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Doing feminist longitudinal research across the COVID-19 crisis: Unheard impacts on researchers and garment workers in Cambodia

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Abstract

This paper is based on the ReFashion study which used mixed-method longitudinal research to track and amplify the experiences and coping mechanisms of 200 women garment workers in Cambodia as they navigated the financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. It develops the idea and practice of 'feminist longitudinal research' (FLR) through re-centring the too often marginalised knowledges and ways of knowing of Cambodian researchers and research participants. Hearing and learning from their experiences reveal the labours and care-work involved in the 'doing' of longitudinal research during a time of extraordinary crisis, and the potential for feminist consciousness raising and solidarity that can arise both within and beyond the confines of an academic study. The paper advocates for geographers and other social scientists to go beyond technically-framed issues of participant 'attrition' and 'retention' in longitudinal studies to think more creatively and critically about the process of longitudinal research and what it means for those taking part in it. FLR not only evidences the temporally contingent gendered impacts of a phenomenon, but can be distinguished by its intentionality and/or potential to challenge the patriarchal status quo, both in the lives of researchers and participants.

KEYWORDS

Cambodia, COVID19 pandemic, feminist, longitudinal research, research assistant

1 | INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. That Spring as the first wave of the virus told hold, lockdowns around the world came into force, and a health crisis became an economic crisis. 'COVID-19 ground the entire [fashion] industry to a halt', shops closed, unsold stock amassed, and brands failed to pay for garments either made or shipped (Brydges et al., 2020, p. 298). Several months later in May 2020, the UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) GCRF/Newton Fund Agile Response Call released a call for 'short-term projects addressing

and mitigating the health, social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak in Low and Middle Income Countries'. Based on long-term relationships between UK universities and the Cambodia Development Resource Institute, we applied to the funding call that same month. After a successful outcome, the study titled 'Social Protection and the Gendered Impacts of COVID-19 in Cambodia: Longitudinal Research to "*Build Back Better*" in the Global Garment Industry' (www.refashionstudy.org) began formally only two months later in July 2020. This methods-oriented paper on what we originally term 'feminist longitudinal research' (FLR) is one culmination of the ReFashion study and is co-written by the UK Co-Is (Katherine, Sabina, and Lauren) together with the collaborating Cambodian researchers (Theavy, Reach, and Hengvotey).

In the application we had argued the need for, and explained how, 'mixed-method longitudinal research will track and amplify the experiences and coping mechanisms of 200 women workers as they navigate the financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic'. The longitudinal approach – incorporating a total of six quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with the same workers over 18 months – was justified to better capture the changing effects on women's lives and livelihoods across different phases of the crisis, from the immediate outbreak of the virus, its more long-running incursions, to its aftermath. The research was conceived of as an explicitly feminist intervention to evidence gendered injustices faced by garment workers who were being adversely affected by the decisions made by international brands to break contracts (often illegally) and cancel orders with suppliers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our methodological embrace of longitudinal research arose, first, from feminist geographical research which emphasises, in general terms, the benefits of sustained engagement, of long-term relationships, and commitments to particular groups of people or issues (McDowell, 2001; Valentine, 2005). Second, we saw the value of going beyond 'snapsnots' of time to understand the temporal contingencies and dynamism of people's life experiences (Holland, 2011; Sou & Webber, 2019; Thomson & McLeod, 2015). Third, the importance of longitudinal research at times of crisis is particularly pronounced. As Scott (2022, p. 2) contend, 'longitudinal research is particularly suited towards studies that investigate changes and adaptations to traumatic and historic events (such as the global pandemic), as well as pathways, transitions and trajectories over time' (see also Patrick et al., 2021; Treanor et al., 2021). While we agree with such an assertion, this paper does not evaluate the data that arose from using this method during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather it focuses on the impacts of undertaking longitudinal research for the Cambodian researchers and the garment worker participants who took part in the ReFashion study. Through these experiences, the paper delves into the under-elaborated and under-scrutinised 'doing' of FLR.

To achieve this, the paper starts by scoping out what can be conceived of as FLR. It then offers brief contextual information about the consequences of the COVID19 pandemic for the Cambodian garment industry and its workers. The feminist longitudinal methodology is then outlined to provide background to the researcher-participant interactions and relationships explored later. Two main empirical sections follow, the first charting the journey that we (the Cambodian researchers) went through, and second, the garment worker participants. The conclusion sets out what contributions these insights have for the development of FLR.

