



## “THE ROLE OF HANDICRAFTS AND SOUVENIR INDUSTRY IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY IN KARNATAKA STATE”

### Folk Tourism

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### KEYWORDS

#### Introduction

Generally speaking, handicrafts have developed without specific political strategies. Handicraft production in developing countries now depends in large part on the demand generated by the tourism industry and by the business activities of intermediaries. Tourism and handicrafts go hand in hand. A tourist is always in search of something that is exotic and at the same time authentic to carry back as a memoir of his travel to a distant land. It is estimated that tourists spend around 40 per cent of their budget on souvenir purchases and other craft products (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005). Recent trends show that tourism earnings have come to rely more and more on the handicraft-This study is intended to illustrate the relevance of developing and reinforcing handicraft production as a way to promote employment and development for the most marginalized populations, especially the women. Handicrafts are a part of the culture of a nation or ethnic group and represent a key component of socio-economic life, even if handicraft activities are not fully included in national accounts. Generally speaking, handicrafts have developed without specific political strategies. Handicraft production in developing countries now depends in large part on the demand generated by the tourism industry and by the business activities of intermediaries.

Touristic ribbon or line of shops selling crafts and offering a glimpse of artisans at work across villages become popular among attractive (even mass tourists) providing a much needed filling towards economic subsistence to the artisans and nearby to the community (UNDP, 2011). Crafts production has, thereby, become a source of direct and indirect employment leading towards economic development of the people. Beside this, craft production also contributes to social development, preventing migration of gifted artisans to urban areas in search of paltry employment and empowering women by converting this pastime craft making activity into a regular income source. For all these characteristics, in recent years, it has become extremely important for countries to develop policies that promote handicraft production along with thrust on tourism development. Undoubtedly, linking pro-poor cultural tourism with local handicraft production can provide ample opportunities for the weaker section. This has been recognized worldwide by tourism promotion bodies, local authorities and lead bodies.

The crafts of India are diverse; rich in history and religion of each state in India reflect the influence of different empires. Throughout centuries, crafts have been embedded as a culture and tradition within rural communities. They are a constant source of inspiration for contemporary designers and the subject for global exhibitions representing India

This has added further impetus to the development of tourism packaged around artisans, their unique craft pieces and the culture of the place and people. Some countries like Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia have understood the symbiotic relationship between craft, culture and tourism and thus have given significant importance to the growth of cultural tourism.

#### Review of Literature:

The present study is review of literature speaks about the results of the various studies which had been already studied by different scholars, authors and researchers. Here the researcher has tried her level best to present a relevant review related to the research problem. The

researcher went through the different libraries and departments for collecting information on Handicrafts and souvenir industry in women empowerment. After visiting libraries and books and literatures, the researcher has found that there are very limited studies had conducted on women artisans working in handicrafts sector, particularly in the state of HK region of Karnataka.

#### Handicrafts

A handicraft, sometimes more precisely expressed as artisanal handicraft or handmade, is any of a wide variety of types of work where useful and decorative objects are made completely by hand or by using only simple tools. It is a traditional main sector of craft, and applies to a wide range of creative and design activities that are related to making things with one's hands and skill, including work with textiles, mouldable and rigid materials, paper, and plant fibres. Collective terms for handicrafts include artisan, handcrafting, crafting, and handcraftsmanship.

#### Souvenir

A souvenir (from French, for a remembrance or memory), memento, keepsake, or token of remembrance is an object a person acquires for the memories the owner associates with it. A souvenir can be any object that can be collected or purchased and transported home by the traveller as a memento of a visit.

#### Souvenirs as objects

The tourism industry designates tourism souvenirs as commemorative merchandise associated with a location, often including geographic information and usually produced in a manner that promotes souvenir collecting.

Souvenirs as objects include mass-produced merchandise such as clothing: T-shirts and hats; collectables: postcards, refrigerator magnets, miniature figures; household items: mugs, bowls, plates, ashtrays, egg timers, spoons, notepads, plus many others.

Souvenirs also include non-mass-produced items like folk art, local artisan handicrafts, objects that represent the traditions and culture of the area, non-commercial, natural objects like sand from a beach, and anything else that a person attaches nostalgic value to and collects among his personal belongings.

#### Concept of Empowerment

'Empowerment' is a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted and multi-layered concept. According to Encyclopaedia, Empowerment means empower yourself to live the life of your dreams, shed your limitations and reclaim your greatness. But in Dictionary 'Empowerment' means "to invest with authority, authorize, shortly thereafter it began to be used with an infinitive in a more general way, meaning "to enable or permit". And according to the country report of Government of India Empowerment means, "moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power". Empowerment includes individual and collective abilities that offer a socio-political space as well as access to and control of different means (resources power etc.).

**The Bodhicitta Foundation** -A Drikung Kagya Charitable Organization has said "If you are empowered and therefore have freedom that is joyful and will give you happiness. When you are not empowered and your freedom is controlled by others, the afflictive

emotions will lead to suffering. If you take a hundred of empowerments, the one you must have is the empowerment of the state of your own mind. It must be able to stand on its own. An analysis of the empowerment process 2 highlights the way in which opportunities to seize power can be used to overlook as well as the way in which they can change the immediate or wider environment

