working time squeeze that continues to persist, what *bandish* entails for workers in their everyday factory life and how *bandish* eventually manifests in the working and personal lives of factory workers.

5. *bandish* in the lives of factory workers

5.1 Introduction

Factory workers refer to their experiences of international CSR requirements manifested through CoC as *bandish*. The previous chapter presented workers' descriptions of feeling stressed, confined (seat-bound), restricted (boxed-in) under work pressure (tied-up) and explained how this *bandish* is constituted through and as working time squeeze in an internationalised factory at the intersection of international brands' production and CSR requirements. This chapter examines what *bandish* entails for workers and how it manifests in their everyday lives, both inside the factory and beyond.

The chapter argues *bandish* entails for workers the choice to either impact their personal and social lives to avert and minimise the working time squeeze or to submit to its consequences and adversely impact their psychological and financial lives. In dealing with the working time squeeze that underlies *bandish*, while an adverse outcome is usually inevitable, factory workers have some choice with regards to the sphere of influence of the unpleasantness. They can choose between adversely impacting either their physical, social, psychological or financial lives. Despite entailing such a dilemma, *bandish* manifests differently in workers' lives. It can generate both limiting experiences that evoke negative feelings or liberating experiences that induce positive feelings. The manifestation of *bandish* in the lives of factory workers, the chapter suggests, depends on whether *bandish* triggers a sense of partial or complete loss of control, or that of partially or fully gaining control over financial, temporal, personal or familial aspects of one's life.

The chapter begins with a collective story of how factory workers deal with the working time squeeze and illustrates the workers' dilemma in their everyday factory life by highlighting the adverse outcomes are generated for workers' physical, social, psychological, and financial lives as they deal with the squeeze. It shows that when workers attempt to manage or minimise the squeeze, their physical and social lives are impacted, and when they either submit to the squeeze and are unable to deal with it, their financial and psychological lives are affected. This section is presented as a composite narrative drawing on interactions with different workers across multiple ethnographic observations. The second part of the chapter then underlines how *bandish* manifests in the working and personal lives of factory workers. This is presented as two

sets of tales: lives of workers who feel empowered, protected, liberated, and inspired; and those who feel marginalised, helpless, oppressed and constrained.

5.2 Working with *bandish:* Dealing with the squeeze

This section highlights the role working time squeeze plays in shaping and influencing workers' lives and what *bandish* entails in everyday factory life. It shows that working at the intersection of CSR and production requirements, workers have two options for dealing with the working time squeeze: that of trying to manage and minimise it by limiting other activities that take away time or else to face the consequences for being unable to manage it, thereby submitting to the squeeze and paying for it.

Workers either take measures to save time by compromising the needs of their body (controlling hunger, thirst, and the need to visit the washroom) or compromising on their relationships. In an event where they cannot manage the squeeze, the failure to deliver targets or inability to follow buyer compliance rules are regarded as 'misconduct' for which workers are either counselled or penalised. This generates consequences for their psychological self and their financial lives. Dealing with the working time squeeze, then, leads to consequences either for the workers' bodies and health (physical lives), their relationships with co-workers and family (social lives), their mental well-being and sense of self (psychological selves) or workers' earnings (financial lives). Each of these is discussed in turn.

5.2.1 Managing the squeeze: Physical lives

bandish entails consequences for workers' physical bodies. Trying to manage the working time squeeze, workers not only feel confined to workstations but often have to overlook the demands of their body. To pacify Sarla, who was relatively new and was complaining about not being able to go to the washroom during an audit (see seat-bound in previous chapter), Sunita shared:

> "What to do dear! I also need to go urgently. I actually got up late in the morning so had no time for breakfast, so had my chapati on the way and at the gate. So, when I came in I only had time to drink water. I could not visit washroom. I thought I will go after making a few pieces. But then I got caught up and I thought I will go when am when am done with this jam[23], will then go… but now listening to you, I think I won't take the chance. I'll wait for the lunch and will go then."

[23] When pieces are accumulated, it is called work-in-progress (WIP), commonly referred to as jam by workers. It reflects poor target delivery of workers, can affect work and production further

Sunita did not want to be late in the morning, lest she would have been scolded and had come straight to her workstation after drinking water in the morning. All morning she was under pressure to deliver targets and clear a backlog of pieces, which itself in all likelihood emanated from the working time squeeze as the last few days CoC compliance-related activities had increased in intensity. She did not go to the washroom as she wanted to clear backlog. And then she learnt that due to a compliance audit she had to now stay put for more time.

The case of water bottles and excerpts from training discussions underlined how workers also hold back on drinking water. Sometimes workers skip breakfast when they are late to start their production on time. Other times they skip lunches to sit and finish the backlog. On other occasions they skip lunch to go to HR to raise a grievance or other issue, for instance, issue of a new passbook, request for a letter to apply for a government scheme, any salary- or leave-related issue. As it is not always possible to leave the workstation during work hours, they have no choice but to use lunch time for their personal work. In some cases, as happened with Salma (see individual differences in section 4.4.2.3), lunch is missed trying to juggle managerial differences. Buyer compliance rules in the factory, as seen earlier, prohibits any eating or drinking on the workstations including even candy, toffee, chewing gums. There is no other break except lunch. Missing breakfast or lunch then means working on an empty stomach for the remaining hours unless one feels sick and needs to go to the medical room. That too requires the approval of supervisors which does not always come easy (see the tale *neglected* for more details).

Workers skip breakfast and lunches, control the urge to drink water or visit washrooms as they try to manage the working time squeeze and cope with impacts on their physical selves. They also try to deal with the squeeze by reducing and limiting their social interactions.

5.2.2 Minimising the squeeze: Social lives

Interacting with each other forms a key part of workers' social lives in the factory. Shailja highlighted:

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down the line and can lead to counselling for target delivery. Workers, therefore, like to keep it to a minimum.

> "I have learnt so much about life from hearing about it and learning it from my peers about since I first joined here seven years back. Some of the friendships I have built help me so much to let me deal with my own life issues. Plus, we have also supported each other in work. Although this is changing now. There is much pressure and hardly any time to talk."

Talking, however, is now a big deal in the FF as it is believed to eat into the production time and affect workers' attention span. It is believed that if workers' talk, they are likely to make more mistakes and not produce their target with quality. Kavita explained:

> "If buyers find the floor too noisy, they will think quality is not good here GM Sir also does not like noise… That day when assessors had come to the factory, they commented, it seems your people give good quality, everyone is looking down and working, no one is talking. I was so happy to hear this."

Workers adhere to such views and focus on finishing off their targets. Piya clarified:

> "I am only focused on the target. I only have to finish all my pieces. I don't want to get involved in anything else or in anyone's matters. There isn't really time or scope for that. And I avoid talking too much to anyone. From home to machine and machine to home."

Even though everyone does not agree that talking is distraction, they still keep it to minimum. Sita underscored:

> "Feeders keep roaming around and they keep noticing us and whether we are talking and what we are talking about. Supervisor threatens to pull us up if they see us talking…If we say a sentence or two, or crack a joke to lift our spirits and smile a little to lighten the mood and lift the stress, what harm can come? It may perhaps help us manage our stress...But if the supervisor even sees me smiling, he will comment, why are you showing all your 32 teeth madam? Should I take you to HR [for counselling]? I tell you, these days you are also followed to the washroom. Guards have been asked to keep a watch there so that we don't spend too much of time talking with each other or on the phone. But then what is to be done. Our job is dear to us. It is much better to keep our head down and give our target."

Sita puts her heads down and works, much like Salma stays in her 'box' and makes needle reports (refer boxed-in story in previous chapter) and Anvi and Pallavi have accepted their changed relationships with co-workers since they were appointed feeders and 'compliance monitors'. To save time to deal with the working time squeeze, workers limit their interactions not only with their co-workers and peers but also with family members. Nimmi, who operates the sewing machine, shared:

> "My 6-year old daughter comes from school and stays at home alone. I used to call her every day to check if she is back safe and has eaten. But now, I cannot always do so. If supervisor or some manager will see, I will be pulled up. I don't want to get involved in a brawl. And I have to anyway finish my target. Now my husband has to call and check, when he can, but of course he is in a driving job and pretty nagged about it. I can't do much about it. I have to manage."

To deal with the working time squeeze and production pressure, Nimmi, much like her peers, has decided to avoid using the phone. This has created tensions with her husband but she knows she needs the job and tries to do all she can. *bandish* then ultimately entails altered relationships with peers and family and influences workers' social lives.

An additional point to be noted here is that using a mobile phone is a compliance related issue in the FF, in the name of buyers' safety requirements, much like in other garment factories in South India (Tirupur) and Sri Lanka where a 'metal-free policy' was introduced (Ruwanpura 2014; De Neve 2014). Both CSR requirements from buyers (construction of needle box) and those introduced in the factory, in the name of buyer's CSR (including phone under metal free; no talking), then influence workers' social lives in an internationalised factory, much like approaches to enact CSR requirement driven compliance rules influence workers' psychological lives. When workers are unable to manage or minimise the squeeze, they submit to it and consequently pay for it.

5.2.3 Submitting to the squeeze: Psychological lives

Doing it all and doing it right is not always possible. Even though efforts are made to make up for compliance time by compensating through their physical and social selves, they are not always successful. Moreover, managerial discretion and interaction, as noted in the last chapter, only make the balancing act harder as they accentuate the squeeze. Consequently, workers are guilty of 'misconduct' and are counselled in efforts to enact the buyer compliance rules. During a counselling session, Kavita remarked:

> "Someone who does not know basic counting, we have hired that person (referring to the worker) as an operator and this is how you behave? You are not even worthy of being a helper!"

Statements like these are common during counselling sessions (see section 4.2.2 on enacting buyer compliance rules in previous chapter) and are driven by the "need to make them realise the value of this job. Only when they realise the importance of the job will behave themselves" (Mahesh, HR).

Workers, however, describe these as extremely insulting and humiliating experiences and often break down during or after these sessions. Isha shared:

> "When I am scolded, then just don't ask what I go through. I feel I should leave immediately and I should not return again. I cannot control my tears. The way people talk to us, it is so insulting. I cannot control my tears. No one talks to me

> like that, not at home, not in neighbourhood, no one in the family. We are only human, we make mistakes, but the way these people talk… don't know what to say."

Isha's views were widely shared. Several workers referred to the phrase "bezati si lagti hai (We feel insulted)" when referring to their experiences of being counselled. Parmeeta, a garment checker, was among the rare group of workers who had so far managed to not be pulled up:

> "No, I have never been taken to HR and don't ever want to go... In my five years here, I have never been to HR…I don't want to face the madams in HR, and I hope I don't ever have to. They speak so badly and insult people. I hear so many stories. I will try and keep my record good for as long as I am here."

A good record that Parmeeta alludes to is an employee file with no warning letter or apology letter and is indicative of a worker who comes on time, takes minimal unplanned leave and is, in management's perception, sincere in his/her work. The opposite is a poor record, what Kavita calls 'a decorated file', which lists apology letters taken from workers for misconduct and warning letters issued for violation of buyer compliance rules, for instance, eating/drinking on/near production lines, keeping a water bottle on the workstation, among others.

The documentation of misconduct in employee files plays a role in defining workers' sense of self (Stryker and Burke 2000). Punita beamed with pride:

> "My target is on the dot and I don't take too many leaves. Because my work is good, I have not been to HR. I'd like to keep it that way."

Punita not only thinks that she is good. She has views on her peers too:

> "See, some people behave very poorly and make a big issue of being asked to wear slippers and employee cards. That is not right... Many people behave as if they are from the village and act absolutely dumb. I always tell them, listen to seniors. It is for your good."

The underlying views of good and bad furthered by managers and internalised by workers like Punita eventually lead to workers not even questioning why what they did was wrong. Seema was scolded during the factory round. It was not clear why but when asked she was very clear:

> "I must have been wrong and must have done something, that's why madam scolded me. It is for my good only."

The onus to strike the balance and to manage the working time squeeze, as has been noted, is on the workers. An inability to deal with working time squeeze amounts to 'misconduct' and results in workers being scolded, insulted and humiliated often leading

to them bursting into tears, thereby affecting their mental and emotional well-being. The insults and humiliations are also documented in files which contribute to workers' internalising the managerial labels of 'good' and 'poor'. Those who have internalised it further contribute in cementing it among their peers. Eventually, workers seem to accept what Bela and HR repeatedly emphasise, "this is a compliant [internationalised] factory. This is the way we do things here". Managers' definitions of an ideal image of self as that of a 'good worker' play a role in not only shaping workers' psychological lives but also in furthering workplace controls[24] which further sustains the squeeze and in turn workers' *bandish* (refer to previous chapter for more details on sustenance).

In addition to shaping workers' psychological lives, the inability to deal with the squeeze also impacts their financial lives.

5.2.4 Paying for the squeeze: Financial lives

During counselling sessions, in addition to scolding, demanding apologies and issuing warning letters, workers are also penalised for a 'misconduct' by being handed a chit for a specified number of days. The chit system[25] refers to the system in which workers are asked to leave the factory immediately and can only return to work after the duration mentioned on the chit. The system of chits was introduced to regulate and track the entry and exit of factory staff and workers from FF. No one can leave the gates of the factory during work hours without showing the chit. However, HR deploys it to also ensure adherence to rules. When an HR representative feels counselling sessions alone are not working or 'misconduct' is too serious, a chit is handed out for a specified number of days.

After finishing scolding the two workers who were caught drinking a cold drink on their workstations (refer to counselling in section 4.2.2 on enacting buyer compliance rules in previous chapter), the HR called the production manager:

> Bela (to the production manager): This is a serious mistake on their [the workers'] part. We are sending them home on the chit…They will spoil 1000s of our people. We need to take strict action…Ok…yes…thanks.
> Bela (to workers): Give me your employee cards. Show your chit on the gate when you return after two days and then come to HR room to take your employee card.

[24] Costas and Kärreman (2013) too noted how CSR can play a role in controlling employees through managers' definition of an 'ideal image of self', while Siltaoja et al. (2015) note the role of CSR as a means of governing employees and controlling their action.
[25] This is a pseudonym.

Bela wrote out two chits of 2 days each.
Kavita called the guards room: One of you please come. We are giving the chit to two workers. They have to collect their bags before they leave the factory.
Bela (to workers): Now go and think at home.
The guard arrived and the two workers left with the guard.

Once workers are issued a chit, managers have to ensure that those workers don't roam around freely in the factory chatting, talking, and distracting others on the factory floor. They want the workers to immediately leave the factory and therefore they are escorted from the HR room with a guard. A guard accompanies them to the shelf where the workers keep their bags and then walks them out to the factory gate. When workers return, the guard checks the chit and allows the workers to enter only if the duration mentioned on the chit has passed. Wearing an employee card at all times is mandatory so workers who had been sent out on chit come to HR to ask for the employee card, mostly during their lunch hour on the day they resume work. The second visit is an opportunity to conduct a brief counselling session once again and to reiterate the rules to the workers.

As noted earlier, entry and exit of all workers and staff is recorded using a biometric system. When workers leave the factory on the chit, the exact time of their exit is recorded. The days on which the worker does not come as he/she was handed a chit is marked as absent and unauthorised leave in the system. Salary is calculated based on the number of days worked and authorised leave. So, being handed a chit ultimately results in workers losing salary as a punishment.

It is for this reason that sometimes workers do show up before time and insist to get back to work. Such cases are brought to the attention of HR. Whether the pleas of "Madam, please forgive me this time", "I really need to and want to work", "this mistake won't happen again" will result in the workers being allowed to resume work or not depends on the managers' discretion. In some cases, workers are asked to be sent back home from the gate itself and not allowed entry into the factory. At other times they are called in, counselled again and then sent back and sometimes they are counselled and asked to resume work. Handing out the chit allows managers several opportunities to ensure workers appreciate the rules. As Mahesh summarised,

> "When for few days they will have to sit at home after getting the chit, they will come to realise the value of this job."

Chits are handed out for being unable to deliver targets, for not producing with quality or for violating buyer compliance rules. The severity of the misconduct as assessed by

the HR representative determines whether the worker will be only scolded, asked to write an apology, handed a chit, or issued a warning letter. The final point of escalation is workers' being asked to resign (in effect terminated). Buyer compliance rules become a reason for workers to lose their jobs[26].

The process for terminating letters is by asking them to submit a resignation letter in a fixed template. This conceals both the act of firing the worker as well as the issue of workers not being given any 'reasonable notice'. Services of workers are terminated with immediate effect when resignations are received. This results in workers losing their employment and the salary being restricted to the day the resignation letter is submitted. This impacts workers' financial planning and impacts their livelihoods. As Naresh, Sarla's brother shared when I visited them at home,

> "I got my resign. Now I have to manage so I am doing night shifts with contractor. It is difficult but hopefully, I will find something."

Being handed a chit results in loss of salary and losing the job impacts workers' earnings, at least temporarily, till they find new employment. The inability to deal with the working time squeeze ultimately results in workers paying for it with their earnings and adversely impacts their financial lives.

The extent to which the financial lives will be impacted, however, depends on the managers much like the extent of the impact on their psychological lives and mental and emotional well-being. While workers have little control over the extent of adverse impact, they also cannot be certain that in making sacrifices that impact physical and social lives will necessarily ensure that their financial and psychological lives will not be impacted. This further clarifies why workers refer to the experiences of working with and under working time squeeze as *bandish* and describe it as being stressed, confined (seat-bound), restricted(boxed-in) and under pressure (tied-up) (see the previous chapter).

5.3 Living with bandish: Workers' lives

bandish entails a dilemma for workers – to choose between adverse outcomes on either their physical, social, psychological, or financial lives. Yet the individual feelings triggered by *bandish* vary. When *bandish* triggers a sense of acquiring control on financial, temporal, personal and/or familial aspects in one's life, despite the dilemma,

[26] Company codes, it has been noted, can be put to different uses, including to justify firing (Helin et al. 2011).

bandish evokes positive feelings and in exchange for what it offers, seems like a worthwhile price to pay. When it triggers a sense of loss of control on financial, temporal, personal and/or familial aspects in one's life, the dilemma leads to a feeling of despair.

As highlighted in chapter three, experience is characterised by a unity that is constituted by a single quality that pervades the entire experience (Roth and Jornet 2014; Frie 2003; Dewey 1980). After an experience occurs, reflecting on it, one property emerges prominently to characterise the experience as a whole. Emotions have been identified as one such property that tend to serve as the moving and cementing force, providing unity in and through varied parts of experience (Dewey 1980). Hence the emphasis on feelings evoked by *bandish*.

There is also a distinction between immediate experience, which is lived directly, and accumulated or conceptualised experience, which is its subsequent objectification (Daher et al. 2017; van Manen 1990). Experiencing and that which is experienced constitute a process that requires an intentional act or attention along with effort, conducted in the field of individual human consciousness, and from which a meaning or sense is inferred (Daher et al. 2017). Experiences, then, are varied and specific to whoever lives them.

