

## **GENDERED POWER RELATIONSHIP: IN RESPECTIVE TO MALE DOMINATION OVER WOMEN IN ARTISAN COMMUNITIES OF JAIPUR CITY, RAJASTHAN**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The culture of Indian society is inherited within the traditional customs, ethical values, art and craft since time immemorial. This historical experience relates to the unique contribution of artisan communities which is been endured till the present society, by the efforts of both men as well as women artisans. However, due to the very ingrained patriarchal structure of Indian society, women artisans, alike most of women, are subjected to gendered power relations where males are having superior advantage over them. They are deprived of financial and decision-making rights in their respective households and working spheres. This hindrance exposure of women to the market, interrupting their self-dependency, and lack respect and equality succumbing their work efforts to male counterparts. Thus, the paper seeks to highlight the problem of gendered power relationship in respective to women artisans of Jaipur city, Rajasthan.*

**Keywords:** *Traditional Customs, Ethical Values, Self-Dependency, Gendered Power Relationship.*

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### **Introduction**

The artisan society has always been a significant pillar of culture and heritage. Artisans are the workers who are skilled in making things with their hands and who get involved into trades using their skills of installing things. Along with their manual capabilities, they may use various equipments, machineries and tool to give it a finishing touch and bring it into the market. The term artisan has been derived from French word 'artisan' and Italian word 'artigiano.' Right from the medieval period, cultural diversity exists in the form of variety of dances, languages, religions, people, their customs, festivals, art, craft and heritage. The traditional occupation of the artisans is maintained in almost all the parts of the Jaipur city as well. In some parts of the country, whole families are engaged in artisan services by learning vocational and technical skills or are traditionally indulged in it. Thus, artisanal services can help in reducing unemployment and poverty.

In India as well as other developing countries, the artisan sector provides job opportunities especially to women. The Indian handicrafts industry is considered to be the major source of income to rural people including women and weaker sections of the society. Women participate in the artisan economy and practice traditional crafts so as to earn income and sustain their livelihoods. They are playing a significant role as it accounts to more than hundred million in unorganized sector. A large chunk of women workforce is observed dominating the handicrafts sector, and many holding respectable positions in their working spheres. However, even after so much efforts and being successful breadwinners, many women are still deprived of decision making rights and authoritative actions. They are subjected to gendered power relations within the patriarchal structure of Indian Society. It is a conventional approach where men are holding advantageous positions over women especially in workplaces. The society has created some male-dominated specialized roles such as decision making in financial matters, holding on property rights, etc. These gender discriminating roles are resisting artisan

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women from progress and having a negative impact on women's exposure to the front markets. Thus, it becomes necessary to find out the status of women in artisan communities and the paper seeks to analyze whether women are given enough financial and decision making rights in artisans communities of Jaipur city, Rajasthan.

#### Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the status of women in artisan communities
- To analyze the financial inclusion of women artisans in their families.
- To find out whether women hold decision making power

#### Tools for Data Collection

The following tools were used for the purpose of the study:

- **Schedule:** For the convenience of analyses, a schedule was prepared to collect the first-hand information. The questions listed in the schedule were asked to the respondents and the researcher noted their responses down. The schedule was framed in two languages i.e. Hindi and English.
- **Secondary Sources:** To gather some existing information related to the study, secondary sources of data have been used. Secondary sources of data included existing research data, statements and data by government agencies, books, newspapers, magazines, journals and articles, and authenticated websites.

#### Methodology

- **Area of the Study:** For the purpose, the study was conducted in Jaipur City, Rajasthan.
- **Universe of the Study:** For the study, card holder artisans belonging to the different art forms such as Jaipur Jewelry, Jaipur Textiles, Blue Pottery, and Carpets and Rugs artisans were included.
- **Sample:** Sample of 100 artisans are taken for the purpose of the study. 25 artisans of Jaipur Jewelry, 20 artisans from Jaipur textiles, 5 artisans from blue pottery and 50 artisans from carpets and Rugs are sampled.
- **Sampling:** The method of sample selection is Purposive sampling method.