2 | DOING FEMINIST LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH

In standard definitional terms, longitudinal research comprises (a) data 'collected for each item of variable for two or more distinct time periods; (b) the subjects or cases analyzed are the same or at least comparable from one period to the next; and (c) the analysis involves some comparison of data between or among periods' (Menard, 2002, p. 2). Mostly a method which is quantitative in use, qualitative longitudinal research has suffered in relative terms from a lack of funding and support (van Santen, 2014). Likely because of this, there exists a dearth of scholarship which explicitly explores the 'doing' of longitudinal research (be this quantitative, qualitative or in our case mixed-method), from a feminist standpoint attentive to the process, labours, politics, and inequalities of knowledge production. 'Doing' is associated conceptually with feminist research method (the doing of research), methodology (approach to research), and epistemology (knowledge associated with doing and approaching research; Moss, 2002). In this sense, it is 'not just the processes through which data is collected then that make it feminist, but also the way in which projects are conceptualized and how we as researchers act as people (ethically, politically, emotionally) while engaged in the process' (Sharp, 2005, p. 306). Railing against the phenomenon of the 'footloose researcher' (Nagar, 2002), FLR is both facilitated and sustained through long-term relationship building. As part of the ongoing 'questions and conundrums' arising from applying feminist principles in geographical research (Hiemstra & Billo, 2017, p. 285), we believe that the doing of FLR is ripe for further articulation. Our paper contributes to this endeavour in three main respects.

First, a feminist methodological stance inclusive of all researchers' and participants' experiences is *especially* needed in longitudinal research given the length and regularity of engagement that the method requires. Regarding the former group, the paper looks to address the still commonplace invisibility of research assistants in scholarly publications (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2019), and indeed their co-publication with grant holders (see Nagar & Ali, 2003 for substantive discussion on the politics of collaboration between Northern academics and Southern researchers). As Turner's (2010) critical intervention on the silencing and 'ghost-worker' status of research assistants (RAs) surmises,

> For all our progress within the social sciences to include the voices of 'the other', especially under-represented research subjects and participants, and also our own voices as reflexive researchers, a key partner in the research process has been rendered invisible and effectively silenced. As a consequence, we know very little about the subjectivity and experiences of research assistants and interpreters from their own standpoints.
>
> (p. 206)

Over a decade on, this diagnosis remains still salient. For all the reliance placed on research assistants in social science field work, 'a relatively limited body of literature discusses their roles, the potential for RAs to be empowered as a direct result of the process and the central ways in which they shape knowledge production' (Nguyen et al., 2022, p. 2). For the ReFashion team, this scholarly lacuna became even more untenable with the COVID-19 pandemic during which we (the UK Investigators) were, for the first ever time, unable to undertake any research physically in Cambodia due to mobility restrictions. In the latter case of research participants, there also persists an under-attention to their experiences of taking part in studies, and pro-active and direct efforts to solicit these. Goals of FLR include to re-centre marginalised knowledges and ways of knowing when it comes to an issue or topic being studied over time, and to learn from participants' experiential encounters and reported impacts of taking part in what are typically long-running projects.

Connected to this, second, a feminist approach to the labours of longitudinal research is required because of the long-term engagements required of both researchers and participants individually but also in relation to each other. Working with participants over extended time necessitates emotional labour in the forging and maintenance of connections with participants. Yet method-focused publications on how to do longitudinal research rarely discuss this. One of the most highly cited scholarly publications (with nearly 2000 citations) on longitudinal research, for example, pays scant attention to the 'doing' of the method from the perspective of researchers or participants beyond what are technically framed issues of 'panel attrition' and 'respondent recall' (Menard, 2002). In contrast, as feminist geographer Hall reflects in relation to her UK ethnographic research on austerity, 'although rarely posited in this way, the research encounter might be understood as a form of care work: by listening to and empathising with participants, or in providing companionship or intimacy, one can perform a caring role, which may or may not be reciprocal.' (Hall, 2017, p. 305). For us (the Cambodian researchers) and participants during the COVID-19 pandemic, the interweaving of our lives took the form of managing not only the physical risks of meeting up, but also the emotional dimensions of talking about the economic turmoil unfolding. Being attentive to the process, proximities, and even intimacies of longitudinal research is vital from a feminist perspective.