This section identifies and traces the varied, multiple, constantly changing experiences in workers' lives. It presents how *bandish* manifests in workers' everyday lives and highlights the multiple, often even contradictory emotions that are triggered as they work in FF. The tales are presented in two groups. The first four refer to the bright side of life in the factory and allude to workers feeling empowered, liberated, protected, and inspired, despite the dilemma that *bandish* entails for them. The next five are grouped as the dark side of life in the factory and emphasise how the dilemma leads to workers feeling neglected, helpless, humiliated, marginalised, and oppressed. Drawing on workers' own description of working at FF and ethnographic observations, each tale presents a feeling that is shared by a group of workers and highlights how working time squeeze and in turn *bandish* generated at the interplay of international CSR and production manifests in the lives of factory workers.

Salma was introduced in the previous chapter and different aspects of her and her co-workers' *bandish* have already been underlined. The below tales are also woven around different aspects of Salma's life along with her several co-workers. The purpose of crafting the tale with a central character is to be able to capture and highlight multiple

dimensions in a worker's life as well as to underline how *bandish* is associated with constantly changing experiences and a range of feelings.

5.3.1 The bright side of life in the factory

The four tales included in this section illustrate how *bandish* manifests in workers' lives to trigger positive feelings. When workers are able to gain control over their personal freedom through financial independence, or over other temporal, personal or familial aspects, *bandish* and its underlying working time squeeze and the associated stress, confinement, restriction, work pressure and the accompanying dilemma, all appear manageable. Rather, the characteristics and constituents of *bandish* that arise in the interaction of international CSR and production requirement come to seen as a source of empowerment, liberation, protection, and inspiration.

Empowered

(where bandish *enables financial freedom and personal growth)*

Salma joined FF in 2011. Prior to that she was working in another Mystral factory. She started work straight after her class ten exams (comparable to GCSEs in the UK), as a young girl of eighteen. Having lost her father at an early age, she had to contribute towards running the household. Like her, many of Salma's peers also started work because of the death of the male member of the family (husband, father, or brother) and assumed the role of primary breadwinners. Salma's mother was already making plans for her marriage but the year 2009 changed everything. Salma met with an accident and her injuries marked her as a lesser preferred choice for a bride and she was considered an object of pity. This was extremely hard for her to accept:

> "After one long year, I re-joined work. But then I just could not handle the way they [referring to her co-workers and superiors] used to pity me all the time. I quit within a week of re-joining and then came to this factory [FF]. All those comments about my unfortunate fate at a young age were too much for me to handle. I do not want anyone to pity me, not then, not now. In fact, I rarely ever mention or talk about my accident to anyone. No one here knows, except the HR who had hired me."

She continues to live with her mother and brother's family. She is conscious that her sister-in-law may start seeing her as a burden and is therefore very particular to continue to earn. Since she is not a financial burden and her brother does not have to take care of her, she feels that her self-respect is not violated. She is not dependant on anyone.

She is free. While for Salma having a job became a necessity because of her circumstances, for some of her peers securing financial freedom to avoid marriage is a deliberate strategy.

Fifteen years ago, Padma, like Salma, started work as a sewing machine operator when she was eighteen years old. Her sister was married off at nineteen and Padma did not want that. With her earning, while working at the FF, Padma completed her bachelor's degree in law through correspondence. Recently she received her degree and was appointed as an HR assistant responsible for CSR-related training and other support activities. She feels grateful, recognised for her efforts, and respected for her commitment to study. Despite the challenges and the dilemma she has faced, her ability to remain financially independent made everything else seem like less of a challenge.

> "If I leave this job, my parents will get me married. And I don't want to get married. I am not inclined...And I don't want to leave this company. I have learnt so much about life seeing the lives of my co-workers here."

Padma remains happily unmarried, well-qualified and as she has risen through the ranks, she has set an example for young co-workers who look up to her and to whom she suggests that putting up with some hardships in exchange of what you really want will be worth it. Such interactions make a huge difference to new recruits. Salma recounts,

> "When I first came to the factory, I knew nothing about stitching. I did not know what the factory is or what is what!"

Several workers, like Padma and Salma, who are now multiskilled operators (those who can do any operation on the sewing machine) happily point out that they "have learnt everything here". Some credit their knowledge about garment work, the sewing machine as well as life skills more broadly to FF itself. Some of the training that deals with financial literacy and communication skills, implemented as a part of buyer projects and the company's own initiatives, has changed lives. Talking of Blossoms training, a programme focused on life skills of workers, Seema described,

> "the training taught me so much about life. I was hesitant to put my views forward but the training gave me confidence to put forth my point of view. I learnt so much about budgeting and about other aspects of life."

Seema's views on Blossoms are widely shared. The training hours, often scheduled after the end of shift times, are well attended and workers look forward to participating. The training programme runs over a few months and in every batch a few hundred women workers are included. Having acquired these skills, many of these women have

gone on to be a member of the worker management committees. When elections were held, nearly all of the elected members turned out to be alumni of the training programme. A few of the women have even risen through the ranks. Padma too had undergone the programme. Today Padma supports in conducting training for it. Salma too completed the Blossoms training a while back. Later, like Padma, she also earned her graduate degree in 2015. She feels all the training and life's lessons at FF combined with her education has helped her to satisfactorily fulfil her role and implement the new, stricter requirements for needle management.

Like Padma, Salma and Seema, there are several women who want to retain their financial independence, cherish the ability to live life on their own terms and appreciate the skills they have acquired that they believe allow them to grow and develop their personal and professional personality. They are grateful for the opportunity and this possibility. For these women, the juggling of tasks is a part of everyday life. Work in the factory and the working time squeeze too is a task to be managed. They take their everyday work in their stride. Most of these workers have good relationships with the managers. As Parul, who has been at the FF for seven years and also completed the Blossoms training, emphasised:

> "If anyone says anything to me, I speak to my line in-charge. He values my skills and I don't hesitate to put forth my point of view. I know what I can do and what I cannot. And I know my work and my job. I come and focus on my work, and don't get distracted or involved in anything else. And I am telling you, the day things get too much, I know I can find myself a suitable job. It is they who will lose a good operator."

Male-workers, who are relatively few (only 20–25 percent), share some of the views of women workers. Specifically, the ones who are less educated or unable to find alternative employment are grateful. For others, working in a well-known, internationalised factory like FF generates good prospects to assume supervisory roles in other factories. Others who are quick learners work for some time and get associated with contractors and make more money by working overtime and longer hours. Many prefer the company as "this company has good timing. Other places, there is too much work at night" (Sumit). Timing is a significant factor in shaping the lives of workers, even more so for the women workers. This is elaborated next.

Liberated

(*Where* bandish *facilitates 'family time")*

Salma does not want to be seen as a burden by her brother's wife. She is, therefore, very particular and committed to support all household work. And this makes FF her preferred place of work. Shift timings of FF allow her to get home in time to prepare dinner for everyone. And Salma is not alone in being appreciative of the shift-timings. Contrary to national level workforce participation in India, where she belongs to 26 percent of the female workforce (PIB 2018), at the FF, Salma is a part of the majority[27]. FF is an attractive workplace for women. Here they can earn money as well as manage the housework and consequently they regard themselves as being "lucky" and "fortunate". Not only does working at the FF offer them a chance to earn money and be financially free, most importantly, it allows them to have time to discharge their other household duties. This, as Salma explained, is critical:

> "I always support in housework. I don't want anyone to think that because I earn and an independent woman, I am not aware of my responsibilities. In fact, I always try and do more than expected. It just helps keep matters calm at home."

This ability that working at FF enables women to get home in time to take care of other responsibilities outweighs *bandish* and the working time squeeze that underlies it in the factory. Women consider FF as a great place to work as its timings allow women to care for their children by earning to support their education as well as taking care of them. Seema shared,

> "I make breakfast for children, send them to school, cook lunch and then come to the factory in the morning. By the time I reach home, it's time for evening tea, and then I can make dinner."

This ability to be home by 5pm and at the latest 6pm was treasured by every woman. Seema shared she cried profusely when her shift was changed from 8am to 4:30pm to 9:30am to 6pm. Had it not been for the assurance of her PM that this change was only for a month, for the duration of a production of a particular order, she would have quit. The ability to be home by early evening, to cook, take care of kids and be there for the family is very significant for women at the FF.

The significance to be home as early as possible in evenings also determines their behaviour in the interim time, that is, the time after end of shift and before they can leave

[27] 76 percentof workers in FF and over 70 percentof workers in all Mystral's factories combined are women.

the factory gates. After 4:30pm, unless staying for overtime, workers contend that the time is theirs. While they deem commute time, that is time taken to reach home from factory as inevitable, they constantly try to claim the interim time and make it theirs. Some prepare for this in advance. Five minutes before the shift-end bell is sounded some stop work, others freshen up, some submit their thread cutters and other tools, waiting to exit the very moment the bell rings. A rare few carry on working to finish the target for the last hour. As soon as the bell rings, workers rush towards the exit. They want to optimise every single minute of 'their' time. They want to reach home as soon as possible. Those who travel in a shared transport rush to secure a better seat in the auto-rickshaw. The earlier you reach it, the better is the seat that you get – else you have to be squeezed in between others or might even have to sit in the front with the driver which workers, specifically women, do not like. However, after a few people got hurt in this end-of-shift rush, HR and PMs defined a rule for the way people are to leave the factory. Everyone now has to line up in a queue and anyone breaking the queue is regarded as posing a safety hazard, declared guilty of 'misconduct' and appropriately penalised.

Different workers rationalise the struggle of 'interim time' differently. Salma is not in a rush to claim this time:

> "I have no reason to push around and be the first one to leave. I live nearby, and don't have a fixed monthly auto. I can sit in any auto, give fifteen rupees[28] and reach home."

But for those who live far from the FF, HR's perspective that rushing and pushing is an impediment to the safety of co-workers is of little significance as for many women workers reaching home before night falls is an important safety concern. This is discussed in the tale that follows.

Protected

(Where bandish *is the price of women's personal safety)*

4:30pm, even in winter is not very late or dark. Women consider that compared to several other factories where work ends at 8pm, this is a time that assures them of their safety. Salma shared:

> "My mother is very happy about the timings here. I can reach before it is dark. In fact, I suggest to other women also in my area to switch to this factory if they can. It will be much better than daily anxiousness they go through."

[28] Approximately 15 pence UK currency.

Reaching home before it gets dark minimises the chances of being molested or harassed. Fear of harassment and sexual violence haunts women in most of India (Narayan 2018), more crucially in the national capital region (Sinha 2017; Kumar 2017). Shift-timings at the FF allow women to work around this worry and hence the FF is an attractive employer for women. Further, despite overtime hours, FF is strict in ensuring that no woman is ever asked to stay after 7pm. Nimmi explained,

> "This makes FF a sought-after factory, despite everything. See work is everywhere, target is everywhere but the timings are not good for women there. Working here [at FF] gives women and their families a lot of confidence."

Sometimes special family visits are organised for workers' families for them to come and see the factory. Nimmi shared how all her in-laws' concerns vanished when they heard from her husband about the workplace which has so many women and has timings which take into account the safety concerns of women.

Several women working at the FF joined after quitting better remunerated jobs at boutiques, call centres and offices (as receptionists). Punita, who worked previously at the call centre explained,

> "I was tired of receiving calls where people spoke so poorly only because they heard a female's voice. Moreover, my parents were always worried because of my timings. Here it is much better. There are so many women workers, so I feel much safer and the timings are also good."

Women, emphasises Punita, feel safer working in the midst of women. The work environment combined with some of the spaces offered to raise issues against men through committee meetings, such as those of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Committee, reassure the women who are its members and others who are aware about it and know they can voice their concerns if they feel the need. In fact, such compliance mechanisms of committee meetings and CSR training often serve to inspire many victims of gender-based violence. This is presented next.

Inspired

(*where* bandish *instils self-confidence)*

Reflecting on her personal situation, Salma shared one afternoon,

> "Actually, sometimes I feel its ok only that I am single. When I listen to some of the stories of the violence that women here narrate, I wonder if my injury was a blessing…"

Salma was referring to the stories of domestic violence that are extremely common among women in the FF. Right after Ruhi got married, she started getting beaten up by

her husband and in-laws in the name of less dowry. She was young, the eldest daughter among four and married off. She put up with being beaten, slapped and harassed, until one day her brother-in-law helped her escape. She then came to the gate at the FF. Soft-spoken and shy, within six months of her joining, during an event on gender-based violence organised as part of a CSR training programme in the factory, she stood up in front of a crowd of nearly 250 workers and told her life story. In a confident and inspiring tone, she concluded:

> "Yes I was exploited and violated by a man who was my husband but the one who helped me save my life was also a man. So, speak up, reach out and seek help. If you try, you will find a way."

Ruhi's life story is not exceptional. Several of her co-workers share a history and a present of such violence. Roli, a mother of 2 sons, has fights with her drunken husband every day. He hits her. She had to quit a higher paying job in a beauty parlour because he suspected her of meeting other men. She sold her phone and does not carry one anymore because he suspects her if she talks to anyone or else repeatedly calls her even if she is a few minutes late. At FF, not only have Ruhi and Roli found a means to earn their livelihood and the ability to juggle domestic responsibilities but they have also found friends to share their grief with and most critically training programmes such as Blossoms have allowed them to feel stronger and better equipped to take on life's challenges. The approach, attitude and demeanour of the HR staff who conduct the Blossoms training is itself inspiring for many. "Ma'am talks so nicely…They explain so well. I have learnt so much…My life has changed since I attended that training...I have understood about managing a budget…" were common expressions when referring to Blossoms. Added to this, the changing workplace culture also inspires them. Salma emphasised,

> "Previously line master [referring to supervisor] could use any kind of abusive language. Those who had never been scolded before, could not handle it, they used to cry a lot. Some people even left the job due to this. Now this has been somewhat controlled."

For women who are abused at home, being treated with respect and enjoying financial freedom outweighs the stress and pressure of working time squeeze. HR repeatedly asks men in the factory to behave appropriately with women while trainings and committees allow women to articulate some of the wrongs done to them. While sometimes there may be repercussions (see the section on power play under section 4.4.2.3 in the previous chapter), the very ability to be able to raise the issue is much cherished and more so by women who are beaten and abused at home. These women with challenging circumstances in their marital lives feel both empowered to question

what they disagree with as well as inspired to support their daughters and other women to have lives unlike theirs. For young Alia, who dropped out of school and joined the FF with her mother, everything is a learning experience. Since she is the youngest, and everyone knows her mother, everyone treats her well and patiently . Attending such CSR events where people like Ruhi share their stories, she is excited and inspired to take on life. The everyday tasks, the working time squeeze and other pressures don't affect her as much. She is a helper and new at the FF but even when she is scolded, what she learns every day and the people she meets overpower and supersede everything else.

5.3.2 The dark side of life in the factory

bandish can trigger positive emotions when it somehow allows for partial or full control over one's financial, personal, temporal, and familial aspects of one's life. It can also trigger the opposite. When there is a sick family member or personal exigencies and leaves are denied, or access to a provision/service is denied, unable to do anything and faced with financial implications, loss of control over their own time and reduced ability to carry out familial responsibilities, workers feel neglected and helpless, humiliated, marginalised and oppressed.

Neglected

(Where bandish *overlooks workers' personal and familial needs)*

Talking about her pressures of constantly having to issue needles, Salma commented:

> "Sometimes when any one of the needle keepers from the other floors is absent, I go crazy because the pressure increases manifold. I also don't get my leaves issued easily and I do understand. It's the nature of this work."

For the factory to be able to ship orders on time, a constant delivery of target is needed and for that Salma's and other workers' regular presence in the factory is critical. Consequently, unauthorised absences create an issue for managers and attract a huge amount of emphasis during counselling. Managers repeatedly insist that workers should take planned leave and get them approved. Even these, however, are an ongoing matter of contestation in the factory. Shama explained,

> "I had gotten permission three months backs to go to my village for ten days and now in-charge Sir is refusing as there is production pressure, but my tickets are done. What to do!"

She went to HR and she was advised that she should 'reschedule' her travels or should shorten her trip and request for leave for fewer days as there was target pressure at this time. Geeta expressed her frustration with such experiences,

> "They say we will get 2.5 leaves a month but if you go and ask them it is not easy. What is the point of a facility you cannot avail?"

HR not only refuses leave but also engages in highly personal discussions on the matter. For instance, when a woman came to inform them that she would not come on a Sunday (which was a working Sunday in exchange for Monday in the following week to allow everyone a longer festive break), as guests were coming over to her place, the HR officer authoritatively suggested,

> "Why can your husband not go and receive them and take care till you return from work? Tell him to do that and you come or else ask your guests to come next Sunday…"

Such suggestions are frequent. From questioning why someone attended a neighbour's funeral and took the day off, to suggesting that people find a way to manage family, guests, postpone holidays, various alternatives are offered during the leave-related counselling sessions.

Workers feel that their personal concerns and family needs are not valued. When Ravi asked for leave to take rest as he had an infection in his toe, the production in-charge reacted stressing, "You don't have to plough fields here that you can't come" and did not sanction his leave. Prema mentioned an incident highlighting what she labelled as management's stone-faced behaviour and insensitivity:

> "One girl was on leave as her mother was not well. When the feeder called her, she said she can't come. The feeder said, your mother won't die! That girl didn't come for few days and then after being scolded on phone (the feeder called her again when the in-charge asked her to) she rejoined and the day she rejoined she got a call and said she had to leave as her mom was serious. All this while the feeder and the production-in-charge kept saying your mother won't die. In the evening, her mother passed away and only then they allowed her to go…."

When workers raise issues and share reasons for leave, managers seem to assume they are lying. Remarks like, "she is good with stories", "he always has some excuse" were frequently exchanged about workers in the discussions after the counselling. Skepticism about workers combined with production-related pressures and man-power budget restrictions[29] results in such situations where workers' need for leave is ignored, challenged and suppressed.

[29] Manpower budgets are sanctioned for each factory by the Mystral management. At any point in time, only a fixed number of people can be on the factory's employee roll.

Workers would like their needs to be appreciated and would like some degree of flexibility when it comes to leave. Geeta strongly contested the managers' approach:

> "I have a seven-year old daughter and I come to work here only for her sake. Here there is lot of pressure. When I am here, I am told to forget everything and focus only on work. They say forget your family and children when you are at work. How can I do that? How can I forget the very people I come here to work for? How can I forget my family? How can I forget the fingers in my own fist? How can I forget the ones for whose sake I come here? Now as long I am not well or something, I still push myself and avoid taking a day off but if anything happens to my daughter, I just take the leave. You can scold me or cut my salary or fire me, I cannot ignore my daughter."

Those who can, under pressure of the managers do change and cancel their plans at the expense of some inconvenience to themselves and their relatives. Other workers, as Geeta emphasises, are willing to put up with the label of 'irresponsible', 'careless', 'insincere' worker with a 'poor record' for the sake of personal urgencies and are prepared to be penalised. Either way, often feeling stuck in this dilemma, they experience a feeling of growing helplessness which is discussed in the next story.

Helpless

(Where bandish *leads to financial loss for factors beyond workers' control)*

Salma described her accident nine years previously:

> "I was upstairs on the terrace. There was some construction work going on our terrace. I had gone to get my mother's clothes from the clothing line and then someone announced that chowmein arrived. Now I love food and hearing that I rushed downstairs but my feet got stuck in the metal rods and I fell down from the first floor. The metal rods cut through my stomach and pierced my body. I don't even know how I was saved. My mother says it was a miracle. Many people gave me blood, even people from the factory. I took one full year to recover… If it was not for ESI, I don't know how we would have managed."

