

# Women in Focus: Gender Dynamics in India's Arts and Culture Sector

January 2024





# Table of contents

Foreword	04
Acknowledgements	05
Executive summary and recommendations	06
Introduction	10
Gender, arts and culture in India	13
Trend analysis	36
Stakeholder analysis	39
Recommendations	47
Conclusion	50
References	52



# Foreword

There is universal agreement that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are integral to the achievement of sustainable development. As the United Kingdom's cultural relations organisation, the British Council is committed to making a significant contribution to gender equality through its programmes. We believe that gender equality and women's empowerment are crucial to creating inclusive, open, and prosperous societies.

The 'G20 Culture: Shaping the Global Narrative for Inclusive Growth' report produced under India's G20 presidency notes the foundational importance of culture in a nation's progress. As mentioned by Mr. Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa, India in his foreword, *"At the core of India's G20 Presidency lies the profound ancient philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' which is deeply ingrained in the long-standing Indian ethos of inclusivity, sustainability and interconnectedness."* The report also articulates the direct linkage of gender equality to cultural heritage, livelihoods and sustainability. This aligns strongly with the British Council's work in arts and culture, where we aim to find new ways of connecting with and understanding each other through arts and culture, building creative and collaborative global communities that inspire innovation, inclusion and enterprise.

This gender analysis was commissioned to better understand gender inequalities within the British Council's operating context in India. It aimed to develop strategies that could make our programmes more gender responsive. The study investigated cultural biases, social norms, gender stereotypes and structural barriers that impact women's journeys in creative professions. Covering sectors that the British Council is engaged with, it explored crucial aspects like women's working conditions, access to digital technology and gender pay gaps. It also looked at programmes, projects and practices of a range of stakeholders from a gender perspective, with a view towards uncovering potential collaborations and partnerships.

These reflections were very useful in reviewing our arts and culture programmes through a gender lens. However, we realised that it was important to share these insights with the arts and culture sector in India, especially the limited research, knowledge and insight about gender issues that exists in the sector. This view was also endorsed by our partners.

I hope that the insights and recommendations of this study will serve as a reference point to initiate a broader discussion and further action on gender equality in the arts and culture sectors in India.

**Alison Barrett MBE**  
Director, British Council India



# Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following individuals who dedicated their time and expertise to peer review various sections of this report. Their valuable feedback and insightful comments have significantly enhanced the quality and rigor of the content. Their contributions have played an instrumental role in shaping the final outcome of this work.

## Ananya Bhattacharya

Director  
Banglanatak dot com

## Priya Krishnamoorthy

Founder & CEO  
200millionartisans.org

## Ami Patel

Sr. Director  
Business Development &  
Regenearth, Industree Foundation

## Shuchi Kapoor

Co-Founder and Director  
Chennai Photo Biennale Foundation  
& CPB Learning Lab

## Archana Prasad

Founder  
Gooley.AI | BeFantastic.in |  
Dara.network | Jaaga.in

## Tejshvi Jain

Founder Director  
ReReeti Foundation

## Saloni Mital

Managing Editor  
Penguin Random House India

## Suchismita Ukil

Editor  
Trusted Media Brands

## Authors

### Deepa Sundara Rajan

Senior Consultant  
Gender & Inclusion, British Council

### Paramita Chaudhuri

Head of Arts Creative Economy  
British Council, India

## Advisor

### Delphine Pawlik

Deputy Director Arts  
British Council, India

# Executive summary and recommendations





Gender equality is at the core of the British Council's work as a cultural relations organisation. Our work in arts and culture aims to enhance skills and networks for the next generation of women leaders, enable cultural institutions to develop inclusive policies, improve the visibility and elevate profiles of women artists internationally, address gender stereotypes, boost women-led creative enterprises and remove barriers to their success.

To achieve these outcomes, a thorough understanding of power dynamics between genders, within a given context is crucial, giving rise to a need for a gender analysis. While we recognise the expanding and diverse nature of the term "gender," this report primarily focuses on women and girls.

The report analyses how gender inequality is reflected, reinforced and challenged in the arts and culture sector in India. It examines relevant policies, statistical data, available research and insights on the extent and consequences of gender inequalities. It aims to strengthen the information base on gender equality. The insights and evidence presented here can be used to engage with policymakers, to inform and where possible, influence gender inclusive policy making in the sector. It can also contribute to the design of gender-sensitive/transformational programmes.

This study is largely based on secondary research and consultations with a select number of British Council's internal and external stakeholders. It covers crafts, sustainable fashion, literature, music, museums, inclusive cities, culture, art and technology, festivals, and biennales. It also looks at the gender equality mandates of an indicative list of stakeholders engaged by the British Council in India.

## The sectors studied revealed the following key challenges and obstacles faced by women in the arts and culture sector in India:

### Overrepresentation at low levels



Although the study did not find an overall estimate for the entire sector, several individual sectors show an overrepresentation of women, especially at a low level.

### Financial challenges



Limited awareness of and access to finance impedes women entrepreneurs, particularly in the MSME sector.

### Vulnerable work



Women's participation is often freelance, part-time, project-based, contractual, or insecure.

### Digital divide



The rural-urban divide, poverty, patriarchy, and cultural norms, keep women from acquiring and benefiting from digital technology.

### Gender pay gap



Gender pay gap is a persistent problem, where women's work is often undervalued.

### Gender-based violence



Gender-based violence, such as sexual harassment and objectification, is prevalent across various creative occupations.

### Gender discrimination



Gender discrimination hampers opportunities for career progression.

### Safe access to public spaces



Safety concerns impact women's mobility in public spaces which in turn limits their ability to participate in and benefit from economic and cultural activities.

### Leadership gap



There is a consistent lack of representation of women in leadership and decision making roles.

### Policy implementation gaps



There are gaps between policy commitments and actual working conditions for women in the arts and culture sector.



# Recommendations

## 1. Strengthen the evidence base on gender issues in the sector

- ◆ Invest in research on gender issues in India's arts and culture sector, focusing on women's representation, contributions, and leadership.
- ◆ Facilitate knowledge sharing that reaches all, especially at the grassroots, through conferences, seminars, and stakeholder consultations.
- ◆ Mainstream gender into monitoring and evaluation systems for programme interventions.

## 2. Create opportunities for female artists and creative professionals

- ◆ Promote capacity building for female artists through exchange programmes, training, leadership, and mentoring initiatives.
- ◆ Establish networking platforms for female artists to exchange ideas, collaborate, and enhance visibility in the arts and culture sector.

## 3. Establish multi-stakeholder collaborations and partnerships for gender equality

- ◆ Advocate for a gender equality focus in India's upcoming culture policy.
- ◆ Engage with government ministries to integrate gender considerations into existing policies and collaborate with flagship programmes promoting women's entrepreneurship in the creative sector.
- ◆ Foster partnerships between arts organisations and the private sector to drive gender equality initiatives and gender-focused programmes, adhering to national and international standards.



# 01

## Introduction



The British Council emphasises the significance of gender equality and women's empowerment in creating inclusive, open, and prosperous societies. Equality is a basic human right. Empowering women and promoting gender equality has a far-reaching cascading impact, that can accelerate sustainable development.

### Globally, the British Council's work in arts and culture brings focus to gender equality by:

- ◆ improving skills and networks among the next generation of women leaders in the cultural sectors and creative industries
- ◆ supporting cultural institutions and intermediaries to develop and implement more inclusive policies and practices that address gender gaps
- ◆ improving visibility, recognition and influence of women artists and cultural professionals internationally
- ◆ exploring and challenging perceptions and gender stereotypes through the arts and creative industries
- ◆ supporting the increase in number and size of women-led creative enterprises and addressing any gender-related barriers they face.

The British Councils' arts and culture programmes in India focus on diversifying arts audiences by extending 'traditional' art spaces, cultivating new curatorial voices and empowering creative entrepreneurs to build a more inclusive and accessible arts landscape. Supporting women leaders and artists who are championing audience diversification is a key aspect of our programming.

## Purpose and objectives

**Gender analysis is a process that questions and analyses power dynamics between men and women, their access to resources, activities, and constraints within a set context.<sup>1</sup>**

Art and creative industries present opportunities to address gender equality by imparting new experiences and understanding of the subject, that contributes to sustainable development. They have the power to leave legacies, such as skills, infrastructure, gender-sensitive art programmes and cultural changes, that can have a long-term impact on gender equality.

However, according to a report by UNESCO<sup>2</sup>, there are gaps in the availability of comprehensive data and evidence on gender equality in the culture and creative sectors. This hampers efforts to inform and influence policy as well as the design and delivery of gender-responsive programmes.

The purpose of this gender analysis report is to provide an overview of key gender-related dimensions in the arts and culture sector in India. Through this, the British Council aims to:

- ◆ contribute to strengthening the information base on gender equality in the arts and culture sector in India
- ◆ use the insights and evidence to engage with policymakers, to inform and influence gender-inclusive policy making
- ◆ mainstream gender into the design and delivery of our own arts and culture programmes in India.

<sup>1</sup>British Council, "Guide to addressing gender equality (2018) [https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/gender\\_guide\\_external\\_july\\_2019.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/gender_guide_external_july_2019.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Bridget Conor, "Gender & Creativity, Progress on the Precipice" UNESCO 2005 Convention Global Report Series, Special Edition 2021, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375706> accessed 13 September 2023

# Methodology

The study is based mainly on secondary research incorporating studies, reports, and grey literature available in the public domain, as well as British Council's own research. A targeted search of relevant government policies and programmes has been conducted for this study. Information on the arts and culture strategies of relevant stakeholders has also been collected and analysed from a gender perspective.

The British Council has further consulted with external experts and practitioners working on gender in arts and culture. Their feedback has been incorporated in this study.

# Limitations of the study

- ◆ Gender issues in India's arts and culture sector are extensive, and this analysis only focuses on areas where the British Council is active and has expertise in.
- ◆ The secondary research is based on information, insights and evidence that we have found in the public domain. While the study discovered that information gaps exist due to limited research, data, and evidence in the cultural and creative sectors, we acknowledge that there may be existing data and insights that we may not have come across yet.
- ◆ The stakeholder analysis only takes into consideration the key stakeholders that the British Council engages with on a regular basis. We acknowledge that there may be other stakeholders in the sector working on gender equality who may not have been covered in this study.



# 02

## Gender, arts and culture in India



UNESCO notes that “Gender equality is fundamental to ensuring a genuine diversity of cultural expressions and equal opportunities in artistic work and cultural employment.”<sup>3</sup> A 2021 UNESCO study looked up UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) data from 72 countries, where women constituted nearly 47 per cent of workers in cultural and creative industries.<sup>4</sup>

Despite this significant presence, women continue to face challenges such as unequal access to work, fair pay, and leadership roles. The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified these pre-existing inequalities. However, due to lack of statistics that track gender inequality in cultural and creative industries, the real extent of the pandemic’s impact on women is difficult to determine. Some studies show significant growth in unpaid care work, gender-based violence, and gender digital divide, which has led to an increase in the number of women dropping out of the cultural and creative workforce.

India, the world’s fastest growing large economy, possesses a rich cultural heritage that is integral to its

soft power. Its creative economy and cultural sector, valued at INR 50,000 crore (US \$6.14 billion) in 2019-20, represents more women compared to any other professional sector.<sup>5</sup> Research suggests that the female share of creative employment in India (27.89 per cent) surpasses non-creative employment (24.33 per cent). It also surpasses India’s overall employment (24.62 per cent), translating into a total of 11.08 million female creative workers.<sup>6</sup> While gender wage gaps persist in creative and non-creative sectors, the gap is wider in the latter, suggesting the potential for gender inclusivity in creative roles.

Given the cultural and creative sector’s significance in the Indian economy, the notable presence of women in these occupations, and the potential for increased inclusivity, this section examines the secondary information on gender issues in India’s cultural and creative sector. It evaluates publicly available research and data to offer a contemporary, contextual, and comprehensive understanding of the listed themes, especially in the context of India’s recently concluded G20 Presidency in 2023.

## This section will cover



<sup>3</sup> UNESCO, March 8, 2021. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/new-unesco-publication-investigates-state-gender-equality-cultural-and-creative-sectors#:~:text=The%20report%20also%20highlights%20innovative,artistic%20work%20and%20cultural%20employment.,> Accessed on 14, July 2023

<sup>4</sup> Connor, “Gender & Creativity”, 14

<sup>5</sup> G20 Culture Working Group Background Paper: Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy. UNESCO, 2023. <https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2023/04/India%20CWG%20Background%20Paper%20Priority%203.pdf>. Accessed on 14 July 2023

<sup>6</sup> Prateek Kukreja, Havishaye Puri, and Dil Bahadur Rahut. Working paper. Creative India: Tapping the Full Potential. Asian Development Bank Institute, December 2022. <https://doi.org/10.56506/KCBI3886>. Accessed on 14 July 2023

## Crafts and sustainable fashion

The textiles and apparel sector, India's second largest employer according to Invest India, provides direct employment to 45 million people and supports 100 million people in allied industries. India is the largest producer of cotton in the world and a leading supplier of natural fibres like cotton, jute, and silk, contributing to 95 per cent of all hand-woven cloth globally. Cotton production supports 5.8 million farmers and 40-50 million people in allied sectors.<sup>7</sup>

According to the Ministry of Textiles, India is the sixth largest exporter of man-made fibre textiles in the world. The Indian textile sector has four segments (1) Modern textile mills (2) Independent power looms (3) Handlooms, and (4) Garments.<sup>8</sup>

This section examines gender issues in the handloom and garment sectors in India, both of which have high participation of female workers. It also looks briefly at women's entrepreneurship in Handmade and Craft-based MSME (HCM).



## Handloom sector

As per the Fourth All India Handloom Census (2019-20), 3.15 million households in India are engaged in handloom activities (weaving and allied activities). 88.7 per cent of these households are in rural areas. 72 per cent of handloom workers are female. It is also noted that nearly 25 per cent weavers lack formal education, while 14 per cent have not completed primary school. Male weavers typically work full time, while female weavers, especially in rural areas, work part time. Female allied workers outnumber their male counterparts by almost twice the number. Nearly a third of female allied workers have not completed primary school or received any formal education.

