

INTERDISCIPLINARY CLINICAL EDUCATION — ON EMPOWERMENT, WOMEN, AND A UNIQUE CLINICAL MODEL

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Once we kept silent. We wouldn't open our mouth because we didn't know what was coming. Now, that we know what our rights are, we began demanding what's coming to us.
- Alimito (one of the women cleaners)

For the past seven years, the Women's Rights Clinic operating within the Law School of the College of Management in Israel has been engaged in an "assistance project" of the women cleaners working at the campus. This Article presents a discussion of interdisciplinary clinical work and focuses on an empowerment model developed in the Women's Rights Clinic. It argues that clinical work for marginalized populations requires a holistic approach that is not limited to legal work alone, but enables the use of a combination of legal and extra-legal tools. The holistic approach illustrated in the Article emphasizes the importance of integrating into lawyering models skills from the domains of social work and therapy rooted in empowerment theory: developing empathy and listening, giving clients a voice, avoiding paternalism, and using emotional discourse in communication with clients.

INTRODUCTION

Clinical legal work continually enables links to other disciplines. As such, it is fertile ground for use of extra-legal tools and for work that exceeds the narrow boundaries of the law. Clinical work, especially assisting disadvantaged populations, enables the use of extra-legal tools, primarily emotional and therapeutic ones, aimed at understanding the emotional world of clients—their feelings, opinions, and non-legal needs—in order to produce a meaningful change in the lives

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of disadvantaged populations.

For the past seven years, the Women's Rights Clinic operating within the Law School of the College of Management in Israel has been engaged in an "assistance project" of the women cleaners working at the campus. Most of the women are immigrants from Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union. All are mothers. Their age ranges approximately between 23 and 40. They speak Hebrew poorly.

The project differs from customary legal-social work involving contract workers¹ because the clinical work is not primarily in the area of labor law. The employment of contract workers is a complex, multi-dimensional issue. Most of the legal actions undertaken to advance the interests of contract workers belong to labor law. Despite the immense importance of struggles fought in the area of labor law, and their ability to challenge the problematic structure of outsourcing, labor laws and the battlefields on which they operate cannot in themselves promote a comprehensive change and improvement in the lives of disadvantaged populations in the labor market. The labor laws provide only a partial answer, and not a holistic one. Contract workers in Israel (particularly cleaning workers) earn minimum wage, work long hours and are exposed to constant violations of their rights in the labor market. Furthermore, most contract workers are not unionized and have limited access to law. In the case of the women represented by the Women's Rights Clinic, they are immigrants living on the economic and social fringes of Israeli society. They are struggling with barriers of language and low socioeconomic status, exacerbated by origin and gender. This reality requires a holistic assessment of the problem, which is not exhausted within the legal field alone, and requires use of skills borrowed from the therapeutic disciplines, particularly social work.

The Article presents a discussion of interdisciplinary clinical work and focuses on an empowerment model developed in the Women's Rights Clinic. It argues that clinical work for marginalized populations requires a holistic approach that is not limited to legal work alone, but enables the use of a combination of legal and extra-legal tools. A holistic approach does not require crowding out legal actions; traditional legal tools continue to play an important role in effecting change. But the holistic approach illustrated in the article emphasizes the importance of integrating into lawyering models skills from the domains of social work and therapy rooted in empowerment theory: developing empathy and listening, giving clients a voice, avoiding paternalism,

¹ Contract workers are formally employed by a contract firm that supplies labor to an end-user. Here, the contract workers are employed by a firm that provides cleaning services to the university.

and using emotional discourse in communication with clients. The Article charts the clinic's evolving understanding of the needs of the women cleaners in a manner consistent with empowerment theory, thereby illustrating one model of empowerment in clinical education and work. By presenting the model, the article develops an in-depth discussion of interdisciplinary clinical education, and thereby advances a developing trend in legal research in general and in clinical research in particular,² concerning the use of psychological and emotional discourse in law.

An extensive literature deals with empowerment outside of the field of law, and more narrowly, with empowerment within the law, as discussed below. The discussion of empowerment in clinical legal education and in clinical legal work is limited, however. The interdisciplinary aspects of clinical work are not sufficiently developed in the clinical literature. The empowerment model described in this Article and the discussion of holistic clinical education contribute significantly to this discourse by forging connections among various theories—psychological and emotional discourse in general and empowerment in particular, law and society theories, lawyering theories and the discourse dealing with clinical education. The connections between these various disciplines produce important pedagogical and clinical insights for clinical legal education.

The Article proceeds as follows: The first part provides a description of the Women's Rights Clinic and of the contract workers' project the clinic has undertaken over the past several years.³ In this part I describe the origins and development of the project. The second part discusses the phenomenon of cleaning contract workers. In this part, I focus on women, who make up the overwhelming majority of contract workers (both on campus and generally), and on the double oppression they suffer. Although the discussion concerns cleaners in Israel, the characteristics of this minority are similar to those of minority groups in the U.S., especially those of non-white women. In the third part I examine theories of empowerment in the sociological literature and in the legal field. Part III lays the theoretical foundation for the discussion in Part IV. In Part IV I present the empowerment model that was developed through the seven-year clinical project with the contract workers. I discuss the learning process that characterized the project and the way our experience in the project shaped the empowerment model. I show how it is possible to integrate extra-legal discourse with clinical and community work, and I discuss the advantages

² See, e.g., Symposium, *Therapeutic Jurisprudence and Clinical Legal Education and Skills Training*, 17 ST. THOMAS L. REV. 403 (2005).

³ The project began in 2009 and as of this writing is entering its seventh year.

and disadvantages of empowerment tools in community work. I further look at the clinical and pedagogical dilemmas associated with the use of extra-legal tools in clinical work, the difference between empowerment tools and classical legal tools used by key players in the legal world, and the effect of the incorporation of extra-legal approaches on the nature of the clinic. I use empowerment theories as the foundation of the discussion, integrating theories of cause lawyering and interdisciplinary clinical education. The discussion further integrates interviews conducted with some of the women and students participating in the project.⁴ In the Conclusion, I look into the future of the project and examine its strengths and limitations. I address questions having to do with the character of the Women's Rights Clinic as a "macro" clinic for social change and for holistic lawyering, with emphasis on the development and encouragement of skills and qualifications such as empathy,⁵ understanding, and compassion.

I. THE CONTRACT WORKERS' ASSISTANCE PROJECT

In this Part, I describe the origins and development of the Contract Workers' Assistance Project in the Women's Rights Clinic. I first provide background on the context in which clinical legal education is situated in Israel, as some of the characteristics of clinical legal practice in Israel informed the choices that the Women's Rights Clinic has made in structuring the assistance project.

The legal clinics in Israel share several goals. First, the clinics seek to promote access to justice by providing legal counsel and legal aid to members of disadvantaged sectors of the Israeli society. Second, the clinics promote and protect human rights through litigation and legislative initiatives. Third, the clinics promote social change on a range of topics through diverse clinical methods as described below. Fourth, the clinics provide students with an opportunity to gain hands-on

⁴ The use of the interviews in the paper is done with the consent of the workers and the students. Unlike in qualitative research based on a broad sample of interviews, in the present study the interviews do not represent the main body of data but enrich the research and illustrate the process of empowerment, without being the key research tool. I interviewed four workers and two students. All of the worker interviews were conducted with the help and translation services of an Amharic-speaking student who accompanied the workers for three years. The interviews were semi-structured, so that on one hand the workers were asked questions concerning certain topics (such as relations with the contractor, feelings about the meetings and their contributions), and on the other hand, there was ample room to hear thoughts, feelings, and ideas that the workers wanted to voice.

⁵ See Shmuel Bachar, *Empathy and Happiness: A New Look at the Objectives of Legal-Clinical Education*, HAMISHPAT 17 (Dec. 2012) (Hebrew); Laurel E. Fletcher & Harvey M. Weinstein, *When Students Lose Perspective: Clinical Supervision and the Management of Empathy*, 9 CLIN. L. REV. 135 (2002); Ross Hyams, *Nurturing Multiple Intelligences Through Clinical Legal Education*, 15 U. W. SYDNEY L. REV. 80 (2011).

practical experience. Students take part in all parts of the litigation process including interviewing clients, legal correspondence, conducting negotiations, and preparation of affidavits and briefs on behalf of the clinics' clients. Under the clinical instructor's supervision, they take part in writing various applications to courts and closing arguments. In accompanying the case and taking active part in it, the students learn and experience the interaction between lawyers and clients, and the ethical dilemmas and the complex issues that characterize lawyer-client relationships.

In some of the clinics, students take part in the preparation and drafting of proposed legislation. Students also draft legal documents, such as public disclosure requests and comments on bills. Fifth, the clinics serve as a bridge between theory and practice in class discussion, research conducted in the clinics and the application of theoretical and critical insights in the work of the clinic.

Notably, in Israel students in the legal clinics are not allowed to appear in courts. They can join their clinical instructors, who appear in courts on behalf of the clinics' clients, but the students themselves cannot represent the clients in courts. Notwithstanding this feature of the clinical practice in Israel, as noted above, students take active part in the litigation process.

The work done in the clinics is diverse. Some of the clinics focus on litigation in both the lower and higher courts. Some develop projects in the community and do "grassroots lawyering," such as founding groups (for example the Women Rights clinic helped to establish a group of homeless women and provided them with legal and personal assistance) and organizing workshops on legal rights in the community (for example, the Women Rights clinic developed a workshop for battered women in a shelter, which included lectures on rights, access to rights, equality, and other topics related to battered women). Other clinics focus on advocacy by promoting legislation and responding to bills. Still others develop projects aimed at policy change, such as organizing round tables and conferences with key players in the relevant sectors, writing position papers and participating in Parliament committee meetings. Many of the clinics seek to build bodies of knowledge relating to specific topics and use it to promote social and legal change regarding these topics.

In the Women's Rights Clinic, students engage in projects concerning women, law, and social change. Students do legal work in a variety of non-governmental organizations dealing with women and the law. This includes work with victims of sexual abuse, youths at risk, low-wage women workers, and homeless and indigent women, among others.

The clinic rarely serves individual clients, and the bulk of its work focuses on community and grassroots lawyering, promotion of legislation, development of projects such as round tables and conferences aimed at policy change, and writing position papers. As such, it enables students to act for broad legal social change in any area related to women's rights. As part of their work, students conduct large-scale research concerning their topic, which allows them to gain experience in work that is not based strictly on individual legal assistance but on the creation and development of lawyering models for systemic social change. The project working with homeless women exemplifies the clinic's use of different lawyering tools in the clinic. First, the students established a group of homeless women and helped to provide legal and social assistance to the women. They also conducted research that included interviews with the women in order to expose the often hidden gendered features of homelessness. The data generated from the interviews will be presented in a conference on homelessness addressing to non-governmental organizations, social welfare workers, members of Parliament and academics. The project also seeks to promote an amendment in the legislation concerning homeless people to include gender characteristics in its definition. Such multi-dimensional clinical work that combines micro- and macro-legal tools⁶ is meaningful because it advances the students' overall understanding of social justice and develops a systemic view of the social power relations that in many cases serve to preserve power differences and inequality.⁷

The Contract Workers' Assistance Project is an example of clinical work that integrates macro and micro tools. At the micro level, clinic students have provided both individual legal and social assistance to the women workers. At the macro level, the students developed a distinctive model of empowerment that can be replicated with other groups of cleaning women in Israel.⁸ By means of this model, students observe the broad picture of the employment of contract workers in Israel, analyze gender patterns in contract work, and cooperate with organizations dealing with the topic.

Begun in 2009, the assistance project has focused on cleaning women who were present on campus but were almost invisible to

⁶ By the term micro I mean legal counseling to individuals. Macro work refers to policy change projects and other projects concerning systemic clinical work.

⁷ For a discussion of the challenges of systemic versus individual client clinical work, see Katherine R. Kruse, *Biting off What They Can Chew: Strategies for Involving Students in Problem-Solving Beyond Individual Client Representation*, 8 CLIN. L. REV. 405, 433-40 (2002) (introducing a model to cope with the challenges of macro-activity without individual clients).

⁸ This year, the clinical staff seeks to expand this project to women's rights clinics at four universities in Israel.

those surrounding them. The project is characterized by two unique aspects. First, the clinical work is done on campus, with women who work on the campus. In most clinics, the work is done outside the campuses – in the community.⁹ Doing the clinical work on campus has posed challenges concerning the cooperation with the university's management, and potential conflicts of interest for students representing workers against the students' own university. At the same time, working within the campus allowed us to develop a long-standing project that became a source of security and stability for the workers. No less important, the project became a source of pride to the students in the clinic. Second, now entering into its seventh year, this is a long-term project. Due to its length, the lawyering model used has been subject to ongoing development, thereby enabling a longitudinal and multidimensional process of learning and opportunities for the use of a range of legal and non-legal skills.