The ESI is Employee State Insurance. Among others, one of the protections included in the CoC insists that social security arrangements be offered to workers. If an employee's gross salary per month is less than INR 21,000 (approx. GBP 220), then he/she is covered. As per the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (1952), ESI contributions have to be made for social security whereby the employee contributes only 1.75 percent of the salary while the company contributes 6.5 percent of the salary. Under this facility, registered hospitals offer free treatment to workers. The free treatment is extremely helpful for workers in cases such as Salma where major surgery is involved. Even if ESI refers the patient to a private hospital, the government foots the bill. The HR Department of FF also strongly recommends that workers visit

only ESI-registered hospitals when they are sick as they are government registered hospitals offering reliable treatment. As Kavita highlighted,

> "We insist on ESI. Otherwise workers tend to go by diagnosis of the pharmacist in the pharmacy shops or self-diagnose or end up with quacks. We, therefore, insist on ESI slips and prescriptions for sick leaves."

However, queues at these hospitals and dispensaries are long, and people have to wait for hours to access these services. When workers avail themselves of these services, they often end up losing half to one day of work. Kavita was talking to a worker who said she had gone to ESI to get medicines and became late. Kavita scolded her for not planning well and asked her why she didn't go early if she knows that in ESI dispensary things take a really long time. "I did madam, but the queue was just too long, what can I do*?*" Kavita insisted that she plan better next time else she would be penalised. Vinita, who has been stitching garment for nine years explained,

> "See, if now a sick person will go to ESI, he will need to go to small ESI (dispensary) and then big ESI (registered hospital). In both places we have to stand in line here and there, everywhere. A person who is sick can't really do that, can they? So, I go and see a private doctor. Now they [referring to HR] want an ESI slip or a MBBS doctor. See, this is not our status and we can't afford fancy doctors. We need to manage our household expenses our way. We take the medicines from the pharmacists and recover and come to work on 2nd or 3rd day. Now, they want ESI slip. And it becomes an issue. We get scolded, our leave is not passed. Tell me, how much can one do?"

While those who are sick find it hard to stand in line, end up being financially penalised when their sick leave is not passed because they do not have the ESI slips, even those who go to ESI may suffer the same fate. Standing in long lines, they become late. They are scolded for coming in late and often their half-day leave is not passed (as Kavita warned). Sometimes going to ESI can even take the whole day, and that then becomes unauthorised leave and workers may lose a whole day's pay. Workers' dilemmas are only accentuated and they feel not only helpless but being scolded for no fault of their own, they also feel humiliated as the next story illustrates.

Humiliated

(Where bandish *leads to financial and familial complications)*

Salma pointed out why FF was a sought-after place of work, especially for women:

> "It's not just the timings but there is also the crèche where women can leave their children and work. My friends who have come from other cities and are mothers, think it's helpful."

Renu, who had been on maternity leave, walked past Salma's box. She was back after six months and looked visibly upset. During an interaction later in the day, she shared:

> "What to say. I am just really sad. I have worked here for four years. Now 6 months I was on leave and after that I requested my sister to come from village to take care of my daughter. But she left after a month as she had other work. I then went to HR to ask for admission of Pari to crèche. And you know what she (referring to a HR officer) said to me? She said why did you have a child when you had no one to take care of the child? Is this fair? Did she really need to say this?"
>
> Renu broke down in tears. She looked down and continued stitching with tears wetting the fabric. After a brief pause she continued,
>
> "My peers told me I should have answered back, but what's the point. That might only worsen matters. Also, she did say to me to go and meet her when my daughter is 1 year old. So, for now my husband has left his full-time job at this company. He now works with tailoring contractors and goes to work for night shifts and spends his day taking care of the baby. What can I do? Hopefully, this ordeal is for two more months only. I will try going to her when the baby is 1 year old. I hope things will work out then."

The very next morning, a woman dressed smartly with hair tied into a bun came to the HR room to complete the paperwork for her child who was recently admitted to the crèche. Her son was seven months old and she had joined the company only three months ago. She had been granted access and was now being briefed about the crèche rules. Why she got her child admitted to the crèche and why Renu was denied access remained unexplained. Renu had been with the company far longer and her child was older than the one who was just admitted. It could be that the HR officer was upset at Renu for something, for some workers shared that they felt if you had managed to put a manager off, you would be impacted. It could also be that the HR officer didn't like her perhaps because Renu is illiterate, comes from a village and her manner of talking is different than others - not as suave or polished as some in HR, who labelled people from villages as dumb and weird. Renu could not recollect any particular incident when she had put off the concerned HR officer, but she was too scared to question or ask anything. For fear of risking Renu's identity, the incident could not be further investigated. This differentiation and discrimination remain unexplained.

Despite several suggestions, Renu refused to go to HR again. She could not bear the idea of being seen as dissenting or insisting. She wanted to wait for two more months to try her luck and test her fate. And Renu is not alone in having faced such a situation. While others did not necessarily experience the harsh behaviour, access was not always given. Dev, the training manager, who has been around in the company for seven years,

confirmed that such issues emanating from managerial discretion were prevalent when it came to access to the crèche.

Despite the crèche being available, Renu felt humiliated and was denied access when she needed it. Her husband had to quit his full-time job at a sought-after factory like FF. That has reduced the income and disturbed the routine of the family which lives in a one-room house. Renu concluded,

> "Yes, it is tough these days. But with two children now, one person's income will not suffice. My older daughter is seven and she goes to school also, so we need to manage… I just hope I can get my daughter admitted to crèche and resume our usual life and routine."

Having to deal with financial and familial consequences without getting a chance to hear or give an explanation, Renu and her peers tend to feel marginalised as shown next.

Marginalised

(Where bandish *sidelines workers' personal needs)*

Discussing the photocopy incident when she had missed her lunch, Salma shared,

> "I had a fever last night and I had to take medicine with food. But could not even eat anything in running around. But ok, what can be done?"

This wasn't the first or the last time this happened with Salma. Nor was such an oversight of personal needs unique to her. Geeta is a twenty-seven-year-old single mother of a five-year-old daughter. A victim of domestic violence and now a widow, she was grateful when she secured a job at the FF. Her happiness and gratitude were, however, rather short-lived. She narrated:

> "I cannot forget that one day here". "I had fever. I started feeling unwell around 9am itself and by 10am I was feeling sick. I went to the medical room and took a medicine, but I did not feel good at all. I went to my line supervisor and requested him to please give me let me go home as I could not work. He replied, 'Do some work. Not yet. Take the medicine and you will be fine'. I insisted that 'Sir, I am not able to work'. He insisted I go to medical and get another dose of medicine. I got so tired and hassled running around between medical room and factory. I went and lay down in the medical room for quite some time. I even requested the nurse in the medical room that please get me the permission to go home, I am not able to work. I was feeling nauseous...But no one heard me. No one paid heed. I went back to my seat and sat on my machine. But I had no strength and I fell from my stool. From 10:00am till 4:30pm, I was crying, I was running around. I requested but no one heard me. Only, when I finally fell from the chair, it was then that they let me go. But then I was not even able to walk. A guard escorted me. After that I was home on medical leave for fifteen days. I was severely dehydrated, anaemic and had viral. Now tell me, you expect these people to listen?... And this did not just happen with me. They don't understand. They think people are acting up. We cannot say anything, it is of no use."

After this incident, Geeta's mother suggested she should quit. But she did not. She carried on for the sake of her daughter. Women's personal issues compel them to work. Many of them are not very educated and in such a situation finding a job and that too in a women-friendly workplace is valuable. The broader lack of meaningful alternatives contributes to feeling marginalised and constrained. Men, however, do not always put up with these constraints for so long. If and where possible, they reclaim their autonomy and freedom by switching factories or by changing the nature of work by working with contractors (De Neve 2014). For Geeta and others, this often is not even an option. Kashish, shared,

> "There are days I am really upset, and I feel like giving up. But then I look behind me and see my children and for their sake, I carry on, I put up with everything. No matter how suffocated I feel, how hard it gets, I can't do much, I have to carry on. That is the only choice I have…Constraints in my life let me put up with constraints at work."

Shavi emphasises such personal situations including the illness of any family member, a worker being the sole bread winner, divorced, widowed, victim of domestic violence makes workers more vulnerable to marginalisation,

> "If they know you are weak, more vulnerable than others, they know you can be pushed harder and since you do not have much of a choice, you will still have to stick around."

Dev, the training manager, agreed with such views,

> "The weaker ones are always exploited. In fact, they are the ones who are more frequently taken advantage of."

Faced with a personal situation and unable to share their views and do much about situations, workers often feel oppressed, which the next story presents.

Oppressed

(Where bandish *leads to workers' views on financial/personal/temporal aspects being ignored)*

Salma spends her days in the box, the needle keeper room that was constructed. However, she is not clear for whose safety she was asked to sit inside the box. All she knows is that it was a buyer's requirement and buyers have a needle policy. On being prodded, she reacted sharply with some exasperation,

> "Listen, I don't ask that much. What's the point? I just do what seniors tell me. That helps keep matters calm."

She was not consulted when the box was being constructed. She could not say anything then and does not want to say anything now:

> "I said but no one heard me. We won't discuss about it. I have tried to make it my house, this box. I'll just do my work. I'll worry about the needle."

It is not possible to question buyer compliance rules. Workers are repeatedly informed by HR,

> "This is a big company and has some rules. You can go and work in the smaller companies if you like. But there the environment is bad – supervisors who abuse, no drinking water, no canteen, ill-mannered people, dirty people. Go work there and then you will know."

The worker operating washing machines explains that he doesn't always wear a mask because he finds hard to breathe in it and takes it off when no one is around. Sita with her head and nose covered with a dupatta, working on the overlock machine (which generates a higher amount of cotton dust) elaborates why she is not wearing a mask.

> "After a while it starts stinking because of sweat. Then I can't wear it. We should get a new one every day, but we don't. So, I always keep my dupatta tied."

These concerns, experiences and needs are not shared with managers because, "no one listens", "too busy with target so no time" and "what is the point of raising anything anyway". When the water bottle rule was introduced, Parul, an operator, put in several requests and concerns in the suggestion box, but to no avail. Much like 'misconduct', what is to be considered a 'grievance' is also contingent on managerial discretion.

Workers feel they do not even have a chance to present their view, opinion or problem. On any issue or point of contention, it is the workers who will in all likelihood be penalised or lose their job. Sunita highlighted:

> "If we come into their [supervisors and other managers] notice, we are done for. My in-charge says, if someone comes to my notice for not complying to requirements and doing what is needed, he/she will either be penalised or fired or else they will end up leaving on their own. He basically meant to say that he will ensure the job is lost…He once said to me, 'What do you think I can get your record spoilt, I will ensure you repeatedly write apology letters and the moment you accumulate 2-3 such letters, HR will itself take action on you. Company will itself fire you.'… Being subject to such threats, one thinks it better to stay shut."

As emphasised earlier, managers enjoy discretionary authority and more privileges. Workers feel treated differently when it comes to different provisions. Sita raised the issue of notice periods,

> "Why is it that workers are not allowed any notice period in the event of being asked to resign, why is it effective with immediate effect?"

Shama added,

> "Staff receives performance bonuses. While managers think we won't know about it, we get to know. It is so obvious when everyone in staff is talking about it. Why don't we get a performance bonus? It is after all workers who are involved in production of garments…But if anyone says anything on any such matter, what will happen? Well, we will lose our job. We are doing so much work, but they will throw us only out."

Such differences cannot be raised or questioned. Workers are, instead, repeatedly asked to respect staff and listen to them. Consequently, workers feel their needs and views are neither heard nor understood. It is only the staff who are always right and workers always guilty. Geeta explained,

> "They [managers] don't understand. We are like insects to them. We are not supposed to have any feelings...In any problem, any situation, they are right, we are wrong. That we can have an issue or problem is not even a consideration… If someone raises their voice, that person is asked to resign. So, the one who has the courage to speak, also cannot speak…If there is any argument or any issue, it is always the worker whose resign is taken. No one sees the fault of seniors. Workers are always scolded. It is the seniors' point of view that is always considered. No one considers us. It is always our fault. It does not matter what a senior is doing or does... We are the ones who are always guilty. We get chits for small mistakes…Our truth is also lie for them. They are always right. There is no use of saying anything. You cannot express your views. If you do, you will be called in to HR…These people are all the same and in their view workers will always be wrong anyway. If we complain against a senior, we are only wrong. We are wrong even if we speak. And even if we are silent, even then we are only wrong. There is just no point in saying anything."

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted that *bandish* entails a dilemma for workers – no matter what they do, an adverse outcome for either their physical, social, psychological, and/or financial lives is inevitable. Such a dilemma offers an explanation of why workers characterise their experiences of CoC enacted as buyer compliance rules as being stressed, confined, restricted and under pressure. Despite such a dilemma, *bandish* shapes working and personal lives of workers in varied ways and evokes different emotions. For instance, while on the one hand the working time squeeze, and in turn *bandish*, with its pressures leads to workers needs being overlooked, on the other hand, the same pressures add to the workers feeling protected.

Through the nine tales underscoring the common shared experiences, it has also been indicated that workers' experiences of CSR, in spite of similar situatedness in the same

factory, can be characterised by multiple emotions. *bandish* in the everyday factory life of workers in an internationalised factory manifests differently and as Salma's narratives allude to, can be different for the same person.

The nature of *bandish*, its characteristics, how it is constituted and manifestations in workers' lives has implications for international CSR and CoC, that intend to offer certain freedoms and protections to workers. Such implications and what they mean for theory and practice of CoC and CSR are examined in the final thesis chapter which follows.

6. bandish and its implications: the 'hidden work' of CSR

6.1 Introduction

This study set out to examine factory workers' experiences of CoC as an expression of international CSR of MNCs. Workers in the FF, an internationalised factory in India, which follows and implements international CSR requirements, describe and term their experiences as *bandish*. I have examined and explained both what *bandish* entails (the nature of workers' experiences), as well as how *bandish* is constituted (the generation of workers' experiences), and have argued that it is a working time squeeze that determines workers' experiences and shapes their personal and working lives. This chapter highlights the significance of workers' *bandish,* and the underlying working time squeeze for theory and practice of CoC and international CSR.

I begin this chapter by summarising the work presented thus far in the thesis. Then, drawing on the insights presented, I contend that the working time squeeze, and in turn workers' *bandish* in an internationalised factory is a manifestation of the 'hidden work' induced by international CSR which is sustained by three underlying mechanisms in the factory, namely *CSR Responsibilisation*, *CSR Enactment* and *Worker Situatedness*. In inducing and generating 'hidden work' for factory workers, international CSR appears to be engaged in an inversion of CoC by trigerring consequences that are in contravention of the stated intentions and requirements of international CSR. After presenting this argument, I discuss the implications of such CSR induced 'hidden work' and its underlying mechanisms on, as well as, contributions to the scholarly debates in CoC and CSR literature. Some limitations of this study and areas for future research are then discussed. The concluding section of the chapter reflects on the implications of this study for the everyday practice of international CSR and CoC and draws the thesis to a close.

6.2 Factory workers and their experiences of international CSR

CoC are a key tool through which international CSR commitments, practices and behaviours of MNCs are enacted. The literature review chapter (chapter 2) highlighted the research gap that while most studies examining CoC - from either organisational, regulatory or practice-based perspectives – focus on evaluating and assessing CoC for workers, they fall short in researching with the workers themselves and in examining their experiences. Consequently, factory workers' experiences of CoC and international

CSR have received rather scant attention in the literature. There are instrumental, normative and theoretical reasons to study CoC, and in turn international CSR, by closely engaging with workers who are involved with and impacted by CoC in their everyday lives. Without examining workers' experiences of CoC, the potential and scope for CSR-based change itself remains questionable (Kazmi et al. 2016). Responding to these concerns and scholarly calls to examine embodied experiences of factory workers (Prentice et al. 2018; Prentice and De Neve 2017), and to utilise such ethnographic research sensibilities, common in studies of employment relations, for international CSR research (Jackson et al. 2018), this thesis has presented an ethnographic study of an internationalised factory in India. An internationalised factory is one that follows and adheres to the requirements of international CSR extended through a CoC, so that it is able to continue supplying to, and thereby continue its participation in international production operations of MNCs.

Workers in the FF describe their everyday experiences in the factory as feeling stressed, confined (seat-bound), restricted (boxed-in) and under constant pressure (tied-up), and term it as *bandish.* The empirical chapter 4 illustrated that workers' *bandish* is constituted as international CSR demands, extended in the factory through CoC, interact with the requirements of international production targets in an internationalised factory. This dynamic and double-barrelled interaction generates a 'working time squeeze' for workers. The expectations of international CSR, manifested as CoC are translated to buyer compliance rules in the internationalised factory. These buyer compliance rules interact with the production targets, defined to fulfil buyers' purchase orders, the manifestation of international production processes and targets in the factory. Viewed as foreign, the CoC requirements are treated by the factory personnel as 'theirs', not ours. Buyer compliance is, therefore, treated as an independent and additional requirement to be fulfilled, running in parallel with other processes in the internationalised factory. Consequently, as buyer compliance interacts with production targets, a working time squeeze is generated, because the time taken in following the requirements of international CSR - the time to accomplish the CoC compliance related tasks (compliance time) - is not accounted for either in the buyer's CoC, or in the factory's everyday processes. Additionally, the managerial discretion in interpretations and enactment of the CoC in together with managerial interactions and perceptions also play a distinctive role in shaping, accentuating and sustaining the working time squeeze, and in turn workers' *bandish*.

Dealing with the working time squeeze in workers' everyday factory life is characterised by a choice between adverse consequences on their work and personal lives. On the one hand, it is not possible to manage or minimise the working time squeeze, without adverse outcomes for their physical and/or social lives. On the other hand, in the event of being unable to manage the squeeze, there are adverse outcomes for workers' psychological and/or financial lives. This dilemma that they work under highlights how working time squeeze impacts workers' everyday factory lives, and explains why workers repeatedly described their *bandish* as feeling stressed, under pressure, confined and restricted. Yet, while common, these are not the only feelings that characterise *bandish*. When *bandish* offers to workers a sense of partial or complete control over financial, personal, temporal and familial aspects of their lives, they tend to feel empowered, liberated, protected and inspired. On other occasions, when *bandish* adds to workers sense of partial or complete loss of control over financial, personal, temporal, and familial aspects of their lives, it adds to their stress, leaving them feeling marginalised, helpless, oppressed and constrained.

Taken together, the descriptions of workers' CoC experiences as *bandish*; illustration of how workers' *bandish* is constituted by a working time squeeze in the dynamic interaction of CoC and production targets; analysis of how this squeeze is generated, shaped, accentuated and sustained; presentation of how workers deal with the squeeze and finally how the squeeze, and in turn, *bandish* shapes and influences the working and personal lives of workers, draw attention towards a significant, and thus far overlooked, phenomenon in CoC research and practice - CoC as manifestations of international CSR, with an intention to benefit factory workers, ultimately generate more work for them. Not only does international CSR, with its ostensible and stated intentions to improve working conditions for the factory workers, induce additional work for the factory workers, but such work also remains hidden. The consequences of this 'hidden work' appear to be in conflict with the stated intentions of the CoC. This inference and argument are elaborated further in the following sections.