#### Review of Literature

To determine the relevancy of research, following literary works are reviewed for the purpose:

**Jasani (1990)** stated that there is a growing rate of women employment and boost can be observed in women empowerment after several measures taken by the government. However, a gap seems to be widening where women are not treated equally due to male domination. They lack in labor market strategies and are paid lower than men. Still there is a male domination in working sector.

**Weber (1997)** opined in a study of embroidery industry of *Chikan* in Lucknow that it is ironic that the relative success and popularity of the craft is leading to its partial demise, at least in terms of the level of skill of the artisans and lack of variety of high quality, finished product. The author also made it notable that craft industry is important for the employment of women as the *chikan* industry was once dominated by highly skilled male embroiders and now semi skilled women are working even from home so that they are remained in '*pardah*' and can locally produce cheap products at large scale.

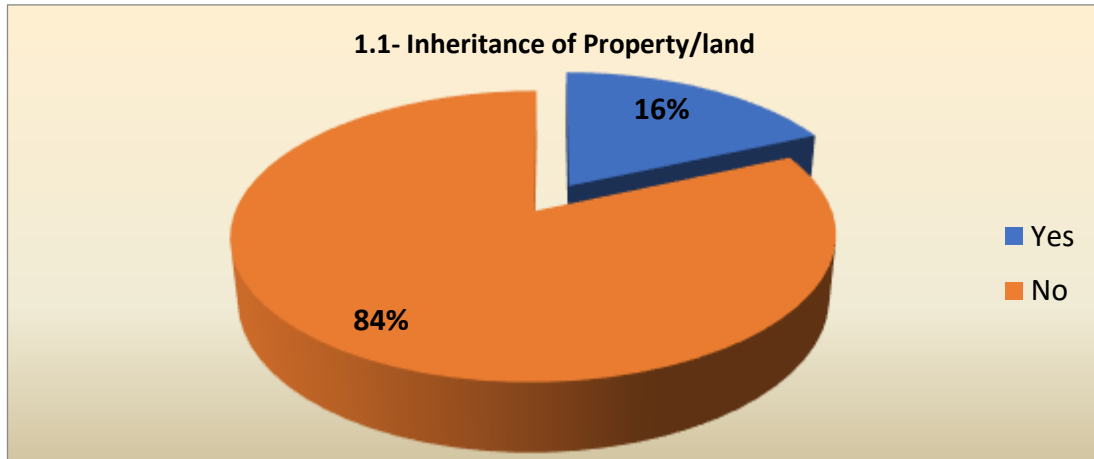
**Halford et al. (2018)** opined the contradictory picture of men and women in organizations stating that their relations in twenty first century are becoming optimistic where women are getting equal opportunities. However, still there is a huge part of the society where gender based inequalities exist and discriminate women leaning their secondary role in the workforce.

#### Empirical Study

The status of women and their socio-economic empowerment is a matter of concern in Indian society. Women stand a chance to gain social and economic empowerment through their inclusion in financial matters. Also, their right to hold assets traces women's empowerment and security.