The challenges faced by contract workers are complex and not easily categorized, and as such, the conceptualization of the project was challenging. The classical model of naming-blaming-claiming, identified by Sarat, Flestiner, and Abel, defines three stages in the development of disputes.¹⁰ First is naming the problem and identifying the harm that was caused (naming). The second stage focuses on placing guilt or liability on the injurer (blaming). The third stage involves demanding the right, that is, seeking to right the wrong (claiming). For decades, this model has served the construction of legal battles. I use this model to describe the process of conceptualization of the problem and the evolvment of the empowerment model.

The contract worker issue has multiple aspects that require intervention: problems with rights in the labor market, poverty, immigration, discrimination, and language, among others. Furthermore, most contract workers are women.¹¹ The gender characteristic is significant given the social, cultural, and economic power differences between

⁹ By the term community, I refer to centers in the community, hostels, shelters, courts, and other sites off campus.

¹⁰ William L.F. Flestiner, Richard L. Abel & Austin Sarat, *The Emergence and Transformation of Disputes: Naming, Blaming, Claiming* 15 *LAW & SOC'Y REV.* 631 (1980).

¹¹ Meirav Michaeli, *The Correct Term is (Female) Contract Workers*, HA'ARETZ, (Jan. 2011), available at <http://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/1.1560759>; Orli Binyamin, *Duality in Relations between State and Women in Israel: The Case of Women Employed Through Employment Agencies in the Public Sector*, 22 *CHEVRA VE'REVACHA* 455, 465-69 (2002) (Hebrew); RONIT NADIV, *EMPLOYMENT THROUGH LABOR CONTRACTORS*, MINISTRY OF LABOR, MANPOWER PLANNING AUTHORITY 4-5, 31 (2000) (Hebrew). The author notes that the percentage of women employed through labor contractors is twice that of men, 65% vs. 35%. See also Dafna Rubinstein, *The Trade in Manpower and Israeli Law: Local Lesson in Global Political Economy within Temporary Facts: Between Globalization and Israel*, THE WOMEN'S LOBBY (2003).

men and women and the unique problems that women face, such as gendered violence, wage disparities, and discrimination in a gendered labor market.¹² Preliminary research done in the clinic indicated that most actions taken to advance the topic of outsourcing of labor belong to the domain of labor law. Activities included attempts to organize workers as well as actions against the employer (the contractor) and against the institution where contract workers work.¹³

The fact that students cannot appear in courts, the fact that my area of specialty is criminal law and not labor law, along with my vision to develop a unique model that would combine legal and non-legal approaches, affected the conceptualization of the project. I wanted the students to develop an advocacy model that would reflect the workers' needs and wishes. Legal battles in courts, which the student would not even be able to lead and represent, seemed an anecdotal solution to a complex phenomenon. Moreover, a significant component was missing: the voice of the workers themselves. What do they want? How do they feel? What are their needs? Therefore, initially the objectives of the project were to provide a place for the workers to voice their opinions, express their needs and wishes, and be heard. The students also held sessions featuring lectures on legal rights, which offered an opportunity for dialogue with the workers and allowed the students to start getting to know the workers. The lectures also reflected our goal to make law and legal rights more accessible to the workers, who did not know what their rights are.

According to the literature dealing with empowerment, giving voice, listening and making rights accessible are empowering tools.¹⁴ But as shown in Part III, empowerment is a broad, subjective and abstract concept which allows a variety of interpretations and meanings.¹⁵ Indeed, in the long course of the multi-year assistance project, the term "empowerment" acquired various meanings. As will be elaborated in Part IV, in the first year, the empowerment model focused

¹² Dafna Izraeli, *Genderization of Labor*, in *SEX GENDER POLITICS* 167 (Dafna Izraeli et al., eds., 1999) (Hebrew); Jacqueline Scott et al., *Introduction: changing lives and new challenges*, in *WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT: CHANGING LIVES AND NEW CHALLENGES* 1 (Jacqueline Scott, Shirley Dex & Heather Joshi, eds., 2008); SUSAN HALFORD & PAULINE LEONARD, *NEGOTIATING GENDERED IDENTITIES AT WORK: PLACE, SPACE AND TIME* (2006).

¹³ Richard Johnstone, Claire Mayhew & Michael Quinlan, *Outsourcing Risk? The regulation of Occupational Health and Safety Where Subcontractors are Employed*, 22 *COMP. LAB. L. & POL'Y J.* 351-94, 386-89 (2000).

¹⁴ See *infra* notes 46-72 and accompanying text.

¹⁵ For a discussion of the complexity of the concept and of the fact that its objectives are not always clear, see Margaret M. Barry, A. Rachel Camp, Margaret E. Johnson, Catherine F. Klein & Lisa V. Martin, *Teaching Social Justice Lawyering: Systematically including Community Legal Education in Law School Clinics*, 18 *CLIN. L. REV.* 405 (2012).

on access to legal rights and providing the workers a place where they could voice their thoughts. The workers participated in regular sessions in which the students gave lectures on legal rights. In each meeting, we sought to create a dialogue with the workers, encouraging them to tell us what issues they wanted to learn about and to discuss with us their work conditions, feelings and thoughts. In the second year, the “naming” of empowerment changed. At this stage, on top of the regular meetings, the clinic started providing individual legal assistance to the workers, particularly in the area of labor rights. Many workers began to share with the students and me more details regarding the reality of their lives, the poverty, the difficult conditions at work and the manifestations of racism they experienced. In the third year, the project focused on legal assistance in the area of labor law and on the exercise of rights in this domain. In parallel, the clinic conducted a Hebrew language instruction project for the workers. In the fourth year, the project involved legal assistance in various legal areas such as, consumerism, debt law and labor rights. The students assisted in writing letters to public sector officials and employers regarding violation of rights. During these years, we continued with regular meeting that dealt with various topics such as equality, activism, access to law, and how to reading a salary slip. In the fifth, sixth and seventh years, we focused on personal mentoring. With the assistance of a social worker coach, the meetings addressed the workers’ dreams for the future, endeavors, hopes, couplehood, motherhood, and life skills. At this stage, empowerment took on a different meaning, dealing not only with legal rights and legal assistance but also with the acquisition of tools for personal development. The project also focused on promoting a sense of belonging to the group by means of joint social activities, for example, through the organization of an Ethiopian culture day. The students also organized a half-day trip outside the campus in order to develop the social solidarity of the workers and to provide them with a break from their difficult everyday lives. The emotional discourse and skills derived from the discipline of social work were key tools in these last three years.

The above account illustrates the complexity of the process of “naming” or conceptualizing the clinical project; As will be elaborated in Part IV, over the seven years of the project, the students have gone through a learning process in which they (and I) have come to embrace an advocacy approach that is consistent with the insights of an empowerment model. The content attributed to the concept of empowerment has changed each year, and with it, the understanding of what is the empowerment we are trying to achieve. The trial and error that was involved in the process, the learning that was done along the

way, and the way in which those learnings were applied so as to modify our practice, generated new pedagogical and lawyering questions and dilemmas. The discussion of these challenges contributes to our understanding of clinical education and cause lawyering and enriches the literature on clinical legal education.

Unlike the complexity of the conceptualization stage (naming), the stage dealing with the imposition of liability on the injurer (blaming) was clear: the contractor who provided services to the college and the college itself are responsible for the situation of the workers was. As a direct employer, the contractor is responsible for safeguarding the workers' rights, enforcing the labor laws, and treating the workers properly. In time, our understanding of responsibility was expanded to the second tier: the college. Although the college does not directly employ the workers, they work within its boundaries.¹⁶

The third stage of the model, that of demanding one's rights and righting the wrong (claiming), deals with the measures and actions taken to remedy the injury and change the situation of the workers for the better. Consistent with this stage, our actions included giving voice, providing access to law and rights, providing legal assistance in the area of labor laws, nurturing personal development, and providing social guidance, as described in Part IV.

II. CONTRACT WORKERS: GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

They play with us because most of us are Ethiopian and none of us have a mouth. They exploit us. . .

-Zaman (one of the workers)

This Part describes the situation of female contract workers in Israel and their gender-related characteristics.¹⁷ Indirect employment, through contractors, is a global phenomenon, as is the exploitation that so frequently arises in it. Contract workers are weak employees worldwide.¹⁸ An extensive literature deals with women in the labor

¹⁶ In the course of the assistance project, the Act to Improve the Enforcement of Labor Laws came into effect, which imposes on the secondary employer (the college in our case) secondary responsibility for the enforcement of the rights of workers employed by contract firms (service providers).

¹⁷ Although the present discussion concerns mostly Israel, it is relevant regarding other Western countries.

¹⁸ Janine Webster, *Supply Chain Accountability: How Far Does Responsibility Extend? Recent Enforcement Outcome in the Trolley Collection Industry*, 42 *LAW SOC. NEW S. WALES J.* 22 (2015); Hugh Collins, *Independent Contractors and the Challenge of Vertical Disintegration to Employment Protection Laws*, 10 *OXFORD J. LEGAL STUD.* 353(1990); Arne L. Kalleberg, *Nonstandard Employment Relations: Part-time, Temporary and Contract Work*, 26 *ANN. REV. SOC.* 341(2000); Katherine Stone, *Flexibilization, Globalization and Privatization: Three Challenges to Labor Rights in Our Time*, 44 *OSGOODE HALL L.J.* 77 (2006).

market: their low status, discrimination, and inequality.¹⁹ In Israel, women are inferior to men in the labor market, as manifest in several parameters: wage differences,²⁰ barriers to advancement,²¹ high participation rate in professions that are characterized by low prestige and low pay, high representation of women in abusive patterns of employment,²² and discrimination at work.

Many studies address problems associated with immigration in general, and in particular with immigrants in Israel from Ethiopia, and the difficulties the immigrants encounter in their absorption.²³ An in-

¹⁹ Noya Rimalt, *Between Segregation and Integration: A Call for Renewed Feminist Thinking about Equality and Gender in the Labor Market*, 24 MECHKAREI MISHPAT 299 (Hebrew); NOYA RIMALT, LEGAL FEMINISM FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: THE STRUGGLE FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES 161 (2010) (Hebrew). See also HALFORD & LEONARD, *supra* note 12. In the U.S., in 2013, women's earnings were 82% those of men's; 26% of employed women worked part-time. By comparison, 13% of employed men worked part-time. See U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, BLS Reports No. 1052, *Women in the Labor Force: A Databook* (Dec. 2014), available at <http://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/cps/women-in-the-labor-force-a-databook-2014.pdf>. For a discussion of discrimination and inequality in the U.S. labor market, see Kristin Housh, *Different but Equal? Inequalities in the Workplace, the Nature-Based Narrative, and the Title VII Prohibition on the Masculinization of the "Ideal Worker"* 17 TEX. J. C.L. & C.R. 117 (2011) (arguing that wage differences, occupational segregation, and the exclusion of women in the labor market are the results of stereotypical social and cultural attitudes toward women, backed up by "scientific truth" regarding biological differences between men and women). For a comparative analysis of occupational segregation between men and women and its problematic consequences for women in several countries, see MARIA CHARLES & DAVID B. GRUSKY, OCCUPATIONAL GHETTOS: THE WORLDWIDE SEGREGATION OF WOMEN AND MEN (2004).

²⁰ Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2012, the average monthly income of salaried male employees was New Israeli Shekel (NIS) 9,720, compared to NIS 6,386 for women. The average hourly wage for salaried men was NIS 51.4, as opposed to NIS 43 for women.

²¹ The phenomenon is commonly referred to as the glass ceiling. See David A. Cotter et al., *The Glass Ceiling Effect*, 80 SOC. FORCES 655 (2001); Jerlando F. L. Jackson, Elizabeth M. O'Callaghan & Ryan P. Adserias, *Approximating Glass Ceiling Effects Using Cross-Sectional Data*, 159 NEW DIR. INST'L. RES. 37 (2014).