6.3 International CSR induced 'hidden work' for factory workers

In the pursuit of international CSR commitments, seeking to protect their reputation and satisfy legitimacy demands of multiple stakeholders, MNCs have increasingly adopted, designed and developed CoC for the factories and suppliers participating in their international production processes (see chapter 2). Factories supplying merchandise to

international brands, such as the FF, are expected to adhere to the requirements listed in the CoC (see chapter 2, Appendix 5). Chapter 4 illustrated how CoC are being enacted as buyer compliance rules in the FF and how these rules entail additional work for the factory workers. Following compliance rules generates more tasks, takes more effort, requires more coordination and takes time. While in addition to production targets, workers also have to accomplish CoC compliance-related work, the time taken in carrying out these compliance tasks is not accounted for either in the factory's everyday processes or in the MNC led international CSR or international production operations. This ultimately leads to a situation where more work is to be accomplished in the same amount of time (as without the CoC compliance demands) leading to a shortage of working time, a working time squeeze, for the factory workers (see chapter 4). The buyer compliance rules in the internationalised factory are themselves unwritten (See chapter 4, enacting buyer compliance), and the ensuing compliance work is neither recognised, nor additionally remunerated through either allocation of time or provision of resources for accomplishing it.

Moreover, coping strategies adopted by workers to deal with the working time squeeze, in order to carry on without losing their employment also remain concealed (see chapter 4, sustaining the squeeze). Such work, when it is not recognised as 'real' work, and because of this, those performing the tasks, do not receive payment, is 'hidden' work (Noon et al. 2013). Also referred to as invisible work, it includes and refers to activities that occur within the context of paid employment which workers perform in response to requirements (either implicit or explicit) presented by their employer (Poster et al. 2020). Workers need to carry out the CoC induced compliance work if they want to obtain an employment in an internationalised factory, if they want to retain their employment and source of livelihood and also if they want to rise through the ranks, for instance feeders who despite belonging to unskilled category of workers have risen in prominence at the behest of compliance related work (see chapter 4). Yet, such work is often overlooked, ignored and/or devalued by employers, as well as by the MNC buyers, consumers, and the legal system itself (Hatton 2017; Poster et al. 2016). The compliance work that workers perform is not recognised, time taken for carrying out the compliance associated tasks is not accounted for, this work remains devalued and its consequences for workers remain concealed. Ultimately, CoC, and in turn international CSR, is generating 'hidden work' for the factory workers.

The working time squeeze that is generated in an internationalised factory may then be a manifestation of this 'hidden work' of CSR. Since the work itself is not recognised, time

for it is not accounted for or measured, leading to a perpetual shortage of working time. It can be argued, then, that workers' *bandish* is itself a consequence of such 'hidden work'. It can be argued that although invisible, 'hidden work' of international CSR, manifests in workers' everyday lives as *bandish*. The analysis in chapter 4 and 5 suggests that three phenomena may be at play in an internationalised factory, which sustain the 'hidden work' for workers induced by international CSR. Or in other others, the three phenomena underlie the generation and sustenance of workers' *bandish*.

The first is a consequence of managerial discretion, whereby workers are made responsible for ensuring they work in a compliant factory, referred to as *CSR Responsibilisation.* The second is the amalgamation of managerial perceptions and their interactions (as elaborated in empirical chapter 4) - the combined effect referred to as *CSR Enactment*. Finally, the third phenomenon is the interplay of workers' own compulsions, emotions and decisions (as elaborated in chapter 5) - referred to as *Worker Situatedness.* Drawing on the analysis and insights from the two empirical chapters, each of the three phenomenon are further detailed and discussed in the following sections.

6.3.1 CSR Responsibilisation: 'It is your responsibility'

CSR Responsibilisation refers to process whereby managerial discretion assigns and transfers to workers the responsibilities for CoC induced compliance related tasks in the making of an internationalised factory.

CoC are intended, designed and developed to protect workers from different forms of exploitation, including poor working conditions. Seen from a regulatory perspective, as discussed in chapter 2, CoC view the factory and factory managers as the direct regulatory targets while factory workers are regarded as the intended beneficiaries of CoC as regulation. Even when seen as a strategic tool for stakeholder management, from an organisational perspective, CoC treat workers as beneficiary stakeholders. However, when CoC are enacted in the factory, workers are no longer just beneficiaries. Rather, they become the targets of the buyer compliance rules that are defined to be followed in order to ensure compliance with the CoC. As CoC are enacted, workers are assigned greater responsibility for their own safety and for following all associated rules, in order to maintain good working conditions, and are held accountable, scolded, penalised, and in some cases even blamed for violations (see chapter 4, translating

international CSR and enacting buyer compliance rules). Discussing such a process, where workers are assigned additional responsibilities for their own safety, and are judged and targeted for sanctions, Gray (2009) discusses it as *responsibilisation*. Responsibilisation, then, is a process whereby subjects are rendered individually responsible for a task which previously would have been the duty of someone else, or would not have been recognised as a responsibility at all (Wakefield and Fleming 2009). What appears to be at play in the FF is *CSR Responsibilisation,* whereby workers, who are the intended beneficiaries of international CSR, through the CoC, are made responsible for ensuring the achievement of that stated commitment of buyers, which they expect to realise through their factories and suppliers.

Factory workers, the oft noted victims of exploitation by international production (see emergence of CoC in introduction chapter), and thereby the intended targets of the CoC, which is apparently meant to be a source of workers' freedoms and protections, are also made the means through which CoC is to be implemented to realise its intentions. Responsibilisation is premised on the construction of moral agency as the necessary ontological condition for ensuring an entrepreneurial disposition in the case of individuals (Shamir 2008). Meaning thereby that responsibilisation entails that workers have to be recognised as independent actors and made both the victims as well as the offenders (Gray 2009). Buyer compliance rules are created for workers in the factory to behave in a specific way so that workers can play a role in creating a factory that is meant to be better for them. Workers, then, become both the target of an internationalised factory as objects who need to be protected, as well as the subjects, the means to achieve such a factory. An internationalised factory, as a safer workplace, defines individual behaviours and conduct for workers and places blame on workers themselves for failing to create a factory that is better, safer and CoC compliant. International CSR, manifested through a CoC, and the ensuing buyer compliance rules ultimately become a means to govern the factory workers and control their actions and behaviours (Siltaoja et al. 2015; Laufer and Robertson 1997). CoC, which were meant to protect workers and offer them certain freedoms and better working conditions, now add to the restrictions, become a reason for their counselling, and are used to penalise workers, thereby adding to their *bandish. CSR Responsibilisation* leads to workers being assigned compliance induced work, and makes them accountable for contributing in making and maintaining the factory as an internationalised factory.

Such CSR Responsibilisation is accompanied by an intention to present an internationalised factory as a natural way of being, which I discuss further in the following section.

6.3.2 CSR Enactment: 'This is the way we do things here'

CSR Enactment refers to the process whereby managerial perceptions that are acquired and shaped in interactions with international brands and their representatives drive the translation and performance of international CSR requirements to and as everyday compliance rules with the purpose of presenting an internationalised factory as the way factory always is, its natural way of being.

The ultimate goal and objective of translating and enacting a CoC into buyer compliance rules is to ensure that the factory is presented as an internationalised factory, as its natural way of being, specifically during CoC audits. This objective, as illustrated in chapter 4, is defined based on managerial perceptions that are shaped and acquired during interactions with the buyers and auditors. The factory is supposed to be presented as an internationalised factory - a factory following and working in accordance with the requirements of international CSR - in order to be able to continue in the business of supplying garments to the international brands. In making and enacting buyer compliance rules, as pointed out in the impact on workers' psychological lives in chapter 5, managers repeatedly emphasise to workers that 'this is the way we do things here'. The rules that workers are expected to follow are presented as the natural and the obvious way of doing things in the FF. This leads to compliance work being hidden, because even though such work is explicitly required by employers, it remains invisible as the goal of such work is to make their products appear natural, rather than manufactured through individual efforts (Hatton 2017). Unlike garments, which are 'to be made', the factory always 'is' an internationalised factory. The efforts and the work undertaken 'to become' such a factory are neither recognised nor accounted for. As one of the trainers at Mystral, Parth emphasised in chapter 4, buyers' expectations of how the factory must be, leads to presenting the internationalised factory as 'this is how it is'.

Enacting international CSR, as the way the factory always is, contributes to hiding not just the work that goes in making such a factory, but also the consequences that such work generates for the workers. As chapter 4 highlighted, the requirements of international CSR, outlined in a CoC, are perceived as 'foreign', resulting in factory

managers' adopting a gaming approach towards audits, whereby both the working time squeeze and workers' *bandish* are concealed. As a result, both the compliance work as well as its impact on workers' bodies, and in turn their physical lives and on their psychological, social and financial lives that is generated as workers try to deal with the working time squeeze under this work, remains hidden.

In addition to CSR Enactment, workers' own situatedness also plays a role in further hiding the compliance work and their impacts. I discuss this further in the following sections.

6.3.3 Worker Situatedness: 'What can I do?'

Worker Situatedness refers to the amalgamated effect of the interplay of workers' needs, desires, compulsions and decisions that encompass financial, social, physical, psychological, personal, familial and temporal aspects of their lives and is enacted through a silent acceptance of the status quo accompanied by conflicting emotions on an ongoing basis.

Workers in the FF are usually driven by their financial, personal, temporal and familial pressures and compulsions. It is these compulsions that result in workers experiencing conflicting emotions in their lives, where *bandish* feels both liberating and limiting. For some workers, *bandish* becomes a source of empowerment and liberation when it serves as a trade-off for more control over their time with family or freedom from the family obligation of marriage. For others, when *bandish* leads to loss of control over own time and a feeling of inability to respond to personal and familial needs, it is perceived as a source of oppression. Yet, these workers carry on because they seem to be caught between a rock and a hard place, since the burden of joblessness is worse than feeling exploited while performing that work (Ashwin et al. 2020). Workers like Geeta and Kashish, discussed in chapter 5, despite feeling oppressed and disappointed that their needs are neglected and marginalised, cannot afford to not work, and FF, with its women-friendly shift timings, is the best option available to them. Their personal compelling needs make them resilient to the stress, pressure, confinement and restrictions that characterise workers' *bandish*. As Kashish concluded, "Constraints in my life let me put up with constraints at work".

Their compelling needs also help explain how workers may be playing a role in sustaining *bandish* by not resisting. Chapter 5 highlights how workers deal with the squeeze by minimising and managing it or submitting to it and paying a price, but never quite challenging it. They do not resist. A silent acceptance, and a lack of any opposition, albeit driven by workers' own personal and financial compulsions, ultimately contributes to sustaining *bandish*. Workers' compulsions appear to underlie workers' decisions to continue and carry on their work at FF, to perform compliance work, despite dealing with an ongoing dilemma, and to cooperate and follow all instructions, ensuring that compliance work appears as the natural way of working in the factory and the impacts of compliance work remain hidden.

Together, the three mechanisms of *CSR Responsibilisation*, *CSR Enactment* and *Worker Situatedness* obscure the fact that compliance work is performed. *CSR Responsibilisation* makes workers responsible for making of an internationalised factory through unwritten rules. *CSR Enactment*, by insisting to present the factory as an internationalised factory as the way it always is, reduces the possibility for *CSR Responsibilisation* to be identified. Coupled with the silent acceptance owing to *Worker Situatedness*, together the three mechanisms sustain the 'hidden' work of international CSR and contributes to its economic devaluation (Hatton 2017). International CSR requirements, which intend to improve working conditions for factory workers, ultimately create 'hidden work' for factory workers, which is unrecognised and unpaid. Such work, as is discussed next, generates consequences, which invert the very intentions of international CSR requirements, manifested through the CoC.

6.3.4 Effects of the 'hidden work' of international CSR: Inversion of the CoC

Experiences of factory workers presented in the two empirical chapters highlight workers' *bandish*. This chapter has thus far established that *bandish* is the manifestation of the 'hidden work' of international CSR in workers' everyday lives and has identified the three mechanisms that contribute to the sustenance of *bandish* and invisibility of 'hidden work' of international CSR. These processes also contribute to how impacts of compliance work remain hidden. This has crucial implications for CoC and the international CSR requirements, as the 'hidden work' of CSR contributes to inverting the intentions of the CoC.

CoC intend to offer specific freedoms and protections to workers by calling for transparency in the factory (see chapter 4 and Appendix 5). However, workers' experiences (for instance see their description of being seat-bound, confined, tied-up in chapter 4, and the section on dark side of life in the factory in chapter 5), and the discussion on *CSR Responsibilisation* earlier, indicate that the workers' lives in the factory are characterised by more restrictions and vulnerability than freedom and protection. Added to this, the enactment of transparency, in pursuit of presenting the factory as internationalised (see sustaining the squeeze in chapter 4), not only contributes to concealing workers' needs and experiences, rather, it places limits on workers' actions. Adding to restrictions and making them more susceptible to penalisation, *CSR Responsibilisation*, thereby contributes to making workers vulnerable, and in turn, inverts the stated intentions of the CoC.

The clauses on freedoms listed in the CoC document intend to ensure workers' freedom to choose employment and move freely, among others (see Appendix 5). *CSR Responsibilisation* and *CSR Enactment*, however, contribute to managers regarding workers' freedom as an impediment to presenting the factory as an internationalised factory and they ultimately outline rules to control workers' freedoms leading to workers' *bandish* (see Appendix 9 which elaborates workers' experiences against each of the freedoms, protections and transparency requirements listed in the CoC). Similarly, the clauses on protections outlined for workers in the CoC document intend to ensure that workers are not exploited and their interests along with their health and safety are protected. However, for both managers and workers, it is the protection of the company and securing orders for the factory that is the primary objective since it protects their own livelihoods. Further, specific acts of protection entail a cost to the factory, and actions to avoid or manage these costs, render workers vulnerable. For example, protection is offered to pregnant women workers, but the need for offering this protection leads to discrimination in their recruitment (see section on audit as game in section 4.4.2.4 in chapter 4). Similarly, CSR Responsibilisation, and accompanying translation and enactment of CoC to buyer compliance rules, renders workers vulnerable and liable to be penalised for a misconduct in the name of buyer compliance (see accentuating the squeeze in section 4.4.2.3 chapter 4).

Moreover, international CSR requirements, and in turn the CoC, place an emphasis on the transparency of factory processes and call for transparency during the audit (see Table A5.3 in Appendix 5). CSR Responsibilisation and CSR Enactment are driven by such calls and make workers responsible, accountable and liable for penalty. In so

doing, they contribute to transparency itself and becoming a form of regulation (Etzioni 2018). Transparency and opacity can be viewed as a continuum of firms' behaviours (Ghauri et al. 2015). This, then, implies that transparency and opacity can be managed depending on an organisation's interest (Christensen et al. 2011), and this seems to be at play when audits are approached as a game, and the factory is presented as an internationalised factory (see section sustaining the squeeze in section 4.4.2.4 in Chapter 4). CoC documents appear to assume transparency as an end state and overlook the possibility that transparency itself is always in the making (Hansen et al. 2015).

While transparency calls for unrestricted access to workers, chapters 4 and 5 highlight how offering such access results in concealing the experiences of workers. Such concealed experiences include the presentation of terminations as resignations, discrimination against recruitment of pregnant women, dealing with WIP bundles[30], status of certain types of workers (contract and casual workers), imposition of increased rules and restrictions (for instance, do not roam around, do not use washroom during audits, do not talk during audits) and stricter surveillance and penalisation for workers through factory rounds, compliance briefings, joint production and HR oversight and counselling for misconduct (see Table A9.1, A9.2 and A9.3 in Appendix 9, which elaborate workers' experiences against each of the freedoms, protections and transparency requirements listed in the CoC). The paperwork and presentation enacted to enable transparency ultimately lead to concealing and rendering invisible the workers, their issues and their compliance work in the factory. The 'hidden work' of international CSR results in inverting the CoC intentions, thereby generating unintended consequences for workers. The 'opacity of transparency' ensures that this work and its consequences remain hidden (Alloa and Thomä 2018; Ejiogu et al. 2018; Fenster 2006).

The contention hereby presented, that CoC ostensibly designed for factory workers generate 'hidden work' for them, has implications for and contributes to the ongoing debates in CoC and CSR scholarship. I discuss this further in the following section.

6.4 Significance of 'hidden work' of international CSR

Chapter 2 highlighted how evaluative studies, undertaken from organisational, regulatory, and practice-based perspectives, intend to assess, evaluate and examine

[30] See footnote 18

CoC for workers. However, while about workers, these studies fall short in capturing workers' experiences. It was argued that studies carried out *with* workers may have far-reaching implications. Having undertaken such a research, this study identified, described and explained the notion of workers' *bandish* and the underlying working time squeeze, and highlighted how CoC, and in turn international CSR requirements, generate 'hidden work' for factory workers.

The notion of 'hidden work' of international CSR presented, elaborated and examined in this thesis contributes to the debates on the tension between profit and legitimacy imperatives in CSR. Specifically, chapter 4 identified factory workers' experiences and examined how they are constituted, and contributes to the debate between the two imperatives by showing their interactions in the factory. Chapter 5 highlighted what *bandish* entails for workers and how it shapes workers' lives and furthers the scholarly work by illustrating how the tension between the two imperatives manifests in working and personal lives of workers. Together, the two empirical chapters also clarify, extend and contribute insights to the ongoing debates in the four research areas that I identified as research gaps in the extant CoC literature in chapter 2. Chapter 4 responds to the need to examine the processes and interactions in the making of an internationalised factory and to explore and better understand the role and significance of the tension between the legitimacy and profit imperatives. Chapter 5 addresses the need to examine how CoC generate effects for factory workers and to learn more about workers' perceptions, motivations and understanding of CoC and international CSR. The specific and main contribution of this thesis is for the debate between the profit and legitimacy imperatives, which I discuss in the following section.

6.4.1 Interaction of the profit and the legitimacy imperatives

CSR has a relationship with firms' legitimacy demands and has been noted to be used to maintain or repair firms' legitimacy (Palazzo and Scherer 2006). Profits have also been noted to have a relationship with CSR activities, albeit by critics who contend that CSR can serve as an opportunity for firms to expand markets and their influence to increase profits (Hanlon 2008; Shamir 2008). It has also been shown that CSR can be linked with higher profits (Hategan et al. 2018).

CSR as a source of both profit and legitimacy for firms, however, has been fraught with contestations. Serving to add to the legitimacy, CSR is portrayed as a means to mitigate

the adverse effects of capitalism (de Bakker et al. 2020). However, when it fails to do so and rather adds to the profits, it is contended to be a 'pathology of CSR' (Schneider et al. 2019). Scholars contend that the two imperatives of profit and legitimacy do not reconcile, and such a lack of reconciliation results in a tension (Bird et al. 2019). This tension has also been noted to underlie the limited success of various efforts to achieve social and economic upgrading simultaneously in international production processes (Barrientos et al. 2011; Goger 2013).