The data shows that the average engagement in weaving activity is 208 days in a year. The Census of India defines main workers as those who are engaged in gainful employment for at least 180 days in a year. With 208 days of work annually, all individuals in the handloom sector qualify as main workers. However, a detailed breakdown by gender and location shows that 75.6 per cent of male workers are engaged full time, whereas 60.6 per cent of female workers are engaged part time. In rural areas, this figure increases to 63.5 per cent for female workers.

A news report on women weavers in Uttar Pradesh underlines the bias via the gendered division of labour in the handloom sector. Women typically operate looms installed within their homes while men manage the production and marketing and do not share the earnings. Despite their majority in allied work, women's contributions often go unrecognised and unremunerated.<sup>9</sup>

The Handloom Census also points towards limited financial inclusion among female weavers, with only 17.6 per cent having bank accounts as compared to 37.8 per cent among male weavers. Female weavers in urban areas appear to have better access to banking services at 37 per cent.

Collectively, these facts suggest the need for a deeper look into the gender bias and inequality entrenched in this sector. The part time, contractual and/or informal nature of employment, and low access to financial services, indicates that progress towards gender equality and reaching decent working conditions as outlined in the SDG Goal 5 and 8<sup>10</sup>, may be slower for women in the weaving community.

<sup>7</sup>"India - Knitting the Future", Invest India, accessed on 22 Jun. 2023, <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/textiles-apparel>

<sup>8</sup>S. Sudalaimuthu, and S. Devi. "Handloom Industry in India." Fibre2Fashion, July 2007. <https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/2269/handloom-industry-in-india#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20earliest%20to,largest%20employment%20generator%20after%20agriculture.&text=ROLE%20OF%20HANDLOOM%20SECTOR%3A,role%20in%20the%20country's%20economy>, accessed on 14 July 2023

<sup>9</sup>Hiba Rahman, 'Patriarchy And Weaving: The Curious Case Of Uttar Pradesh's Women Weavers', Feminism in India, 9 Jan, 2023, <https://feminisminindia.com/2023/01/09/patriarchy-and-weaving-the-curious-case-of-uttar-pradeshs-women-weavers/> accessed on 22 Jun. 2023

<sup>10</sup>SDG Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. ; SDG Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

# Garment sector

India, the sixth largest exporter of textiles and clothing, employs about 45 million people, of which nearly 70 per cent are women.<sup>11</sup> There are regional variations and in places like Chennai and Bangalore, 80-90 per cent of the workers in garment industries are women,<sup>12</sup> making the southern clusters more 'female oriented' compared to the rest of the country.

Research on women garment workers reveals several challenges. The key issue is low wages, based on

patriarchal notions that women are 'less skilled' and should therefore earn less than men. Additionally, socio-cultural norms burden women with unpaid care work, limiting them from working long hours in a competitive and fast-paced industry. An increasing trend of employing female migrants as garment workers on contract basis, adds to their vulnerable and insecure situation. The gender pay gap in the Indian garment industry is among the highest at 34.6 per cent.<sup>13</sup>

## DID YOU KNOW?

### The Sumangali (married woman) scheme in Tamil Nadu and forced labour

Originating from social issues like dowry and caste, the Sumangali scheme involved hiring young girls, aged 15-18 years, on three-five year contracts in the textile industry in Tamil Nadu. The idea was to provide jobs to adolescent girls, so they earn to pay for their own dowries. During the contract period, they lived in a company-controlled compound, under surveillance and with restricted mobility. They worked long hours with compulsory overtime and faced verbal and physical abuse.

Activism by humanitarian organisations exposed this exploitation, with major brands condemning the practice and committing to implement policies that would require their suppliers to adhere to ethical practices. Although the scheme does not exist anymore, the model may have moved lower in the value chain.

**Rinku Kumari, 'Sumangali Scheme: Marginalised Young Girls Made To Earn Dowry Through A Caste-Class Patriarchal Nexus', *Feminism in India*, 8 June, 2022**

<https://feminismindia.com/2022/06/08/sumangali-scheme-marginalised-young-girls-made-to-earn-dowry-through-a-caste-class-patriarchal-nexus/> accessed on 23 June 2023

<sup>11</sup>Factsheet: India's Clothing Industry', Femnet , <https://femnet.de/en/materials-information/country-profiles/india.html> accessed on 22 Jun. 2023

<sup>12</sup>Working Conditions Of Migrant Garment Workers In India A literature review', ILO 2017 [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms\\_554809.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_554809.pdf) accessed on 22 Jun. 2023,

<sup>13</sup>Gunjan Sharma, 'A Critical Note on Women's Work in Indian Garment Manufacturing', Public Policy India, 10 Feb, 2023, <https://publicpolicyindia.com/2023/02/10/a-critical-note-on-womens-work-in-indian-garment-manufacturing/> accessed on 22 Jun. 2023





Another issue in the garment industry is the absence of women in skilled roles, like design, pattern making, and other crucial aspects of garment creation. Under the traditional 'khandani darzi' (family tailor) system, these roles are reserved for male tailors or 'Master jis', with the skill being passed on from father to son. Women are excluded from making their own design and creative decisions and confined to the sewing machine. According to the team at 200 Million Artisans, *"There is an unwritten rule that pattern making is for men, since it is a technical job, stereotyping women as not capable enough. Almost all export houses and even designers in India have male pattern makers who lead while women work under them for menial jobs."* As a positive step forward, this disparity is being addressed by MasterG and Daughters, India's first all-women design and skill development ecosystem for the global apparel industry, by training women as 'Masters' and connecting them with brands.<sup>14</sup>

A 2022 study by the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre suggests a rise in gender-based violence against women working in the garment industry. The study covers three major production hubs in India - Faridabad and Kapashera in Delhi NCR, Bangalore in Karnataka, and Dindigul, Erode and Tirupur in Tamil Nadu. It reports that women garment workers experienced routine physical and verbal abuse, bullying, discrimination, forced overtime, accidents in addition to exhaustion, lack of COVID-19 safety measures and denial of bathroom and lunch breaks. Women also reported coercion by managers for sexual favours in exchange for better working conditions. These factories supply, or have recently supplied, to at least 12 global fashion brands all of which have policies against harassment and abuse. Yet a significant gap exists between policy and practice.<sup>15</sup>

Expanding on the working conditions, women garment workers often lack legally mandated maternity benefits. It varies between one month without pay to two months with pay. During the pandemic, the situation worsened with women facing forced ultrasounds and even unfair dismissal from work if pregnant.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, while garment factories re-opened after the pandemic, their day-care facilities did not, compelling women with children to leave their jobs.

Article 19(1)(C) of the Indian Constitution guarantees the right to form associations and unions to citizens. Despite this, unionisation in the garment industry in India is low at only 5 per cent. With a significant number of women in this industry, the limited union presence implies a lack of collective bargaining power. As a result, issues like discrimination, harassment, violence, maternity benefits and childcare facilities remain unaddressed.<sup>17</sup>



<sup>14</sup>Shobita Dhar. "India's First Women Apparel Pattern-Makers." Times of India . Accessed December 29, 2023. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/sunday-times/indias-first-women-apparel-pattern-makers/articleshow/68540896.cms>.

<sup>15</sup>Shikha Silliman Bhattacharjee and Alysha Khambay, rep., Unbearable Harassment THE FASHION INDUSTRY AND WIDESPREAD ABUSE OF FEMALE GARMENT WORKERS IN INDIAN FACTORIES (Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 2022).

<sup>16</sup>Bhattacharjee et al, Unbearable Harassment

<sup>17</sup>Factsheet: India's Clothing Industry'

# Women's entrepreneurship

**The Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs 2022, places India in the 57th position out of 65 countries. India ranks third globally, in the entrepreneurship gender gap.<sup>18</sup> According to the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), only 20.37 per cent enterprises in India are female-owned. Amidst this discouraging trend, is the pivotal role that women-led Handmade and Craft-led MSMEs (HCM) are playing in fostering gender equality. Nearly 70 per cent of these enterprises support a gender balanced or female majority workforce, 95 per cent have women in decision making roles, and 55 per cent are women-led.<sup>19</sup>**

A major challenge for women entrepreneurs is limited access to finance and capital. Women often struggle to secure adequate financial support due to biases in the credit system and being marked as "thin file". This is compounded by difficulties in accessing collateral and an apathetic response to the MSME sector by financial institutions. In 2021, only 5.2 per cent of total credit extended by public sector banks went to MSMEs. Government initiatives like Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) which offer collateral-free support can play an enabling role. However, complex application processes and low awareness prevent women from benefitting from these schemes.<sup>20</sup>

Women-led HCM also struggle with engaging effectively with investors. Nearly 62 per cent women-led HCM find it difficult to talk to investors, compared to 48 per cent men-led. 55 per cent women-led HCMs find it difficult to comprehend funding options compared to 33 per cent men-led.<sup>21</sup>

Women entrepreneurs encounter challenges such as limited networking opportunities with peers and industry experts, along with restricted access to education, training, and mentorship, particularly for women in rural areas.<sup>22</sup>



<sup>18</sup>Mansi Jaswal, "What Women Entrepreneurs Need to Shine in the MSME Sector? Experts Explain." Mint, January 10, 2023.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/heres-what-women-entrepreneurs-need-to-shine-in-the-msme-sector-11673324338271.html> accessed on 28 Dec. 23

<sup>19</sup>Priya Krishnamoorthy, Nima Srinivasan, Aparna Subramanyam, Bonnie Chiu, Rashmi Salian, Shailja Sachan, Amrutha Krishna, and Louise Bouet. Business of Handmade. "Financing a Handmade Revolution: How Catalytic Capital Can Jumpstart India's Cultural Economy." 200 Million Artisans, 2023. <https://www.businessofhandmade2.com/> accessed on 28 Dec. 23

<sup>20</sup>Jaswal, Mint, January 10, 2023 | <sup>21</sup>Priya Krishnamoorthy et al, 200 Million Artisans, p 17 | <sup>22</sup>Jaswal, Mint, January 10, 2023

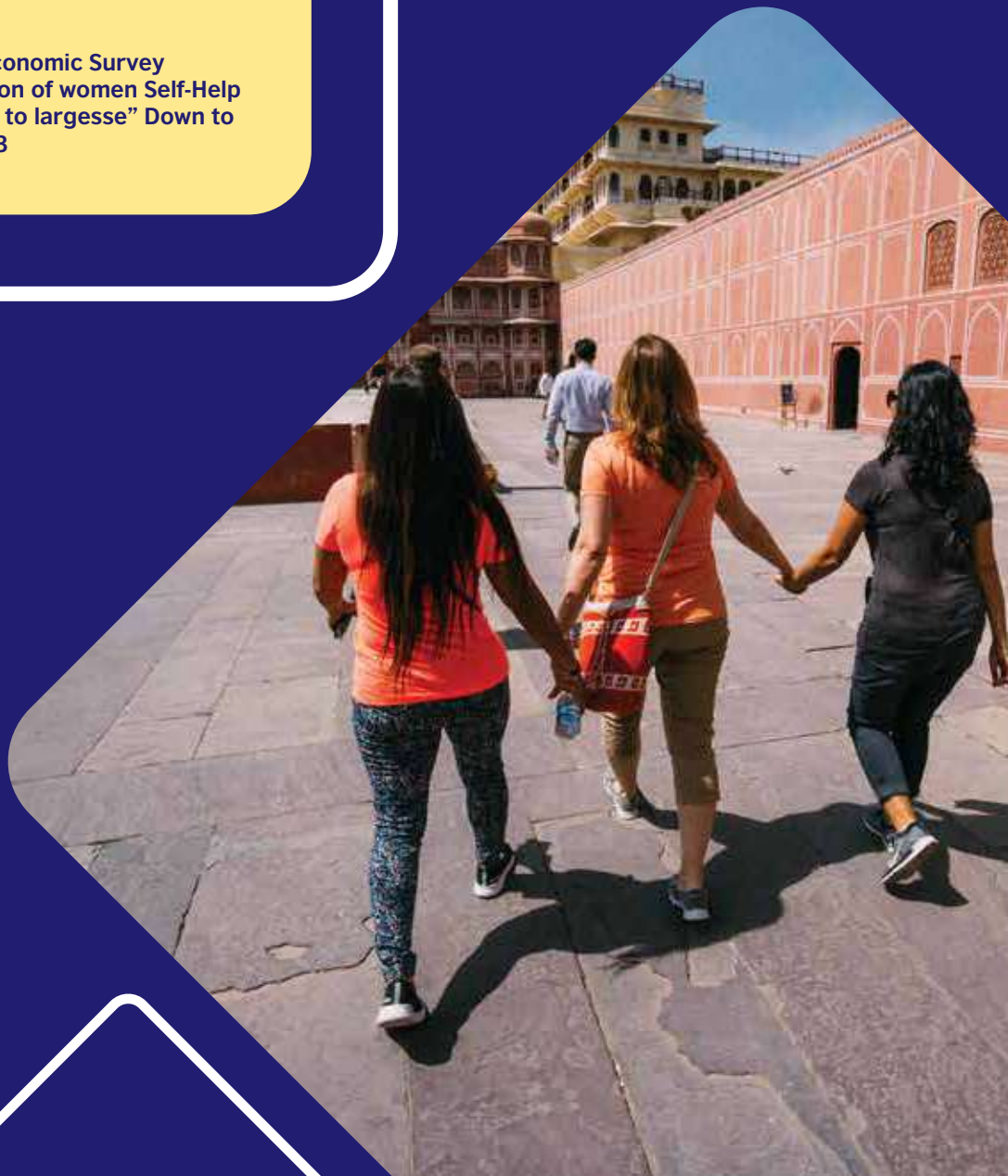
India is home to nearly 12 million Self Help Groups (SHGs). SHGs are community level groups of 20-25 people, usually women.