²² Emily Grabham & Jenny Smith, *From Social Security to Individual Responsibility (Part Two): Writing Off Poor Women's Work in the Welfare Reform Act 2009*, 32 J. SOC. WELFARE & FAM. L. 81 (2010); Einat Albin, *Income Protection Laws and Their Consequences for the Rights of Poor Women to Equality on the Labor Market*, 11 LABOR, SOC'Y & L. 155 (2005) (Hebrew); Sarit Sambol & Orly Benjamin, *Structural and Gender Fragmentation of Women's Labor History: The Reduction in the Structure of Opportunity for Poor Women Workers*, 9 ISRAELI SOC. 1 (2008) (Hebrew); Natalie Baruch & Sefa Yunes, *Arab Women and Oriental Women in the Labor Market: A Chronicle of Poverty Known in Advance*, 24 CHALLENGE 34 (2008) (Hebrew).

²³ Esther Levinson, *Joining the Labor Market: Formative Evaluation Research of the "Open Door" Program*, 99 ECHO NEW SCH. TEACHING HEBREW LANG. & CULT. 69 (2012) (Hebrew); Chen Lifshitz, *Ethiopian Immigrants Graduates of the "Youth Project": Summary of Research Findings*, 74 NEW SCH. TEACHING HEBREW LANG. & CULT. 47 (1997) (Hebrew); Adi Maane, Adma Or & Yossi Maane, *Who Is a Well-Integrated Immigrant in Israel? Representations of Successful Integration of Immigrants in the Opinion of Adolescents Originating from Ethiopia, the CIS, and Members of the Absorbing Groups*, 45

depth discussion of these topics is beyond the scope of the present article. Nevertheless, the problems and barriers that women and Ethiopians in general encounter in the labor market become more pronounced when they concern women immigrants from Ethiopia. These women, similar to non-white women in the U.S., experience a double inferiority and oppression because of their gender and their ethnic background.²⁴

Since the 1980s, and more intensively since the 1990s, the Israeli labor market has adopted new employment patterns.²⁵ Unlike the two-way relationship that characterizes traditional employee-employer relations, the new patterns of employment blur or sever entirely the legal link between the workers and the entity that enjoys the fruit of their labors.²⁶ Among these types of employment, we find outsourcing to “service providers.” This is an indirect employment – a three-way form of employment in which the employee works for an entity referred to as the end-user or the using entity (in our case, the college); the worker, however, is not employed by the end-user but by a contract firm, which supplies the service (the contractor). This pattern of indirect employment, whereby personnel services are sold to the end-user, historically was not regulated by Israeli law.²⁷ Once the

TRENDS: BEHAVIORAL SCI. J. 637 (2008) (Hebrew).

²⁴ Kimberle Crenshaw introduced the theory of intersectionality in her seminal writing in the 1980s and 1990s. See Kimberle Crenshaw, *Mapping The Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics And Violence Against Women Of Color*, 43 STAN. L. REV. 1241 (1991); Kimberle Crenshaw, *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics*, 1989 U. CHI LEGAL F. 139 (1989). The literature on intersectionality in the lives of women is vast. For selected examples see Patricia Hill Collins, *Gender, Black Feminism, and Black Political Economy*, 568 ANN. AM. ACAD. POL. & SOC. SCI. 41 (2000); Irene Browne & Joya Misra, *The Intersection of Gender and Race in the Labor Market*, 29 ANN. REV. SOC. 487 (2003); Janis V. Sanchez-Hucles & Donald D. Davis, *Women and Women of Color in Leadership: Complexity, Identity and Intersectionality*, 65 AM. PSYCHOL. 171 (2010); Elizabeth Hirsh & Christopher J. Lyons, *Perceiving Discrimination on the Job: Legal Consciousness, Workplace Context and the Construction of Race Discrimination*, 44 LAW & SOC'Y REV. 269 (2010); Karen Jones, *Intersectionality and Ameliorative Analyses of Race and Gender*, 171 PHIL. STUD. 99 (2014).

²⁵ For a detailed discussion of the changes in the cleaning sector in Israel, see Guy Davidov, *Special Protection For Cleaners: A Case Of Justified Selectivity?* 36 COMP. LAB. L. & POL'Y J. 219 (2015)

²⁶ Avishai Benish & Roi Tzarfati, *When Labor Becomes a Commodity Again: A Critical Examination of Abnormally Low Bids in the Procurement of Employment Services*, 1 MAASEI MISHPAT 93, 96 (2008) (Hebrew); Sharon Rabin-Margalit, *Service Companies, Procurers of Services, and Especially What Takes Place between Them: About the Status and Enforcement of the Rights of Employees of Service Companies*, 25 LEGAL STUD. 525 (2009) (Hebrew).

²⁷ In 2011, the Act to Improve the Enforcement of Labor Laws was passed, and it became effective in June 2012. Among others, the new law imposes responsibility on the end-user as well, not only on the cleaning contract firm, for wage violations and injury to employees. It is secondary responsibility, however.

legal link between the procurer of services and the worker is severed, the stage is set for significant violations and harm to workers whose services the contract firm is selling.²⁸

Contract workers represent 5-10% of employees in Israel,²⁹ and make up most workers employed in sanitation, security, and caregiving. Most contract workers are immigrants. Among immigrants from Ethiopia, compared to other immigrants, there is a relatively high rate of “unskilled” workers (an alternative term for contract workers and caregivers).³⁰

Women are more likely than men to be employed in harmful patterns of employment, for example, through contract firms. The proportion of women employed in work of this type is 1.5 times higher than that of men, and they are employed in this form for longer periods of time than men are.³¹ As noted above, one of the characteristics of a gendered labor market is gender segregation, which is manifest in predominantly “feminine” professions such as cleaning, caregiving, nursing and education. This type of segregation is more prominent in instances of privatization. The privatization that characterizes the labor market today has resulted in a weakening of women in low-pay, non-professional, temporary, and part-time positions.³² Gender is joined by the ethnic origin of the women, and together they increase the harm that these women suffer in the labor market. In turn, these characteristics are joined by barriers of language and low socioeconomic status. As a result, there is a large group of poor workers, exposed to significant harm in a labor market that has an abusive structure.

Recognizing the gender characteristics of cleaning workers is im-

²⁸ MICHAL TAGAR, *WORK WITHOUT HONOR: WORKER'S RIGHTS AND THEIR VIOLATION*, ASS'N CIV. RTS. IN ISRAEL 43 (2006) (Hebrew); Sarah Halperin, *The Work Experience of Cleaning Women Working through Service Contractors, and Their Opinions about the Arrangements of Their Employment* (2010) (unpublished Master's thesis, Hebrew University) (Hebrew); AVIA SPIVAK & MEIR AMIR, *INDIRECT EMPLOYMENT OF SANITATION WORKERS ON THE CAMPUSES OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN ISRAEL: ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND PROPOSAL FOR A NEW POLICY* 8-11 (2011) (Hebrew).

²⁹ There is no accurate body of data regarding the number of contract workers in Israel. According to the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2010, there were 79,800 employees in the sectors of guarding, security, and sanitation. See http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications11/1460/pdf/t02_01.pdf (Hebrew).

³⁰ URI PENSIRER, *EMPLOYMENT OF IMMIGRANTS, CONTRACT WORKERS, AND SERVICE PROVIDERS*, KNESSET RES. & INFO. CTR. 7-9 (Feb. 2011) (Hebrew), available at www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/data/pdf/m02784.pdf.

³¹ TAGAR, *supra* note 28, at 34-35; NADIV, *supra* note 11, at 31.

³² Orly Benjamin, *Gender Outcomes of Labor Market Policy in Israel*, 30 *EQUAL DIVERSITY & INCLUSION* 394, 395-97 (2011). Benjamin presents Israel as an example of the manner in which privatization and centralization have fragmented the labor force, especially workers in non-professional jobs, who are exposed to harm in the labor market.

portant because women face difficulties and complexities that men usually do not have to cope with, such as sexual harassment at work, discrimination, and the fact that they usually act as the main providers of care for their children.³³ These characteristics have been apparent in the course of the assistance project.

III. EMPOWERMENT

This Part examines various theories of empowerment in the legal and extra-legal discourse. I begin with an overview of theories of empowerment and the various meanings of the term in sociological scholarship, with a focus on social work. Next, I present the manner in which theories of empowerment are manifest in the legal arena. The theoretical review serves as a platform for the subsequent discussion in Parts V and VI, which describe in detail the pedagogical and clinical aspects of the project and discuss the connection between theories of empowerment, clinical education and clinical work.

A. *Empowerment in the Extra-Legal Discourse*

“The process of empowerment means transitioning from a situation of helplessness to one of greater control over life, fate, and the environment.”³⁴ In the social science literature on empowerment, it is conceptualized as a positive change in the life of the individual. What is this change? Is a change in consciousness sufficient to constitute empowerment? Is social change action a measure of empowerment? Is empowerment a personal or a group process? How can we quantify and measure empowerment? I attempt to answer these questions below.

Thinking about the term empowerment raises a variety of associations: power, strength, change of consciousness, critical attitude, visibility, self-motivation, the ability to change, solidarity, community spirit, and sense of belonging, among others. Indeed, the literature provides a variety of interpretations and theories of empowerment,

³³ For a discussion of the gendered character of the category of poor workers, see Sambol & Benjamin, *supra* note 22. See also Michal Kromer-Nevo, From Penelope to Miri: *The Feminist Paradigm and Women in Economic and Social Deprivation*, 22 CHEVRA U'REVACHA 433 (2002) (Hebrew).

³⁴ ELISHEVA SADAN, EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF HUMAN SOCIAL SOLUTIONS 11 (1997) (Hebrew) (hereinafter SADAN, EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING). In her definition of empowerment, Sadan distinguishes three dimensions: personal, social, and organizational: “The process aims to change three dimensions of social situation: to cause a change in people’s sense and capabilities; in the life of the collective to which they belong; and in the professional work that is mixed in.” *Id.* at 4.

situated in extra-legal fields of research such as sociology,³⁵ social work,³⁶ education,³⁷ criminology,³⁸ psychology,³⁹ gender studies,⁴⁰ and political science⁴¹ as well as in the field of law.⁴² Review of the extensive writing on this topic reveals that there is no single definition of the term “empowerment” or conceptual unity with regard to its interpretation. The following well exemplifies this idea: “Everyone is for it [empowerment], but rarely do people mean the same thing by it.”⁴³

The concept of empowerment was developed primarily in the field of social work in the 1960s and 1970s. In the sociological literature, empowerment in its classical sense is conceptualized as giving power to oppressed groups.⁴⁴ Barbara Solomon defined this concept as a process in the course of which people who belong to an oppressed social category obtain tools that enable them to grow and to develop skills and capabilities to influence their social function and position. She argued that a process of empowerment enables oppressed groups

³⁵ Chau-Kiu Cheung, Lo T. Wing & Suk-Ching Liu, *Measuring Volunteering Empowerment and Competence in Shanghai*, 36 ADMIN. IN SOC. WORK 149 (2012); see also Peter C. Scales, Peter L. Benson, & Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, *Adolescent Thriving: The Role of Sparks, Relationships, and Empowerment*, 40 J. YOUTH & ADOLESCENCE 263 (2011).

³⁶ The social work literature on empowerment is particularly abundant. For examples, see Mekada Graham, *Empowerment Revisited – Social Work, Resistance and Agency in Black Communities*, 7 EUR. J. SOC. WORK 43, 46 (2004); Gilbert J. Greene et al., *The Languages of Empowerment and Strengths in Clinical Social Work: A Constructivist Perspective*, 86 FAM. SOC'Y 267 (2005).

³⁷ Len Cairns, “*I Got the Power*”: *Teacher Educators, Teachers and Empowerment* (1994), available at: www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED376156.pdf. See also Michael Vavrus, *Alienation as the Conceptual Foundation for Incorporating Teacher Empowerment into the Teacher Education Knowledge Base* (1992), available at: www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED344851.pdf.

³⁸ Shoshana Pollack, *Reconceptualizing Women's Agency and Empowerment: Challenges to Self-Esteem Discourse and Women's Lawbreaking*, 12 WOM. & CRIM. JUST. 75 (2000).

³⁹ Douglas D. Perkins & Marc A. Zimmerman, *Empowerment Theory, Research and Application*, 23 AM. J. COMMUNITY PSYCHOL. 569, 571–572 (1995); Marc A. Zimmerman, *Psychological Empowerment: Issues and Illustrations*, 23 AM. J. COMMUNITY PSYCHOL. 581 (1995).

⁴⁰ Marilynne Bell & Janet Mosher, *(Re)fashioning Medicine's Response to Wife Abuse*, in *THE POLITICS OF WOMEN'S HEALTH: EXPLORING AGENCY AND AUTONOMY* 205 (Susan Sherwin, ed., 1998).