This thesis contributes to the debates on the tension between the profit and the legitimacy imperatives of the firm in five specific ways. It shows how the 'hidden work' of CSR is generated for workers in the interaction between the two imperatives. Contending that such work may be a consequence of the persisting tension, it proposes that the hidden work of CSR for workers might be a result of managers' themselves experiencing and shifting the unresolved tension. The thesis also extends the debate on the imperatives by proposing a way to reconcile the tension, calling for time for compliance, and in turn, for the 'hidden work' of international CSR to be accounted for. It offers alternate explanations for ongoing scholarly observations in the CoC literature and furthers a better understanding of the tension. It also draws attention to how the effects of CoC are manifestations of the tension, and finally reflects on what the notion of 'hidden work' contributes to future studies of experiences of international CSR and the tension. Each of the contributions is elaborated in the following sections.

6.4.1.1. Hidden work of CSR: A consequence of the unresolved tension?

This study expands the debate on tensions between profit and legitimacy imperatives by highlighting how their interplay is generating 'hidden work' for factory workers. Such work, as highlighted above, serves to contravene the very intentions of international CSR, specifically of extending freedoms and protections to workers. Instead, as practices of counselling in pursuit of enacting CoC (chapter 4, see enacting buyer compliance rules) highlight, workers are made vulnerable to additional penalisations. Further, by demanding work that is unrecognised and unpaid, it can be argued that CSR even exploits them. It thereby goes beyond acting as a smokescreen that conceal exploitation (Fleming et al. 2013; Banerjee 2007), to become the very basis of exploitation.

The two imperatives, it has been argued, serve different sets of stakeholders: while the profit imperative is targeted at shareholders or economic stakeholders, the legitimacy imperative is oriented towards social shareholders (Wang and Liang 2017). Although, in the case of CoC, even such an alignment is contested. Sobczak (2006) argues that CoC are closer to consumers and more aligned with consumer-oriented regulations rather than workers, who they are supposed to protect and are distant from employment-related regulations.

Driven primarily by the interest to protect their reputation with consumers, as managers highlight in chapter 4, buyers are more concerned with reviewing paperwork and the factory's presentation as an internationalised factory as part of their CSR. The concerns and limitations of buyers' approach in focusing on paperwork and presentation in CoC auditing have been ongoing for the last two decades (Terwindt and Armstrong 2019; Distelhorst and Locke 2018; LeBaron and Lister 2015; Anner 2012; Locke et al. 2009; O'Rourke 2003; Nadvi and Wältring 2001). Yet, as narratives of managers' point out, little seems to have changed for the FF. Even the cooperation-based approaches of CoC implementation in factories that emerged as an alternative to compliance-based approaches (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen 2014) (see chapter 2), as Nikhil and others highlight (refer section 4.4.2.4), appear to have followed the same trajectory. While placing international CSR expectations and demanding CoC compliance, buyers do not offer additional monetary incentive or time for making the factory compliant to the CoC. The CoC seek to satisfy legitimacy demands rather than to promote transactional efficiency, and therefore do little to improve productive efficiency (Bird et al. 2019). Rather, it takes time and money to follow the requirements outlined in the CoC. Such implications and 'cost of compliance' has been discussed by some scholars (Rahman and Rahman 2020; Sinkovics et al. 2016; Huq et al. 2014).

Added to this, operating in a business environment characterised by dynamic consumer demand, shorter product life cycles, and concentrated retail channels, buyers have reorganised international production processes. Such reorganised processes of international production optimise their efficiencies and minimise their financial and reputational risks. While the subsequent purchasing practices are guided by a profit imperative, they often adversely affect the CoC requirements in factories (Locke and Samel 2018). Order delivery schedules and style changes also have been noted to affect the CoC compliance by leading to, for instance, increase in overtime violations (Ashwin et al. 2020; Ruwanpura 2016; Robinson 2010).

The two sets of demands are not only in constant tension with respect to the underlying imperatives, they also generate tensions for the managers in the factory. Production managers at FF (see section accentuating the squeeze in section 4.4.2.3 in chapter 4) draw our attention to how managers have to choose between the two poles of action when they attempt to attend to both demands of CSR and production at the same time. The two sets of requirements, therefore, manifest as competing demands with opposing and interwoven elements (Gaim et al. 2018; Carroll 2012; Lewis 2000). Equally, fulfilling the two sets of buyer requirements requires more to be done than what managers' feel is possible with the available resources of time, skills and money (Gaim et al. 2018). The demands are of comparable importance, since by not complying with either, the factory can lose business/orders. In such instances, where competing demands are deemed to be of comparable importance by managers/decision-makers, tensions arise over resource allocation and prioritisation (see Andriopoulos and Lewis 2010; DeFillippi et al. 2007; Jarzabkowski et al. 2013).

To deal with the tensions they experience between the buyer demands emanating from profit and the legitimacy imperatives, factories work towards upgrading technologically and cutting down activities to save money (Sinkovics et al. 2016). Yet often feeling coerced they themselves are, arguably, exploited (Schleper et al. 2015). Chapter 4 points out how managers themselves are under pressure and negotiate with each other to work collaboratively and align expectations to strike a balance. The HR managers in internationalised factories have been noted to play a role in dealing with these competing demands (O'Donnell et al. 2019), and in the FF they utilise creative ways to challenge the existing priorities and hierarchies, for instance with the use of WhatsApp (see chapter 4). However, the critical issue here is that these approaches do not resolve the tension. While on the one hand, the tension at the intersection of the two imperatives is made out to be an issue of collaborative working between HR and production (see section aligning expectations in section 4.4.2.3 in chapter 4), the unresolved tension, it appears, is ultimately passed on to the worker as 'hidden work'.

CSR Responsibilisation and CSR Enactment follow from managerial discretion, interaction, and perceptions (see above and chapter 4) and ultimately generate a working time squeeze that underlies workers' *bandish*. Workers remain at the receiving end of the differences in managerial priorities, driven by the dynamic and double-barrelled imperatives, and additional aspects of individual differences and managerial power plays.

There are two issues here which are noteworthy. Firstly, tensions between production targets and CoC compliance requirements assume a tangible form and manifest in workers' everyday factory lives. They contribute to generating the international CSR induced 'hidden work' for workers. Indeed, production targets realign conditions under which the CoC is implemented (Ruwanpura 2016; Du Toit 2002) and the everyday reproduction of social relations (Goger 2013) contributes to sustaining the tensions. Production targets can play a role in realigning conditions under which CoC are implemented (Ruwanpura 2016). Working time squeeze and the ensuing *bandish* shows and explains why this happens and how. Secondly, the identification of the working time squeeze as the manifestation of the 'hidden work' of international CSR which may be emanating from the tension between the two imperatives opens up the possibility to mitigate the adversarial relationship between production and CoC requirements. If appropriate time for meeting the CoC compliance requirements is accounted for, measured and included in respective processes and practices at both the end of MNC buyers and the factory, the working time squeeze could possibly be alleviated. This is discussed next.

6.4.1.2 Making time for hidden work: Reconciling the tension?

The tension between profit and legitimacy imperatives in CSR are much debated in the literature. de Bakker et al. (2020) call for further research on 'systemic constraints' of CSR. By identifying working time squeeze, which underpins the 'hidden work' induced by international CSR, this thesis is expected to contribute to these debates with the notion of time, and calls into question the idea that profit and legitimacy imperatives are always conflicting.

The notion of *bandish* and, in turn, working time squeeze, presented in this thesis, point to the need to include 'time for compliance' in appropriate debates around the tension between profit and legitimacy imperatives. As chapter 4 makes it clear, time that compliance takes away is eventually the loss of productivity time in a factory, which in itself is linked to production and product costs. The CoC compliance activities take time, and purchasing practices and garment costing and associated processes of international production need to acknowledge and accommodate this time, in the absence of which what CoC may be able to achieve for workers is likely to remain questionable. There is, therefore, a need to expand the notion of 'costs of compliance'

to include time taken for compliance-related activities into consideration, not only by factory managers but also by MNCs acting as buyers.

If time for the legitimacy-driven CSR activities is included and accounted for in profit-driven activities, legitimacy efforts of CSR could possibly be integrated into profit-driven initiatives, and could have alternate consequences for workers. This may have implications for both the profit- and legitimacy-driven imperatives, and could be a way forward for the CSR-driven change that Kazmi et al. (2016) referred to. If time for CoC compliance were to be included, the CoC could, possibly with some modification, deliver for workers within the existing processes of international production. It could open the prospect for CoC and international CSR offering workers what Kazmi et al. (2016), drawing on Boltanski and Chiapello (2005), highlight as excitement, security and fairness for workers (see chapter 2). If this were to happen, it may contribute to CSR becoming the fourth spirit of capitalism (Kazmi et al. 2016).

By putting forth such a possibility, the question this thesis offers for CSR is this- if time for international CSR is accounted for, what prospects could be offered for workers engaging in international production processes? Would it be able to address the issues of 'hidden work' of CSR? Temporality of processes of international firms is increasingly recognised (Plakoyiannaki et al. 2020) and exploration of the issues pointed out in this thesis are well posited to further these discussions (see discussion on temporality in further research section below).

6.4.1.3 Hidden work of CSR and the factory processes: Understanding the tension

This study argues that both the cause and consequence of the 'hidden work' of international CSR is that the time taken to follow the CoC, the compliance time, is not accounted for, or measured. Consequently, a persistent shortage of working time, a working time squeeze, is generated for workers in their everyday factory lives. In presenting this argument, this study highlights the temporality of CoC compliance and contributes to the extant work where following CoC requirements appears to have largely been considered as 'atemporal'. Considering the temporal dimensions of CoC compliance, as this study highlights, has implications for better understanding of what goes on inside the factory.

Bird et al. (2019) highlight that legitimacy structures like CoC compete with productivity-driving incentive structures. Driven by different imperatives, they contend that the core production activities become internally buffered or decoupled from CoC requirements – for instance, efficiency structures with an intention to enhance productivity lead to unchanged core labour practices, thereby buffering the factory from changes desired by the CoC. However, as highlighted in chapter 2, how this may be happening and what goes on inside the factory has been less clear. This thesis explains why the drive for efficiency appears to work in contravention of CoC intentions, and in so doing elaborates and illuminates this link between production and CoC activities. It highlights how by not accounting for compliance time, coupled with managerial discretion, interaction and perceptions, efficiency structures can result in effects that are in contravention of what CoC desires. When the demand for productivity goes up, without accounting for compliance time, pressures for workers will increase, thereby limiting the effects of the CoC. The 'buffering' and 'decoupling' that Bird et al. (2019) refer to is effectively, then, the factory being unable to deal with the working time squeeze.

Considering this time for compliance can also offer alternative explanations for some ongoing discussions in extant studies. Scholars have highlighted that lean production systems (a system to increase production efficiency) may be linked with increased CoC compliance. For instance, Distelhorst et al. (2017) illustrate that high involvement work practices improve social performance. Their work provides and adds to the evidence on the efficacy of capacity building in improving compliance with labour standards in the processes of international production. They offer the hypothesis that because lean requires higher investments in worker training/higher levels of discretionary effort, managers have the incentive to improve labour conditions and to retain and motivate skilled employees. While this may well be true, this thesis offers an alternative explanation for their contention that capacity building programmes may be improving CoC compliance. It may well be that the lean and capacity building programmes, by improving production efficiencies, ultimately are able to compensate for time taken in compliance, thereby allowing the factory to deal with the working time squeeze.

Kabeer et al. (2020), in their survey of garment factory workers, after the implementation of measures in factories following the Rana Plaza disaster[31] in Bangladesh reiterate the perception that enactment of working time limits has resulted in increasing work

[31] On April 24, 2013, the Rana Plaza building in Savar, Bangladesh collapsed killing over 1138 people, injuring 2600 workers (CCC 2015), orphaning 800 children (Tezon 2014).

intensity. While they contend that this may be because reduction in working hours has not been accompanied by a reduction in daily targets, with the notion of 'working time squeeze', this study offers the possibility of an alternative explanation of why with the increasing compliance in factories after the Rana Plaza incident, workers have reported increase in work intensity. Along with offering alternate explanations to workers' perceptions, this thesis also illuminates how effects of CoC may themselves be a manifestation of the tension between the two imperatives. This is elaborated next.

6.4.1.4 Hidden work and CoC effects for workers: Manifestations of the tension?

The 'hidden work' of CSR also highlights how working conditions for workers are constituted at the intersection of legitimacy and reputation-led CoC and profit-led production targets. In so doing, it contributes to the academic debates on CoC effects that have thus far remained focused on whether CoC improve working conditions (see chapter 2) by showing how CoC effects themselves are generated or constituted. Highlighting how 'hidden work' leads to the contravention of CoC intentions, this thesis draws attention to the implications of not including workers in the design, development and implementation of CoC. By identifying CSR Responsibilisation, CSR Enactment and Worker Situatedness as the three underlying mechanisms that generate 'hidden work' for workers, this thesis proposes that CoC effects are constituted as an ongoing social accomplishment and are not a one-time activity. Moreover, identifying unwritten buyer compliance rules, as the translations and enactment of CoC in the factory (see chapter 4, section 4.2.1 on translating international CSR), the current emphasis placed on paperwork is also problematised and called into question. Extant CoC research as well as practice, as discussed in chapter 2, appear to rely much on audit reports. This thesis highlights that the paperwork is itself a symbolic act and gesture to present the factory as internationalised and does not necessarily reflect workers' or managers' everyday experiences. To examine the effects of CoC, this study reiterates the need to examine, design and develop the CoC with workers themselves.

This study has also identified the dilemma *bandish* entails, which ultimately influences workers' physical, social, psychological and financial lives. In doing so, it responds to calls by Prentice et al. (2018) and Prentice and De Neve (2017) to study workers' embodied experiences to identify impacts on their health and well-being and presents how the interaction between the profit and the legitimacy imperatives are manifested in

workers' lives. It also emerges from this study that workers may not even be aware of the CoC and yet CoC plays a role in constituting the very conditions of their everyday factory life. It has been highlighted that workers describe their experiences in internationalised factories, without specifically alluding to the CoC. For instance, as was highlighted in chapter 2, De Neve (2014) reported that workers in internationalised factories feel like 'birds in a cage'. My study further illuminates and clarifies how such experiences are generated and what restriction of autonomy refers to and means in the work of De Neve (2014). The working time squeeze and the ensuing dilemma offers an explanation to why workers felt 'caged' in De Neve's (2014) study in internationalised factories in Tirupur. It emerges that much of the previous work carried out with workers (De Neve 2014; Ruwanpura 2016; Ruwanpura 2014; Ruwanpura 2013) has identified some manifestations of the hidden work induced by MNCs international CSR requirements, enacted through the CoC. By identifying, examining and proposing the notion of 'hidden work' of international CSR, this thesis brings together these conversations taking place in different disciplines of anthropology and economic geography under a phenomenon that is relevant for international CSR and can be further investigated and analysed by scholars across several disciplines.

It has been illustrated in this thesis that the factory workers are people with emotions, desires and life histories, who are actively engaged in factories, and usually play a role in normalising and rarely challenging the 'hidden work' of international CSR. Recognising workers' situatedness not only made it possible to examine their experiences (Krucks 2001), but also highlighted the significance of workers' personal lives and individual circumstances. This helps illuminate why CoC have been noted to impact different workers differently (see chapter 2). While CoC may appear to 'not be delivering' as per intended desires and expectations of those who demand, design and develop CoC, they may still be productive and be playing a role for workers. The illustration and contention that the same working time squeeze can evoke both positive and negative feelings, depending on workers' financial, personal, temporal, and familial circumstances and situations, underlines this point. It is therefore pertinent to examine workers' motivations, needs and perspectives when evaluating MNCs CoC, as part of international CSR practices. This study also reiterates the need to understand workers' own perceptions of their role in CoC compliance and their own understandings of CoC as a tool for MNCs international CSR practices and strategies (McEwan and Bek 2009). Moreover, the identification of the notion of working time itself in this study has implications for further research of the tension as well as CSR experiences. This is highlighted next.

6.4.1.5 Hidden work of CSR and its experiences: Examining the tension

This study has developed the notion of working time squeeze that does not just explain what underlie workers' *bandish* in an internationalised factory that follows international CSR requirements, it also makes these experiences observable and visible. It has emerged in this study that factory workers' experiences are intertwined with and embedded within internationalised factory's production and target achievement processes. It is the working time squeeze that allowed workers' production and international CSR experiences to be delineated analytically. Indeed, in reality the experiences are multiple, overlapping and intersecting. It is by examining and investigating the experience of working time squeeze that international CSR and production experiences and their relationship could be identified, established and examined. The notion of working time squeeze, then, offers a vantage point for investigating the hidden work associated with international CSR, and associated experiences in internationalised factories and possibly in internationalised workplaces more generally. Based on the assumption that international CSR activities take time, utilising the notion of working time squeeze could offer a way to examine workplace experiences of individuals. Such an examination may help in illuminating different aspects of the tension, which has thus far been examined in this section.

There is also a crucial connected point that this study highlights: it may not be possible to study international CSR experiences in isolation. International CSR experiences in workplaces and internationalised factories are intertwined and embedded within other processes. To examine and study international CSR experiences, it is relevant to identify other parallel processes and examine how the very conditions of work in the workplace are constituted. It is in analysing the constitution of workplace conditions that the notion of time and associated working time squeeze can offer a vantage point for examining the multiple, parallel ongoing processes and allow international CSR experiences to be identified and discussed.

6.4.2 Reflecting on the clash between the imperatives: Conceptualising the tension

The previous section highlighted and examined the significance of the hidden work of international CSR, presented in this research for the CoC and international CSR

scholarship. It has been emphasised that it is the tension between the profit and legitimacy imperatives that underlie observations and analysis of the work presented in this thesis as well as the research on different aspects of CoC implementation and CoC effects in extant scholarship. This tension, its nature and aspects need to be better understood.

Three ways of conceptualising the tension between the profit and legitimacy imperatives can be identified: descriptive, instrumental, and normative (cf. Hahn et al. 2018; Donaldson and Preston 1995). The descriptive aspects of the tension describe and explain how firms and managers deal with tensions and are concerned with the nature of the challenges managers face (Hahn et al. 2018). Instrumental aspects seek to establish connections with various outcomes (Donaldson and Preston 1995) and are concerned with different ways to manage, including the outcomes and consequences of the tension (Hahn et al. 2018). Normative aspects of the tension appear to be driven by a strong conviction that only a profit-driven imperative is problematic and that there is an inherent tension between profit and legitimacy imperatives which intend to serve stakeholders. As such this represent objectives for their own sake, irrespective of their ability to further financial or shareholder interests (Hahn et al. 2018; Donaldson and Preston 1995).

This thesis has been concerned with the descriptive and instrumental aspects of the tension, and illuminated how the tension between the two imperatives play out in the factory and has highlighted a range of consequences that this tension is generating. The broader debates on the paradoxes and tensions in CSR literature on economic, social, and environmental goals has been ongoing. Drawing on a review of 11 years of research, Van der Byl and Slawinski (2015) identified that firms manage the tension between different imperatives in CSR in multiple ways. There is a win-win approach focusing on opportunities to reconcile the imperatives and is characterised by efforts to bypass the tension. There is a trade-off approach where the conflict is recognised and a choice made between the imperatives. There is an integrative approach which attempts to balance the demands of the imperatives. Finally, there is paradox approach which seeks to understand the nature of tensions along with how actors work through them, provides an opportunity to evaluate the complexity of the issues and generate creative approaches to deal with them. Gaim et al. (2018), discussing tensions in organisations more broadly argued that competing demands can be defined in various ways, including dilemma, trade-off, paradox, duality, and dialectic. A review of literature and categorisation of studies on the tension between profit and legitimacy imperatives

drawing on such work could be a useful way forward to advance the discussion on the clash between the imperatives. The next section discusses the limitations of my study and identifies areas for further research.