Third, while longitudinal research is ordinarily centred on recording and understanding certain trends and shifts over time (in our case the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on garment workers), ordinarily missed in mainstream social sciences are the changes or even transformations which the research process can bring about in researchers and/or participants. As Scott (2022, p. 6) recognises through her research with young people during the COVID-19 pandemic, 'Over time, I felt increasingly attuned to the feelings of participants, which is (in my view) a natural and direct consequence of the longitudinal nature of the work undertaken'. One view then is that by the very nature of longitudinal research 'professionally and otherwise – [researchers] are part of these changes' (van Santen, 2014, p. 24). This paper thus hears from us (the Cambodian researchers) and garment workers in Cambodia and the impact the longitudinal study had. As we elaborate later, feminist consciousness raising, and solidarity galvanised both within and beyond the confines of the study, is one notable outcome of FLR. An important dimension of the approach is thus its intentionality and/or potential to challenge the patriarchal status-quo, both in the lives of researchers and participants. In this sense, while gender analysis was a core part of the ReFashion study, a feminist sensibility and practice is more interventionist in character, aiming to change systems and patterns of inequality. FLR has in this guise the potential to both highlight the gendered impacts of a phenomenon over time on a cohort of participants, and to bring about perceptible shifts and even transformations in those participating in such studies as researchers and respondents.

3 | THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN CAMBODIA'S GARMENT INDUSTRY

The collapse of clothing trade and retail during the pandemic triggered a collapse in employment opportunities for the fashion industry's mostly female manufacturing workforce. In response to the cancelling of orders by global brands, local suppliers in Cambodia (and likewise in other Asian countries such as Bangladesh) shut down production lines and facilities (Lawreniuk, 2020). Workforce layoffs and wage cuts became 'widespread' (ILO, 2021, pp. 10–11) across the industry worldwide.

Cambodia itself is home to an estimated 600–800 garment factories, which provide employment for nearly 1 million people. Some 80% of these workers are women. By May 2020, as order contracts were rescinded throughout the global industry, already up to half of all factories in Cambodia had suspended production, either on a temporary or permanent basis (Arnold, 2021). With the industry responsible for an estimated 6% of employment, 75% of merchandise exports, and 16% of GDP (ILO, 2018), this sparked a macro-economic crisis, whose impacts reverberated and were felt most acutely within the already precarious home and working lives of the garment sectors' female employees and their families. Cambodia's existing social protection coverage for garment workers offered little support to those unemployed for any period, whether over the long- or short-term.

Despite Cambodia acting quickly to close national borders in 2020, and registering only 400 cases and 0 deaths in the first year of the pandemic, the sharp economic shock suffered as global markets and supply chains collapsed left workers with mounting debts and growing hunger (Brickell et al., 2022; Brickell & Lawreniuk, 2022). This early economic crisis segued into a delayed health emergency from February 2021, as COVID-19 cases began to rise sharply. Often concentrated in the garment sector, the economic hangover from a year of underwork compelled many of the garment sector's employees to risk infection in continuing to work. Where lighter touch measures failed to curb transmission, a series of rolling lockdowns followed. Implemented at short or no notice, many workers were left effectively stranded with a shortage of supplies, and worker reports of severe anxiety and depression peaked (Lawreniuk et al., 2022). A successful vaccination campaign enabled Cambodia to lift public health restrictions by November 2021. Yet the legacies of COVID-19 are still felt in the post-pandemic era, with stalled wage growth and increased flexibilization worsening the terms of employment for most and ensuring the continuation of crisis.

4 | RESEARCH (RE)DESIGN

Our research team observed the grave early impacts of the pandemic on the financial security and wellbeing of garment workers in Cambodia from as early as January 2020. When the GCRF/Newton Fund Agile Response Call was launched, we built on these early insights with the successful bid to examine the pandemic's impact on female garment workers. The light touch funding application enabled us to quickly secure the support and cooperation of a cross-spectrum of industry stakeholders and local collaborators. Importantly, the application was made possible too by the already-established relationships between the Co-Investigators: the UK academics and researchers at the Cambodia Development Resource Institute.

At the time of application, we faced an unprecedented research challenge: of designing and deploying fieldwork methods to both contend with and capture the temporal uncertainties and biosecurity risks posed by the pandemic. Faced with the context of an extraordinary crisis, of indeterminate length and character, we settled on a longitudinal method that would enable us to capture the pandemic's unpredictable turns and phases, and track the longer-term impacts of what might prove to be more than a short-term crisis.