⁴¹ Nick Bailey & Madeleine Pill, *Can The State Empower Communities Through Localism? An Evaluation of Recent Approaches to Neighborhood Governance in England*, 33 ENVIRON. & PLANN. C: GOV'T & POL'Y 289 (2015).

⁴² For a discussion of empowerment in the legal discourse, see *infra* notes 69 to 80 and accompanying text.

⁴³ Iris M. Young, *Punishment, Treatment, Empowerment: Three Approaches to Policy for Pregnant Addicts*, 20 FEMINIST STUD. 33 (1994).

⁴⁴ BARBARA B. SOLOMON, *BLACK EMPOWERMENT: SOCIAL WORK IN OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES* (1976). See also Jane E. Schukoske & Mizanur Rahman, *Empowerment of Community Members through Grass-Roots Organization: What Roles for Lawyers?*, in *HUMAN RIGHTS & EMPOWERMENT* 102 (Mizanur Rahman, ed., 2001).

to overcome their sense of oppression and inferiority that the hegemonic society has created.⁴⁵ Julian Rappaport defined empowerment similarly, as the creation of space for oppressed and excluded groups, where they can voice their opinions, be conscious of the reality in which they live, and influence their decisions and activities.⁴⁶

The literature focuses on two dimensions of empowerment: the personal and the social.⁴⁷ Personal empowerment is defined as a process taking place between individuals and the group in the course of which individuals build confidence and trust in their ability to make decisions and exert influence, develop a critical sense toward the social, political, and economic reality in which they live, and are able to act accordingly.⁴⁸ The goal of personal empowerment is to enable individuals to expand their resources and use them for the purpose of achieving power and control over their lives, to define and shape the reality of their lives, and to act to realize their goals.⁴⁹ An important aspect of personal empowerment is a focus on the strengths of individuals, which makes possible growth and a change from a situation of helplessness and oppression to one of strength and control.⁵⁰ Personal empowerment focuses on psychological aspects and on individual processes that people undergo, in the course of which they gain strength and acquire the skills and tools that enable them to improve their lives. Individual empowerment helps individuals seek meaning in a personal sense. This search can also create a desire for social and systemic change. Thus, personal empowerment facilitates successful

⁴⁵ For the sake of accuracy, here is her definition verbatim: “a process whereby persons who belong to a stigmatized social category throughout their lives can be assisted to develop and increase skills in the exercise of interpersonal influence and the performance of valued social roles.” SOLOMON, *supra* note 44, at 6.

⁴⁶ Joan Rappaport, *Terms of Empowerment/Exemplars of Prevention: Toward a Theory for Community Psychology*, 15 AM. J. COMMUNITY PSYCHOL. 121 (1987). Saleebey defined this accurately by emphasizing the elements of power in the people. According to him, empowerment is “[r]eturning power to the people and discovering the power within the people.” DENNIS SALEEBEY, *THE STRENGTHS PERSPECTIVE IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE* (1992). See also Spencer Rand, *Teaching Law Students to Practice Social Justice: An Interdisciplinary Search for Help Through Social Work’s Empowerment Approach*, 13 CLIN. L. REV. 459, 464 (2006).

⁴⁷ Colette Browne, *Empowerment in Social Work Practice with Older Women* 40 SOC. WORK 358 (1995). See also Dafna Rubinstein, Orly Benjamin, & Eran Golan, *Political Empowerment of Poor Workers in the Shadow of the Tenders Culture*, in LAW, SOCIETY AND CULTURE: EMPOWERMENT ON TRIAL 159, 160-161 (2008) (Hebrew).

⁴⁸ SADAN, EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING, *supra* note 34, at 50-51.

⁴⁹ See Greene et al., *supra* note 36.

⁵⁰ A focus on strengths is one of the key points in the positivist psychological stream. See, for example, POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: THE SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL EXPLORATIONS OF HUMAN STRENGTHS (C.R. Snyder & Shane J. Lopez eds., 2007); STEVE R. BAUMGARDNER & MARIE K. CROTHERS, POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY (2007); BEN ZION COHEN & ELI BUCHBINDER, FROM POTENTIAL TO ACTUAL: THE POWERS APPROACH IN SOCIAL WORK (2005) (Hebrew).

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community empowerment, as described below.

In its social sense, empowerment is directed at the power relations in society. Its objectives are to create comprehensive social change and to challenge the existing power differences between various groups. This empowerment, also referred to as community empowerment, helps group members develop awareness of the reality of oppression in which they live, increase their influence over the processes that shape them as a community, and act for structural social change as a group.⁵¹ Empowerment in this sense emphasizes two important elements: the group as an empowering framework, and the structures of social, cultural, and economic power that serve as barriers blocking the way of the group that is socially discriminated against and excluded.⁵² This aspect of empowerment is of great importance because it seeks systemic change by focusing on context.⁵³ This type of empowerment, which I call contextual empowerment, serves as a central motif in the field of law and social change in general and of clinical legal education and work done in the legal clinics in particular because it is aimed at redistributing social power and correcting power differentials.

Having presented the general principles of the theory of empowerment, I turn now to the manner in which empowerment is conceptualized in social work. This knowledge base can enrich the work of clinics because there are many points of contact between social work and legal clinics. Both social workers and law students in clinics can act as agents of social change in the community by helping oppressed populations and giving them tools to realize their rights. Moreover, the problems they cope with are similar: racism, family violence, and issues of health, housing, and welfare in general.

The empowerment approach in social work discourse is based on the concept of social justice. According to this approach, seeking social justice means narrowing the power differences between oneself and one's clients (the oppressed individuals), between oneself and the community in which one lives, and between oneself and the state.⁵⁴

Several key principles serve to connect the empowerment and so-

⁵¹ SADAN, EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING, *supra* note 34, at 70-72.

⁵² Paul W. Speer, *Intrapersonal and Interactional Empowerment: Implications for Theory*, 28 J. COMMUNITY PSYCHOL. 51-54 (2000). Muhamad Haj-Yehie & Elisheva Sadan, *Battered Women in Collectivist Societies: Intervention and Empowerment*, 27 CHEVRA VE'REVACHA, 423, 437 (Hebrew). Haj-Yehie and Sadan stress the concept of intersectionality and how it shapes the experience of certain groups. An understanding of these phenomena enables a group process of empowerment that meets the unique needs of the empowered group.

⁵³ SADAN, EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING, *supra*, note 34, at 76-77.

⁵⁴ Rand, *supra* note 46, at 488.

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cial justice narratives: a focus on the ability of the individual to act for herself; giving the individual the possibility to define her needs from her own perspective by voicing her opinion; emphasizing the importance of group solidarity in the process of empowerment; and a systemic view of assistance to the oppressed individual, which is manifest in the linkage between the difficulties of the empowered group and the general context within the framework of which these difficulties arose.⁵⁵

In order to address the problems of those accessing clinical legal counselling in the best possible way, it is not enough to concentrate strictly on the individual client. A broad view of the system of social power relations is important in clinical education because it enables students to assess the responsibility that society and the state bear for certain issues, and as such not to blame individuals for their situation. Identification of social power relations enables students to initiate a comprehensive and deep change that would eventually affect other populations as well. The context is therefore meaningful, and it is a key tool in the process of empowerment of the individual because it reflects the social, economic, and cultural power relations between the group that is the object of empowerment and the hegemonic society.

Nevertheless, traditionally, law sought to distance itself from contextual analysis of situations, and to focus on the narrow legal problem it faces, dismissing the overall picture as irrelevant to the legal problem it is required to solve.⁵⁶ The evolution of the project and the development of an empowerment model therefore distances us from the arena of classical law, and challenges the limitations of the law in bringing about social change.⁵⁷ I will return to this theme in further detail in Part IV.

A key principle in the empowerment approach within social work is that the power relations must be identified and understood from the point of view of the oppressed group. Observing the problem from the

⁵⁵ *Id.* at 484-86.

⁵⁶ This approach appears in a particularly pure form in the field of criminal law, which focuses on the subjective criminal intent of the defendant (*mens rea*) in order to assess the extent of her guilt. But in other areas of law as well, legal analysis is limited to the claim that is the object of the case, and it does not usually take into consideration the social, economic, and cultural context. Menachem Mautner addressed this convention of the law, which dismisses many components of the human story for being irrelevant, as one of the characteristics of “thin legal thinking.” MENACHEM MAUTNER, *LAW & CULTURE* 220, 231-32 (2008) (Hebrew).

⁵⁷ GERALD N. ROSENBERG, *THE HOLLOW HOPE: CAN COURTS BRING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE?* (1991); Ruth Gavison, *The Hollow Hope: Can the Courts Bring About Social Change? Critique of the Second Edition (2008) of Gerald Rosenberg’s Book*, 2 *MAASEI MISHPAT* 15 (2009) (Hebrew); Marc Galanter, *Why the “Haves” Come Out Ahead: Speculations on the Limits of Legal Change*, 9 *LAW & SOC’Y REV.* 95 (1974).

outside precludes its proper understanding because it is based on a partial point of view. In most cases, such observation represents a monolithic social worldview that identifies with the hegemonic majority (characterized as white, male, heterosexual, of average socioeconomic status or higher, and in our case, certainly not with immigrant, poor, dark-skinned, Ethiopian women). Thus, an outside perspective is liable to undermine the possibility of finding an optimal solution.

Client-centered lawyering reflects the centrality and importance of the client's voice. Introduced by David Binder and Susan Price in the late 70s in a groundbreaking textbook,⁵⁸ the client-centered approach emerged as the leading model of client counseling and representation in clinical legal education.⁵⁹ In its "classical" form, the client-centered approach seeks to enhance the involvement of the client in the representation and to minimize lawyer influence on client decision-making. Throughout the years, this model has evolved to encompass a range of approaches. Taken together they "define a richly elaborated philosophy of lawyering that strives at once to be client-directed, holistic, respectful of client narrative, client-empowering, and partisan."⁶⁰

Katherine Kruse developed a taxonomy of five approaches to client-centered lawyering. All share the enhancement of the client autonomy.⁶¹ Three of the approaches are particularly relevant to the discussion presented in this Article as they are reflected in the work of the Contract Workers' Assistance Project. The "Narrative Integrity Approach" places the client at the center of the representation and emphasizes the narrative of the client, her voice, perspective and perception. The "Client-Empowerment Approach" focuses on the mobility of marginalized populations to self-sufficiency and self-actualization. The "holistic approach" perceives the client as a whole person who experiences legal and non-legal problems. The holistic approach sees the legal problems of the client as part of a broader narrative consisting of a range of non-legal problems. Holistic lawyering uses non-legal strategies on top of the legal tools, and "a lawyer operating under a Holistic Approach will seek to work outside and around the law to achieve the client's goals by non-legal means."⁶² These models of client-centered lawyering, the empowerment theory and the model of community lawyering share common features such as the

⁵⁸ DAVID A. BINDER & SUSAN C. PRICE, *LEGAL INTERVIEWING AND COUNSELING: A CLIENT-CENTERED APPROACH* (1977).

⁵⁹ Katherine R. Kruse, *Fortress in the Sand: The Plural Values of Client-Centered Representation*, 12 CLIN. L. REV. 369 (2006).

⁶⁰ *Id.* at 372.

⁶¹ *Id.* at 419-26.

⁶² *Id.* at 421.

centrality of the client, the importance of the client's narrative and voice and the use of holistic analysis of the client's situation.

Giving voice is a central motif of critical theories of law that seek to challenge the uniform voice of the law as suppressing and concealing others.⁶³ In our case, the empowerment approach demands that the empowering agent (the students and faculty) be part of the community it seeks to empower, to listen to its members, and let them voice their opinion without imposing on them the definition of the problem or the solution to it. Strength is therefore derived from the people and not only from the clinical staff.⁶⁴ As I show in detail in Part IV, providing an outlet for the women's voices was a key element in the course of the project. As part of the effort to diminish any sense of superiority by the students, and in order to shape the project based on the women's perspectives, listening to the women and hearing their narrative was a central element. At the same time, letting the women's voices be heard was and remains a complex process. It took the workers a long time to express their opinions and feelings. Only after more than a year did the workers begin to say what interested them and what their needs were. Only then did they muster the courage to voice their opinions.