6.5 Limitations of the study

This thesis examined factory workers' experiences of CoC as a manifestation of international CSR requirements and identified that this experience is constituted in the ongoing interaction of CSR with international production processes that manifest as production targets. It has shown how international CSR requirements are generating 'hidden work' for workers. In presenting workers' *bandish* and the underlying working time squeeze that characterise this 'hidden work', this study focused primarily on processes inside the factory, with its particular conditions and geography. While an in-depth study of the factory offered the possibility of illuminating the 'hidden work' of international CSR and accompanying mechanisms of *CSR Responsibilisation, CSR Enactments and Worker Situatedness*, there could be more factors at play which the current work has not been able to consider.

There may be processes and factors outside the factory that may influence the extent of the squeeze, which are not examined in the present work. For instance, there was no union and no collective bargaining agreement in this factory. Unions have been noted to play a role in influencing working conditions (Oka 2016) and their presence might have an influence on the extent and nature of the working time squeeze, which may then need to be accounted for and examined. Connected to this, there is also a need to identify other internal structures in the factory (Bird et al. 2019), if present, and to determine the role they may (or may not) play in the generation and shaping of the working time squeeze.

Moreover, FF was supplying to leading international brands and retailers, which are susceptible to reputational risk and place certain type of expectations on the factory. While the content of CoC is usually similar (as noted in chapter 2), the way it is implemented by MNCs vary. If buyers are not strict in their demands of international CSR, the nature of the working time squeeze is also likely to vary. In a similar manner, there is a potential for working time squeeze to be affected by other associated purchasing practices of buyers. These issues need to further examination to delineate the extent of their influence on the working time squeeze.

This study was also undertaken at a time when there were no unforeseen circumstances affecting either the buyers or the factory. However, global health crises such as the Coronavirus (Covid-19) may likely affect the fashion industry and international production networks and processes. Kelly (2020) has highlighted how the factories and workers involved in international production are being affected. While some brands cease business (Quartz 2020), workers continue to show up because they cannot afford not to have work (DHNS 2020). The short- and long-term impact of such global, regional and local crises on international CSR requirements, international production and in turn the working time squeeze could be examined in the future research.

An added point is that the factory where this research was undertaken had more women workers than men. If there may have been more male workers, the factors constituting *Worker Situatedness* may have been different. Similarly FF had more women workers and less women managers. This too may influence the managerial discretion and shaping of workers *bandish*. These issues could not be addressed and explored in the existing study because of the peculiar characteristics of the factory in which the study was undertaken. However, examining gender(ed) dimensions would be useful for this work presented here and is proposed for future study in the next section.

6.6 Further research

The 'hidden work' of international CSR and underlying working time squeeze and workers' *bandish* present how profit and legitimacy imperatives interact and influence workers' lives in an internationalised factory and beyond, and this has implications for CoC and CSR scholarship. These contributions can be strengthened and further expanded if specific issues that have been noted and identified in this study are researched and analysed further. Three key issues that emerged with respect to workers' experiences are discussed in this section.

6.6.1 bandish *and women workers*

bandish not only presents, describes and explains workers' international CSR experiences, it also highlights how working time squeeze plays a role in the working and personal lives of workers. Working time squeeze and the associated dilemma that *bandish* entail, affect workers socially, physically, psychologically and financially, and

these influence their lives at home. The role of international CSR in allowing MNCs to influence the lives of relatively less powerful (rather powerless) stakeholders according to economic principles has been previously noted (Banerjee 2018). However, the contrary might also be true and this requires further research. Specifically, while the extent of workplace experiences on personal lives has been identified, the extent to which personal lives shape, determine and influence workplace experiences and behaviours remains to be studied. For instance, undertaking an ethnography of workers' homes and observing their routines and interactions could inform these issues. This aspect, it appears, may have a significant role for women workers who, embedded in particular socio-cultural expectations, work to juggle both domestic and work responsibilities. A closer examination of positive feelings evoked by *bandish* reveals the distinctive sense of control offered to women in the sense of protection by reaching home on time, liberation for having family time, empowerment to remain unmarried, to learn and grow and the inspiration to deal with personal challenges and issues.

Research on women workers and gender dimensions of CSR is an emerging area in CSR literature (McCarthy 2018; Alamgir and Alakavuklar 2018; McCarthy 2017). It has been highlighted that compliance regimes triggered by CoC and similar international CSR requirements (mis)represent and (non)recognise women garment workers and their lives and needs (Alamgir and Alakvuklar 2018). Workers' situatedness and life circumstances calls for a focus on gendered norms. Undoing gender involves unsettling gendered norms of work and organisation (Linstead and Brewis 2004). It entails undoing the restrictively normative conceptions of sexual and gendered life (Butler 2004). While CoC call for no discrimination, *bandish*, it appears, draws attention to how CoC enactment draws on gendered norms and contribute to them. For instance, by labelling women as 'vulnerable' and requiring specific facilities for them (for instance crèches, special provisions for pregnant workers) (see Appendix 5), CoC draw on and crystallise the gendered norms. There is yet another way that the enactment of protection triggers gender-related outcomes. The facility of crèche is provided in accordance with the CoC. As per company policy, managers shared that crèches are allowed to have kids between the ages of 6 months to 6 years. In practice, however, managers in my interactions mentioned that they prefer not to have children younger than one year as taking care of them is difficult. After 6 months of maternity leave, when kids cannot be admitted into the crèche, women find themselves in a difficult situation. As the case of Renu (see chapter 5, humiliated, the tale in the dark side of *bandish*) illustrates, they then draw on gendered norms to cope with the situation. They call upon relatives to stay with them or leave their kids with relatives or parents in their villages, where women usually stay at

home, and can take care of children. In Renu's case, she first called her sister, and then her husband quit daytime job to work in night shifts because he could then spend the days at home in order to support his wife to be able to retain her employment with the FF. These issues require further examination, for instance, what is the relationship between CoC and gender, how CoC reinforce gendered norms and how such norms are challenged. In addition to examining the issue of gender and intersectionality for women workers, intimate partner violence (IPV) is yet another area needing further examination.

bandish and intimate partner violence

bandish also draws attention to how personal circumstances influence choices and decisions at work and may be contributing to sustaining it. It highlights how those workers, specifically women who are victims of domestic violence, behave in particular ways in the workplace and are perceived as weaker and more willing to put up with adversarial conditions (see chapter 5). Such recognition has led scholars to argue that IPV is a public rather than a private concern, which spill over into workplaces and has significant effects on both employees and organisations (Wilcox et al. 2019). This has been recognised as an area for further research, and *bandish* reiterate such calls. *bandish* also highlight the different consequences such as IPV can have, not just for the workers as employees, but also for internationalised factories, and by implication for the MNCs that source from internationalised factories.

While IPV arguably has been noted to generate adverse consequences for workers as well as employers (Wilcox et al. 2019), *bandish* brings to light an intriguing contradiction to this debate. Such violence is often productive for the internationalised factories. IPV makes women workers feel more vulnerable, at the same time, they simultaneously show more resilience in putting up with additional adverse circumstances at work. Women workers experiencing IPV may be more agreeable, more stable and can be controlled more easily at the workplace. While MNCs through internationalised factories and CoC may offer protection to such vulnerable workers, these workers are also more open and willing to cooperate with factories to ensure their livelihoods opportunities are secure, in most cases, their only source of gaining dignity and respect. In such cases, how the ethical engagement of brands, factories, CoC and international CSR should be defined, is an area for further research.

6.6.2 Temporality of/in bandish

I have noted that time plays a critical role in constituting *bandish*. It also appears that it may be playing a role in determining how workers undergo and experience *bandish*. Time is a sociotemporal order that regulates the lives of social entities such as families, professional groups, organisations or even nations. Time as a socially constructed artefact is distinct from the biotemporal or physiotemporal order (Zerubavel 1981). The clock-time orientation that views time as linear and objective generates a working time-squeeze (see chapter 4). Trying to follow all rules and deliver the allocated target in designated time, workers experience a squeeze of this objective working time. How significant this squeeze is, what becomes of it, and whether they experience it as limiting or liberating depends on the sense of control, and which, it can be argued, itself depends on workers' own orientation to the time.

For instance, when viewed through a process lens, temporality is negotiated and constituted in action (Reinecke and Ansari 2017; Langley et al. 2013). Temporal rhythms are themselves constructed (Orlikowski and Yates 2010) and in the case of internationalised factory workers, this appears to be happening in four ways. When a particular life event is overbearing for a worker, it is an ever-prolonging present, such that nothing else seem to matter. When Geeta felt sick and rushed from the medical room to the production floor or when her daughter was unwell, time is no more an objective reality to be optimised. Her sense of time is governed and shaped by her own or her daughter's health. Apparently, Geeta would like to define her time based on her and her daughter's wellbeing, and not the arbitrary objective ticking away clock-time. On the contrary, in a significant life event that was painful and constraining, like Salma's accident or Ruhi's domestic violence, what appears to matter is the ability to push that painful memory and emerge from it. The sense of time is governed by a comparison of the felt pain, and in the face of physical and emotional pain, the present clock-time orientation and the accompanying working time squeeze apparently does not matter as much. In yet another case, the clock time orientation is co-opted and its rhythms are used to organise life and associated activities. In this context, being able to get home on time enable feelings of safety as well as freedom to carry out activities for the family. Finally, workers also undergo *bandish in time.* Clock-time orientation is the dominant order for organising work and life and at any particular point in time interactions and life circumstances vary, and with each variance *bandish* is constituted anew, generating newer experiences. All of these observations need further research. The nature of

workers' conception of time, how they relate to the varying conceptions of time, and how that relates to the CoC and international CSR may be a useful research topic and can possibly contribute to the emerging interest in the studies of time.

6.6.3 Workers' meanings of CoC values

CoC intend to protect workers and offer them certain freedoms and protections (highlighted in Appendix 5). Workers' *bandish,* however, highlights that workers' meanings of the notions of freedom and protection may not necessarily reflect what is listed in the CoC, and this requires further research.

bandish *and the notion of freedom*

CoC intend to guarantee certain freedoms to workers. Freedom is, however, a porous concept, which, while largely treated as a right, is not given, but rather mobilised and can serve to legitimise organisations and work relations in particular ways (Andersson et al. 2019). While certain freedoms come as given and for realisation as a part of CoC document and processes, *bandish* highlights that what becomes of them is contingent on workers' own conceptions of freedom. The freedoms that workers prioritise in their daily lives serve to both legitimise how FF operates and may also invert and change the meanings of freedoms, enacted through the CoC. For instance, women workers value temporal freedoms and their ability to secure family time reigns supreme. Male workers value autonomy and increased income. As such, they willingly work as contract and casual workers, and cooperate with factory managers to conceal their status. It has been highlighted that freedom is inextricably linked to dominant socio-economic conditions (Andersson et al. 2019). What is presented and theorised as control and choice, and in turn freedom, because experience of choice can be experience of freedom (Holton 2006), perhaps, needs to be problematised. Distinctions have been offered between freedom, choice and freedom of choice (Carter 2004), and examining workers' decisions and choices and meanings with respect to these will contribute to contemporary debates about freedom as well as allow reflections on how these align with CoC and international CSR debates.

bandish *and the notion of protection*

Much as the notion of freedoms discussed above, the CoC intend to offer protections to workers (see Table A5.2 in Appendix 5). However, its meanings for workers may not necessarily be what is embedded in the CoC. For instance, protection from verbal harassment makes little sense for a worker who believes that scolding aids better performance and delivery of targets, or for those who feel that working with women and getting scolded is safer than being in a place where one is always vulnerable because one is a woman. In certain cultural contexts, for instance for women who are constantly scolded by fathers and then husbands, such a protection holds little meaning as being scolded is 'normal' for them. On the other hand, such a protection may be relevant for a woman who is respected in her household and is not used to being scolded or insulted. Whether a protection intended in a CoC 'is' a protection cannot be assumed a priori. It becomes meaningful only in experience. Those in comparatively challenging personal life circumstances feel either more vulnerable or protected based on their interactions with factory managers and executives. Similarly, the notion of health and safety at workplace is of limited meaning and importance to those who feel vulnerable because of their gender. When feeling safe is about being least vulnerable to sexual exploitation, other protections and promises of safety and considerations appear secondary, largely reduced to a set of rules to be followed, and often viewed as inconvenient. These issues need further research.

In addition to implications for the CoC and international CSR literature, this thesis also has implications for CoC policy and practice, which are discussed in the following section.

6.7 Implications for CoC policy and practice

This thesis has highlighted that requirements listed in CoC are interpreted and translated to unwritten buyer compliance rules by managers in an internationalised factory. The expectation of following these rules generates a working time squeeze in the factory which underlies workers' *bandish* and influences their working and personal lives. Managerial discretions, interactions and perceptions play a specific role in shaping, accentuating and sustaining the squeeze and thereby shape workers' CoC and international CSR experiences in an internationalised factory. This analysis and observation has implications for CoC design and development and most critically for

their implementation. Three specific implications for corporate practitioners and policymakers are identified including the need for accommodating compliance time, strengthening CoC implementation and integrating worker perspectives in CoC design, development and implementation. Each of these is discussed below.

6.7.1 Accommodating compliance time

This thesis highlights that the current approach to CoC implementation does not account for time taken in following the CoC, the compliance time. Consequently the implementation of international CSR and production targets as two parallel processes, then, appear to contravene the CoC intentions. Following buyer compliance rules in pursuit of implementing CoC requirements not only takes away time, it creates more work, needs more efforts, requires more coordination, and can alter the workplace and work experience for factory workers. If compliance time were accounted, measured, and accommodated, workers may not experience the working time squeeze. There is, therefore, a need for compliance time to be recognised and accommodated for in industry operations, including product costing, product delivery schedules and CoC implementation approaches and strategies.

While these discussions and changes can be carried out by the MNC buyers and internationalised factories individually, there is a need to also update the General Sewing Data (GSD)[32] database for the industry. By including compliance time in this database time standards for compliance activities can be included and they can offer the fashion production industry broad generalised indicators for costing of garments, much like it currently lists the time for performing different sewing operations. This time can then be accommodated in the average industry costing estimates for the different garments.

Indeed, for a fast-fashion industry which competes on low costs, this may not be easy. However, given the repeated concerns of the dark and ugly side of the industry, as highlighted in the opening chapter (See section 1.1.1), the pressure on the industry stakeholders, specifically the multinational companies continues to grow. Despite the disillusionment and disenchantment with CoC and accompanying audits, it remains a prominent risk management practice and continues to grow. Accommodating for

[32] General Sewing Data is a technique for methods analysis and the setting of time standards for sewn products for industries whereby international time standards are a set of garment manufacturing operations https://www.gsdhq.com/products/gsdcost-manufacturers.

compliance time in internationalised factories, this thesis proposes, is likely to improve workers' experiences in internationalised factories and therefore might be a meaningful response to the growing concerns of uneven impacts of CoC . Such a recognition and integration of compliance time may also set a precedent for integrating international CSR driven CoC compliance with production processes and activities and may contribute to reconciling the inherent tension between profit and legitimacy concerns in both multinational firms as well as factories.

6.7.2 Strengthening the implementation of CoC

This thesis has highlighted how managerial perceptions plays a role in shaping workers experiences and in turn CoC effects in an internationalised factory. The content of CoC of different brands and retailers draw on widely accepted international norms and is largely similar (See section 2.3 in Chapter 2 and section 4.2.1 and Appendix 5). Yet, CoC are perceived as 'foreign' by factory managers and audits have come to be viewed as a game. These perceptions are not driven so much through the content of CoC and are instead shaped in and through managers' interactions with buyers and in turn shape and influence factory managers' engagement with CoC implementation. Often these perceptions are underpinned by the dark side of buyer power where supplier factories tend to feel exploited (Schleper et al. 2015).

Such perceptions should be considered and paid attention to by international brands. If buyers can take cognisance of the managers' perceptions in internationalised factories, it may strengthen the CoC uptake and implementation, and possibly contribute to its effectiveness. Adopting a dialogue-driven and reflective approach to design, development and implementation of CoC could be useful.

Adopting a dialogue-driven approach to CoC design, development and implementation could include undertaking a dialogue with factories and the managers at the time of introducing the CoC to explain the rationale and purpose of CoC and its clauses and possibly agreeing to co-design and co-develop certain aspects in a manner that it is relevant for factories and their managers. It would also include ongoing dialogue throughout the processes of CoC implementation to incorporate feedback and concerns of factory managers and accordingly adapting and revising the CoC.

It is to be noted that while managerial perceptions shape the factory's approach to CoC compliance, these perceptions are not fixed, but rather constantly evolve with each subsequent interaction with MNC buyers and auditors. This has significance for everyday practices and behaviours in CoC implementation activities of both buyers and auditors and calls for a reflective approach to CoC implementation. It entails the need for buyers to periodically collect feedback from factory managers followed by reflection by staff at buyer firm following which necessary changes to processes and procedures carried out by buyer staff themselves or by auditors may be introduced. Incorporating changes in CoC as well as wider international CSR activities, for instance projects aimed at capacity building in internationalised factories, to address the perceptions of factory managers' may contribute to enhancing prospects for the changes that CoC and international CSR projects envision.

6.7.3 Integrating worker perspectives

Workers' experiences presented in this thesis underline and reiterate the need for CoC policy and practice to recognise workers as active participants and not passive beneficiaries of stakeholder management or regulatory tools. It has been highlighted that workers' actions and decisions, in their everyday lives, play a role in sustaining the working time squeeze and in turn their experiences of *bandish*. Other studies have also made similar observations where workers cooperate with managers for their needs (Hoang 2019). These observations point to the need to make CoC more inclusive and participative, if they are indeed meant to protect workers.

Including worker perspectives during design and implementation of CoC may make CoC more relevant and meaningful for them. It has been pointed out above that the values that CoC aim to embed and realise may neither hold the same meaning nor the same importance for workers as what the CoC developers may intend. It is the workers' needs, priorities, life situations and circumstances that influence and shape what individual values of freedom or protection may mean for workers and it is therefore critical to include their perspectives when designing and developing CoC. Unless workers' views and needs are taken into account and reflected in the CoC, these will remain managerial tools and rules for the workers to follow, instead of becoming the means to offer them space and opportunities to put forth their views.

Including worker perspectives and voices during implementation is also critical. For instance, it was been highlighted that managerial differences in priorities as well as individual differences can lead to placing conflicting demands on workers as well as and conflicting briefings for workers. For instance, see the case of Shanti in chapter 4 (difference in priorities in section 4.4.2.3). If workers had space to voice their experiences, managers in factories may be able to take cognisance of these issues and even though they may not be able to fully resolve the working time squeeze generated, they could limit the accentuation that is triggered owing to managerial differences in priorities and the subsequent conflicting briefings flowing from it.