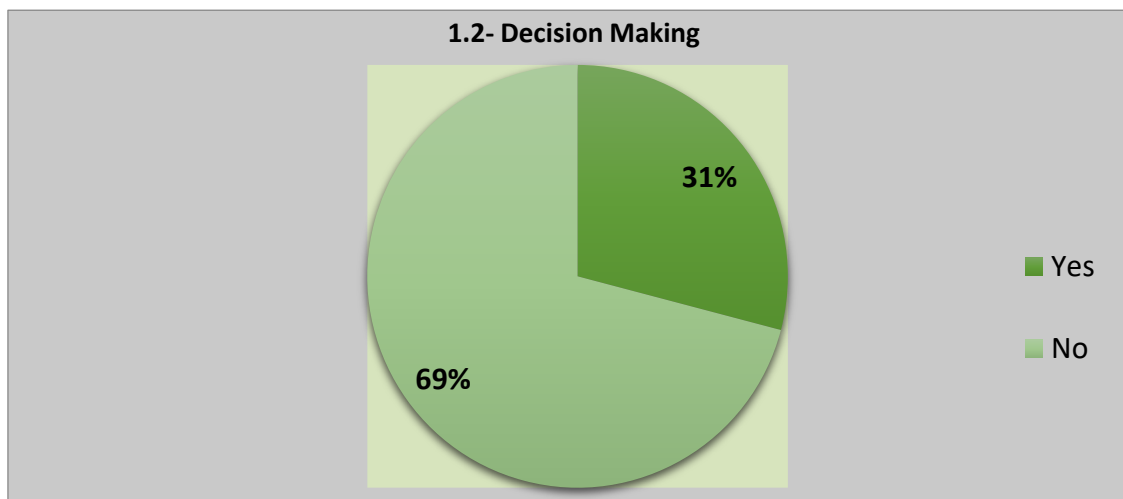
During the research, it was found that women do contribute in the traditional family occupations but do not work in open markets. They mostly work from their homes due to the customary '*pardah*' practice and domestic responsibilities. This practice of female subjugation is prevailing in most of the artisans families even after their effective contribution in this sector. Women are expected to work from

their households not just to manage their familial responsibilities, but also to maintain the boundaries set by patriarchal mindsets. This corresponds to the study of Weber (1997) emphasizing the male domination over the *Chikan* industry in Lucknow city of Uttar Pradesh, where women artisans remain behind the veil and work from home. This shows that the social practice of women's seclusion is prevalent even in the artisan communities of Jaipur city, Rajasthan. Thus, it becomes imperative for the researcher to know the financial inclusion of women in artisan families.



**Diagram 1: Inheritance of Property/land**

The respondents were questioned regarding the inheritance rights of women in their families. It was found that 84% (84) of the respondents refused that women in their family do not inherit property while only 16% (16) respondents agreed that women also inherit property in their families. This shows that women are still devoid of property inheritance rights, deprived of potentials to meet their subsistence needs on their own, and are either dependent on their paternal family or on the husband/ in-laws.



**Diagram 2: Decision Making**

The above diagram reflects the decision-making by the women who hold property/land in their name. From amongst the 16 respondents, 69% (11) respondents replied that women in their families cannot take decisions on their own inherited property/land matters, whereas only 31% (5) respondents admitted that women who own property in their family can take independent decisions regarding their inherited property. It is observed that patriarchal mindset persists in the families of these artisans and despite the governmental efforts, the women in these families' still lack equality and social security.

## Conclusion

An important finding of the study is the **gendered power relationship** in which male dominates women in artisan communities of Jaipur city. Under the patriarchal domination, women in artisan families are deprived of financial rights and are expected to support their male counterparts by doing the artisanry work from home. The idea is to maintain female seclusion and to keep them away from the public gaze, within '*Purdah*'. For the most part, women artisans are not getting any exposure to showcase their productive capacity and talent in the markets. They are working behind the front markets due to which they lack respect and equality in society resulting in stunted family growth and glaring socio-economic inequalities. Women in artisan families are not so involved in financial matters and lack decision making rights even on their own property/assets.

The social practice of women seclusion and lack of economic rights to them is observed, which reflects the absence of gender equality in their work as well as in households. This leads to the low self-esteem of women, which holds back a family's growth and lowers progress as their productive aptitude remains unutilized. Observing this sight of the lower social state of women in artisan communities, there is a need to focus upon their socio-economic conditions and empower them with proper implementation of governmental and non-governmental strategies. There is a need to organize such awareness programmes and training practices that may empower them to stand in financial matters and their social lives.

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