Despite the importance of voice to the empowerment of individuals in general and of oppressed individuals in particular as I have argued, some have been critical of the focus on client voice. In an article dealing with the construction of "othering" of poor people, the authors explain how treating the motif of voice as central to the empowerment of poor people and as vital to their social positioning is liable to miss the point by strengthening their "othering" rather than weakening it. The authors argue that in itself voice is liable to serve as an echo of the dominant narrative in society, so that the voices of the poor at times replicate the hegemonic voice.⁶⁵ According to this argu-

⁶³ For example, feminist theories have pointed out the exclusion of the voices and life experiences of women from the general discourse, and in particular, from legal discourse. Carol Gilligan's theory of cultural (relational or difference) feminism provides one well-known approach to voice and voicing opinions. See CAROL GILLIGAN, IN A DIFFERENT VOICE: PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT (1993). Other critical theories focus on the exclusion and marginalization of the voices of various groups because of their ethnic origin or race. See, for example, Richard Delgado, *When a Story is just a Story: Does Voice Really Matter?*, 76 VA. L. REV. 95 (1990); Carrie Menkel-Meadow, *Excluded Voice: New Voice in the Legal Profession Making New Voice in the Law*, 42 U. MIAMI L. REV. 29 (1987); Sharon Angella Allard, *Rethinking Battered Woman Syndrome: A Black Feminist Perspective*, 1 UCLA WOM. L. J. 191-207 (1987). For a discussion of the importance of voice in cause lawyering, poverty lawyering and clinical practice see Anthony V. Alfieri, *Reconstructive Poverty Law Practice: Learning Lessons of Client Narrative* 100 YALE L. J. 2107 (1990-1991).

⁶⁴ Rand, *supra* note 46, at 489.

⁶⁵ Michal Krumer-Nevo & Orly Benjamin, *Critical Poverty Knowledge: Contesting*

ment, for voice to become a significant tool of empowerment and a tool in the struggle to abolish “othering,” it is necessary to take into account the influence of social constructions and of stereotypes. Contextual analysis of voice can serve to make it into an empowering tool that helps integrate rather than differentiate.⁶⁶

Observation from within the community and through its eyes is particularly important when the community is features characteristics that differ from those of the hegemonic society. In this context, empowerment is even more complex because it must take into consideration the unique characteristics of the community, which may shape differently the empowerment tools and the approach that must be followed in the empowerment of the group.⁶⁷

In our case, most of the workers are immigrants belonging to the Ethiopian community. Their socioeconomic status is low and some of them do not speak the language of the country at all. These differences play an important role in the construction of the workers’ “otherness”. The sociological literature discusses the construction of oppressive “othering” as a tool of the hegemonic group used to underline the inferiority of the other. This construction makes it possible for stereotypes based on gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status to develop and take root. These stereotypes serve to justify treating others, who are naturally different, as inferior, and help preserve the existing power relations between the hegemonic group and the oppressed one.⁶⁸ This point is important in the development of the empowerment model, as I show in Part IV.

B. Empowerment in Legal Discourse

The domain of the law is so pure a product of tradition and hegemony that even posing the question of empowerment within its

Othering and Social Distancing, 58 *CURRENT SOC.* 693, 703-05 (2010).

⁶⁶ *Id.*

⁶⁷ See Haj-Yehie & Sadan, *supra* note 52. The authors argue that the empowerment of women victims of violence in collectivist societies, for example, Arab and ultra-Orthodox women in Israel, is different from the way in which empowerment is constructed in the hegemonic society. For a discussion of the American context, see Lorraine M. Gutierrez, *Working with Women of Color: An Empowerment Perspective*, 35 *SOC. WORK* 149-53 (1990); Natalie J. Sokoloff & Ida Dupont, *Domestic Violence at the Intersection of Race, Class and Gender: Challenges and Contributions to Understanding Violence Against Marginalized Women in Diverse Communities*, 11 *VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN* 38-64 (2005).

⁶⁸ See Kevin K. Kumashiro, *Toward a Theory of Anti-Oppressive Education*, 70 *REV. ED. RES.* 25-53 (2000). For a discussion of the use of language as an element that reinforces the oppressive othering of cleaning workers in Israel, see Sarit Nisim & Orly Benjamin, *The Speech of Services Procurement: The Negotiated Order of Commodification and Dehumanization of Cleaning Employees*, 69 *HUM. ORG.* 221 (2010).

framework is in my opinion especially subversive.⁶⁹

The choice of empowerment tool in legal work raises questions relate to the definition of empowerment in legal discourse, the type of lawyering work chosen for assisting people, the relationship with clients, and the interrelation between law and other disciplines. In this section, I discuss the manner in which empowerment theory is implemented in the legal field.

The idea that “our lives are saturated with law”⁷⁰ expresses the strength of law and its central position in directing our lives. The law defines the status of the citizens and of government authorities, and lies at the foundation of the relations between them. It grants rights and defines obligations, and above all, it “plays an important role in establishing the social relations between individuals; people who live under the law continue to create law; they continue to live their lives and to exercise their social relations under the law, and so forth.”⁷¹ As such, the law serves as a tool for achieving power.

The perception that the law is present in our everyday lives, and the emphasis on its ability to shape the reality of our lives, make the law a significant arena for using the tool of empowerment. A variety of theoretical meanings are attributed in legal research to the concept of empowerment: empowerment as a process of making tools available to deprived individuals, as participation in the making and shaping of decisions, as a process that makes knowledge available and helps “dispel the fog,” and as a process of making individuals aware of their rights and exercise them. Empowerment is also a process of developing group identity, achieving personal autonomy, and a tool that makes possible the development of an effective ability to act.⁷²

As noted above, empowerment has two dimensions, the personal and the social (what I refer to as contextual empowerment). Contextual empowerment aims the spotlight at the overall system of social power relations. Changing the workers’ awareness of the reasons for their oppression and their understanding of the overall context of their situation can lead to political empowerment and can serve as the first step to that kind of empowerment, especially to the extent that it

⁶⁹ Elisheva Sadan, *Empowerment in Law: A Critical Article*, SOC. SEC. 169, 169-70 (2009) (Hebrew).

⁷⁰ Mautner, *supra* note 56, at 200.

⁷¹ *Id.* at 202.

⁷² Mimi Eisenstadt & Guy Mundlak, *Empowerment in Law*, in LAW, SOCIETY AND CULTURE 14, 21-26 (Mimi Eisenstadt & Guy Mundlak eds., 2008) (Hebrew); Tom R. Tyler & Gregory Mitchell, *Legitimacy and the Empowerment of Discretionary Legal Authority: The United States Supreme Court and Abortion Rights*, 43 DUKE L.J. 703 (1994); INEKE VAN DE MEENE & BENJAMINE VAN ROOIJ, ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LEGAL EMPOWERMENT (2008); MARGARET SCHULER, LEGAL LITERACY: A TOOL FOR WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT (1992).

relates to poor workers.⁷³ Political empowerment helps expand the structure of existing opportunities. It is not merely a change at the micro-level, but one at the macro-level; not merely local, individual empowerment, but a broad and comprehensive one.

Access to knowledge and rights is an aspect of empowerment.⁷⁴ As noted in Part I, for the workers, access to knowledge represented the first step in the project. Subsequently, access to knowledge became a complex and broader act of empowerment. Through this process, we assessed the overall array of rights and the manner in which they were implemented (or most often not implemented) in the workers' lives, and assessed possible actions and tools for exercising the rights.

Despite the importance of access to knowledge, this action covers only a narrow range of the empowerment process. It does not challenge existing reality because it cannot change it, and therefore cannot serve as a complete empowerment move.⁷⁵ Providing information about rights is merely an initial stage in the empowerment process and cannot stand alone. Concomitantly, access to knowledge must be attended by real actions for the realization and changing of rights. This theoretical observation became central as the assistance project developed because at a certain point it was clear that teaching about rights was not enough. The workers did acquire confidence in their ability to stand up for their rights and felt stronger than they were before the project began but were still hesitant in their acts. They did not know how and in what way to exercise this knowledge. I will return to this challenge in Part IV.

Another aspect of empowerment is participation in decision-making processes. Similar to the emphasis placed on giving voice in the empowerment process in the social work literature, this aspect emphasizes the voice of individuals and the importance of their participation in the shaping of actions for change. Empowerment in this sense makes possible expressing the interests of the people in the decision-making process.⁷⁶ Participation in decision making gives individuals a

⁷³ See Rubinstein, Benjamin & Golan, *supra* note 47, at 181; Kumashiro, *supra* note 68, at 37. R

⁷⁴ For examples of this approach with regard to men and women living in poverty, see Charlotte Wrigley-Asante, *Out of the Dark But Not Out of the Age: Women's Empowerment and Gender Relations in the Dangme West District Of Ghana*, 19 GENDER, PLACE & CULT.: A JOURNAL OF FEMINIST GEOGRAPHY 344 (2011); Sujata Shetty, *Microcredit, Poverty, and Empowerment: Exploring the Connections*, 9 PERSP. GLOBAL DEV. & TECH. 356 (2010); MICHAL KRUMER-NEVO, WOMEN IN POVERTY – LIFE STORIES: GENDER, PAIN, RESISTANCE (2007) (Hebrew).

⁷⁵ See Eisenstandt & Mundlak, *supra* note 72, at 22.

⁷⁶ See *id.* at 22-25; Gretchen M. Spreitzer, *Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace: Dimensions, Measurement and Validation*, 38 ACAD. MGMT J. 1442 (1995); Robert R

sense of knowledge, power, independence, and freedom to act.⁷⁷ The participation of individuals in the shaping of decisions regarding the tools and acts that should be taken to assist them may have great significance, especially when their voices are not heard in the political-public arena.⁷⁸ This feature of empowerment is reminiscent of client-centered lawyering, which seeks to involve the client in decision making and allows the client a central role in the formation and development of the case at hand.⁷⁹

The law-empowerment connection is complex and fraught with contradictions. An example can be found in the nature of the attorney-client relations. The relations between the various agents of the law (first and foremost, the attorneys) and their clients are often characterized by a hierarchical nature. Attorneys “know more,” are experts in the areas in which they help their clients, and know the language of the law and its rules of conduct, unlike their clients. It has been argued that representation by an attorney perpetuates the passivity of the client. In light of the attorney’s expertise and knowledge, the client does not take part in decision making. It has been argued further that the client’s dependence on the attorney does not allow the former to control the situation and initiate action independently – all the traits that characterize empowerment.⁸⁰ Client-centered lawyering sought to cure these problematic features in the traditional lawyering. As discussed in Part IV, without naming it as such, we employed this type of lawyering in our work with the cleaners.

In light of these contradictions, it is important to understand that the law is not necessarily the main arena for enacting the empowerment model, and that legal tools are not necessarily the preferred ones in working with disadvantaged populations. The understanding that there is a need for methods borrowed from extra-legal disciplines was central in the development of the assistance project, as shown in Part IV below.

IV. EMPOWERMENT IN LEGAL CLINICAL WORK: THE ASSISTANCE MODEL

In the beginning there was a disconnect. They didn’t tell us anything. They didn’t believe. I feel that suddenly they turn to me with

C. Ford, Myron D. Fottler, Diane E. Russ & Elaine R. Millam, *Empowerment: A Matter of Degree*, 9 ACAD. MGMT. EXEC. 21 (1995).

⁷⁷ See Hadar Danzig-Rosenberg & Yifat Prader, “The Other Among Us:” About “Culture-Sensitive” Social Lawyering, 3 MAASEI MISHPAT 45 (2010) (Hebrew).

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ Camille Carey & Robert A. Solomon, *Impossible Choices: Balancing Safety and Security in Cases of Domestic Violence Representation*, 21 CLIN. L. REV. 231 (2014).

⁸⁰ Eisenstandt & Mundlak, *supra* note 72, at 34-35; Galanter, *supra* note 57.

more personal stories. I feel that they are talking about the family. From my point of view, this is remarkable because I know the mentality of the Ethiopians. Talking about a violent husband is remarkable. She [one of the workers] got very personal. Brought down the barriers. Talking about a personal problem in a forum like this, among the women . . . this is awesome empowerment.⁸¹

In this part I show how the theory of empowerment is reflected in our clinical work. I further examine the evolution of an empowerment model in the clinical project and the adaptation of the project to the characteristics of empowerment theory. This description highlights the pedagogical and lawyering dilemmas and questions that were asked through the project. I examine whether and how empowerment was present in the clinic's work and in what way the empowerment process was conducted. I also discuss the significance of the empowerment process for the workers and the students, and ask whether our objectives have been accomplished. This Part also illustrates some of the linkages between empowerment, client-centered lawyering, cause lawyering and theories of clinical legal education. It incorporates the interviews I conducted with some of the workers and with some of the students who took part in the project.