Each phase of our longitudinal study comprised two data collection methods with the all-female garment worker participants: (1) a quantitative survey and (2) qualitative interviews (which were conducted in Khmer and transcribed into English by the Cambodian research team). Much like the UK-Cambodia research collaboration, the recruitment of garment workers was made feasible by already having entry points into worker unions. The Cambodian researchers were also employed to work full-time on the study, thus enabling enough time and capacity to pursue the FLR methodology. First, our quantitative survey captured monthly data on work and income, as well as financial and wellbeing impacts on worker's immediate household and rural-based families. The survey was repeated three times with the same cohort of workers: in Oct/Nov '20 (203 workers), Mar/Apr '21 (150 workers), & Nov/Dec '21 (100 workers). Second, a series of semi-structured interviews with 60 workers from our original sample, permitting scope to discuss women's experiences in fuller detail. Interviews were again repeated three times with the same cohort of workers: in Dec '20/Jan '21 (61 workers), June/July '21 (45 workers), and Dec '21/Jan '22 (31 workers). In the final round of interviews, the respondents were

additionally asked about their experiences of participating in the study. Around 50% of all participants were retained across the full 18-month period and completed the three surveys and three interviews. This figure is testament to the strong connections forged during the COVID19 crisis between the Cambodian researchers and garment workers.

During the 18-month study as an international team we communicated almost weekly via online meetings and more regularly via WhatsApp. Towards the project end we also made time to discuss our experiences of working together. This encompassed a formal online interview between us in October 2022, and then all meeting up in November 2022 for 10 days in London. The time in London included working on this paper together and presenting the ReFashion data and films made as part of the study (see https://www.refashionstudy.org/films) to MPs in Parliament (Figure 1).

To protect the safety of both our participants and research team, the methods were designed to be flexible and adaptable, attuned to COVID-19 prevalence in Cambodia. For the initial phases of the study in 2020, therefore, the interviews proceeded face-to-face, with participants able to attend the research team's office or elect for a home visit. However, as cases in Cambodia grew from late 2020, the research team made the decision to continue to the

FIGURE 1 Cambodian researchers with a MP discussing the ReFashion findings and 'Wedding Ring' film in Parliament (Photo by Katherine Brickell, November 2022).

interviews remotely, reaching participants through mobile telephone numbers securely stored with the prior permission of participants for follow-up interviews. Our participants' names and those of the Cambodian researchers have been changed to pseudonyms.

5 | THE JOURNEY OF CAMBODIAN REFASHION RESEARCHERS

> I stand for women. Before I joined the project, I stood a little bit for women... But after this project I understand much more about the women and I have a sense of, being the women's agent: to promote them, to protect them, something like that.
>
> (Lida)

As Lida describes, our Cambodian research team experienced changing roles and identities through the implementation of the study. At the outset, we perceived ourselves more conventionally, as collectors and interpreters of data provided to us by our participants. However, later the research journey became more bidirectional and discursive: 'more casual communication, like friends or like the people that we know' (Hanna). As we gained the confidence of participants in uncertain times, amid a dearth of official and verified information sources, we became more than interlocutors of experience but, in ourselves, vital repositories of information regarding the COVID19 pandemic:

> We're not psychology experts you know, just researchers, but during that time... it wasn't *just* an interview, you know? ... We researchers read the news, read all the updated information on the situation to explain to our respondents... advice about what they need to do and what they don't need to do and what support is out there that they can access during their crisis.
>
> (Hanna)

Hanna's account here speaks to the many invisible labours performed by research assistants; of the building and maintenance of bonds of trust and rapport. Part of the interview included garment workers asking *us* questions. Given concerns around the safety of vaccines, for example, quite a few garment workers were interested to know if we had been vaccinated and how the pandemic was affecting our own families. Much of this is, of course, a particularly emotional form of labour. Indeed, where Scott (2022, p. 1) highlights that qualitative longitudinal methods 'have enormous potential to curate rich emotional narratives', for interview methods we suggest this may demand a matched, intense emotional investment from researchers.