The Economic Survey 2022-23 notes that SHGs can play a key role in enabling women's access to finance and livelihood diversification.

Since 1992, SHGs have been linked to banks and can take loans for livelihood activities. Over time, they have demonstrated their reliability, maintaining a bank repayment rate of 96 per cent. Consequently, in 2021, the government expanded their limit for collateral-free loans under its COVID 19 pandemic stimulus package. Flagship programmes like the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) are also working towards microfinance led livelihood diversification strategies.

The potential of SHGs in promoting women's livelihoods and entrepreneurship was also mentioned by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment.

**Richard Mahapatra, "Economic Survey 2022-23: Special mention of women Self-Help Groups; will it translate to largesse" Down to Earth, 31 January, 2023**



# Literature

**In 2019, the Indian publishing industry was valued at approximately INR 500 billion and was expected to grow to INR 800 billion by 2024. Ranked as the second largest in the world, after China, the sector contributes to India's economic development by promoting learning and education, while creating employment for more than 1.2 million people.**

Regional languages account for at least 45 per cent of the market and play a crucial role in promoting Indian culture and values. India is also the third largest publisher of English language books, with an estimated 10-15 per cent share of the foreign market.<sup>23</sup>

A study by the University of Minnesota, revealed that, in the United States, women's share of published titles increased from around 20 per cent in the 1970s to over 50 per cent by 2020. This contributed to higher revenue for the industry and benefitted both male and female consumers<sup>24</sup>. In India too, industry insiders note a rise in women's writing with an increasing interest in women's issues spurred by global events like the MeToo movement. But has this resulted in tangible gains for women in literature and publishing?

Modern Indian women authors, published between the 1980s and 1990s, like Nayantara Sehgal, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Deshpande, Gita Mehta, Bharathi Mukherjee, and Jhumpha Lahiri, have fuelled a literary revival in India. Their writings serve as both anthropological and sociological perspectives highlighting post-colonial and post-modern challenges. They exhibit a high degree of self-awareness, challenging political, theoretical, and cultural issues related to gender in contemporary Indian society<sup>25</sup>.

Feminist publishing houses in India, including Kali for Women, Zubaan, Women Unlimited, Tara Books, Tulika Books, Stree, Samya, Asmita, contribute significantly to feminist narratives presented by women writers. They play an important role in producing high quality feminist literature, creating a market share for themselves.<sup>26</sup>

However, there are stereotypes associated with feminist writing in India. A 2015 article in *Samyukta*, a journal of gender and culture, points out that *"there is a tendency to associate women's writing with 'women's issues', often confined to the domestic sphere. Feminist writing, however, breaks down such distinctions and addresses a wide range of issues from economic liberalisation, globalisation, militarisation, violence, politics, health, education, the environment, law, literature, history and the arts."*<sup>27</sup> Another challenge lies in the perception that women's writing is exclusively for women, described by the sexist term 'chick lit'.



<sup>23</sup>Value Proposition of the Indian Publishing Trends, Challenges, and Future of the Industry. Association of Publishers of India and EY-Parthenon, May 2021., accessed on 24 July 2023.

<sup>24</sup>1. Women are now publishing more books than men - and it's good for business, March 8, 2023, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/03/women-are-now-publishing-more-books-than-men-and-its-good-for-business/>. accessed 24 July 2023

<sup>25</sup>Ravindra Kumar Singh, "Indian Women Writers and Its Feminism in English", *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education*, Volume: 16 / Issue: 5, April 2019, accessed on 24 July 2023

<sup>26</sup>Dr. Paromita Chakrabarti, "Press(ing) Business: Decoding Feminist Publishing In India", *Feminism in India*, July 2020, <https://feminisminindia.com/2020/07/27/feminist-publishing-in-india-business/#:~:text=of%20utmost%20importance.,Publishing%20houses%20such%20as%20Kali%20for%20Women%2C%20Zubaan%2C%20Women%20Unlimited,made%20way%20for%20feminist%20publishing> accessed on 24 July 2023

<sup>27</sup>Ritu Menon, "Feminist Writing and Women in Publishing", *Samyukta*, Jan 2015 <https://samyuktajournal.in/feminist-writing-and-women-in-publishing/> accessed on 24 July 2023

Examining literature and publishing from a business angle exposes gender gaps akin to those that exist in other sectors. Public events such as a 2018 panel discussion organised by ShethePeople during a Women Writer's Fest in New Delhi, and Civil Services Officers Institute (CSOI) Literature Festival in Delhi 2019, highlighted gender inequality issues in the sector, including the following:

01

There is a majority of women in the creative side of the publishing ecosystem with more women seen as writers, translators, designers, freelance editors, typesetters, reviewers, bloggers, publicists, and booksellers.

05

Children's publishing and publishing firms in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns have women involved not only on the editorial side but also in sales, marketing, finance, and production which are traditionally male dominated.

02

There is a preponderance of women over men in the creative and editorial elements of publishing and not as much in top management.

06

The gender composition of the publishing workforce is evolving, with women taking more jobs across accounting, sales, and production while men are increasingly seen in editorial roles.

03

Despite the rise of women in creative spaces, they often face the challenge of being underpaid, attributed to their association with the growing 'gig economy'<sup>28</sup> and undervaluation of their labour to control production costs.

07

Male authors continue to dominate bestseller lists since women lack funds or the willingness to engage in the marketing and promotion of their books.

04

Women have greater presence and authority in family-run publishing firms as compared to corporate ones.

08

In traditional publishing, female authors' titles command only around 45 per cent the price of male authors.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, despite growth in the Indian publishing industry and the significant presence of women in its workforce, evident gender equality concerns persist. Addressing these concerns is essential for women to benefit equally from the expanding economy.

<sup>28</sup>A gig economy is a free market system in which temporary positions are common and organisations hire independent workers for short-term commitments. The term "gig" is a slang word for a job that lasts a specified period of time. Traditionally, the term was used by musicians to define a performance engagement. <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/gig-economy#:~:text=A%20gig%20economy%20is%20a,to%20define%20a%20performance%20engagement> accessed on 25 July 2023

<sup>29</sup>Dana B. Weinberg & Adam Kapelner, "Comparing gender discrimination and inequality in indie and traditional publishing", Abstract, Plos One, 9 April, 2018, <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0195298> accessed on 25 July 2023

## The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic:



The **lockdown affected women** in Indian publishing in multiple ways, as highlighted by **Urvashi Butalia** in a **2020 article for Scroll.in**



The burden of housework suddenly **increased exponentially**



Women faced challenges related to **loneliness and the inability to meet** friends and acquaintances



Small, feminist and indie publishers faced a more challenging situation with **less cash flow and inability to make royalty payments**



Women struggled to find dedicated spaces at home to work and had to **work out of makeshift spaces** like the dining table or the bed



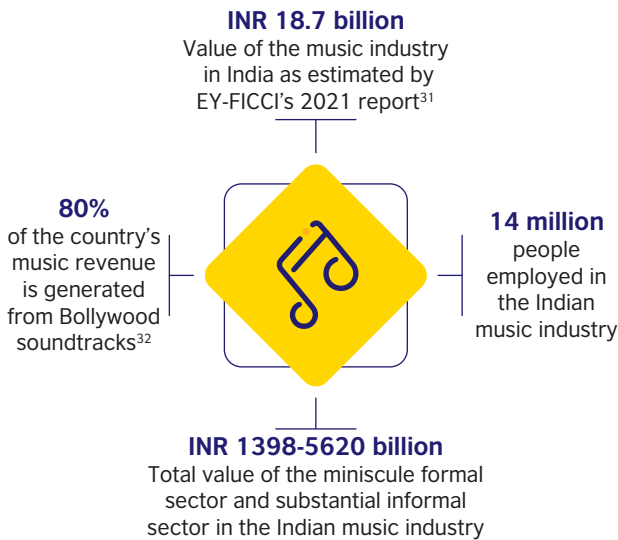
The economic downturn caused by the pandemic also impacted the Indian publishing sector with a **looming risk of layoffs**



Women living away from their hometown in hostels, found themselves **without a place to stay and no means to get back home**

# Music

The Indian music industry is thriving and witnessing an unprecedented growth driven by digital technology and streaming services. According to a 2022 article in The Financial Express, India had the 17th largest music market in the world in 2021<sup>30</sup>.



**India faces issues of gender inequality similar to the global music scenario in terms of representation and pay. A 2019 report in Firstpost, noted challenges for female artists, including objectification and limited playback signing opportunities in Bollywood. Nearly 70 per cent of independent female artists also experienced sexual harassment.**<sup>33</sup>

In the same report, Priyanka Khimani from Women in Music India highlighted the lack of research and data on female participation in behind-the-scenes roles in the music industry.

She noted the importance of evidence to identify issues, create awareness and prompt action. Ms. Khimani also pointed out the lack of women leaders in record companies, describing it a *"big boys club at the end of the day"*<sup>34</sup>

In the contemporary music scene too, gender discrimination and inequality are prevalent. Globally, female musicians are underrepresented at festivals, on streaming platforms and even as producers. A 2019 Firstpost report revealed that *"From the over 80 nominations across the nine music categories in this year's Radio City Freedom Awards, only six are for solo female artists or female-fronted acts."* It further highlighted that only 3 per cent of 1200 entries were by female solo artists. This low number could be attributed to the fact that only 10-15 per cent of albums released annually are by female artists. This in turn could stem from their limited capacity to finance their own recordings, especially for female indie artists, as compared to their male counterparts.<sup>35</sup>

Female artists grapple with producing their own music due to lack knowledge, skills, and confidence in using digital technology or face stereotypes about women not being able to manage technology. A UNESCO report emphasises *"But the digital divide remains a pressing concern, since women are more likely than men to lack the means of basic access, such as internet connections, smartphones, and other tools that can foster and facilitate creative practice."*<sup>36</sup>

Female musicians continue to have low representation and visibility at music festivals. A 2018 Firstpost report highlights that at the Pune edition of Weekender in December 2017, *"Only eight out of over 50 performers at the flagship Pune edition of Weekender in December 2017 and only nine out of over 75 at Supersonic this February were female or fronted by a female musician."*<sup>37</sup>

There is a growing awareness of gender imbalance in music festivals prompting organisers to take action. For instance, Wild City, the organiser of the Magnetic Fields festival in Rajasthan, consciously works to increase the representation of female artists in their festival line up, which is an encouraging trend.

<sup>30</sup>Vivek Raina, "How the Indian Music Market Is Balancing the Scales between Original Soundtrack and Independent Music," Financial Express, September 18, 2022, <https://www.financialexpress.com/business/brandwagon-how-the-indian-music-market-is-balancing-the-scales-between-original-soundtrack-and-independent-music-2672375/>. Accessed on 25 July 2023

<sup>31</sup>Tuning into Consumer March 2022 Indian M&E Rebounds with a Customer-Centric Approach. EY FICCI, March 2022. [https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en\\_in/topics/media-and-entertainment/2022/ey-ficci-m-and-e-report-tuning-into-consumer\\_v3.pdf](https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en_in/topics/media-and-entertainment/2022/ey-ficci-m-and-e-report-tuning-into-consumer_v3.pdf). Accessed on 25 July 2023

<sup>32</sup>Raina, Indian Music Market

<sup>33</sup>Aarushi Agarwal, "Women in Music: New initiative addresses gender disparity in India, as on-demand streaming goes big" Firstpost, <https://www.firstpost.com/entertainment/women-in-music-new-initiative-addresses-gender-disparity-in-india-as-on-demand-streaming-goes-big-7254431.html> accessed on 9 August 2023

<sup>34</sup>Agarwal, "Women in Music"

<sup>35</sup>Amit Gurbuxani, "Record labels, management companies must step up to address gender disparity in Indian indie music scene", Firstpost, <https://www.firstpost.com/entertainment/record-labels-management-companies-must-step-up-to-address-gender-disparity-in-indian-indie-music-scene-6327331.html> accessed on 10 Aug 2023

<sup>36</sup>Conor, "Gender & Creativity" 38

<sup>37</sup>Gurbuxani, "Record Labels", Firstpost

# Museums

**Museums play a crucial role in preserving a country's history and cultural heritage. They are important public spaces, especially in urban settings, bringing in revenue, particularly from tourism.**

In this section we will examine:

- ◆ safety and accessibility of museum spaces for women
- ◆ representation of women's art
- ◆ gender inclusivity and enabling nature of the museum workplaces.

## Museums as a gender accessible space

Museum visitor demographics show that, globally, women tend to visit museums more than men. Women have a distinct way of experiencing and engaging with museums as they often bring their children along to provide them with learning experiences. They find the museum space to be nurturing where they can spend quality time with their children, and themselves.<sup>38</sup>

How safe and accessible are museum spaces for women in India? Limited publicly accessible information makes it challenging to answer this question.

Public museums in India face challenges due to limited funds, relying mainly on government support and inability to access private funding. This results in difficulties for many museums, except those in the national and state capitals, to create attractive spaces especially for women.

Private museums are becoming influential in presenting India's cultural heritage in new ways, aligning with international museum trends. For instance, the Museum of Arts and Photography (MAP) in Bangalore aims to democratise art, by making it fun and relatable for everyone. The functional and open architecture emphasises access and inclusion, thereby providing a comprehensive cultural experience.

## Gender representation in museum collections

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA)<sup>39</sup>, in Washington DC notes that women in the art world face unequal treatment, remaining significantly underrepresented and undervalued in museums, galleries, and auction houses. In 2018, the top 20 most popular exhibitions globally featured only one exhibition that was headlined by a woman artist: Joana Vasconcelos: I'm Your Mirror at the Guggenheim Bilbao.