Beginning in 2009, the assistance project was not based on any theoretical foundation. It was an almost spontaneous decision to act for the women cleaners on the campus. I saw the cleaners every day and knew that I did not want to, and could not, ignore this group of women. But the naming of the project was not clear and accordingly the theoretical framing was missing. The conceptualization of the project thus was gradually developed to reflect theories of empowerment, centered-client lawyering, and critical and rebellious lawyering. The nature of the clinical work reflected a range of theoretical tools that gradually shaped and informed the clinical work. Due to the longitudinal nature of the clinical project it was possible to engage in an evolving learning process in which theory and practice shape one another.

As discussed in Part I, framing the project was a complicated process. At the beginning of the clinic's work, we examined the main legal tools offered to deal with contract cleaning workers, such as unionization, battles for direct employment and litigation in cases of violation of rights, and questioned the relevancy of these battles to the women. The invisibility of the women on the campus, the wish to engage in "lawyering from below" by learning what the women wanted, shaped the initial formation of the project. We understood that we did not know what the workers wanted and what their needs were. In or-

⁸¹ Yael, Amharic-speaking student who was part of the assistance project for two years, from its beginning.

der to change the low status of the women workers, the students and I had to get to know them, listen to them and learn their needs. We had to hear their voices. Voice was a central theme in the evolution of the project and in its framing. Therefore, we chose to speak with the women through meetings in which the students lectured about legal rights and, at the same time, learned about their needs, wishes and perspectives. We understood that the legal strategies mentioned above might not be the first choice of the workers. The legal discourse was too limited in its ability to translate the reality of the women's lives.⁸²

A. *Voice*

At times, I help people in some way, in small ways, but I know that it is not enough to do. Because people want to be spoken to. And they want to talk. Often this is much more important for them than actions. The right words, that is.⁸³

As discussed in Part III, voice is a central motif in theories of empowerment. The literature, especially the social work literature concerning empowerment, emphasizes that the empowered person is the one who must identify the social power relations that weaken her as an individual and a group. Empowerment is possible when the person speaks, defines the problem, and demands that it be changed. We must therefore add the great contribution of giving voice to the eradication or reduction of the otherness of those who voice their opinions. When we are dealing with women of Ethiopian origin, with a low socioeconomic status, who cannot speak Hebrew well, telling their narrative, voicing an opinion, expressing thoughts and emotions, and describing needs are vital to treating them as equals and not as others.⁸⁴

This point is important for understanding the development of the model of empowerment described here. "Othering" could have become problematic in the relations between the workers and the students. Perceiving the workers as different, as others, as separate could have led to paternalism, haughtiness, and lack of understanding of the workers' needs.

Throughout the seven-year project, most of the clinic staff consisted of white students who were not familiar with the Ethiopian

⁸² Benish, Tzarfati, *supra*, note 26, at 94-95. The authors describe a clinical project dealing with contract workers in government offices, which was conducted using a method of relaxed watching and data collection in the field. The authors stress that according to their estimation, the classical legal tools, such as filing claims with the labor courts, would not promote public awareness of the phenomenon because the "legal arena is by nature intended for individual cases that each stand on their own."

⁸³ AHARON MEGGED, *ASAEL* (1978) (Hebrew).

⁸⁴ For a critique of this topic, see Krumer-Nevo & Benjamin, *supra* note 65.

community or culture. Only in the first two years (2009-2011) and in the project's fifth year (2013-2014) did the staff include an Ethiopian student. This was a pedagogical challenge. First, it required the non-Ethiopian students to acknowledge their privilege as white law students from high socioeconomic status. It forced them to question their own perceptions regarding the Ethiopian community, immigrants and black people. It was challenging to try to neutralize potential feelings of paternalism by the students.

When building the assistance project I knew that this "otherness" would be hard to unpack. Therefore, I urged the students to develop personal relationships with the women, to sit with them and talk, to get to know them. I knew that familiarity and a personal relationship would be significant tools for challenging the possible construction of the workers' otherness. Notably, developing personal relationships risks the danger of over-familiarity, confusion (by both the students and the women) in the students' role and accordingly, distortion in the relationships. Nevertheless, considering the social exclusion of the women, their suspicion and the cultural differences between the women and the students, I thought that getting to know the women would assist in countering the potential otherness of the women. The relationship with the workers became an important component of the empowerment process, as elaborated below.

Furthermore, as stated earlier, I wanted to engage in "lawyering from below." In conceptualizing the project, I wanted the assistance project to reflect the voices of the women – their narratives, needs, wishes and perspectives. This is why developing relationships and focusing on the voice of the community was essential. Grassroots lawyering⁸⁵ seeks to breed change from the bottom up, from within the community, and to assign a key role to the community's narrative.⁸⁶ This approach emphasizes the importance of perpetual interaction with the community and of joint activities with it in order to empower its members and create change through them, not impose it by an external entity. As with lawyering from below, grassroots lawyering re-

⁸⁵ See Thomas M. Hilbink, *You Know the Type . . . Categories of Cause Lawyering*, 29 *LAW & SOC. INQUIRY* 657 (2004). The author describes several categories of social lawyering, including those practiced by proceduralist, elite/vanguard, and grassroots cause lawyers, and describes their common characteristics. *Id.* at 663-64. For a discussion of the interdisciplinary aspects of grassroots lawyers, see Karen Tokarz, Nancy L. Cook, Susan Brooks & Brenda Bratton Blom, *Conversations on "Community Lawyering:" The Newest (Oldest) Wave in Clinical Legal Education*, 28 *J. L. & POL'Y* 363 (2008).

⁸⁶ See GERALD P. LOPEZ, *REBELLIOUS LAWYERING: ONE CHICANO'S VISION OF PROGRESSIVE LAW PRACTICE* (1992); Lucie White, *To Learn and to Teach: Lessons from Drie-fontein on Lawyering and Power*, 1988 *WIS. L. REV.* 699 (1988); Ingrid V. Eagly, *Community Education: Creating a New Vision of Legal Services Practice*, 4 *CLIN. L. REV.* 433, 480 (1998); Hilbink, *supra* note 85, at 688-89.

flects the principles of empowerment discussed above because it enables members of the community to voice their opinions, define their needs, and take meaningful part in decisions concerning them. The relationship between the lawyer and the client in grassroots lawyering is also different from traditional attorney-client relations. The grassroots lawyer seeks to empower clients and develops non-hierarchical relations with them.⁸⁷

Developing relationships with the women was not an easy task. The women were silent as the project began. They came to the meetings, listened to the students who talked about a variety of legal rights but did not say anything. The students accepted the women's silence as being natural for the initial stages. The restraint of the workers made the students understand that their role was not that of saviors but that they must be attentive and wait patiently until the workers decide to open up. This is what one of the students said:

In the beginning, I felt like Madame Bovary. I thought I was going to change the world . . . But as I said, dreams are dreams and reality is reality. Who am I in in their world? Who am I to change their world? Who am I not to ruin their world? After all, I'm not alone here, and neither are they. . .⁸⁸

Notwithstanding the above, because of the women's silence, we had to determine the content of the rights meetings, without feedback from the women concerning the topics about which they wanted to hear. My fear, as a clinic advisor, was that this silence would prevent the students from learning, understanding, and connecting with the workers' point of view. It was clear to me that the empowerment of the workers (and of the students) could not take place if the relationship were based on provision of knowledge, without hearing the voices of the workers and without understanding their universe. Moreover, guided by our desire to engage in lawyering from below, we did not want to choose the topics of the lectures but rather to develop the lectures based on the needs of the workers. It was, thus, a dilemma. We knew that the workers would not share with us their needs before trusting us. We understood their suspicions based on their status on the campus and the power relations between them and us. At the same time, we did not want to enforce our perspectives on the women. Ultimately, we knew that we had to start somewhere, and developed several basics lectures about legal rights and building relationships of trust between them and us.

⁸⁷ Hilbink, *supra* note 85, at 684. The author describes the relations between the grassroots lawyer and the client: "grassroots lawyering may use the intimacy of the lawyer-client relationship as a site for client empowerment."

⁸⁸ Michal, one of the students who started the project with me.

In legal clinics generally, students develop awareness of social and legal injustice, get to know the power of the law to effect social change,⁸⁹ and find themselves in the social arena as significant players in its development and change.⁹⁰ Indeed, one of the main emphases in clinical education is social justice and access to justice.⁹¹ Clinical education also emphasizes the development of the students' social sensitivity, an attitude that is free of paternalism toward the people they help, and the recognition on the part of the students of their privileges, all of which influence their conduct toward the group with which they work. Not hearing the voices of the workers was likely to preserve the power gaps between them and the students, and harm the ability of the students to know and accept cultural differences, to understand the other, and to develop an overall view of a different reality of life.⁹²

Gradually, the silence was broken. In the second year of the project, the workers began to speak. They began to demand. As one of the workers, Alimito, put it:

⁸⁹ There is a vast literature about leveraging the law for the purpose of social change and about social lawyering, including CAUSE LAWYERING: POLITICAL COMMITMENTS, AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (Austin Sarat & Stewart Scheingold eds., 1998); Stephen Wizner, *Beyond Skills Training*, 7 CLIN. L. REV. 327 (2001); Alizabeth Newman, *Bridging the Justice Gap – Building Community by Responding to Individual Need*, 17 CLIN. L. REV. 615 (2011); Yuval Elbasha, *About the Absence of Social Justice in Legal Education in Israel*, 3 ALEI MISHPAT 7 (2003) (Hebrew); Neta Ziv, *Legal Education and Social Responsibility: About the Link between the Law School and the Community in Which It Resides*, 25 IYUNEI MISHPAT 385 (2002) (Hebrew); Yuval Elbasha, *The Robe Smells Like the Field*, 34 MISHPATIM 455 (2008); SHARYN L ROACH ANLEU, LAW AND SOCIAL CHANGE (2nd ed. 2000).

⁹⁰ Stephen Wizner, *Law School Clinic: Legal Education In The Interests Of Justice*, 70 FORDHAM L. REV. 1929 (2002).

⁹¹ For a discussion of social justice as a central motif in clinical legal work, see Sameer M. Ashar, *Law Clinics and Collective Mobilization* 14 CLIN. L. REV. 355, 360 (2008); Stephen Wizner & Jane Aiken, *Teaching and Doing: The Role of Law School Clinics in Enhancing Access to Justice* 73 FORDHAM L. REV. 997 (2004); Wizner, *supra* note 89; Marcy L. Karin & Robin R. Runge, *Toward Integrated Law Clinics That Train Social Change Advocates*, 17 CLIN. L. REV. 563 (2011). For an article that challenges the exclusivity of the principle of social justice in clinical work, see Praveen Kosuri, *Losing My Religion: The Place of Social Justice in Clinical Legal Education* 32 B.C. J. L. & SOC. JUST. 9 (2012). The author argues that social justice and its advancement are significant, but that clinics must make available a variety of fields for clinical work, including those that are not naturally identified with social action for the benefit of the disadvantaged, such as clinics dealing with intellectual property and negotiation.

⁹² See Jane Aiken & Stephen Wizner, *Law as Social Work*, 11 WASH. U. J. L. & POL'Y 63 (2003). The authors describe an imaginary lawyer who represents the model of the lawyer as social worker: "She develops cultural competence and respect for difference. She seeks to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion and mental or physical disability. She is aware of the ways in which her own experience affects her perceptions of the client, the client's problem, and the possible solutions." *Id.* at 75.

Once we kept silent. We wouldn't open our mouth because we didn't know what was coming. Now, that we know what our rights are, we began demanding what's coming to us.

Another worker, Abynish, also spoke about this development:

My suffering is still expressed in tears, but now I have the option to call up and tell and vent, even if you don't solve the problem . . . A sense of protection. This is why I call. In the beginning, the reaction was always to burst out crying every time I ran into a problem, I was immediately crying from frustration. Today when I call and I have someone to talk to it's a relief.

Finding one's voice symbolizes a positive change and openness. As a result, the workers identified the problems confronting them and enabled us to enable them to begin the process of change. One of the students, Stav, who led the project at its second and third years said:

They're talking. This is a change. [In the beginning] we would finish talking and leave. They didn't open up for more than a year. Maybe in the second year a small number of workers opened up, and that was probably the wave that swept them along. Look at it now—they're all coming. In the beginning they were afraid to complain about the employer for fear that they would be fired. I think we helped them come forward and complain. Where there is no such assistance, you won't be able to get anything out of the workers. The fear of losing one's livelihood is so great.