"Empowerment" has been used to represent a wide range of concepts and to describe a proliferation of outcomes. The term has been used more often to advocate for certain types of policies and intervention strategies than to analyse them, as demonstrated by a number of documents from the United Nations (UNDAW 2001; UNICEF 1999), the Association for Women in Development (Everett 1991), Feminist activist writings often promote empowerment of individuals and organizations of women (Sen and Grown 1987; Jahan 1995; Kumar 1993) but vary in the extent to which they conceptualize or discuss how to identify it. Another line of thought in development promotes social inclusion in institutions as the key pathway to empowerment of individuals and has at times tended to conflate empowerment and participation. Capitalism, top-down approaches to development, and/or poverty itself are seen as sources of disempowerment that must be challenged by bringing "lowers"—the poor and disenfranchised—(Chambers 1997) into the management of community and development processes. The growth of civil society and participatory development methods at both macro-and meso-levels of society are usually proposed as the mechanisms by which empowerment takes place (Friedmann 1992; Chambers 1997). For example, Narayan et al. (2000a) focus on state and civil society institutions at both national and local levels, including informal institutions such as kinship and neighbourhood networks. Institutions at the micro level, such as those of marriage and the household, are not considered part of the state or of civil society, but interpersonal gender dynamics within the household are considered part of the equation of social exclusion and in need of directed efforts at change.

Bennett (2002) has developed a framework in which "empowerment" and "social inclusion" are closely related but separate concepts. Drawing on Narayan (2002), Bennett describes empowerment as "the enhancement of assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to engage, influence and hold accountable the institutions which affect them." Social inclusion is defined as "the removal of institutional barriers and the enhancement of incentives to increase the access of diverse individuals and groups to assets and development opportunities." Bennett notes that both of these definitions are intended to be operational, and describe processes rather than end points. The empowerment process, as she characterizes it, operates "from below" and involves agency, as exercised by individuals and groups. Social inclusion, in contrast, requires systemic change which may be initiated "from above."

Early studies of "women's status" often covered aspects of empowerment without explicitly labelling it as such. One of the earliest empirical studies in this area, for example, used the more general term "women's status" but located a nexus of gender-related power differentials in the household, noting how important the family unit is to understanding the operation of gender in a society (Acharya and Bennett 1981). Acharya and Bennett also highlight the links between women's economic roles and their control over resources and life options.

### Women Empowerment

Different people use empowerment to mean different things. However there are four aspects which seem to be generally accepted in the literature on women's empowerment. Firstly to be empowered one must have been disempowered. It is relevant to speak of empowering women, for example, because, as a group, they are disempowered relative to men. Secondly empowerment cannot be bestowed by a third party. Rather those who would become empowered must claim it. Development agencies cannot therefore empower women the most they can achieve is to facilitate women empowering themselves. They may be able to create conditions favourable to empowerment but they cannot make it happen. Thirdly, definitions of empowerment usually include a sense of people making decisions on matters which are important in their lives and being able to carry them out. Reflection, analysis and action are involved in this process which may happen on an individual or a collective level. There is some evidence that while women's own struggles for empowerment have tended to be collective efforts, empowerment orientated development interventions often

focus more on the level of the individual. Finally empowerment is an on-going process rather than a product. There is no final goal. One does not arrive at a stage of being empowered in some absolute sense. People are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time.

### Summary of the review

In this section different related literature about tourism handicrafts value chain was reviewed. From this literature I have seen the importance and contribution of handicrafts trading at local, national and international level. Despite of the contribution of the sectors, some challenges and problems have been highlighted that hinder further contribution and growth of the sectors. To this matter I pointed out some of the strategies that can be deployed to strengthen the sectors. In this discussion, I also explored in details value importance of using the value chain techniques in analysing handicrafts trading so that governments and donors can easily generate information on the socio-economic impacts of the industry at both macro and micro level, and provide recommendations to ensure the growth of the sector and all the actors involved.

### Objectives of the Study

The aim of the present study is to gain insight into the concept of women empowerment from Handicrafts tourism in Karnataka State where women have become self-reliant and empowered by making their traditional handicrafts as the source of income from tourism. These handicrafts have become prime attractions for not only domestic tourist but also foreign tourist.

The research focuses on three specific objectives as follows:

- To study the need of women empowerment from tourism.
- To study role of Karnataka region handicraft in women empowerment.
- To study the perceptions of local women about tourism and empowerment.
- To suggest measures of women empowerment from tourism.
- To collect successful stories of women's empowerment through tourism

### Statement of the Problem

The study sets out to increase the understanding of those factors that influences the tourist as consumers' buying decision of handicrafts; in this manner further information will be interesting for formulating effective marketing strategies aimed at women empowerment and the handicrafts.

### Scope of the Study

The main objective of our research is to collect successful stories of women's empowerment through tourism across the Karnataka state such Places we have identified such places Bidar Bidariware, Kinnhal Wooden toys, Kalaghatgi tottilugalu, Channapattan toys, Gokak wooden toys, Ilakal sarees. In order to, show the connection between tourism and socio-economic development of women.

### Research methodology

This study illustrates the research methodology and procedures used to collect and analyse the data for answering the research questions and attaining the purposes. It is arranged into four main sections where the first section explains the selection of study area, sample size and characteristics of the rural population, the second section deals with the methodological design, methods of data gathering including instruments and techniques, and the third section presents data processing and analysis methods. The last section explains the critical consideration of the applied methodology.

#### 1. General features of the study area:

The empirical research will be conducted in the HK districts of Karnataka, which is bounded by north. The socio-economic conditions of the people in the HK district are under average in comparison with other districts of Karnataka.

#### 2. Population and sample

A total number of 400 women were identified in the study area involved in IGAs and they were categorized into two groups such as (i) association with non-government organization ("NGO women") and (ii) not association with non-government organization ("non-NGO women"). From each group 50 women were randomly selected for interviewing and data collection.

Consequently, the sample size stood at 100.

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