### A joint study by Artnet Analytics<sup>40</sup> and Maastricht University, noted the following challenges women artists in the West experience in their career:

- ◆ While both women and men enrol in art schools in equal numbers, fewer women are picked by galleries. Only 13.7 per cent of living artists represented by galleries in Europe and North America are female. Galleries may discriminate on the basis that women's art does not sell as well or that women's artistic output is affected due to their reproductive role. Women also face limited access to networks that could aid their career progression.
- ◆ Female artists struggle to move from primary markets (galleries) to secondary markets (auction houses), with a dropout rate of up to 15 per cent in this trajectory according to the study. The numbers could be larger as the study only considered women artists represented by galleries or part of the Artnet gallery network. However, women who do manage to make it to secondary markets, tend to outperform men.
- ◆ Established female artists struggle with the 'winner takes all' dynamic. The study reveals that only 2.6 per cent of female artists account for 91 per cent of the sales while the distribution of profits among male artists is more equitable.
- ◆ There are no female artists in the top echelons of the art market. The top 0.03 per cent, which accounts for more than 41 per cent of the overall profits, are all male.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup>Priyanka Sacheti, "Gendering of Museum Spaces," web log, Rereeti Revitalising Museums (blog), March 2, 2017, <https://rereeti.org/blog/2741-2/#:~:text=She%20observed%20that%20women%20tended,prolonged%20engagement%20with%20street%20art>. accessed on 24 Aug. 23.

<sup>39</sup>The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) in Washington DC, USA, is the first museum in the world solely dedicated to championing women through the arts.

<sup>40</sup>artnet is an online resource for the international art market - to buy, sell, and research art online. It was founded in 1989 with the goal of bringing transparency to the art world

<sup>41</sup>. Julia Halperin, "The 4 Glass Ceilings: How Women Artists Get Stuffed at Every Stage of Their Careers," artnet, December 15, 2017, <https://news.artnet.com/market/art-market-study-1179317>., accessed on 25 Aug. 23



Women artists in Europe and North America face these issues. What challenges do female artists in India face? Similar to global trends, they often remain invisible, gaining recognition much later in life or after years of producing outstanding art.

Around the early 20th century, artists like Mangalabai Thampuratti, were among the few females trained in the Western Academic Realist oil painting. However, her life and art has been overshadowed by her famous brother Raja Ravi Varma. Post-Independence, women began entering higher education, including the arts sector. Artists like Nasreen Mohammadi and Zarin, educated in the West, gained significance. Women also ventured into traditionally male-dominated artistic fields, like Homai Vyarawalla in photojournalism.<sup>42</sup>

## Gender in museum leadership

Globally, although there are more women than men in professional art museum staff, they remain underrepresented in leadership positions, mirroring gender disparities in decision-making seen in other sectors. A 2016 report by the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) in North America, reported that women held less than half of directorships and were paid less than male directors even in the largest museums.

The report also highlighted gender disparities based on the museums' operating budgets, with smaller budgets allocated to museums headed by women. The top three museums in the world (Louvre, British, Metropolitan) have never had a female director.<sup>43</sup>

Gender equality in museum leadership in India shows variations in the gender composition of directors in public and privately funded/owned museums. Public museums show a diverse gender composition in their leadership. The current Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India is female, and the top seven government museums run by the Ministry of Culture, have male directors. State government run museums present a similar situation - in Tamil Nadu and Telangana two Directors of Museums are female, while in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry, and Kerala there are four male directors.<sup>44</sup>

Privately managed museums in India constitute about 10 per cent of the Indian museum sector. People like Kiran Nadar (Kiran Nadar Museum of Art), Lekha Poddar (co-founder of Devi Art Foundation) and Dr Tasneem Zakaria Mehta (Bhau Dadji Lad Museum), have played crucial roles in the revival of museums in the country. Their contributions mark the emergence of a new era promoting gender equality in the museum workplace in India.<sup>45</sup>



<sup>42</sup>Feminism in Indian Art, MAP Academy, June 13, 2023. <https://mapacademy.io/article/feminism-in-indian-art/> accessed on 28 Dec. 23

<sup>43</sup>Veronica Treviño, Zannie Giraud Voss, Christine Anagnos, Alison D. Wade "The Ongoing Gender Gap in Art Museum Directorships", Association of Art Museum Directors, 2016, pg 2-3, <https://aamd.org/sites/default/files/document/AAMD%20NCAR%20Gender%20Gap%202017.pdf> accessed on 25 Aug. 23

<sup>44</sup>Sarah Lamade, "Issues faced by Museum Professionals: A comparison between India & U.S.", web log Rereeti Revitalising Museums (blog), July 2, 2018, 23 <https://rereeti.org/blog/comparing-issues-for-museum-professionals-india-vs-u-s/#:~:text=Of%20three%20of%20the%20most,the%20direction%20of%20male%20leadership> accessed on 24 Aug..

<sup>45</sup>Priyanka Sacheti, "Is the future female? Gender equality and equity in museum leadership", web log, Rereeti Revitalising Museums (blog), March 16, 2017, <https://rereeti.org/blog/is-the-future-female/> accessed on 24 Aug, 23

## Examples of gender representation in museum collections in India

- ◆ The 'VISIBLE/INVISIBLE' exhibition at the Museum of Art and Photography, explores the representation of women in art through the MAP collection. The exhibition highlights a key paradox in art history where women are often portrayed as muses rather than creators. The exhibition offers a platform for women to tell stories shaped by their experiences.  
(<https://map-india.org/exhibition/visible-invisible/>)
- ◆ The Dr. Savitadidi N. Mehta Museum in Porbandar, Gujarat, is a private museum, built by Sri Lankan architect Channa Daswatte. Dedicated to the legacy of India's first woman who popularised the Manipuri dance form globally, the museum features photographs of Dr. Savita with former leaders like Pandit Nehru, Dr. Radhakrishnan and Dr. Zakir Hussain, and collections of Dr. Savita's Manipuri dance costumes.  
(The Hindu, 16 Dec, 2023)
- ◆ The Shashwati Museum in N.M.K.R.V. College, Bangalore was founded by the late Dr. C.N. Mangala, former Principal of the college. Displaying over 5000 items in various art forms, the museum shows the aspirations and achievements of women.  
(<https://travel2karnataka.com/shashwati.htm>)

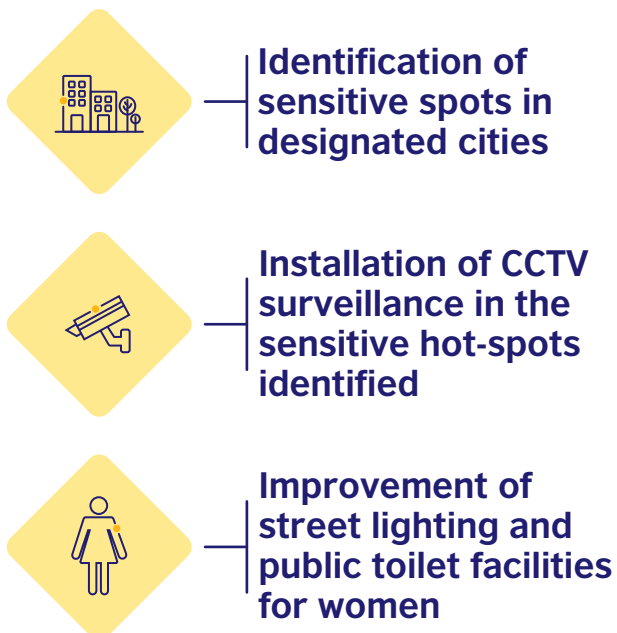


# Inclusive cities and culture

**The UN estimates that about 55 per cent of the world's population lives in urban areas, with this number projected to increase to 68 per cent by 2050. Nearly 90 per cent of this growth is taking place in Asia and Africa.<sup>46</sup>**

Urban planners have often failed to take into consideration the unique experiences and needs of women, girls and gender minorities who make up half the urban population. This may be influenced by cultural norms that relegate women to a secondary position in society. Women face challenges such as a lack of safe urban spaces for public participation, such as inaccessible or poorly lit areas and restrooms. The low representation of women among architects and urban planners only serves to compound this gender unawareness.

Recently, through its Safe City project, the government has created ground assets and resources keeping in mind the safety of women. Some of the key features of this project include:



While architecture is male dominated, women play a significant role in conservation.<sup>47</sup> Women conservation architects lead prominent conservation projects, such as Abha Narain Lambah (Mumbai's Royal Opera House) and Annabelle Lopez (Mughal Riverfront Gardens in Agra). Women make notable contributions to cultural heritage tourism. Organisations like Madras Inherited in Chennai, and Enroute Indian History, exemplify women's active participation in this field. The 'Badass Begums' heritage walk in Delhi curated by Enroute Indian History highlights history and heritage influenced by women.<sup>48</sup> The 'Madrasin Pengal' heritage walk in Chennai, was organised collaboratively by Madras Inherited, The Equals Project, and the Greater Chennai Corporation. This unique women-only night walk highlighted the contributions of women achievers from the city, while also occupying the streets at a time when women usually stay indoors.<sup>49</sup>

Cities often accentuate women's vulnerabilities, especially sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. A British Council study on women's mobility in urban spaces, especially at night in India, reveals that transportation is a defining and prohibitive factor for women going out at night. Most prefer to have their own transport for control over their arrival and departure. They prefer to travel in large groups of known people, a male companion, or people they can trust. Safety precautions include avoiding alcohol, keeping their phones charged and carrying pepper spray for self-defence. Clothing choices are also a factor, with women choosing outfits that cover arms, legs and cleavage, prioritising safety over fashion.

These are significant concerns that inhibit women from being equal and active participants in city life. It calls for enacting or strengthening policy that enables women to enjoy life in a city. Initial efforts towards gender-sensitive urban planning are being made by the Government of India, state governments and city planning committees. The Thiruvananthapuram municipality collaborates with women and planners to develop 'women friendly' areas with services like 24/7 pink police, breastfeeding kiosks and 'She autos'. Hyderabad has a theme park exclusively for women and children. Delhi is planning to build over 500 toilets for the LGBTQ+ community.<sup>50</sup> There is need to intensify and scale these efforts across the country along with greater representation and effective participation of women and gender minorities in urban planning bodies, and greater coordination among stakeholders to make cities truly gender inclusive.

<sup>46</sup>"68% of the World Population Projected to Live in Urban Areas by 2050, Says UN," Department of Economic and Social Affairs, May 18, 2018, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html#:~:text=Projections%20show%20that%20urbanization%2C%20the,and%20Africa%2C%20according%20to%20a>. Accessed on 25 August 2023

<sup>47</sup>"Celebrating Women Protecting Cultural Heritage," World Monuments Fund, n.d. accessed January 4, 2024, <https://www.wmf.org/slideshow/celebrating-women-protecting-cultural-heritage>.

<sup>48</sup>Bibek Bhandari, "In India, Women-Led Heritage Walks Spotlight Old Delhi's Centuries-Old Colourful 'Twisted' History," South China Morning Post, December 10, 2023, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/people/article/3244409/india-women-led-heritage-walks-spotlight-old-delhis-centuries-old-colourful-twisted-history>.

<sup>49</sup>Roshne Balasubramanian, "Reclaiming the Night: Chennai's Unique Night Walk Spotlights Women's Historical Contributions and Promotes Safety Dialogues," South First, October 5, 2023, <https://thesouthfirst.com/featured/reclaiming-the-night-chennais-unique-night-walk-spotlights-womens-historical-contributions-and-promotes-safety-dialogues/>.

<sup>50</sup>1. Anusha Kesarkar Gavankar, "Building Gender-Responsive Cities," Observer Research Foundation, November 7, 2022, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/building-gender-responsive-cities#:~:text=Cities%20become%20discriminatory%20through%20their,and%20involves%20socio%20legal%20implications>. accessed on 7 September, 2023,

The Prosperity & Inclusion City Seal and Awards (PICSA) Index, released in the Basque Country capital of Bilbao in northern Spain, is designed to showcase not only the quantity of economic growth of a city but also its quality and distribution across populations.

The index provides a new measure of economic productivity that goes beyond GDP.

It provides a holistic account of how well people are doing in an economy and which cities have the most empowered population.

Bangalore ranked 83, while Delhi and Mumbai ranked 101 and 107 among 113 cities in world.

**India Today, Apr 7, 2022**



# Art and technology

## The gender digital divide

Despite the rise of affordable, digital technologies offering new avenues to women creators, the gender digital divide remains a major challenge in India. A story by the Observer Research Foundation mentions that Indian women are 15 per cent less likely to own a mobile phone, and 33 per cent less likely to use mobile internet services than men.<sup>51</sup>

### The gender digital divide is influenced by three key factors:

- ◆ A rural-urban divide where rural broadband penetration is only 29 per cent compared to a national figure of 51 per cent. Rural women are also less likely to own mobile phones.
- ◆ Economic disparity accentuates the digital divide with low-income households spending about 3 per cent of their monthly income on data charges, while middle income households spend only 0.02 per cent.
- ◆ Discrimination at the household driven by patriarchal notions about women's roles, further impedes women's access to digital technology.<sup>52</sup>

Accenture's Digital Fluency Model highlights the positive impact of women's digital fluency<sup>53</sup> on education, employment, and career progression. However, a 2016 report by Accenture - 'Getting to Equal: How Digital is Helping Close the Gender Gap at Work,' revealed that India had the lowest digital fluency score out of 26 countries. A 2021 report for digital literacy by UNDP indicates that only 33 per cent of Indian women have ever used the internet, a number which drops to around 25 per cent for rural women.<sup>54</sup> Despite improvements in digital literacy, the gender digital divide continues to exist. In creative industries and professions reliant on digital skills, women are more likely to get left behind.



<sup>51</sup>Mitali Nikore & Ishita Uppadhayay "India's gendered digital divide: How the absence of digital access is leaving women behind", Observer Research Foundation, August 22, 2021, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/indias-gendered-digital-divide/> accessed on 7 September, 2023,

<sup>52</sup>Nikore & Uppadhayay, 'Gender digital divide', ORF

<sup>53</sup>Digital Fluency is the ability to discover, evaluate, and use information and technology effectively and ethically and is the ability to create something new with these tools.