During our multi-year study, we remained engaged with the participants, who had become 'like friends', as they endured severe hardship, from compromised financial security to the loss of loved ones from the virus. Reflecting on this journey in the formal team interview we described wide-ranging emotions experienced: of being variously 'upset', 'frustrated', and 'disappointed', both in response to participants' problems and our own inability to offer more immediate solutions. As Hanna elaborates, over time, we found our attachments hard to separate:

> I know that we have an agenda and we need to put up some boundaries, but.... You got emotional, you know... So during the last interview, yeah, I feel a little upset when we say goodbye to all of respondents.
>
> (Hanna)

These responses were not ephemeral but provoked lasting transformations - the project 'really changed me as a person' (Sopheap). As we described, our connections with participants gave us an unique vantage point to observe established and deeply embedded gendered and other intersectional norms and practices and, in doing so, gave us a lens with which to more concretely understand how structures of disadvantage and privilege shape our own lives:

> Since being involved with this project I would say... I can see something different. Not only the project per se, but also in my workplace. In my workplace too, I see the difference between men and women, where the women are working, and how the women struggle to move up to the next level. I would say... I can now see these differences around me.
>
> (Sopheap)

Central to this journey, Sopheap continued, was the recognition and reaffirming of shared experience between researchers and participants during the crisis:

> We had some of the same experience with the garment worker but ... we are in a better situation. We didn't lose income. But we had some of the same experience. What I learned as a researcher is that it's important that we are able to share [things in] common with the respondent.

In the interview, we each described our participation in the project as a form of consciousness-raising, after which we 'became more feminist' and sought to 'amplify' the experiences of participants.

> For me, this project, it changed my perspective. After I joined this project I value more the people who advocate for the women workers...It's made me feel a little bit, like...what should we researchers do, to do more to help the workers...I think before I joined the project I learned the concept of gender, but not really a sense of supporting them. I saw they had a lot of challenges, care work, earning money...some people learn gender studies but do not get a sense of supporting women, to change something through your activities...it has been a big change for me.
>
> (Lida)

In the discussions, each of us agreed that we had come to understand how 'feminist is more than gender' (Hanna) and how we had witnessed changes in ourselves and each other. Our long running involvement in the longitudinal research across the COVID-19 pandemic had not only revealed the inequities and hardships faced by women garment workers, but had shifted our relationship with feminism both personally and being newly sensitive to matters in our own workplace.

6 | GARMENT WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF PARTICIPATING IN REFASHION

> When you interview me like this, it does help when I talk about my worries and also helps relieve what keeps bottling inside me even though you don't have anything to help me but I'm still happy that you did.
>
> (Round 3 interviewee)

Echoing the Cambodian team's experiences, women worker participants also recounted how being included in the project during a time of crisis offered a chance for sharing, a chance to 'relieve the burden': 'I feel that it [being interviewed] somehow releases my sorrow since I get to talk and describe my issues' (Round 3 interviewee). In this sense, the COVID-19 crisis, its significant personal impacts, and the cathartic relationships forged with researchers through the FLR, aided the retention of garment workers over the 18-month period. Moreover, many women explained how they did not feel comfortable talking to others in their life about their problems, particularly around taboo subjects such as debt, domestic violence, and tensions in their marriage. This was something that Sopheap noticed too,

> In some cases, the first time she [a participant] talked to me, after she called me at the weekend about some problems with her husband...it felt like we were building a relationship and trust.
>
> (Sopheap)

Beyond the personal sphere of the domestic, other impacts were identified by workers of participating in the longitudinal research. Garment work is a form of 'invisible' work in that it is taken-for-granted labour, or purposefully occluded from scrutiny. Some participants recounted how longitudinal research which centred their experience was buoying, helping to recapture a sense of worth as a garment worker:

> When I share it with you, I feel like there are people who understand and want to know about the issues and demands of garment workers. Because garment workers are tied with a lot of issues and they end up having nothing.
>
> (Round 3 interviewee)

> I can share the information to you and when you get the information can share it to others about how the factory is like...No one knows about the factory, how it has changed, or even if we work until we die, no one knows.
>
> (Round 3 interviewee)

Garment workers′ participation in the FLR provided them with a sense that their experiences are being shared beyond the factory floor, and importantly that changes in workplace conditions are being reported. Speaking to researchers and hearing more about the outside world, and shared struggles, helped limit loneliness and isolation too: 'Other people face the same impact as me, it′s not just me' (Round 3 interviewee). The repeated interviews left time for participants to talk to each other in between interviews, and begin to share information with each other too:

> I will try to inform my fellow workers... I will tell them to speak up whenever they face any difficulties... Some workers are afraid to ask about how to save money, how to pay off our debt or how to spend money during COVID-19, so I share my experience with them.
>
> (Round 3 interviewee)

> I want to talk about sharing information a little bit. If we don′t share the widely, our fellow workers still don′t know our society in general. Like, you mention, I only know from you, but still not yet know about the big picture of our society. In this regard, I need to listen more, and watch more, and share information to my friends, so it would circulate the information wider. If we don′t like that, there would be still limited awareness.
>
> (Round 3 interviewee)

Longitudinal research offers incremental instead of discrete engagement between researchers and participants and from a feminist purview supports the sharing of knowledge over time between them. As the garment workers express, their experiences of participating in the study has encouraged their own sharing of beneficial knowledge between garment workers.

The ease of researcher-participant exchange was aided through the phone-call interviews which replaced the face-to-face ones as the pandemic took hold in Cambodia. Participants expressed how it made fitting in research with their lives easier- '[We] have a higher chance to talk than meet[ing] physically' (Round 3 interviewee). One respondent also shared that talking over the phone enabled her to open up more, as she could be sure over time who she was sharing with, and why. This quotation also underscores the broader problem of 'one-off' data collection, in this case by auditors:
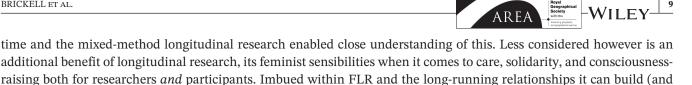
> If we talk by phone and not face-to-face, I would not be afraid. There are people who come to interview us at the factory, I usually don′t know what to talk about. I′m afraid I make mistake, and the interviewer would inform the company. When officials from the Ministry come to the factory, I never dare to talk.
>
> (Round 3 interviewee)

With lockdowns at different points of the study increasing isolation and distance between the researchers and participants, we worried that our ability to conduct longitudinal research would suffer. Akin to labour rights feminist activists adopting social media for their strategic ends (Grosser & McCarthy, 2019), cheap, accessible technology facilitated the research and its relational dimensions. Garment workers commonly noted their preference for phone interviews rather than in-person meetings. For our international research team, the crisis also forced more imaginative thinking, deeper, longer-term connections, shared learning, and blossoming friendships over online meetings and group WhatsApp messaging.

7 | CONCLUSION: BEING HEARD AND RE-HEARD

FLR has a two-fold impulse and purpose. First, the ReFashion study sought to visibilise the experiences of garment workers who make so many of the clothes and shoes worn globally. The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on them shifted across

time and the mixed-method longitudinal research enabled close understanding of this. Less considered however is an additional benefit of longitudinal research, its feminist sensibilities when it comes to care, solidarity, and consciousness-raising both for researchers *and* participants. Imbued within FLR and the long-running relationships it can build (and build from), is recognition of the mutual learning and sharing which can arise in times of crisis.

Across the two empirical sections of this paper, the first focused on our experiences (as Cambodian researchers), and the second on garment workers, is a clear sense of knowledge exchange and the care-work this entails. Garment workers, typically under-valued and viewed as discardable by big business especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, expressed an agentic sense of being heard – and re-heard – as they took part in the longitudinal study. This sensibility then spread as they themselves felt less alone and more able to speak to other fellow workers about the challenges faced. For us Cambodian researchers, reflecting on its impact means moving beyond the factory floors where the garment worker participants (once) laboured, to our own workplace with its newly recognised inequities. A feminist longitudinal approach not only transcends isolated moments in time, but also has the potential to have long-lasting rather than fleeting impacts on researchers and participants involved in it. Feminist consciousness raising and solidarity can emerge both within, but also beyond, the formal boundaries of academic study.

As a consequence, we have argued the case for geographers and other social scientists to go beyond narrow and technically-framed issues of participant 'attrition' and 'retention' in longitudinal studies to think far more creatively and critically about the process of longitudinal research and what it means for those participating. Through the methodological reflections, pragmatism, and innovation of the ReFashion study, together we have shown how FLR can work not only to reveal the temporal gendered impacts of a phenomenon or crisis, but also how it can be distinguished from 'standard' longitudinal research by its intentionality and/or potential to challenge the patriarchal status-quo for researchers and participants.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
The data is available via ReShare https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/study?id=856007.

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