Stav stated further:

In the beginning, they didn't talk to us but among themselves, and would argue among themselves. Today they can and [do] reproach us. Today they are angry at me, and I'm happy that they're angry at me. From my point of view, this is the mouth we gave them. In the beginning, they were not angry at me. They didn't dare be angry at us, but now yes.

At the beginning of the process, we had a sense that we were speaking for the workers in a voice that was ours, not theirs. The fact that the workers did not speak illustrated the power differences between us and them. Making their voices heard, the fact that they are now saying what interests them, and especially their ability to stand up for their rights and demand change and improvement, all reflect a more secure space and a sense of confidence and recognition. The space created for the workers to make their voices heard, and the attention we paid to their personal stories and to their work experiences, have led them to use this voice in order to identify the injury they suffered. The identification of the injury and insistence on their rights signal a movement forward and the expression of agency for changing their situation.

The following description illustrates the empowerment and confi-

dence that voice can enable. At the end of a first-of-a-kind meeting that we arranged between the CEO of the contract firm and the workers, one of the workers, Alimito, stood up, turned to the CEO, and said the following in Amharic: “First of all, we wish to thank the clinic for what they do for us. Second, I would like to ask whether you could raise our salaries.”

Seeing the shy Alimito stand up without fear in front of a person who is so senior in the company, and in front of the other representatives of the company to whom she is subordinate, and loudly ask for a raise, was moving and empowering both for the students and for Alimito. Her stand expressed confidence, the understanding that it is possible to demand, and the desire to change.⁹³ This occasion created a sense of satisfaction, pride, excitement, and hope for change among the clinic students.

Notably, Alimito’s statement did not change the reality. The workers’ salaries were not raised and their conditions were not changed. This is part of the inherent complexity in the project; on one hand, a significant and meaningful process of empowerment is developed through the years. They are stronger and have more confidence in their interaction with the employer. On the other hand, the employment framework is neither changed nor challenged. The women remain “cleaning contract workers” with only basic rights.

In the second year of the project, the know-your-rights lectures were conducted by lawyers from other clinics, social workers and lawyers from NGOs. During this time, the workers began approaching the clinic students and faculty with personal legal problems and questions. They felt that we could be trusted. Lawyers, law and legal rights thus proved helpful by providing access to specialized knowledge. The students understood that we had to make another step in providing access to rights and knowledge and in hearing the women’s voices.

In the last three years, the full force of the workers’ voice has been heard in our meetings. They not only talk about legal rights that are owed to them but about their personal lives, hopes, dreams, and feelings. They talk about themselves, about their character and personality, about couplehood, motherhood, and ambitions for the future. In these meetings, they do not play the role of “contract workers” but instead are women, mothers, and friends. These meet-

⁹³ For a discussion of neutralizing the power relations between the attorney and the community, and especially about the importance of the independence of the community and recognition of its strength, see William P. Quigley, *Reflections of Community Organizers: Lawyering for Empowerment for Community Organizations*, 21 OHIO N. U. L. REV. 455 (1995). See also Paul W. Speer & Joseph Hughey, *Community Organizing: An Ecological Route to Empowerment and Power*, 23 AM. J. COMMUNITY PSYCHOL. 729 (1995).

ings illustrate the importance of offering a space for the workers' voice. Although enhancing the workers' voice was not translated into change in power in the sense that their salary was not raised and the their conditions were not changed, it made the empowerment model valuable and significant for the workers, more than other legal tools, such as litigation. The workers are not invisible anymore and feel that they have a secure place (the clinic) that they can approach any time and get legal and personal assistance; they know that someone sees them and listens to them. Making the workers' voice heard strengthens them in standing in front of their employer and claiming their rights. Moreover, because of the longstanding process of empowerment, the centrality of the project within the clinics and the campus and the resulting visibility of the workers, their employers understand that they cannot ignore the workers' rights or needs, and that they have to treat them properly and with respect. The workers became visible to the employers as well.

At the end of 2015, the clinic presented an exhibition of photographs of some of the workers on the campus. Their pictures, without the cleaning person's uniform, accompanied by a few personal lines about the women written next to each photograph, endow their voices with an additional dimension. According to the women, they feel that they are being heard and seen—that they are not transparent.

In its seventh year, the project combined various advocacy tools. We continued with a series of meetings with a social worker coach, who focuses on group solidarity and strength by using professional tools from social work. We developed a campaign in the college, which is aimed at raising awareness to contract cleaning workers on the campus. This is not a new aspect in our work. The innovative aspect is that as this campaign continues, the workers will participate in this process and will join the students in the battle to make them more visible to the campus's management and students. We continued with our legal assistance, particularly in relation to rights in the labor market and issues related to debts. We also held a computer skills class for the workers. At the end of the year, at the workers' suggestion, we organized a half-day trip to Tel Aviv to one of its tourist attractions. For the workers it was the first time that they visited the place and their reactions were extremely moving. They said it was one of their best days— they felt free.

The empowerment model, which was shaped by the workers' voice and was developed vis-s-vis their needs, wishes and perspectives, created a group. Traditional legal tools, such as litigation or legislation, could not have necessarily achieved this outcome. Listening to the workers' voices and letting them tell their narrative assisted in

framing the various goals of the project: strengthening the workers as a group, enhancing their solidarity, making them visible, raising awareness to the issue of cleaners contract workers, assisting in legal problems and making the women's voice heard by their employers.

B. Access to law

The assistance project reflected both the strength and the limitations of knowledge transfer as part of empowerment. Making knowledge accessible is a complex aspect of empowerment because it requires not only provision of knowledge but also tools to implement it. "They look sadder," said one of my colleagues, describing the workers after we began working with them. Indeed, when we first presented to the workers a broad picture of rights in many areas of law, they understood the extent to which many of their rights had been denied. Later they understood that the struggle to realize those rights is difficult, frustrating, and long. At the same time, the act of making knowledge accessible has had many advantages in the process of empowerment of the workers: it has created a desire for change, aroused a need to take concrete steps for the realization of this desire, and created hope.

Initially, learning about their rights created a sense of frustration in the workers and in ourselves. The frustration was the result of the exploitative work reality, the absence of enforcement of basic rights at the workplace, deficient access to education for the children (e.g., the women spoke about the difficulty of understanding what teachers in their children's schools were saying), poverty, racism, and violence in the family. In time, access to knowledge reached another level, granting access also to possible channels for acting upon that knowledge. The sense of frustration was replaced by a sense of "I also deserve it" and by the understanding that it is possible to accomplish this by insisting on one's rights.

Alimito said:

The contractor doesn't want us to gain knowledge and know our rights, and because of this he becomes hard-nosed because he is afraid that we have too much knowledge. But I don't care that they are taken aback because I personally know that it is good for us to know our rights and the law.

In the interview, I told her that at times I become frustrated, particularly because they are still contract workers who work long hours with minimum wage. She answered:

Contrary to what you feel, I see a big change. It starts with the fact that before the meetings we had no clue what our rights were, how to read a salary slip, we had no clue how to approach someone and how to take care of things. We didn't have the knowledge. From

attending the meetings we began to understand what we had coming to us, what our rights are. Another meeting and another meeting, and each time we learned something else. Once we kept silent. We didn't open our mouth because we didn't have the knowledge of what our rights were . . . In the beginning we didn't believe that the meetings will result in a meaningful change, but as the meetings progressed, we learned more, which in fact strengthened us. *The information strengthened us emotionally.*⁹⁴

Another worker, Zaman, also referred to the meetings in the context of the knowledge provided, and made the connection with standing up for one's rights.

Following the lessons, I knew who has the power in the institutions. There's never a shortage of problems. Now I know to whom to turn. To what office, to the social worker . . . As a result, I know to go to the office or to the social worker. I know what to say, what my problem is.

The change that occurred in their conduct—the transition from passivity to activity—was manifest, for example, in complaints about abusive treatment by representatives of the employer, in demands for a room to take meals in, and primarily in standing up for rights relating to their wages.

Despite all this, the ground covered by the workers was small. They are still dependent on knowledge that resides with us. They still need the staff of the clinic in order to fight for their rights, especially vis-à-vis the employer. Can we therefore say that the workers were empowered? Does not the fact that they need frequent professional mediation weaken them? The answer is complicated. On one hand, the sessions that provided access to knowledge made possible a change in the consciousness of the workers. They now hold their heads high and no longer accept as self-evident decisions made by the contractor. They ask to find out what their rights are, and they formulate the way in which their rights are harmed. On the other hand, the change is limited and specific. They remain secondary players in the field, and require mediation and representation of their needs and interests. They do not initiate the struggle, do not move it forward, and do not determine the mode of action in the confrontation with the employer.

In our case, providing access to information about their rights has produced local and individual empowerment, but this is not group empowerment or a deep change in social consciousness.⁹⁵ The workers

⁹⁴ Emphasis added.

⁹⁵ In an article dealing with empowerment of people with disabilities, doubts are expressed as to whether a large-scale change of consciousness is vital for group empowerment—for example, whether there is a need for a deep change and critical consciousness

are aware of the power structure in the labor market, are conscious of the social and economic meanings of belonging to the Ethiopian community, recognize the importance of group solidarity and the power of the group. I also believe that the sessions made them more comfortable in challenging rules at work. Nevertheless, they are still quite far from struggling as a group and not as individuals.

If the project had developed within an NGO, outside the academic framework, it would have been easier to advance and fortify social and political empowerment.⁹⁶ The promotion of such a project within an academic setting prevented radical steps such as protest against the campus's management, organizing a coalition for direct employment or even organizing strike to improve the workers' conditions in the labor market. Radical tools such as these could have assisted the workers to develop political empowerment.

The clinical framework, on the other hand, allowed the students and the women to develop close and lasting relationships that strengthen the solidarity among the workers. It further assisted in developing, and using, non-legal tools that offered holistic assistance to the workers and not only a legal one. These are steps toward political and contextual empowerment.

C. Relationships

And as time passes, we connect to you and we are becoming stronger and demand that which is coming to us. We didn't have a mouth. We had no idea at all that as time passes we are getting stronger, and the fact that you are guiding us and are close to us gives us the power not to be afraid. (Alimito)

The fact that you are here and it is possible to turn to you with every problem, it helps a lot. (Zaman)

The sheer fact that you are here and available, it gives a sense of security. (Ayala)

One of the dominant characteristics of the project was the personal relationships we developed with some of the women, based on sincerity and trust. Below I connect this relationship with the empow-

that seeks to challenge the existing order and promote structural change, or whether a local and limited struggle is sufficient for the purposes of empowerment. Another question asked in the article is whether there is a need for group consciousness (as opposed to individual one) for the purpose of empowerment. See Sagit Mor, *Toward a Radicalization of the General Disability Grant: Dilemmas of the Struggle for Social Change*, in *EMPOWERMENT IN LAW*, *supra* note 72, at 94.

⁹⁶ See, for example, a description of the work of community lawyers in a grassroots organization and the possibilities to make that kind of empowerment. Marika Dias, *Stepping Aside, Standing Back, and Raising Up: Lawyering within Grassroots Community Movements* 22 *Geo. J. Poverty L. & Pol'y* 405 (2015).

erment of the workers and of the clinic staff. The emphasis on the relationship reflected the importance of emotional discourse in the legal work and of holistic and interdisciplinary lawyering in general and in clinical work in particular

The theoretical discussion in Part III showed that empowerment does not have a narrow, single definition but a range of meanings, all of which share the idea of a positive change, self-motivation, and the development of the ability to move forward. The clinic's work with and for the workers produced in them a great deal of trust in us and in our intentions. Without us noticing, a relationship based on deep trust developed between us.

This is important on two dimensions of empowerment. One is that of personal empowerment: the workers' sense that they are important to someone at the workplace, that someone cares, and that they are visible rather than invisible allowed them to believe that it is possible to change something in their tedious routine. This is illustrated by the excerpts quoted at the beginning of this part and by the following statements:

The simple fact that you are here always stays with me, that you enrich me, that you support me; it helps a lot in achieving our rights.
(Alimito)

Yael, a student, also addressed the connection established and the relation between this connection and the empowerment of the workers:

In the Ethiopian community, telling is not allowed. To open up in a forum in which we don't know what the relations are between participants and to tell such personal things is awesome. The women became stronger—the sheer fact that they say, I don't care what the others think. I feel that this has happened to many of them.

The second dimension of empowerment is in its social sense. The relations of trust that developed served as the basis for the formation of the group and for the sense of solidarity among the women. This solidarity and the strength it offers to the group members is significant in social battles and in the development of activism. Stav, a student, described this best:

I believe that the law is a local tool that we use in specific cases: "I have a breach," "they denied my rights," the law is there. At all other times our objective is not only to return to them money that has not been paid but to make them return the money to themselves, by themselves.