<sup>54</sup>1. Nadia Rasheed, "How Digital Literacy Can Bring in More Women to The Workforce," web log, UNDP India (blog), April 27, 2021, <https://www.undp.org/india/blog/how-digital-literacy-can-bring-more-women-workforce#:~:text=In%20India%2C%20only%2033%25%20of,figure%20drops%20to%20around%2025%25,> Accessed 7 September 2023.

## Digital technology and gender-based violence

A 2020 UNESCO report highlights that women using digital technologies face an increased risk of cyber harassment and abuse. The report surveyed over 900 journalists from 125 countries, including India, about their experiences of online violence. 73 per cent of the respondents said that they had experienced online violence, including threats of physical and sexual violence. Only 25 per cent reported these incidents to their employers but said that they did not get encouraging responses. As a result of the online violence, respondents noted that they self-censored, left their jobs or even journalism altogether.<sup>55</sup>



The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), reported 10,730 cases in 2021, mainly involving cyber blackmail, threats, pornography, stalking, bullying and defamation. Cyber harassment and online violence against women in India are considered crimes under various laws, including the Information Technology Act, 2000, Indian Penal Code, 1860, Section 354A- Sexual Harassment, Section 503- Criminal Intimidation, and Section 509, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POSCO) Act, 2012, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013. For effective implementation of legal provisions, it is crucial for NCRB to raise awareness among women, simplify the complaint process and enhance data collection.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup>Julie Posetti et al., publication, Online Violence Against Women Journalists: A Global Snapshot of Incidence and Impacts (UNESCO, 2020), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375136>. Accessed 29 January 2024

<sup>56</sup>"Bumble India Safety Guide: How to Identify and Report Online Harassment," Bumble, 2022, <https://bumble.com/en-in/the-buzz/safety-center-bumble-india>, Accessed on 7 September 2023

<sup>57</sup>"Harassment Of Women In Digital Space: A Challenging Issue For Law Enforcement", Misha, Legal Service India E-Journal, n.d. Accessed 7 September 2023, <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-10742-harassment-of-women-in-digital-space-a-challenging-issue-for-law-enforcement.html> <sup>58</sup>Vivian Wang and Dali Wang, rep., The Impact of the Increasing Popularity of Digital Art on the Current Job Market for Artists (Art and Design Review, 2021), [https://www.scirp.org/pdf/adr\\_2021072114171398.pdf](https://www.scirp.org/pdf/adr_2021072114171398.pdf). accessed on 9 October 2023

<sup>59</sup>Aditya Krishnan, "Indian Women in STEM: Are They Underrepresented?," Economic Times, April 28, 2023, accessed October 9, 2023, [https://etinsights.et-edge.com/indian-women-in-stem-are-they-underrepresented/..](https://etinsights.et-edge.com/indian-women-in-stem-are-they-underrepresented/)

<sup>60</sup>arXiv is a free distribution service and an open-access archive for nearly 2.4 million scholarly articles in the fields of physics, mathematics, computer science, quantitative biology, quantitative finance, statistics, electrical engineering and systems science, and economics. <https://arxiv.org/>

<sup>61</sup>Kostas Stathouloupoulos and Juan Mateos-Garcia, publication, Gender Diversity in AI Research (Nesta, July 2019), [https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Gender\\_Diversity\\_in\\_AI\\_Research.pdf](https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Gender_Diversity_in_AI_Research.pdf). Accessed on 10 October 2023

<sup>62</sup>Machine learning is a branch of artificial intelligence (AI) and computer science which focuses on the use of data and algorithms to imitate the way that humans learn, gradually improving its accuracy. <https://www.ibm.com/topics/machine-learning>

<sup>63</sup>"Gender and AI: Addressing Bias in Artificial Intelligence," International Women's Day, accessed February 2, 2024, <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Missions/14458/Gender-and-AI-Addressing-bias-in-artificial-intelligence>.

<sup>64</sup>Parvathy Krishnan, Rama Devi Lanka, and Swetha Kolluri, "Is AI Industry Gender-Blind?," Businessline, February 10, 2023, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/is-ai-industry-gender-blind/article66494829.ece..> Accessed on 10 October 2023

## Art, technology and employability

The growth of digital technology has expanded employment opportunities in art. A 2021 U.S. study found that "in the study period (January-April, 2021), around 22,500 artist jobs available, and over 1% (2400) of them are high-paid jobs with an annual salary of over 100K, and over 3% (7515) of them are medium-paid jobs with a salary of over 65K. The majority (66%) of artist jobs with an annual salary of over 60K are related to digital art and come from technology sectors. The digital art jobs are across the nation, not clustered around major cities"<sup>58</sup> Digital art offers flexibility, easy publishing, portability, printability, and popularity.

In India, digital artists express that technology provides employment opportunities in roles like web and graphic designing. The accessibility of these opportunities for women digital artists remains unclear. While women in arts and culture professions often freelance, their presence in the art and technology space may be limited by the gender digital divide especially in rural areas and for those with less education and information. Further study and evidence are required to substantiate these assumptions.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionising the world of art, through AI generated art and AI assisted art. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2022 reveals that women constitute only 22 per cent of the AI workforce. Forty three per cent of STEM graduates in India are female. However, an analysis of the sector shows that they only constitute 28 per cent of the total STEM workforce.<sup>59</sup> Even in renowned tech-focussed global corporations, the proportion of women AI specialists remains between 10-15 per cent. A Nesta study indicates that only 13.83 per cent of AI research publications in arXiv<sup>60</sup> are authored by women.<sup>61</sup>

AI offers artists new creative possibilities, but emerging concerns include gender bias, which occurs during machine learning<sup>62</sup>. Since machine learning is managed by humans, they bring their own biases into the process. This could result in lack of diversity in data sets which in turn leads to bias errors, potentially perpetuating stereotyping and discrimination.<sup>63</sup> Examples include gender-unaware AI designs affecting credit scoring for women or biased AI-recruiting tools filtering out job applications from women.<sup>64</sup>

## India's National Strategy for AI

- ◆ It focuses on inclusiveness and promotes the idea of #AIFORALL.
- ◆ Under this programme, Telangana aims to train 100,000 students, with a focus on girls from vulnerable backgrounds on AI and Data Science and has already trained more than 5,000 girls.
- ◆ Additionally, rural women in Telangana are also being trained and employed in three rural data annotation centres in the state.
- ◆ The government also promoted We-Hub, an incubator for women entrepreneurs in Hyderabad that has trained more than 700 girls aged 13 to 17 in Data Science and AI.

AI and Gender Equality,  
Drishti IAS daily updates,  
13 Feb 2023

## Art, technology and gender activism



***Art of resistance has undergone a complete transformation in the digital era. Without having to wait for that once in a lifetime exhibition, artists now have an open and free space where they can showcase their works. With the threat of censorship out of the way and the provision to remain anonymous, more and more artists are now beginning to assert their voices.***<sup>65</sup>

—An article in *The Citizen*, August 2020

Digital technology, especially through social media platforms has significantly expanded the reach of 'protest art' – an art which is spontaneous, topical and inclusive.<sup>66</sup> Open-source tools have also made it possible for artists and designers to quickly share their art with activists.<sup>67</sup> Women digital artists are using their art to voice stories and experiences that challenge patriarchy and stereotypes. They address issues such as sexist office jokes, shadeism, body shaming, gender fluidity, sexual harassment and casteism.<sup>68</sup>



<sup>65</sup>Kivleen Sahni, "Bring it On – Digital Art Storms the Internet in India" *The Citizen*, accessed October 10, 2023, <https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/16/19180/Bring-It-On---Digital-Art-Storms-the-Internet-in-India>.

<sup>66</sup>Supriya Roychoudhury, "The Art of Resistance: When Imagination Meets Technology at Protests from India to Chile," *Scroll.In*, accessed November 7, 2023, <https://scroll.in/article/954091/the-art-of-resistance-when-imagination-meets-technology-at-protests-from-india-to-chile>.

<sup>67</sup>1. Ritupriya Basu, "How Designers in India Turned Digital Tools into Virtual Grounds of Activism," *Ritupriya Basu*, July 15, 2020, <https://www.ritupriyabasu.com/features/2022/2/28/how-designers-in-india-turned-digital-tools-into-virtual-grounds-of-activism>. Accessed on 2 February 2024

<sup>68</sup>Sahni. "Digital Art Storms the Internet In India"

# Festivals and biennales

**Festivals and biennales are an important part of the arts and culture scene in India and in the context of this gender analysis, warrant a closer look. They are often named after the city they are hosted in like Jaipur Literature Festival, Kochi Muzris Biennale, and Venice Biennale.**

***“The outcomes of cities’ engagement with arts festivals, however, remain little understood, particularly in social and cultural terms”.***<sup>69</sup>

Global UNSECO studies highlight that gender disparities persist in festivals and biennales, despite some progress. An analysis of 60 major film festivals in 2019 revealed that only 33 per cent of the awards for the main film categories were awarded to female artists and producers. Although the proportion of female artists at electronic music festivals increased from 15 per cent in 2016 to 25 per cent in 2019, there is still an imbalance.<sup>70</sup>

Women’s participation in cultural activities presents another consideration. Shuchi Kapoor, Founder, Chennai Photo Biennale emphasises that *“Important to note here is not just women performers but the percentage of women in the audience - their ability to travel, stay and attend these events or festivals is limited. For instance, the number of women at the Chennai International Film festival is abysmally low or negligible, and there are efforts being made by arts and cultural institutions to have a women-only show, to encourage more local women to feel free to attend an otherwise largely male-only festival.”*

Public funded festivals, and festivals with female artistic directors, have a considerably higher proportion of female acts. Art biennales, such as the Istanbul Biennial, Venice Biennale, Sharjah Biennial, DAK’ART and the Havana Biennale, indicate a significant improvement in the participation of women curators and female artists.<sup>71</sup>

Festivals, biennales and exhibitions in India are diverse, covering literature, crafts, visual and performing arts (films, photography, music and dance etc). These festivals fuel the economy through showcases, performances, tourism, and trade.<sup>72</sup> Festivals showcase art, which serves as a medium to discuss shared social challenges and highlight themes such as social equality, gender diversity (G-Fest, Gender Bender, WoW Festival), disseminate ideas including LGBTQ themes (Kashish Mumbai International Queer Film Festival, Goa Pride Festival) and provide a platform for Dalit and Adivasi women, survivors of the MeToo movement and queer artists.<sup>73</sup>

While women and gender issues are presented through artistic content at festivals and exhibitions, further examination is needed in context of their representation in festivals management, curation, and leadership. Available information is anecdotal. For example, The Kochi Muzris Biennale appointed Anita Dube as its first female curator in 2018.<sup>74</sup> However, a look at the organising committee of the Kalaghoda Festival<sup>75</sup> and the Jaipur Literature Festival<sup>76</sup> shows gender diversity at the organising committee level. The publicly available information on festival websites is usually promotional and lacks detailed insights and information. Hence relying solely on desk research is insufficient for a comprehensive understanding of gender perspectives in festival management and governance.

<sup>69</sup>Bernadette Quinn, “Arts Festivals and the City”, Urban Studies, Vol. 42, No. 5/6, Review Issue: Culture-Led Urban Regeneration, 2005, pp. 927-943,

<sup>70</sup>Conor, “Gender & Creativity”

<sup>71</sup>Reshaping Policies for Creativity, Addressing Culture As a Global Public Good. UNESCO, 2022. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380491>.

<sup>72</sup>Mindy Myunghee Jeon, “Impacts of Festivals and Events.” In Routledge eBooks, 32–50, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429274398-4>, Accessed 28 September 2023

<sup>73</sup>1. Niharika Ghosh, “Be Proud, Be You: 5 Festivals Celebrating Gender Diversity,” Festivals from India, April 6, 2023, <https://www.festivalsfromindia.com/5-inclusive-festivals-celebrating-gender-diversity/>. Accessed on 28 September 2023

<sup>74</sup>Lorena Muñoz-Alonso, “Artist Anita Dube Appointed Curator of 2018 Kochi-Muziris Biennale,” Artnet, April 4, 2017, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/anita-dube-curator-2018-kochi-muziris-biennale-913853#:~:text=The%20Indian%20artist%20Anita%20Dube,on%20March%2029%20in%20Kochi.913853#:~:text=The%20Indian%20artist%20Anita%20Dube,on%20March%2029%20in%20Kochi>.

<sup>75</sup><https://kalaghodaassociation.com/committee/>

<sup>76</sup><https://jaipurliteraturefestival.org/team-2023>



The British Council South Asia Festival & Cultural Academies programme aims to develop the festivals ecosystem to deliver maximum positive social and cultural impact.

The Academy brings together festival directors, founders, entrepreneurs, and senior managers within the arts & cultural sector across the region, thereby creating a platform that could positively impact gender and EDI.

One of the key learning outcomes is to enable participants to “critically reflect on their own business practices in areas such as equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), gender equality, and environmental sustainability in order to respond to local and global challenges.”



# Research, data and evidence

**The 2005 Convention on Diversity of Cultural Expressions emphasises the role of women in cultural and creative sectors. Article 7 of the 2005 Convention encourages Parties to consider the special circumstances and needs of women, while Article 4 of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist (1980), urges Parties to focus on fostering women's creativity and the encouragement of groups. The monitoring framework of the 2005 Convention underscores the necessity of policies promoting gender equality in culture and media sectors, with monitoring systems evaluating women's representation, and access in these sectors.<sup>77</sup>**

This clearly highlights the importance of data, research and evidence to identify, track and measure progress towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors. However, this is also one of the key gaps this report has found.

UNESCO's 2021 report *Gender & Creativity, Progress on the Precipice* emphasises the need for better data to monitor gender equality in the culture and creative sectors. While progress has been made by various organisations, there is still much to do to gather comprehensive and reliable data capable of informed policy change. New approaches to data collection using quantitative and qualitative indicators are necessary to uncover the root causes of gender inequalities in these sectors.”