Indeed, including individual workers perspectives in CoC documents which intend to be universal is not easy and may entail multifaceted operational challenges. Yet, if the dialogic approach to CoC design, development and implementation is developed to incorporate factory managers' perspectives and experiences, it can possibly be extended to include worker experiences as well. In addition to traditional means of worker engagement, including unions and representative organisations, which emphasise on collective agency, a range of technology platforms have been developed in the last few years, including mobile applications, worker helpline numbers, short message service (SMS) feedback systems to improve communication with individual workers. Thus far, these have remained focused only on grievances and not so much on collating everyday experiences of workers and their perspectives. There lies much potential and scope for exploring innovative use of information and communication technology to collate individual workers' perspectives and incorporating them in CoC development and implementation approaches which are less static and more adaptive and versatile to the needs of places and people where they are to be implemented

6.8 Conclusion

This thesis is an ethnography of workers' experiences of international CSR in an internationalised factory in India – a factory which follows the CSR CoC demanded by international brands and retailers and which shows how workers' experiences of CSR CoC are deeply intertwined with and embedded within ongoing international production processes and targets. This interaction ultimately results in CSR generating 'hidden work' for workers whereby a perpetual shortage of working time, a working time squeeze, is generated which factory workers described and termed *bandish*. Shaped, accentuated, sustained in the daily working of the factory through managerial discretion,

interactions and perceptions, the working time squeeze and in turn *bandish* determines workers' CSR experiences and shapes their physical, psychological, social and financial lives.

The interaction and manifestation of the profit and legitimacy imperatives in the working and personal lives of workers highlights the need for worker-focused studies of CoC and international CSR. Both CoC theory and practice need to consider the experiences of factory workers when designing, planning and performing initiatives in their name and at their behest. If workers are not included, the purpose, meaning and impact of any such initiative, for the workers, may remain open to questions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Literature Review Approach

The literature reviewed included journal articles (Tranfield et al. 2003; Sartor et al. 2016) as well as grey literature (Adams et al. 2017) comprising book chapters, working papers, media article and practitioner reports. The approach comprises of a systematic search (Tranfield et al. 2003; Sartor et al. 2016), journal specific searches (Frynas and Stephens 2015), and purposive snowball sampling using Google Scholar (Burritt et al. 2018). The approach adopted here for the review draws on previously established methods for high quality literature reviews and was inspired by recent reviews in the academic field of CSR published in a minimum of ABS listed 3* journals.

In the first instance, a systematic search for factory workers and codes of conduct was carried out across the EBSCO, PROQUEST and Web of Science (WoS) databases. The search string used was AB (Code of Conduct OR code of ethics OR CSR codes) AND AB (workers) AND (factory OR supply chain OR value chain OR Production). The search was set up to look for the first two sets of key words in abstracts and the third anywhere in the text to collate an initially comprehensive corpus of all papers that dealt with factory workers and codes of conduct discussed with reference to international production carried out through supply chains. Searches were carried out across the three databases as different journals are available through different databases. WoS showed a list of 116 journal articles, PROQUEST showed a total of 124 journal articles while EBSCO generated a total of 233 unique results from a period of 1970 to 2019. When using EBSCO, the academic journal article filter (that was used in WoW and PROQUEST) was not applied with an intent to also include relevant grey literature – “the diverse and heterogeneous body of material available outside, and not subject to, traditional academic peer-review processes” (Adams et al. 2017:433). CoC is a topic that has attracted the interest of multiple actors. Specifically, following the Rana Plaza disaster (Hammadi and Kelly 2013) in Bangladesh and the passing of laws in the UK and EU calling for increased transparency in supply chains, there has been a growth in journalistic and scholarly projects in the area, many of which are still ongoing or have been recently concluded, for instance the Garment Supply Chain Governance Project[33] and the British Academy funded Combatting Modern Slavery Through Business

[33] https://www.wiwiss.fu-berlin.de/forschung/Garments/index.html

Leadership at the Bottom of the Supply Chain[34]. Incorporating relevant contemporary material using grey literature can enable researchers to explore novel fields of enquiry and make a variety of positive contributions (Adams et al. 2017).

Abstracts of scholarly hits collated across the three database searches were then reviewed and any duplicates and irrelevant papers (for instance papers on health and social work that showed up) were removed. 54 relevant articles were identified in the first instance through WoS. The other two databases were then reviewed to add to this list any other relevant articles. The database search was then followed by journal specific searches to identify additional relevant articles. This was done as search engines do not show the recent papers made available online. Specific searches using the keywords (code of conduct OR code of ethics or CSR codes) and (factory workers) was also carried out in the leading CSR journals including Journal of Business Ethics, Business Ethics Quarterly, Business & Society and in organisation studies and general management journals, specifically Organisation, Organisation Studies, Organisation Science, Human Relations, Strategic Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, Journal of Management and Journal of Management Studies. The choice of management and organisations studies journals was based on the review by Frynas and Stephens (2015) with the addition of Human Relations that was identified as relevant during the initial review of abstracts. Choice of the CSR journals for detailed review in this step was additionally also guided by the prominence of journals that were identified in the initial database research. During this step, cross-referencing, in line with previous reviews (Yawar and Seuring 2017), was also employed to check if there were any additional related and relevant papers and sources that could be included.

As has been highlighted in the second chapter of the thesis, there is no consistency in usage of terms and scholars have used multiple labels to refer to CoC. Using the step wise approach discussed above ensured that any relevant article that did not come up in the keyword search could also be identified. An additional advantage of the approach adopted was also that papers relevant to the topic, for example those that discussed compliance and auditing issues in detail but without necessarily using the keywords, that may have otherwise been excluded, could also be identified, and included. A prototypical example is the paper by Sinkovics et al. (2016) which discusses factory workers'

[34] https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/projects/modern-slavery-combatting-through-business-leadership-bottom-supply-chain

experiences of CoC but does not use the keywords. The approach adopted for the review ensured that all relevant papers dealing with discussions of compliance with CoC could be included in the study.

My search generated a total of 225 journal articles and 40 other relevant resources. In developing this corpus, all papers that dealt with factory workers and codes of conduct as per their abstract were included. The articles together covered 103 journals including 44 ABS listed journals, 49 non-ABS listed and 11 legal journals. As the purpose of the literature review was to undertake a comprehensive analysis, articles were not discriminated against based on the journal in which they were published (Burritt et al. 2018). This is aligned with the purpose of the review to analyse the state of current knowledge on factory workers and their experiences of codes of conduct. In addition to this, books, book chapters, media articles, PhD Thesis, reports, conference papers and other working papers were also included in this corpus. Of the 225 articles, 139 were published in ABS listed journals, 16 in legal journals and 100 in other journals. Out of the 139 ABS listed articles, 56 articles were published in CSR and ethics related ABS journals with Journal of Business Ethics being most common outlet (37). HRM was the second largest discipline with 17 articles. 6 articles were covered in Social Science Journals, 10 in organisation studies, 7 in International Business and the remainder in general management, economics, operations and planning and environment journals.

The articles were then re-examined to answer specifically three questions: a) *How have factory workers and their experiences been discussed? What issues have been raised with regards to factory workers? What methodological and theoretical perspectives have been used?* In the first instance, abstracts were reviewed and in cases where the information was not clear in the abstracts, full papers were consulted. Re-examining the initial set of articles finally yielded a total of 123 relevant journal articles (74 articles in ABS journals, 6 in legal journals and 43 in other journals that span anthropology, development studies but are not listed in ABS). These were then reviewed to gain insights into the formal aspects of the publications (timeline, methodology, journals) and analysed to identify the broad themes and issues that were addressed vis-à-vis the questions identified. The key findings and analysis of the review are summarised in the literature review chapter. It is to be noted that while the review draws on multiple disciplines, it is pivoted in Business and Management studies. The intention of including multiple studies across disciplines is to both map the field pertaining to the topic of interest for this review as well as to identify areas for expansion of the CoC scholarship in the field of CSR.

The 123 articles, together with the articles, conference papers and books, included and examined in this review were noted to be covering a period of 2000–2019. This is in line with the observation that studies of CoC followed their rise in 1990s (Kolk and van Tulder 2005). The journal articles with different theoretical and methodological orientations and spread across disciplines have been published across a wider range of journals. 25 percent articles are in Ethics & CSR journals, 20 percent each in sociological and development studies and the remaining spread across other areas including law, accounting, supply chain management and economics.

Appendix 2: Three previous spirits of capitalism

Three Previous Spirits of Capitalism (Reproduced from Kazmi et al. 2016)

	First spirit: end of 19th century to 1930s	Second spirit: 1940–1970s	Third spirit: since 1980 (project based)
Critiques	*Conservative critique* Poverty and insecurity Destruction of traditional rural communities	*Social critique* Inequalities and exploitation, benefiting only the capitalists Class domination	*Artistic critique* Uniformity of bureaucratic structures Boringness Alienation
Integration of those critiques	'Bourgeois values' Frugality and savings as a way to become bourgeois Charity and paternalism	'Fordist compromise': good salaries, lifelong jobs, social dialogue and managerial capitalism	Project-based corporations Network-based corporations More freedom and opportunities; wage-earners are their own bosses
Excitement	Freedom from local communities Progress	Career opportunities Power positions	No more authoritarian chiefs Fuzzy organizations Innovation and creativity Permanent change
Security	Personal property Personal relationships Charity Paternalism	Long-term planning Careers Welfare state	For the mobile and the adaptable Companies will provide self-help resources Managing oneself
Fairness	A mix of domestic and market fairness	Meritocracy and valuing Effectiveness Management by objectives	New form of meritocracy, valuing mobility and ability to expand a network Each project is an opportunity to develop one's employability

Appendix 3: CSR as a potential new spirit of capitalism

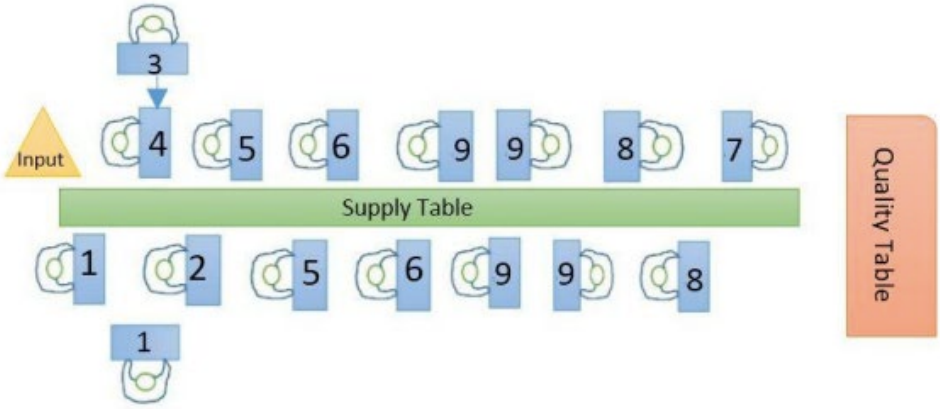
CSR as a potential fourth spirit of capitalism (Reproduced from Kazmi et al. 2016)

	Corporate social responsibility
Critiques	Unsustainability Moral emptiness
Addressing the critiques	Value-based remodelling of corporate activities based on stakeholders' new demands (e.g. values, environmental and social issues) Reorganizing corporate governance by involving stakeholders Widening the socio-economic function and goal of corporate activities
Excitement	For individuals: to align their moral values with their economic interests For companies: to improve relations with the wider society in which they operate, to attract employees
Security	Sustainability, long-term security for society and corporations. *But little attention to improving the security of wage-earners*
Fairness	Incentives and financial rewards for managers who implement CSR *but no such incentives for employees. Regarding those employees, authors insist on the symbolic rewards and improvement of the work environment that they can expect*

CSR: corporate social responsibility.
In italics: the dimensions of spirits of capitalism identified byBoltanski and Chiapello (2005) are missing in the analysed managerial literature promoting corporate social responsibility.

Appendix 4: Illustrative diagram of a sewing assembly line

(a t-shirt production sewing line reproduced from Islam et al. 2014)



Process No.	Name of Process
1	Bottom hem
2	Shoulder Joint
3	Rib Close
4	Rib making
5	Neck Joint
6	Neck top stitch
7	Set tape
8	Sleeve hem
9	Sleeve close and joint
10	Inspection at the Quality table

Appendix 5: Brief overview of the CoC documents

At the time of the fieldwork, five international brands were sourcing from Fast Factory. Ranging between 1–10 pages, these are labelled differently: Code of Conduct, Supplier Code of Conduct, Terms of Engagement, Supplier Principles and Sustainability Commitment. One code is also supported by an additional 40-page guidelines document which further elaborates in extensive detail the expectations and specifications listed in the code document. All five documents open with a statement about the buyer MNC and their commitment to sustainability and ethical and responsible conduct and, as was emphasised in Chapter 2, list desired conduct as compliance with local law, protecting the environment, upholding integrity, and maintaining healthy workplaces. Four documents explain the purpose of the CoC is to outline/describe the buyer's/brand's expectations of its suppliers.

Three CoC documents explicitly outline the applicability of the CoC to all suppliers, both which work directly or indirectly, as subcontractors. Two of the five CoC refer to the different ILO and UN guidelines while others make no explicit reference. However, the clauses across the five CoC are similar. In case of a conflict situation between local law and CoC provisions, three CoC advise that the one which offers greater protection to the environment and people should be adhered to. Specifications of working conditions form at least 50 percent of content of all CoC. Under the second section, all five CoC call for local laws to be respected and in the third section require ethical conduct which emphasises integrity, transparency and discourages bribes and corruption. Under environmental protection, the fourth section, are listed matters pertaining to adherence to applicable environmental laws, including legal permits and regulations and requirements relating to air emissions, solid and hazardous waste, water discharge and energy efficiency.

Specifically, all the CoC (Code A, B, C, D and E) refer to three key issues: freedom, protection for factory workers and transparency expectation from their suppliers. The promise of freedoms for workers encompasses freedom of employment, movement, speech, and expression as well as freedom to associate (refer to Table A5.1 for details). The assurance of protections in CoC includes protection from harassment, overwork, wage-related exploitation, discrimination of all kinds, unsafe working conditions, and workplace hazards (refer to Table A5.2). Protection of vulnerable workers including pregnant women, migrant workers, and temporary workers, is also specifically

highlighted. To ensure freedom and protection for workers, all five CoC recognise transparency as a starting point to address industry-wide and systemic CSR challenges and call for suppliers to demonstrate transparency, honesty, ethics, integrity, and open behaviour with a commitment to continuous improvement (refer to Table A5.3).

In keeping with requirement of transparency, all CoC place an explicit emphasis on the need for suppliers to adhere to the CoC requirements and to allow brands and any nominated representative to monitor for adherence to the CoC specifications. There is an emphasis on establishment of management systems and maintenance of complete and accurate records and documentation in all CoC. Two documents briefly refer to their commitment to work with suppliers and one of them explicitly underlines that it recognises that full compliance to CoC can be challenging. Four of the five code documents refer to sanctions in case of failure to adherence to CoC. These sanctions include a progressive penalising that ranges from reduction of business with the brand to termination of the business relationship. One CoC also outlines that the supplier will be liable for damages and expenses incurred, including loss of revenue/profit, which may result from violation of CoC. All five documents emphasise the need for suppliers to comply with the code of conduct.

Table A5.1: Key issues of freedom of factory workers addressed in CoC

Freedom of employment (decide where to work and for how long)	to allow workers to terminate their employment contract after reasonable notice (Code A)
	to engage with workers on the basis of a recognised employment relationship (Codes A, B and D)
	to not infringe upon free choice of employment by requiring deposits, retaining identity documents, or withholding wages (Code A, Code D)
	workers must do their work on a voluntary basis (Code A)
	any form of forced labour (bonded, indentured, prison labour) is prohibited (Codes A, B, C, D and E)
Freedom of movement	requiring the supplier to ensure freedom of movement of workers (Code C)
	to provide access to clean drinking water and toilet facilities (Codes A, B, C, D and E)
	to allow workers to take breaks (Code A).
Freedom of speech and expression	an inclusive workforce where everyone has a voice in contributing to business success (Code C)
	requirements for grievance mechanisms (Codes A and B)
	enabling employees to put forward complaints without risk of retaliation (Code B)
	facilitating the ability of workers to “bargain collectively” (Code B)
	offering workers the freedom to refuse overtime (Codes A, B, C, D and E).
	workers must be free to join organizations of their own choice (Codes B, C, D and E)

Freedom to associate	allow workers to form or join trade unions of their own choosing and give worker representatives access to the workplace in order to carry out their representative functions (Code A)
	facilitating workers to establish alternative forms of workers' representation and negotiation where this freedom of association is restricted under local law (Code A)

Table A5.2: Key issues of protection of factory workers addressed in CoC

Protections for factory workers: greater protection of workers (Code A), to not put them at risk or exploit them (Code E) and guarantee rights at work (Code B)	
Protection from any kind of harassment	to treat workers with dignity and respect and not engage in or tolerate bullying, harassment (including physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal) (Codes C, D and E),
	not engage in intimidation, violence, or humiliation (Code B)
	no corporal punishment or abuse of any kind as a disciplinary practice (Code A)
	not use or permit use of fines (Code E)
Protection from overwork	all workers will get a day off once in seven days and shall not be required to work more than 48 hours in a week and more than 60 hours in any seven-day period and overtime shall not exceed 12 hours in a week (Codes A, B, C, D and E)
	reasonable rest periods must be provided to workers (Code E)
	all legal entitlements to vacation time, leave periods and holidays must be complied with (Codes B and E).
Protection from wage related exploitation	compensate workers by paying wages, overtime pay (at least 125 percent of regular rate of pay or higher), benefits and paid leave and requires wages to be paid on time without being subject to any unlawful deductions (for instance as a disciplinary measure) (Codes A, B,C,D and E).
	wages to meet the highest prevailing standard (national legal, industry level or collective bargaining agreement) and be sufficient to meet basic needs leaving some discretionary wages for workers and their families (Codes A, B and D)
Protection from all kinds of discrimination	no discrimination in terms and conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training, working conditions, job assignments, compensation including salary and benefits, advancement and promotions, discipline, termination or retirement and these have to be based on ability to do the job without consideration of personal beliefs or characteristics including age, affiliation, disability, gender, membership in worker organizations including trade unions, political opinion, marital or family status, perceived or actual disease status, pregnancy, national, social, or ethnic origin, race, caste, social background, religion or sexual orientation (Codes A, B, C, D and E)
Protection from unsafe working environment and workplace hazards	calls to maintain a safe workplace environment (Code C)
	minimum age for employability (to prohibit child labour) and requiring special provisions for safety of young workers (under 18 years) (Codes A, B, C, D and E)
	exercise precaution that there is no unsafe building (by ensuring safety, strength and stability of building (Code A)
	no unsafe exposure to hazardous machines, equipment or substances, prevention of fire hazards (Code B)