The relationship that developed is in itself empowering. "It is more as if empowerment is a relationship."⁹⁷ This element ties in directly with

⁹⁷ John Lord, *Empowerment: Self in Community* (Sept. 1997) (unpublished manuscript), available at http://www.johnlord.net/web_documents/empowerment_self_in_

the importance of an interdisciplinary approach and with the skills and tools that must be part of clinical education, including empathy, listening, a non-judgmental attitude, and as a rule, an overall emphasis on human relations.

The following anecdote illustrates the importance of using social work techniques in clinical work, the development of holistic clinical education, and the necessity to acquire the skills needed to implement it. As part of the assistance project, in its third year, we were able to organize a Hebrew course for the workers. At our regular meeting, we presented to them the requirements of the course. The response was unenthusiastic, largely because of the unwillingness of the workers to stay past working hours. Most of the workers are mothers, and they stressed that they had no arrangement for their children and were not willing to return home late once a week. Stav, one of the students, was very frustrated, and she became quite angry. She was not able to identify with the workers. She explained to them how vital a tool language is and what a positive change the acquisition of language could produce. Nothing helped. She simply did not understand how the workers could refuse such an offer. Then, Marry (a student who was not interviewed for this article) told the group that she also was a mother of three. She understood the workers and identified with the difficulty of staying late at work in order to participate in a course. For several minutes, she spoke to them as a mother, not as a student and not as a clinician. She listened to their feelings and fears. Their response after she had finished was entirely different. Most said that they would find an arrangement and attend the course. This anecdote illustrates the extent to which empathy, understanding, acceptance and a non-paternalistic, non-judgmental attitude are vital in clinical work. The approach that enabled the workers to pay attention was not one of rights but of compassion.

At many points, the clinic's work required empathy, non-judgment, listening, and understanding. An example of the need to provide tools for confronting paternalism, developing sensitivity to what is different, compassion, and empathy presented itself in the interview with Yael. As stated earlier, Yael is an Ethiopian student who took part in the project from 2009 to 2011. Although she was part of the project for the first three years of the project, she still felt experienced difficulties in the interactions with the workers.

In the beginning, my approach to the workers was, "enough whining," "start doing," "stop complaining." My approach was that it was time to stop crying and looking pathetic.

Only later, after being engaged in clinical work and owing to the relationship that developed with the workers did Yael's feelings partly change. She could understand the origins of the workers' seeming passivity:

Their reservations in the first meetings were the result of the blows they had received before. They had been walked over so much, they become passive. One step, and another blow lands. They have been so disappointed, and have been so oppressed that all they want is to survive. What makes me mad is that they become passive.

The students also had to cope with many frustrating situations and a sense of despair. In order to develop the skills mentioned above and in order to cope with the frustrating situations, each meeting followed by a supervision in which I discussed the various aspects of the project with the clinic students. It was important for me to provide a space where the students could reflect on their feelings and engage in self-learning. I encouraged the students to speak out and to vent their frustrations and difficulties. These talks have led to discussions about the patience required in poverty lawyering work, the importance of the process (even in the absence of final results), our place with respect to the workers, the fear of paternalism, the frustration caused by occasional lack of cooperation, and the social power relations that make it difficult to cause a genuine change in the condition of the workers who remain poor and disadvantaged. This personal supervision was of enormous importance because it developed the students' abilities as lawyers and as agents of social change. The talks that attended the clinical work enabled the students to learn about value-based and emotional lawyering

One of the main themes in these conversations was the power relations between the students and the workers. We discussed ways by which we could challenge these power relations on one hand, and make the students understand that they are not, and should not, be saviors of the women on the other hand. For example, one of the students wanted to lend money to one of the workers who experienced serious socioeconomic problems at that time. The pedagogic challenge was how to balance her empathy and care for the worker and the commitment she felt for her, with her role as a clinical law student, who should provide tools for the workers. We discussed the meaning of empowerment in clinical work, the importance of offering tools rather than financial assistance, and the significance of providing knowledge in order for the group to be empowered and to help itself. I asked her whether giving money would make a change in that woman's life. We also discussed the difference between empathy and sensitivity on one hand and mercy on the other. We further discussed the fact that mercy

is not an empowering tool but rather a tool that can distance the worker who might feel humiliated and weak.

The students also underwent a significant process of empowerment because of both their ability to instill their knowledge into others and their ability to look inside themselves and think about their personal stories within the political story of which they were part. Social work studies, and the field work that is part of it, encourage perpetual dialog of the student with the self. Students must examine their views, their values, and their life experiences, and must be attuned to their intimations and feelings. This discourse and the tools it provides can enable law students to analyze the situation without being judgmental and to develop extra-legal skills.

For example, Stav said:

However strange it may sound—after all I’m white, a student, with academic education—and they are everything but this, they reflected me a huge number of times. Often I saw myself within them, from the perspective of the oppression that I experience as a woman, as a woman with “Misrahi” roots. If my grandmother were here . . . If something like this would have been available for my grandmother, it could have been awesome . . . It became very emotional for me. Many times I felt greatly empowered—with lots of air to breathe, hope. And many other times I left with the opposite feeling—with a lump that blocked my air. A lump of tears, very emotional. Not despair, because it didn’t really make me despair.

The emotional attrition was rooted in my identification with them.

The understanding that the struggle for social change is a long-distance run and that it is the process that counts, as well as the ability to identify the power relations, have affected the students both personally and professionally. The following statement by Yael, who points a blaming finger at society, expresses the complexity of the empowerment that the students underwent:

I see the distress in the [Ethiopian] community, and what’s happening here on one hand *makes me happy, because it strengthened me personally to look at life from another perspective*—to understand that there are people who are guilty! I understand the barriers and I understand them, that they are not whining for no reason, that they are not helpless for no reason.

A great deal has been written about the contribution of volunteering and of clinical work to the emotional resilience of the volunteers and to the enhancement of their happiness.⁹⁸ Indeed, one of the

⁹⁸ See, for example, an interview with Daniel Gilbert, Harvard psychology professor, in *The Science Behind the Smile*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Jan.–Feb. 2012), available at <https://hbr.org/2012/01/the-science-behind-the-smile> (“One of the most selfish things you can do is help others. Volunteer at a homeless shelter. You may or may not help the homeless, but

significant elements in the empowerment of the students was giving to others and working in the project. Yael said:

From my point of view, this gave me a lot. The sense that I am doing something. Before I started studying, I wanted to take advantage of my knowledge of Amharic and altogether to contribute my abilities to the Ethiopian community.

Empowerment was manifest on two dimensions: the personal and the professional. For example, Stav talks about her growth as a human being, as a woman. She also addresses the influence of the clinical work on her development as an activist and on the manner in which the activity at the clinic affected her conception of social change:

I read an article of a student who wrote about a project she did with Druze women. . . She says that as the women grew, she saw the project grow; it became an allegory of how she herself grew. This is how I felt. I actually felt how I am growing as a woman, as a person, in ways in which I could not have received from any other place. I have great awareness of social action for the weak and disadvantaged, but the project developed this enormously. I don't think I could have been available emotionally, to please and support them, without the project. This project empowered different things, caused me to eliminate barriers. If in the past I participated in social action up to a point (because there's a limit to how much I will give of myself), the project made me go with it all the way.

The discussion in this part exemplifies the connection between the theoretical context of empowerment and its implementation in field work. As noted, the project reflected several theoretical aspects of empowerment: voice, access to knowledge, and relationships. These aspects lead us to a discussion of the interface between legal and therapeutic discourse and about the role of clinical and multidisciplinary education.

CONCLUSION

The model of empowerment developed in the Women's Rights Clinic integrates various theoretical themes. Theories of empowerment, critical and grassroots lawyering, client-centered lawyering and clinical pedagogy informed and affected the evolution of the project and shaped its clinical structure.

For the students (and for myself, as an active participant) the clinic's work in the project provided (and still provides) an opportunity for expressing a range of abilities and skills. It enabled the students to use a variety of tools: they organized and developed legal rights sessions that were aimed at empowering the workers and pre-

you will almost surely help yourself.”).

paring them to a better interaction with the employer and with state agencies, advanced cooperative projects with professionals from social organizations and a social work coacher, and mobilized additional lawyers to help in activities with the workers, organized the workers as a group for the purpose of legal assistance, offered individual legal assistance, and participated together with the workers in individual and group empowerment meetings with a group coach. The students also worked on raising awareness in the campus to the issue of contract workers and exposed the campus students and staff to some aspects of the Ethiopian culture. Additionally, a relationship developed between the workers and ourselves, which made possible feelings of trust, affection, and confidence. These feelings advanced group cohesion as well as the personal and group empowerment of the workers.

The clinic's work highlighted the importance of abilities that do not fall within the traditional legal domain. It reflected the centrality of such skills as listening, understanding, empathy, sensitivity, and patience. It stressed the importance of a holistic approach that sees all the needs of the community, not only legal needs. The assistance project exposed the students to different models of lawyering and lawyering practice, which encouraged them to perceive law and lawyering from a range of perspectives.

Given the importance of clinical education to shaping future law students as agents of social change,⁹⁹ the recognition of law as an arena for social change, and the varied nature of clinical work, there is great importance to continual dialog between the law and other disciplines.¹⁰⁰ Greater emphasis in legal education, especially in clinical education, on "bridging" rather than adversarial communication, and on an inclusive and systemic perspective, unlike individualized case analysis, can endow law students in general and clinic students in particular with better knowledge of the clients whom they assist and of the situations they face.

⁹⁹ See David P. Havkin, *Developing the Values of the Lawyers of Tomorrow: Possible Lessons to Be Learned from the United States*, 2 *LAW & BUS.* 381 (2005) (Hebrew).

¹⁰⁰ See Danzig-Rosenberg & Prader, *supra* note 77, at 56-60. In this instructive article, the authors describe the need for using culture-sensitive insights and skills derived from the therapeutic field in clinical work with women who were victims of violence. In their model of alternative, culture-sensitive lawyering, the authors mention a range of skills needed for effective work with women victims of violence in general, and women victims from minority groups in particular. The authors also discuss the need to expand the acquisition of these skills to general legal education. For additional material dealing with the advantages of integrating debates and various disciplines in clinical work, see Pualani Enos & Lois H. Kanter, *Who's Listening? Introducing Students to Client-Centered, Client-Empowering, and Multidisciplinary Problem-Solving in a Clinical Setting*, 9 *CLIN. L. REV.* 83 (2002). See also Stacy L. Brustin, *Legal Services Provision Through Multidisciplinary Practice – Encouraging Holistic Advocacy While Protecting Ethical Interests*, 73 *U. COLO. L. REV.* 787 (2002).

An interdisciplinary approach to clinical work is vital for the clients, the clinics, and the students. Holistic clinical education can improve clinical work because it incorporates various aspects of the problem and enables comprehensive treatment of the person. Similar to client-centered lawyering, holistic lawyering takes into consideration the social, psychological, economic, and other aspects of the problem rather than focus strictly on identifying the legal problem. It provides new tools to the students, including various methods of interviewing clients, styles of counseling, and more.

The assistance project stresses the importance of holistic clinical education that converses with other bodies of knowledge from various disciplines. Education of this type advances a broad conception of the law, and the understanding that there are various areas of activity, even if they are not perceived as necessarily legal in nature, that can promote social change. This holistic thinking instills a systemic view of the issues and includes cultural, social, and economic aspects in addition to the legal ones. It enables students to expand their horizons and learn about new fields. Thinking of this type helps students understand the limitations of the law and recognize the fact that legal skills are not the only criterion of good lawyering. In this way, it is possible to nurture a generation of more diverse lawyers as far as the areas of practice, understanding of the profession, and the tools they use in their legal work.

The workers on our campus are no longer transparent. They use their voice and know that there is an entity with which they can discuss and share their difficulties. They know more than they used to and are aware of their rights. They are moving forward and understand that being active is the key that opens the door to change. They experience positive feelings such as confidence, pride, and trust in us. They are more cohesive as a group and recognize the importance of solidarity.

This paper describes a multi-dimensional narrative of a clinical project. This narrative illustrates the learning process that characterized the clinical work with the women cleaners and the evolution of the model to reflect various theoretical themes. The discussion of holistic interdisciplinary clinical work, various models of lawyering, clinical legal education and empowerment theory enriches the literature relating to these issues. The theoretical contribution is an outcome of the clinical practice that made possible a significant connection between law students and cleaning women. This connection helps both groups move forward jointly in the interest of change.