The report highlights the need for data on

- ◆ women's participation, representation and advancement in culture and creativity
- ◆ official national registers of artists, disaggregated by gender and cultural domain
- ◆ attacks on artistic expression
- ◆ non-binary genders and gender diversity.<sup>78</sup>



<sup>77</sup>UNESCO, "ReShaping Policies For Creativity, Addressing culture as a global public good", 2022, Accessed 28 September, 2023. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380474>

<sup>78</sup>Conor, *Gender & Creativity*

The limited availability of quantitative and qualitative data on gender in India's cultural and creative sectors posed a challenge during this gender analysis. Some of the gaps include:

01

UNESCO's research on gender equality in the cultural and creative industries has been widely referenced here. However, while UNESCO studies offer a global perspective, equivalent data and insights specific to India were difficult to find.

02

The Handloom Census concluded in 2019-20 is the last publicly available census data. This is a challenge considering the negative impact of the pandemic on economic conditions of people, especially the poor. The British Council's own Taking the Temperature Final Report notes that the lockdown and social-distancing measures and termination of contracts have hit hard on 88 per cent of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector, as well as the skilled freelance workforce across creative sectors. It reports a loss of 51 per cent in earned income and mentions that 44 per cent of the creative sector workforce is now self-employed. Under these circumstances, there is an urgent need to have updated and reliable data that can inform policy and programme interventions.

03

Information from India was scarce compared to global or western sources. In such cases, we relied on news reports of events, panels discussions, launches and festivals, to gather information around gender equality, particularly in sectors like music and museums.

04

The Fourth All India Handloom Census 2019-20 published by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, provides valuable insights. The top-level data on number of handloom weavers was sex disaggregated across rural and urban areas, and it also included data on transgender people. However, more detailed sex disaggregation across various other criteria like social groups, religion, housing type and educational levels was either absent or inconsistent.

05

Research, data and evidence on women workers in the garment industry are more accessible. One of the reasons for this could be due to the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh in April 2013. This incident drew international attention to the working conditions of women garment workers, prompting organisations like the ILO and international apparel companies to lead the creation of more evidence and knowledge on the subject.

06

The Indian publishing industry, valued at about INR 500 billion is the second largest in the world, and expected to reach INR 800 billion by 2024. Despite a reported rise in the number of women writers, available data lacks insight into their role and contribution to the economy. Even studies by global market research firms offer limited information on women's presence, representation, or contribution to the Indian publishing economy.

The challenges of finding reliable data on gender issues in India's cultural and creative sectors highlights the need to advocate with policy makers, practitioners and thought leaders for the production of relevant research data and evidence on gender issues. Such reports are essential for gaining a comprehensive understanding of gender issues in the sector which can inform policy making and aid in strategy and programme development as mentioned in this report.

# 03

## Trend analysis



## Research on the sectors described in Section 2 revealed some common trends:

### 01 Role

Women play a significant role in India's arts and culture sector. Although overall numbers for the sector are not available, several individual sectors show an alarming overrepresentation of women, especially at a low level. Example: the handloom and garment sectors consist of approximately 70 per cent women.

### 02 Participation

Women's participation often takes the form of vulnerable work like freelance, part-time, or contractual jobs, which is prevalent across sectors like handloom, garment, literature, and music.

### 03 Representation

The lack of representation in leadership is also linked to the overrepresentation of women in certain creative occupations that are not as highly paid – writers, typesetters, reviewers, bloggers and publicists, to name a few.

### 04 Recognition

Lack of, or delayed, recognition of women artists' contributions to their artistic fields is evident, as seen in several prestigious awards and accolades having sparse representation of women.

### 05 Policy Implementation

Gaps between policy and implementation persist. A 2022 study by the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre examined working conditions for women in the Indian garment industry. It revealed instances of routine physical and verbal abuse, forced overtime, lack of COVID-19 safety precautions and denial of breaks, in factories supplying to at least 12 global fashion brands. It is interesting to note that all these brands have policy commitments against harassment and abuse and gender-based violence in particular.

### 06 Pay Gap

A persistent gender pay gap exists, with women's work often undervalued or considered 'low skilled', particularly in the handloom and traditional publishing sector.

### 07 Career Progression

Gender discrimination in accessing opportunities hinders career progression, noticeable in under-representation of female musicians at festivals, female artists in museum collections and exhibitions and female executives in decision-making roles.

### 08 Finance

It is a challenge for women to access finances to further their creative enterprises. Women entrepreneurs in the MSME sector face major obstacles getting finance for business growth due to collateral constraints.

### 09 Violence and Harassment

Gender-based violence is widespread, affecting various creative occupations. There have been reports of sexual harassment in the garment sector. Women in the music industry have complained of objectification, while digital artists are experiencing cyber bullying and online harassment.

### 10 Digital Divide

The gender digital divide, influenced by factors like poverty, rural-urban divide, patriarchy and cultural norms, impacts women's effective participation in the creative economy. This further hampers their access to and progress in digital technology, impeding women artists in their creative careers.

# Positive Trends

Positive trends contributing towards gender equality are emerging in certain industries. Some indicative trends are outlined below:

**01**

Shifting gender composition of the publishing workforce with women taking on roles in accounting, sales and production, as well as becoming distributors and buyers for retail book chains. At the same time, there is an increase in men working in editorial departments.

**02**

Some festival organisers, like Wild City, are addressing gender imbalance consciously. For instance, Wild City aimed to increase the representation of female artists in their line-up at the Magnetic Fields Festival in Rajasthan.

**03**

Privately managed museums, constituting about 10 per cent of the museum sector in India, are making great strides in promoting women in leadership.

**04**

Several cities like Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad and Delhi are making strides in gender-sensitive urban planning with initiatives like theme parks, breastfeeding kiosks, women-only auto services and toilet facilities for the LGBTQ community.

**05**

Women-led initiatives in heritage conservation are gaining prominence, contributing to the visibility of women's histories and narratives in urban spaces.

Across most sectors that are covered in this report, they could gain and be strengthened from research, insights and evidence on gender issues in the arts and culture space.

# 04

## Stakeholder Analysis



**Stakeholders and partners are pivotal to the success of any programme. They contribute diverse strengths, priorities, and networks, which when pooled together accelerates the progress towards achieving gender equality. Understanding stakeholder priorities and activities from a gender perspective is, therefore, a key part of this analysis. The stakeholders listed here are only those with whom British Council engages with on a regular basis.**

## Indian government stakeholders

There are several government policies and programmes that address the needs of the creative sector as one that has tremendous potential for inclusive growth. This has also been highlighted during recent G20 deliberations under the Culture Working Group. The 'G20 Culture: Shaping the Global Narrative for Inclusive Growth' report produced under India's G20 presidency, notes the intention to "*map a comprehensive cultural landscape that will guide future policymaking*". Currently, India does not have a comprehensive arts and culture policy guided by the Ministry of Culture. However, there are several policies related to the creative and culture sectors that are spread across various ministries and offer opportunities for gender integration. Some of these are discussed ahead.

### Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture has formulated a scheme titled "Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India", with the objective of reinvigorating and revitalising various institutions, groups, individuals, identified non-MOC institutions, non-government organisations, researchers and scholars so that they may engage in activities/projects for strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.<sup>79</sup>

### Ministry of Textiles

The preamble of the National Textile Policy 2000<sup>80</sup> notes the importance and potential for creating employment in the agricultural, industrial, organised, and decentralised sectors in rural and urban areas, particularly for women. While the New Textile Policy 2021<sup>81</sup> focuses on creating better employment opportunities, specific references to gender issues within the sector could be strengthened.



<sup>79</sup><https://www.indiaculture.gov.in/scheme-safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage-and-diverse-cultural-traditions-india>

<sup>80</sup>"National Textile Policy 2000." Ministry of Textiles, [https://texmin.nic.in/sites/default/files/policy\\_2000.pdf](https://texmin.nic.in/sites/default/files/policy_2000.pdf), accessed on 18 September 2023

<sup>81</sup>"New Textile Policy ." Press Information Bureau , February 12, 2021,

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1697401#:-:text=In%20the%20budget%202021%2D22,one%20place%20with%20plug%20%26%20play.> 18 July 2023



## The National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) 2021-2026<sup>82</sup>

The programme recognises the significant role that the handloom sector plays in women's economic empowerment, by engaging over 25 lakh female weavers and related workers. The programme has set out several initiatives to enable this, as outlined below:

- ◆ The NHDP Cluster Development Programme (CDP)<sup>83</sup> focuses on development of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for weavers. SHGs in India consist mainly of women members who leverage the power of the collective for their empowerment and agency.
- ◆ Under the CDP, individual women are eligible to receive complete financial support from the Government of India to set up work sheds.
- ◆ The NHDP provides for the education of weavers and their wards through National Institutes of Open Schooling (NIOS)/IGNOU where fee subsidies are available for women learners. This directly addresses the gap revealed by the Handloom Census data, which showed that almost 25 per cent weavers lack formal education, with an additional 14 per cent not having completed primary school.

## Ministry of Education

Chapter 22 of the NEP 2020<sup>84</sup> focuses on promoting Indian languages, arts, and culture for imparting cultural education. This underscores the importance of teaching language, local crafts, and music at the school level. At higher education levels, the policy aims to offer high quality programmes and degrees in heritage, covering art and museum administration, archaeology, artefact conservation, graphic design, and web design to enhance employability. Chapter 6 of the policy focuses on equitable and inclusive education, to be read alongside Chapter 14, which addresses equity in higher education. The inclusion of both culture and gender issues in NEP 2020 presents a great opportunity for linking education with gender in the arts and culture sector.



<sup>82</sup> & <sup>83</sup> "COMPERHENSIVE HANDICRAFTS I' CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (CHCDS) GUIDELINES." Development Commissioner (Handicrafts). Accessed July 14, 2023. <https://www.handicrafts.nic.in/pdf/Scheme.pdf#page=8>.

<sup>84</sup>"National Education Policy 2020." Ministry of Education , 2020. [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/NEP\\_Final\\_English\\_0.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf). Accessed 18 July 2023

## Ministry of Rural Development

The Ministry has several initiatives which while aimed at rural development, also impact the creative sector.

- ◆ *The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA)*, a flagship government programme, provides 100 days of work per year to the unemployed and unskilled at a CPI inflation-indexed wage rate. About a decade ago, the textile ministry urged the government for the inclusion of handloom weavers in MGNREGA, on account of their lower earnings. Currently, only silk farming is covered under MGNREGA, but the textile ministry is advocating for its extension to the entire textile and garment sector, which as mentioned in earlier sections, has a majority representation of women.<sup>85</sup>
- ◆ *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)* works to: (i) create access to formal credit (ii) provide support for diversification and strengthening of livelihoods (iii) enable access to entitlements and public services. Under the scheme, one member (preferably a woman) from each rural household is brought under the SHG network and provided with bank-linkage arrangements. As of February 2022, this scheme is being implemented in 6,789 blocks in 707 districts across all 28 States and 6 Union Territories (UTs).<sup>86</sup> Issues of poverty and livelihoods, that impact the arts sector in India, overlaps with the mandate of the NRLM. Currently, the NRLM is oriented towards the rural poor as a social security measure provided by the state for improving livelihoods to reach a basic subsistence level. It provides a great opportunity for strengthening livelihoods in various crafts and creative industries. This could be done by bringing a focus on design, and marketing that are critical for the arts sector.<sup>87</sup>

## National Skills Development Mission (NSDM)<sup>88</sup>

There are several initiatives being conducted under the aegis of the NSDM, which have relevance to women working in the arts and culture sector in India. Some of these are mentioned below:

- ◆ The Directorate General of Training, under the NSDM, has been tasked with establishing special institutes for women's training.
- ◆ The National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) is working exclusively on women's skill development, especially in rural areas. The training covers digital, accounting, and entrepreneurial skills, facilitating women to start their own businesses.
- ◆ Under the Skill India Mission: (1) Partnership with Humara Bachpan Trust in Odisha aims to give employment and entrepreneurship opportunities to about 1500 economically disadvantaged women. (2) Partnership with Industree Crafts Foundation is helping train 1500 women in Karnataka.
- ◆ Aligned with the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), there are nearly 450 job roles which are focused on upskilling women. Skill India is encouraging participation of women in new-age job roles aligned to Industry 4.0 such as Artificial Intelligence, 3D printing, Data Analytics etc.
- ◆ The National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD), under the Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), has designed Entrepreneurship Development Programmes for rural women to instil them with entrepreneurial values, attitude and the motivation they need to set up an enterprise/group enterprises. The Livelihood Business Incubation (LBI)<sup>89</sup> approach is also used by the institute to promote woman entrepreneurs.

<sup>85</sup>Textiles Ministry for Inclusion of Handloom Weavers under NREGA .” The Economic Times, 2014.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/textiles-ministry-for-inclusion-of-handloom-weavers-under-nrega/articleshow/28848389.cms?from=mdr>. Accessed 18 July 2023

<sup>86</sup>National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) Manual for District - Level Functionaries (2017).

<https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/National%20Rural%20Livelihood%20Mission.pdf>. Accessed 19 July 2023

<sup>87</sup>Yaaminey Mubayi, rep., Policy Gaps Study on the Crafts Sector in India (All India Crafts & Craftworkers Welfare Association ), accessed July 19, 2023,

<https://www.aiacaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Final-Policy-Gaps-Study.pdf> Accessed 19 July 2023

<sup>88</sup>National Skills Development Mission A Framework for Implementation n.d.. Accessed July 20, 2023.

<https://www.msde.gov.in/sites/default/files/2019-09/National%20Skill%20Development%20Mission.pdf>.

<sup>89</sup>Livelihood Business Incubators aim to create jobs at local level and reduce un-employment by creating a favourable ecosystem for entrepreneurial development in the country.