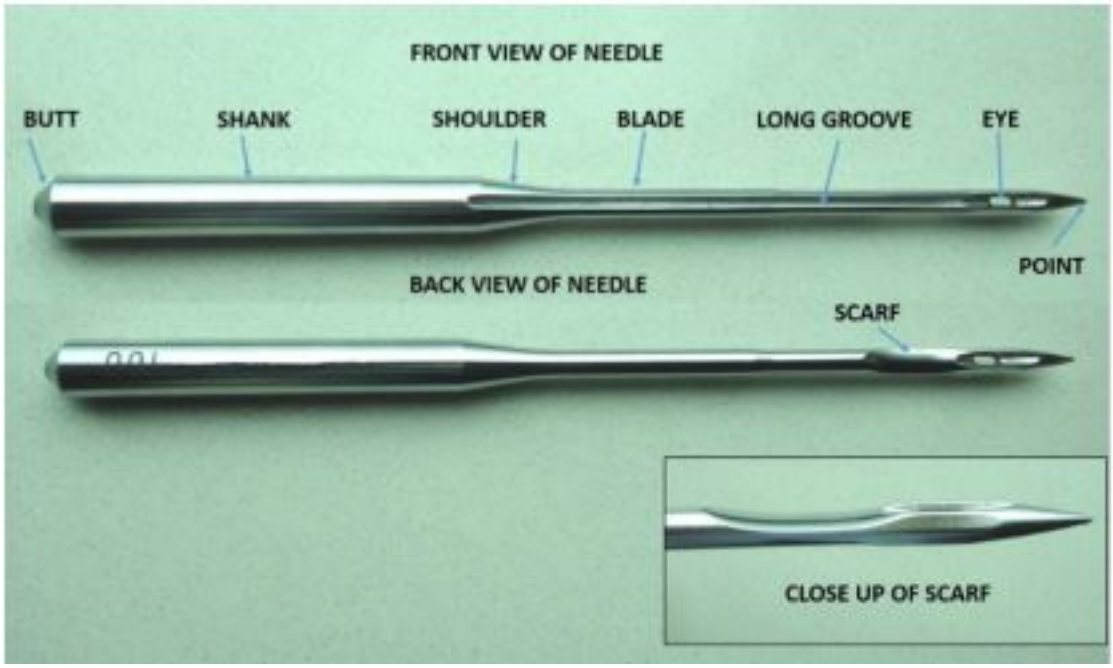
	provide a safe building with proper fire safety equipment, adequate lighting, and ventilation (Code D)
	prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in the course of work and to ensure that employees receive regular and recorded health and safety training, regular firefighting training and evacuation drills and training in waste management and handling of chemicals and other dangerous material (Codes A and B).
Protection of the vulnerable workers, those who are most vulnerable to abusive labour practices	develop special provisions as needed for pregnant women (Codes A, B and E),
	develop special provisions for migrant workers, temporary workers, and home workers (Code A).
	women workers should receive equal treatment and will not be exposed to hazards that may endanger their reproductive health (Codes A and E)

Table A5.3: Key issues of transparency listed in CoC

Access to information	define standard working hours by the contract (Code A)
	make workers aware of the requirements of CoC (Code A)
	if necessary, the CoC document should be translated into the language of the workers and all provisions should be communicated to them (Code E)
Accurate maintenance of all records in the factory	maintain complete and accurate books and true wage, attendance, and work hour records in accordance with laws and accepted accounting practices and not manipulate information or misrepresent any aspects of its operations (Codes A, C and D).
Cooperation towards brand's transparency commitment	suppliers to cooperate by responding promptly to queries on matters outlined in CoC (Code E)
	keep the brand informed where the production is taking place (Code B)
	seek approval before subcontracting (Codes A, D and E)
	allow the brand to disclose its name and details and information on performance as required to third parties (Code A)
Unrestricted access to factory operations and factory documentation	unrestricted access to production facilities and employment records (Code E)
	to allow the brand and its representatives to perform assessments and visit the factory announced or unannounced (Codes A and B)
	be cooperative and transparent and provide unrestricted access to records, work areas (Code A)
	share accurate and true wage, attendance, and work hour data (Code D)
	allow full facility and document access (Code D)
	not intentionally mislead (Code B)
Unrestricted and unmediated access to workers	provide unrestricted access to workers during audits (Code A)

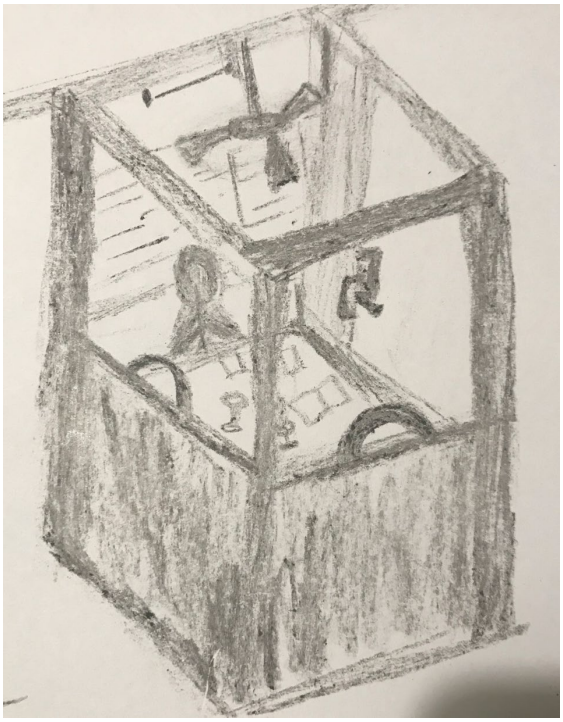
Appendix 6: Sewing machine needle

(source: Coats 2018)



Appendix 7: Salma's cabin

(sketched by the researcher during fieldwork)



Pictures of the cabin obtained later from factory HR representative after permissions

Appendix 8: Key compliance artefacts in Fast Factory

Compliance artefacts in the Factory		
Type of Document	**Description**	**Purpose**
Legal certificates	factory registration certificate, factory standing order (approved by the local labour department), electricity bills, air, and water compliance-related paperwork (regarding pollution, chimney installation and air quality), fire department's no objection certificate, lift maintenance records among others.	Presence of a well maintained and updated file indicates to the buyer/auditor not only that the factory has all necessary legal permissions, but that it takes compliance with laws seriously and operates legally.
Factory policies	Different policies of the factory including on child labour, working hours, grievance handling, employee management, etc.	Deemed to represent management's approach and organization's culture
Employee file	Every worker is allotted an identity number (ID) which is the file number. Copies of worker appointment letters, proof of identity, all warnings issued to the employee, certificate of training attended in the factory (if certificates are issued) and all communication to the worker from the factory (in case of workers who have been on unauthorised leave for more than fourteen days). It also includes in original a family photograph, apology letters submitted by workers besides the details of schemes they have accessed. If the worker has been frequently counselled for late coming or taking too much leave, copies of leave record and entry and exit time records may also be included.	Record workers' history in the factory, serve as justification for decisions regarding the worker, for instance if a worker goes to court, and are often also reviewed by auditors during audits.
Grievance registers	List of grievances heard and handled by each HR officer.	Noting down the employee number along with any relevant information allows HR officers to share how many cases (issues or grievances) they have handled in a day, to raise appropriate matters to Mahesh (HR), to follow up with people and also allows them to remind workers of a previous interaction in subsequent session, if necessary.
Minutes of meeting	Records of all these worker-management committee meetings including canteen committee, safety committee, prevention	To show to auditors. Shyam, the safety officer, explained "Pictures are a

	of sexual harassment (POSH). Pictures are also taken and included in the compliance files along with the minutes.	proof that the meeting actually happened, and the minutes have not been crafted".
Record of training	First Aid training, Fire Safety training and Ergonomic training, among others, that are organised for workers are documented. A list of the signatures of participants and pictures are filed and maintained.	Offer a visual and documentary proof that the training was organised, and the document is an accurate representation.
Compliance objects	Fire extinguishers, emergency lights, fire hydrants, doors, display boards, yellow lines (demarcating different areas and pathways) and locks (to regulate access to packing areas) among others.	Presence of these objects in a specified manner at specified places defines a compliant factory.

Appendix 9: Workers' experiences of international CSR requirements

Table A9.1: Workers' experiences of the specific freedoms listed in the CoC

	CoC requirements	Workers' experiences in the Fast Factory
Freedom of employment (decide where to work and for how long)	allow workers to terminate their employment contract after reasonable notice (Code A)	CoC promise freedom to resign. This freedom is used for presenting terminations as resignations. Terminations are discretionary and workers are asked to resign by writing a letter as per the resignation letter template
	to engage with workers on basis of a recognised employment relationship (Code A, B and D).	Contracts are issued and filed including for contract workers which misrepresents their status
	to not infringe upon free choice of employment by requiring deposits, retaining identity document, or withholding wages (Code A, Code D)	Wages are indirectly withheld by changing mode of payment for workers who are absent in the last week of the month Ronit explained, "Company says, if you are here all month and working, full salary may be paid...if a worker is absent in last week, when salary is being processed, then company says why pay a worker who is not working? Either the worker should resign or come. If he/she wants salary, they will come...If worker is absent from the company our production is being lost, work is not done, why are you paying salary? Salary is calculated but the payment mode changes…employee who comes to re-join is then paid…if resigned, then full and final is done and paid through cheque. If he/she doesn't show up, we send letters for follow ups. The worker who is missing without information and no one knows when he/she will re-join, their payment is lying around in cheque payment". The consequence is that even workers with genuine issues like ill health or family emergency, who are not on pre-approved leave, have to be paid by cheques. This change in payment mode ensures that while salary is shown as processed, as a compliant factory should not withhold wages, in effect it is being withheld as workers must come to collect cheques.
	workers must do their work on a voluntary basis (Code A)	Bound by their life situations, workers feel compelled to work
	any form of forced labour (boned, indentured, prison labour) is prohibited (Code A, B, C, D and E)	None of these was identified/noted.

freedom of movement	requiring the supplier to ensure freedom of movement of workers (Code C)	No explicit restriction on movements except designating authorised and unauthorised areas for access. However, workers feel seat-bound to deliver target on time
	provide access to clean drinking water and toilet facilities (Code A, B, C, D and E)	All facilities are provided but in dealing with working time squeeze the access to such facilities becomes restricted, albeit, voluntarily. Discretionary rules (for instance, bottle of water, see chapter 4) also limit convenience of access
	allow workers to take breaks (Code A).	Lunch breaks are provided. Workers feel they cannot necessarily take other breaks owing to the pressure to deliver target
freedom of speech and expression	an inclusive workforce where everyone has a voice in contributing to business success (Code C)	While some workers feel they are heard, most workers feel oppressed, and marginalised
	requirements for grievance mechanisms (Code A and B)	What is a grievance or not is defined by staff and managers
	enabling employees to put forward complaints without risk of retaliation (Code B)	Workers use suggestions boxes but whether the action on complaints is taken or not depends on management's discretion. Committee-members put forth complaints but often feel exposed. Outside of the official channels, workers do not feel their views are either sought or entertained.
	facilitating the ability of workers to "bargain collectively" (Code B)	Committees exist but knowledge and awareness of the ability to bargain collectively is absent
	offering workers the freedom to refuse overtime (Code A, B, C, D and E).	No overtime is forced and the ability to get home on time is much cherished by women workers
freedom to associate	workers must be free to join organizations of their own choice (Code B, C, D and E)	Workers are mostly unaware about unions. Answering what a union is, one responded, "*Yes, I have heard of it. I think it is some sort of a taunt or something. When we sit in a huddle and talk outside in the morning if we come early or even in here if we ever get a chance, Sir and Madam ask us if we are forming a union. So, guess that's what it is, isn't it?".* Those who are aware do not think creating one is possible.
	allow workers to form or join trade unions of their own choosing and give worker representatives access to the workplace in order to carry out their representative functions (Code A)	There is no explicit restriction but in practice passive resistance is practised by being watchful and cautious and this is underlined in managerial references of 'nuisance maker' and 'trouble maker' that are used to refer to some workers who express their views, ask questions or come into the notice of the managers for these reasons.
	facilitating workers to establish alternative forms of workers representation and negotiation where this freedom of association is restricted under local law (Code A)	Worker-management committees are functional and effective. However, what gets addressed and how is based solely on managerial discretion.

Table A9.2: Workers' experiences of the protections listed in the CoC

	CoC requirements	Workers' experiences in the Fast Factory
protection from any kind of harassment	to treat workers with dignity and respect and not engage in or tolerate bullying or harassment (including physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal) (Code C, D and E)	Systems and rules to prevent harassment are in place. However, depending on individual circumstances and managerial interactions, workers experience psychological and verbal harassment. Depending on what one is used to at home, they may or may not classify it as harassment.
	Not engage in intimidation, violence, humiliation (Code B)	Depending on individual circumstances and managerial interactions, workers often feel intimidated and humiliated
	No corporal punishment or abuse of any kind as a disciplinary practice (Code A)	No physical abuse but disciplinary practices are administered through counselling, warning letters, apology letters and the chit system
	not use or permit use of fines (Code E)	Chit system is used as a penalty system but is (re)presented as system for regulating entry and exit
protection from overwork	all workers will get an off once in seven days and shall not be required to work more than 48 hours in a week and more than 60 hours in any seven-day period and overtime shall not exceed 12 hours in a week (Code A, B, C, D and E)	Workers, mostly men and contract workers occasionally work as much as needed to ensure targets are delivered on time. The defined limits are often violated.
	reasonable rest periods must be provided to workers (Code E)	Except for lunch break and provisions for pregnant women, no other rest-period is scheduled.
	all legal entitlements to vacation time, leave periods and holidays must be complied with (Code B and E).	Legal entitlements are all offered but in practice negotiating a leave and getting it sanctioned is one of the hardest task for workers leading to them feeling that their needs are neglected and marginalised.
protection from wage related exploitation	compensate workers by paying wages, overtime pay (at least 125 percent of regular rate of pay or higher), benefits and paid leave and requires wages to be paid on time without being subject to any unlawful deductions (for instance as a disciplinary measure) (Code A, B,C,D and E).	Wages are paid on time and over time is paid. However stringent systems for overtime approvals often also backfire leading to some manual errors of missing out on a workers' name to be eventually compensated for by the workers : workers either have to let go of the managerial oversight or come another day. See foot note 11 in Chapter 4. Further, use of chit system as a disciplinary measure effectively leads to loss of salary as a penalty as a disciplinary measure
	wages to meet the highest prevailing standard (national legal, industry level or collective	Wages are paid as per the legal minimum after necessary deductions. Some bonus is paid around festival time however workers' feel discriminated against when they are not given

	bargaining agreement) and be sufficient to meet basic needs leaving some discretionary wages for workers and their families (Code A, B and D)	performance bonus while all the staff gets it annually.
protection from all kinds of discrimination	No discrimination in terms and conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training, working conditions, job assignments, compensation including salary and benefits, advancement and promotions, discipline, termination or retirement and these have to be based on ability to do the job without consideration of personal beliefs or characteristics including age, affiliation, disability, gender, membership in worker organizations including trade unions, political opinion, marital or family status, perceived or actual disease status, pregnancy, national, social, or ethnic origin, race, caste, social background, religion or sexual orientation (Code A, B, C, D and E)	While there is no explicit discrimination, pregnant women are not preferred and if pregnancy is suspected, women are not hired. Hiring a worker who will go on six months leave after few months of joining will block a position in the allotted/planned man-power budget of the factory and is not considered preferable by HR. If pregnancy comes to light within six months of joining, workers may even be asked to resign (see chapter 4).
protection from unsafe working environment and workplace hazards	calls to maintain a safe workplace environment (Code C)	Safe workplace is maintained and the onus to do so, in name of buyer compliance rules, is passed onto workers. Further, failure to follow compliance rules may result in being penalised for misconduct.
	minimum age for employability (to prohibit child labour) and requiring special provisions for safety of young workers (under 18 years) (Code A, B, C, D and E)	No child workers are allowed
	exercise precaution that there is no unsafe building (by ensuring safety, strength, and stability of building (Code A)	Legal requirements are followed.
	no unsafe exposure to hazardous machines, equipment or substances, prevention of fire hazards (Code B)	Workers are required to follow all rules and a failure to follow compliance rules may result in being penalised for misconduct.
	provide a safe building with proper fire safety equipment, adequate	Trainings are provided and appropriate physical environment is ensured

	lighting, and ventilation (Code D)	
	prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in the course of work and to ensure that employees received regular and recorded health and safety training, regular firefighting training and evacuation drills and training in waste management and handling of chemicals and other dangerous material (Code A and B).	Necessary trainings are provided. Workers are required to follow all rules and a failure to follow compliance rules may result in being penalised for misconduct.
protection of the vulnerable workers, those who are most vulnerable to abusive labour practices	develop special provisions as needed for pregnant women (Code A, B and E),	Protections are afforded to pregnant women and they are allowed relaxed tasks, flexibility with leaves and breaks and also offered maternity leave. While on one hand pregnant women workers are protected, other women who are pregnant at time of recruitment, as noted above, are rendered equally vulnerable and are discriminated against.
	special provisions for migrant workers, temporary workers, and home workers (Code A).	
	Women workers should receive equal treatment and will not be exposed to hazards that may endanger their reproductive health (Code A and E)	

Table A9.2: Workers' experiences of the transparency requirement listed in the CoC

	CoC requirements	**Workers' Experiences in the Fast Factory**
access to information	define standard working hours by the contract (Code A)	Information is made available to workers based on managerial discretion and is often used to control worker behaviours as well as to require them to enact a role in regulating behaviour of their peers (the case of feeders).
	make worker aware of the requirements of CoC (Code A)	
	If necessary the CoC document should be translated into the language of the workers and all provisions should be communicated to them (Code E)	
accurate maintenance of all records in the factory	maintain complete and accurate books and true wage, attendance, and work hour records in accordance with laws and accepted accounting practices and not manipulate information or	All records are accurately maintained to (re)present the factory as an internationalised factory. However, in and through paperwork contract workers are shown as employees, terminations are presented as resignations, chit penalty is presented as entry & exit and

	misrepresent any aspects of its operations (Code A, C and D).	absenteeism and discrimination against pregnant women is concealed
cooperation towards brand's transparency commitment	suppliers to cooperate by responding promptly to queries on matters outlined in CoC (Code E)	Fast factory offers full cooperation to the buyers and brands – however this leads to managers making demands on workers to ensure an internationalised factory as its natural way of being
	keep the brand informed where the production is taking place (Code B)	
	Seek approval before subcontracting (Code A, D and E)	
	allow brand to disclose its name and details and information on performance as required to third parties (Code A)	
Unrestricted access to factory operations and factory documentation	unrestricted access to production facilities and employment records (Code E)	The factory and all documents are made available to buyers and auditors. However, the factory thus (re)presented through paperwork and presentations conceals workers' needs, status, and their concerns.
	to allow brand and its representatives to perform assessments and visit the factory announced or unannounced (Code A and B)	
	be cooperative and transparent and provide unrestricted access to records, work areas (Code A)	
	share accurate and true wage, attendance, and work hour data (Code D),	
	allow full facility and document access (Code D)	
	not intentionally mislead (Code B)	
Unrestricted and unmediated access to workers	provide unrestricted access to workers during audits (Code A)	Access to workers is visibly unrestricted. However, peer surveillance (through feeders) is often used, workers are coached and trained in advance of audit visits and there are added restrictions for workers during the audits
	allow confidential interviews with workers (Code E)	
	not coach workers on how to respond to queries (Code A)	
	allow workers to share honest account of their experiences (Code D)	