

7 Conclusion

As a final conclusion, it is important to mention that market conditions change over time. The challenge for single businesses and sectors is to survive in a changing environment. However, such changes can have fatal consequences for specific sectors and regions as a whole. This work showed how a healthy and flourishing industry was turned into an ailing one. Many different factors could be identified throughout the work that have contributed to this downturn. However, the most devastating ones for the silversmiths were abrupt changes that occurred without preparing the silversmith industry in Taxco. There is to mention the construction of the highway from Mexico-City to Acapulco, leaving out Taxco and the construction of the hospital in Taxco, coming along with high Social Security payments for the silversmith workshops. This combination of a weakened market, by losing tourism and an increase in production costs, due to the Social Security payments, was devastating for the silversmith workshops in the 50s. This led to the structural change towards the family workshops that came along with various problems that were avoided before. The mentioned political decisions, as well as the abrupt opening of the economy in the 90s, or the preference for massive tourism instead of cultural tourism, probably were taken with good intentions for the development of the country as a whole. However, they benefitted certain regions, while they prejudiced others, such as the economy of Taxco. Therefore, it can be concluded that these decisions lacked planning and a sustainable and holistic strategy in order to provide alternatives for the regions and sectors excluded from the benefits. By that, the economy of Taxco was left alone with its problems. This became clear in the historical analysis of the industry, from its beginnings to present. The silversmiths today suffer from the same problems that have begun decades ago. As there is little hope for bigger changes in the near future, this work introduces an approach that focuses on an external, independent player in order to make a change for the silversmiths. The Fair Trade partner could represent an alternative to the local market and a dormant government. It was demonstrated that applying this concept of trade with the silversmiths, it could lead to an improvement of their living conditions. Further research could focus on designing a concrete strategy for a Fair Trade approach in the silversmith industry in Taxco and on identifying high potential markets for Fair Trade silver jewelry. This work was destined to pave the way for such further steps and to rescue the silversmiths of Taxco and their problems from oblivion.