## Indicative state governments

- **Rajasthan** introduced its first Handicrafts Policy in November 2022<sup>90</sup>, which focuses on job creation, export promotion, infrastructure development, strategic marketing, and empowerment of artisans in various sectors. The policy includes provisions for social security through group insurance and scholarships. The policy could be strengthened by bringing a focus on how women and girls could be supported or benefitted by this policy.
- **The Assam Handicrafts Policy 2022** mentions women in its preamble: *“The State recognises the importance of Handicraft Industries/ Enterprises/ Related Industries in providing self-employment opportunities to rural artisans, particularly to women and the weaker sections of society”*. The policy focuses on improving socio-economic conditions of artisans, fostering craft-based industries, providing training and technology support, conserving traditional knowledge through Geographic Indications (GI) and offering social security (through insurance schemes, family pension, education support), among others. According to the 4th Handloom Census 2019-2020, Assam has 1,159,507 women in the handloom sector and 58,114 women handicraft artisans registered with the office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts)<sup>91</sup>. Policy focus on women in the sector could make this more gender-responsive.



<sup>90</sup>“Rajasthan’s First Handicraft Policy.” GK Today, November 8, 2022. <https://www.gktoday.in/rajasthans-first-handicraft-policy/>. Accessed 20 July 2023

<sup>91</sup>“25,46,285 Women Working in Handloom Sector of Textiles Industry,” Press Information Bureau (Ministry of Textiles, March 16, 2022). <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1806546>, accessed on 22 January 2024

# UK government stakeholders

## UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

UKRI is the national funding agency for science and research in the UK. UKRI has a Gender Equality Plan 2022-2026 that commits to organisation-wide actions to promote gender equality covering recruitment and career progressions, leadership and decision making, gender mainstreaming in research and teaching, and having mechanisms to address gender-based violence<sup>92</sup>. UKRI works with various councils, among which, British Council works with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). AHRC funds high quality, independent research in subjects ranging from philosophy and the creative industries to art conservation and product design. AHRC is committed to promoting the values of equality of opportunity, diversity, and inclusivity. The AHRC Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan, 2021, updated in 2023, notes their intention to foster an inclusive research and innovation system. The action plan is detailed, outlining areas of where AHRC wants to make a difference from an EDI perspective, including gender.<sup>93</sup>

## Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

DCMS oversees the Government Equalities Office (GEO). It leads policies on gender equality, sexual orientation and transgender equality and manages the equality legislation across the UK government. DCMS reports to the Minister for Women and Equality at the Department for Education. It funds organisations working on gender equality. Example: It has partnered with Comic Relief to work on initiatives like addressing the needs of black and minority women and girls, violence against older women<sup>94</sup>, gender equality on FTSE boards<sup>95</sup> etc.

<sup>92</sup>“Gender Equality Plan 2022 to 2026,” UK Research and Innovation, July 11, 2022, <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-gender-equality-plan/gender-equality-plan-2022-to-2026/#section-work-life-balance-and-organisational-culture-objectives..> Accessed on 25 May 2023

<sup>93</sup>“AHRC equality, diversity and inclusion action plan: research and innovation by everyone, for everyone,” UK Research and Innovation, March 14, 2023. <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ahrc-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan/ahrc-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan-research-and-innovation-by-everyone-for-everyone/#section-ahrc-updated-edi-action-plan..> Accessed on 22 January 2024

<sup>94</sup>“Reports and Publications,” Comic Relief, accessed January 22, 2024, <https://www.comicrelief.com/funding/reports-and-publications/>. Accessed January 22, 2024.

<sup>95</sup>“DCMS Leads the Way in Gender Equality.” Diversity UK, July 2, 2014. <https://diversityuk.org/dcms-leads-way-gender-equality/>. Accessed on

<sup>96</sup>“Equality and Diversity Information,” Equality and Diversity Information, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://www.napier.ac.uk/about-us/university-governance/equality-and-diversity-information..> Accessed July 20, 2023..

<sup>97</sup>“Equality Objectives and Reports,” University of the Arts London, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/public-information/equality-objectives-and-reports..>

# UK universities

## Edinburgh Napier University

The Edinburgh Napier University’s website outlines its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) information. Their ‘widening participation’ strategy (2016-2020) acknowledges protected characteristics, including gender and intersectionalities. The strategy includes plans to pilot workshops and resources that target gender stereotypes at different educational levels, demonstrating a commitment to long-term impact. This commitment is enhancing dialogue with stakeholders that the institution engages with. In addition to this, the university has a Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 in place, covering nine outcome areas including women’s representation in leadership, flexibility in work policies, addressing gender balance in the student body and gender-based violence.<sup>96</sup>

## University of the Arts London

University of the Arts London has also published its EDI objective and reports on their website, along with a gender pay gap analysis as required by the Equality Act. However, the available information does not provide much detailed information about the university’s strategic priorities for collaborating with partners on gender equality initiatives.<sup>97</sup>

# Other stakeholders (UN agencies, NGOs, business associations etc.)

## UNESCO<sup>98</sup>

Gender equality is a top global priority for UNESCO, as evident in their gender-specific programmes and gender mainstreaming efforts. Globally, some of the initiatives taken by UNESCO towards gender equality are outlined below:

- ◆ Researching the gender gap and providing evidence and insights through several publications over the years
- ◆ Supporting women creators through mentorship, funding, infrastructure, and co-production opportunities in the digital creative industries
- ◆ Empowering women through targeted workshops with female military personnel and peacekeepers, focusing on their vital role in safeguarding cultural property during armed conflicts
- ◆ Mobilising its conventions including the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the World Heritage Convention and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

## Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)<sup>99</sup>

FICCI recognises the need for a policy framework to grow the arts and culture industry in India. It has constituted a National Committee on Art and Business of Art which focuses on placing art on the National Policy Agenda, engaging industry stakeholders, and forging public-private partnerships.

While FICCI has published several studies on art and culture including Taking the Temperature, 2021, Art Orchestrators: Creating future leaders in the Arts, 2019, Creative Arts in India: theatre, dance and crafts industry among others, its strategic priority on gender equality in the arts sector is not explicitly stated.



<sup>98</sup>"Culture for Gender Equality Questions & Answers." UNESCO. Accessed July 20, 2023. [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/info\\_sheet\\_gender\\_equality.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/info_sheet_gender_equality.pdf).

<sup>99</sup>"Art and Culture." Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Accessed July 20, 2023. [https://www.ficci.in/api/sector\\_details/2](https://www.ficci.in/api/sector_details/2).

## The Lakmé Fashion Week (LFW)

LFW is jointly organised by Lakmé, RISE Worldwide (formerly IMG Reliance) and Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI). LFW has anecdotal information on gender priorities, such as promoting gender neutral clothing<sup>100</sup> and campaigns against gender-based violence<sup>101</sup>. However, specific details on LFW's gender priorities are not publicly available. The event serves as a platform for showcasing designs and crafts by rural women, involving collaborations with designers and NGOs. Example: In 2018, as part of a CSR initiative, five designers collaborated with USHA Silai School to create a collection that brought together the vision of the designers and rural artisan women.<sup>102</sup>

## Fashion Revolution<sup>103</sup>

Fashion Revolution is a fashion activism movement that mobilises citizens, brands and policymakers through research, education, and advocacy.

The movement's manifesto highlights the following:

- ◆ Dignified work that does not enslave, exploit, overwork, harass, abuse or discriminate
- ◆ Fair and equal pay
- ◆ Giving people a voice – to negotiate for better conditions at work and across communities
- ◆ Solidarity, inclusiveness, and democracy regardless of race, gender, age, shape, or ability.

These aspects strongly relate with the challenges that women face in this sector. Fashion Revolution recognises the significance of the predominant female workforce in the 45 million-strong Indian garment industry.



<sup>100</sup>"FDCI X Lakmé Fashion Week Brings Gender-Neutral Fashion To Ramp." Outlook, 2022.

<https://www.outlookindia.com/art-entertainment/lakme-fashion-week-brings-gender-neutral-fashion-to-ramp-photos-188468>. Accessed 20 July 2023

<sup>101</sup>"Celebrities, the Fashion Industry, and Global Partners Unite to Launch Anti Gender Violence Global Program at Lakmé Fashion Week." The World Bank, 2015. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/03/17/celebrities-fashion-industry-global-partners-unite-anti-gender-violence-global-program-lakme-fashion-week>.

<sup>102</sup>"Lakmé Fashion Week: Indian Designers Collaborate with Usha Silai." Fashion Network, 2018.

<https://in.fashionnetwork.com/news/lakme-fashion-week-indian-designers-collaborate-with-usha-silai,943348.html>. Accessed 20 July 2023

<sup>103</sup>"MANIFESTO FOR A FASHION REVOLUTION." Fashion Revolution. Accessed July 20, 2023. <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/manifesto/>. Accessed 20 July 2023

# 05

## Recommendations



## Recommendation 1

### Strengthen the evidence base on gender issues

- ◆ There is an urgent need to produce research, insights and evidence on gender issues in the arts and culture sector in India. This will support the development of gender-responsive policies and gender-sensitive/transformational programmes, fostering equity and inclusivity. Key research areas can include the following:
  - Women's representation, contributions and leadership in India's creative economy including, but not limited to, literature and publishing, museums, festivals, and biennales
  - Gender issues in the arts and technology sector in India, particularly with reference to women's employability (covering AI, VR, tech art and more).
- ◆ Develop platforms to share research and insights and facilitate networking among arts leaders, practitioners and researchers through conferences, seminars, round tables, and stakeholder consultations focussed on gender equality.
- ◆ Ensure gender sensitivity in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems by incorporating explicit gender equality outcomes and indicators. Evaluations should include questions around how the project has impacted women and gender minorities.

## Recommendation 2

### Create opportunities for female artists and creative professionals

- ◆ Work on capacity building for female artists and creative professions through exchange programmes, training, leadership and mentoring initiatives, grants and scholarships, particularly in cross over areas like art and technology. These could be developed through collaborations and partnerships between arts and culture organisations, private and public sectors.
- ◆ Convene networking platforms for female artists and creative professionals for exchanging ideas, collaborating on projects, developing professional relationships to support career progression, and creating visibility for gender issues in the arts and culture sector.



## Recommendation 3

# Establish multi-stakeholder collaborations and partnerships for gender equality

- ◆ Ensure that ongoing advocacy efforts by various stakeholders for developing a comprehensive culture policy in India also includes a gender equality focus.
- ◆ Engage with relevant government ministries and departments to bring a gender equality focus to existing policies. Indicative stakeholders could include Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises etc.
- ◆ Bring focus on women's entrepreneurship in creative and cultural industries through collaborations and partnerships with flagship Government of India ministries and programmes, including but not limited to National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Skill India Mission, National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD), National Handloom Development Programme, National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Niti Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP), and relevant state governments.
- ◆ Foster collaborations between arts and culture organisations and the private sector to drive gender equality initiatives such as:
  - Promoting awareness and sensitising various creative and cultural industries to embrace gender equality. Example: Collaborating with fashion and crafts organisations to create gender-sensitive value chains
  - Establishing gender-focussed arts and culture programmes as an integral part of sustainability and corporate social responsibility strategies. This includes offering grants and scholarships for women artists, festivals and exhibitions featuring women's art, literature, music etc.
  - Signing up to national and international standards and benchmarks, like the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP), that promote gender equality practices in business.
  - Measuring and reporting progress towards gender equality and using the insights to proactively address and eliminate gender inequality within private sector businesses and value chains.
  - Showcasing good practices and success stories from private sector initiatives to promote gender equality, that motivate other companies to adopt similar practices. This also contributes to improving the brand image and reputation of the companies.

# 06

## Conclusion



According to the British Council's report *The Missing Pillar – Culture's Contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, *“Gender relations are critical in the transmission of cultural knowledge and skills, the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage, the promotion of equal rights and access to cultural life, and the emergence and strengthening of the cultural and creative industries”*

This gender analysis was produced by British Council to highlight gender issues in select industries in the arts and culture sector. It is envisioned as a first step towards understanding recent efforts and identifying knowledge gaps related to women in various creative professions in the country. The objective of this analysis is to foster the development of more gender-sensitive policies and programmes and advance gender equality in the arts and culture sector in India. A thorough examination of these complex issues may lead to the realisation of culture as a “transformative driver of the SDG,” as articulated in the New Delhi Leaders Declaration of G20.

# 07

## References



- ◆ British Council. “Guide to addressing gender equality (2018). [https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/gender\\_guide\\_external\\_july\\_2019.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/gender_guide_external_july_2019.pdf)
- ◆ Conor, Bridget. Publication. Gender & Creativity, Progress on the Precipice. UNESCO 2005 Convention Global Report Series, Special Edition 2021, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375706>.
- ◆ UNESCO. UNESCO, March 8, 2021. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/new-unesco-publication-investigates-state-gender-equality-cultural-and-creative-sectors#:~:text=The%20report%20also%20highlights%20innovative,artistic%20work%20and%20cultural%20employment>.
- ◆ Working paper. G20 Culture Working Group Background Paper: Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy. UNESCO, 2023. <https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2023/04/India%20CWG%20Background%20Paper%20Priority%203.pdf>.
- ◆ Kukreja, Prateek, Havishaye Puri, and Dil Bahadur Rahut. Working paper. Creative India: Tapping the Full Potential. Asian Development Bank Institute, December 2022. <https://doi.org/10.56506/KCBI3886>.
- ◆ “India - Knitting the Future.” Invest India, n.d. <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/textiles-apparel>.
- ◆ Sudalaimuthu S, and Devi S. “Handloom Industry in India.” Fibre2Fashion, July 2007. <https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/2269/handloom-industry-in-india#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20earliest%20to,largest%20employment%20generator%20after%20agriculture.&text=ROLE%20OF%20HANDLOOM%20SECTOR%3A,role%20in%20the%20country's%20economy>
- ◆ Rahman, Hiba. “Patriarchy And Weaving: The Curious Case Of Uttar Pradesh’s Women Weavers.” Feminism in India, January 9, 2023. <https://feminisminindia.com/2023/01/09/patriarchy-and-weaving-the-curious-case-of-uttar-pradesh-women-weavers/>.
- ◆ “Factsheet: India’s Clothing Industry.” Femnet, n.d. <https://femnet.de/en/materials-information/country-profiles/india.html>
- ◆ WORKING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT GARMENT WORKERS IN INDIA A Literature Review. ILO, 2017. [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms\\_554809.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_554809.pdf).
- ◆ Sharma, Gunjan. ‘A Critical Note on Women’s Work in Indian Garment Manufacturing’. Public Policy India. 10 Feb, 2023. <https://publicpolicyindia.com/2023/02/10/a-critical-note-on-womens-work-in-indian-garment-manufacturing/>
- ◆ Dhar, Shobita. “India’s First Women Apparel Pattern-Makers.” Times of India. Accessed December 29, 2023. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/sunday-times/indias-first-women-apparel-pattern-makers/articleshow/68540896.cms>.
- ◆ Silliman Bhattacharjee, Shikha, and Alysha Khambay. Rep. Unbearable Harassment The Fashion Industry And Widespread Abuse Of Female Garment Workers In Indian Factories . Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 2022. [https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/2022\\_GBVH\\_Briefing\\_latvnJb.pdf](https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/2022_GBVH_Briefing_latvnJb.pdf)
- ◆ Jaswal, Mansi. “What Women Entrepreneurs Need to Shine in the MSME Sector? Experts Explain.” Mint. 10 January 2023, <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/heres-what-women-entrepreneurs-need-to-shine-in-the-msme-sector-11673324338271.html>.
- ◆ Krishnamoorthy, Priya; Srinivasan, Nima; Subramanyam, Aparna; Chiu, Bonnie; Salian Rashmi; Sachan Shailja; Krishna Amrutha; and Bouet Louse. Business of Handmade. “Financing a Handmade Revolution: How Catalytic Capital Can Jumpstart India’s Cultural Economy.” 200 Million Artisans, 2023. <https://www.businessofhandmade2.com/>
- ◆ Value Proposition of the Indian Publishing Trends, Challenges, and Future of the Industry. Association of Publishers of India and EY-Parthenon, May 2021.
- ◆ Women are now publishing more books than men - and it’s good for business, March 8, 2023. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/03/women-are-now-publishing-more-books-than-men-and-its-good-for-business/>.
- ◆ Singh, Ravindra Kumar. “Indian Women Writers and Its Feminism in English”, Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education. Volume: 16 / Issue: 5, April 2019.
- ◆ Chakrabarti, Paromita. “Press(Ing) Business: Decoding Feminist Publishing In India.” Feminism in India, July 27, 2020. <https://feminisminindia.com/2020/07/27/feminist-publishing-in-india-business/#:~:text=of%20outmost%20importance.,Publishing%20houses%20such%20as%20Kali%20for%20Women%2C%20Zubaan%2C%20Women%20Unlimited,made%20way%20for%20feminist%20publishing>.
- ◆ Ritu Menon, “Feminist Writing and Women in Publishing”, Samyukta, Jan 2015

- ◆ Weinberg, Dana B. and Kapelner, Adam. "Comparing gender discrimination and inequality in indie and traditional publishing". Abstract. Plos One. 9 April, 2018, <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0195298>
- ◆ Raina, Vivek. "How the Indian Music Market Is Balancing the Scales between Original Soundtrack and Independent Music." Financial Express, September 18, 2022. <https://www.financialexpress.com/business/brandwagon-how-the-indian-music-market-is-balancing-the-scales-between-original-soundtrack-and-independent-music-2672375/>.
- ◆ Publication. Tuning into Consumer March 2022 Indian M&E Rebounds with a Customer-Centric Approach. EY FICCI, March 2022. [https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en\\_in/topics/media-and-entertainment/2022/ey-ficci-m-and-e-report-tuning-into-consumer\\_v3.pdf](https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en_in/topics/media-and-entertainment/2022/ey-ficci-m-and-e-report-tuning-into-consumer_v3.pdf).
- ◆ Agarwal, Aarushi. "Women in Music: New Initiative Addresses Gender Disparity in India, as on-Demand Streaming Goes Big." Firstpost, September 13, 2019. <https://www.firstpost.com/entertainment/women-in-music-new-initiative-addresses-gender-disparity-in-india-as-on-demand-streaming-goes-big-7254431.html>.
- ◆ Gurbuxani, Amit. "Record labels, management companies must step up to address gender disparity in Indian indie music scene", Firstpost, March 28, 2019. <https://www.firstpost.com/entertainment/record-labels-management-companies-must-step-up-to-address-gender-disparity-in-indian-indie-music-scene-6327331.html>
- ◆ Sacheti, Priyanka. "Gendering of Museum Spaces." Web log. Rereeti Revitalising Museums (blog), March 2, 2017. <https://rereeti.org/blog/2741-2/#:~:text=She%20observed%20that%20women%20tended,prolonged%20engagement%20with%20street%20art>.
- ◆ Halperin, Julia. "The 4 Glass Ceilings: How Women Artists Get Stuffed at Every Stage of Their Careers." artnet, December 15, 2017. <https://news.artnet.com/market/art-market-study-1179317>.
- ◆ "Feminism in Indian Art." MAP Academy, June 13, 2023. <https://mapacademy.io/article/feminism-in-indian-art/>.
- ◆ Treviño, Veronica, Zannie Giraud Voss, Christine Agnos, and Alison D. Wade. Rep. The Ongoing Gender Gap in Art Museum Directorships. Association of Art Museum Directors. n.d. <https://aamd.org/sites/default/files/document/AAMD%20NCAR%20Gender%20Gap%202017.pdf>.
- ◆ Lamade, Sarah. "Issues faced by Museum Professionals: A comparison between India & U.S." Sarah Lamade, Web log. Rereeti Revitalising Museums (blog), July 2, 2018. <https://rereeti.org/blog/comparing-issues-for-museum-professionals-india-vs-u-s/#:~:text=Of%20three%20of%20the%20most,the%20direction%20of%20male%20leadership>
- ◆ Sacheti, Priyanka. "Is the future female? Gender equality and equity in museum leadership", web log, Rereeti Revitalising Museums (blog), March 16, 2017, <https://rereeti.org/blog/is-the-future-female/>
- ◆ "68% of the World Population Projected to Live in Urban Areas by 2050, Says UN." Department of Economic and Social Affairs, May 18, 2018. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html#:~:text=Projections%20show%20that%20Urbanization%2C%20the,and%20Africa%2C%20according%20to%20a>.
- ◆ "Celebrating Women Protecting Cultural Heritage." World Monuments Fund. n.d. <https://www.wmf.org/slideshow/celebrating-women-protecting-cultural-heritage>.
- ◆ Bhandari, Bibek. "In India, Women-Led Heritage Walks Spotlight Old Delhi's Centuries-Old Colourful 'Twisted' History." South China Morning Post. December 10, 2023. <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/people/article/3244409/india-women-led-heritage-walks-spotlight-old-delhis-centuries-old-colourful-twisted-history>
- ◆ Balasubramanian, Roshne. "Reclaiming the Night: Chennai's Unique Night Walk Spotlights Women's Historical Contributions and Promotes Safety Dialogues." South First, October 5, 2023. <https://thesouthfirst.com/featured/reclaiming-the-night-chennais-unique-night-walk-spotlights-womens-historical-contributions-and-promotes-safety-dialogues/>.
- ◆ Kesarkar Gavankar, Anusha. "Building Gender-Responsive Cities." Observer Research Foundation, November 7, 2022. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/building-gender-responsive-cities#:~:text=Cities%20become%20discriminatory%20through%20their,and%20involve%20socio%20legal%20implications>.
- ◆ Nikore, Mitali and Uppadhayay, Ishita. "India's gendered digital divide: How the absence of digital access is leaving women behind".
- ◆ Observer Research Foundation. August 22, 2021. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/indias-gendered-digital-divide/>

- ◆ Rasheed, Nadia. “How Digital Literacy Can Bring in More Women to The Workforce.” Web log. UNDP India (blog), April 27, 2021. <https://www.undp.org/india/blog/how-digital-literacy-can-bring-more-women-workforce#:~:text=In%20India%2C%20only%2033%25%20of,figure%20drop%20to%20around%2025%25.>
- ◆ Posetti, Julie, Nermine Aboulez, Kalina Bontcheva, Jackie Harrison, and Silvio Waisbord. Publication. Online Violence Against Women Journalists: A Global Snapshot of Incidence and Impacts. UNESCO, 2020. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375136>.
- ◆ “Bumble India Safety Guide: How to Identify and Report Online Harassment.” Bumble, 2022. <https://bumble.com/en-in/the-buzz/safety-center-bumble-india>.
- ◆ Misha. “Harassment Of Women In Digital Space; A Challenging Issue For Law Enforcement.” Legal Service India . n.d. <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-10742-harassment-of-women-in-digital-space-a-challenging-issue-for-law-enforcement.html>.
- ◆ Wang, Vivian, and Dali Wang. Rep. The Impact of the Increasing Popularity of Digital Art on the Current Job Market for Artists. Art and Design Review, 2021. [https://www.scirp.org/pdf/adr\\_2021072114171398.pdf](https://www.scirp.org/pdf/adr_2021072114171398.pdf).
- ◆ Krishnan, Aditya. “Indian Women in STEM: Are They Underrepresented?” Economic Times. April 28, 2023. <https://etinsights.et-edge.com/indian-women-in-stem-are-they-underrepresented/>.
- ◆ Stathoulopoulos, Kostas, and Juan Mateos-Garcia. Publication. Gender Diversity in AI Research. Nesta, July 2019. [https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Gender\\_Diversity\\_in\\_AI\\_Research.pdf](https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Gender_Diversity_in_AI_Research.pdf).
- ◆ “Gender and AI: Addressing Bias in Artificial Intelligence.” International Women’s Day. <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Missions/14458/Gender-and-AI-Addressing-bias-in-artificial-intelligence>.
- ◆ Krishnan, Parvathy, Rama Devi Lanka, and Swetha Kolluri. “Is AI Industry Gender-Blind?” Businessline, February 10, 2023. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/is-ai-industry-gender-blind/article66494829.ece>.
- ◆ Sahni, Kivleen. “Bring it on – Digital Art Storms the Internet in India”. The Citizen. <https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/16/19180/Bring-It-On----Digital-Art-Storms-the-Internet-in-India>.
- ◆ Roychoudhury, Supriya. “The Art of Resistance: When Imagination Meets Technology at Protests from India to Chile.” Scroll.In. <https://scroll.in/article/954091/the-art-of-resistance-when-imagination-meets-technology-at-protests-from-india-to-chile>.
- ◆ Basu, Ritupriya. “How Designers in India Turned Digital Tools into Virtual Grounds of Activism.” Ritupriya Basu, July 15, 2020. <https://www.ritupriyabasu.com/features/2022/2/28/how-designers-in-india-turned-digital-tools-into-virtual-grounds-of-activism>.
- ◆ Quinn, Bernadette. “Arts Festivals and the City”, Urban Studies, Vol. 42, No. 5/6 , Review Issue: Culture-Led Urban Regeneration, 2005, pp. **927-943**, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/43197305.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A5bb5a615d70202324f418de76983a3c5&ab\\_segments=&origin=&initiator=&acceptTC=1](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/43197305.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A5bb5a615d70202324f418de76983a3c5&ab_segments=&origin=&initiator=&acceptTC=1)
- ◆ Publication. Reshaping Policies for Creativity, Addressing Culture As a Global Public Good . UNESCO, 2022. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380491>
- ◆ Jeon, Myunghee Mindy. “Impacts of Festivals and Events.” In Routledge eBooks, 32–50, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429274398-4>
- ◆ Ghosh, Niharika. “Be Proud, Be You: 5 Festivals Celebrating Gender Diversity .” Festivals from India, April 6, 2023. <https://www.festivalsfromindia.com/5-inclusive-festivals-celebrating-gender-diversity/>.
- ◆ Muñoz-Alonso, Lorena. “Artist Anita Dube Appointed Curator of 2018 Kochi-Muziris Biennale.” Artnet, April 4, 2017. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/anita-dube-curator-2018-kochi-muziris-biennale-913853#:~:text=The%20Indian%20artist%20Anita%20Dube,on%20March%2029%20in%20Kochi>.
- ◆ Hampel, Annika. “India’s Non-Policy Towards The Diversity Of Arts And Culture.” Arts Management Network - State of the Arts. Accessed September 20, 2023. <https://www.artsmanagement.net/Articles/Cultural-Policy-in-India-India-s-Non-Policy-towards-the-Diversity-of-Arts-and-Culture,4223>.
- ◆ “National Textile Policy 2000.” Ministry of Textiles, 2000. [https://texmin.nic.in/sites/default/files/policy\\_2000.pdf](https://texmin.nic.in/sites/default/files/policy_2000.pdf).
- ◆ “New Textile Policy .” Press Information Bureau , February 12, 2021. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1697401#:~:text=In%20the%20budget%202021%2D22,one%20place%20with%20plug%20%26%20pl>

- ◆ “Comprehensive Handicrafts I’ Cluster Development Scheme (Chcuds) Guidelines.” Development Commissioner (Handicrafts). Accessed July 14, 2023.  
<https://www.handicrafts.nic.in/pdf/Scheme.pdf#page=8>.
- ◆ “National Education Policy 2020.” Ministry of Education , 2020.  
[https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/NEP\\_Final\\_English\\_0.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf).
- ◆ “Textiles Ministry for Inclusion of Handloom Weavers under NREGA .” The Economic Times, 2014.  
<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/textiles-ministry-for-inclusion-of-handloom-weavers-under-nrega/articleshow/28848389.cms?from=mdr>.
- ◆ National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) Manual for District 2017 National Rural Livelihood Mission Manual for District - Level Functionaries § (2017).  
<https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/National%20Rural%20Livelihood%20Mission.pdf>.
- ◆ Mubayi, Yaaminy. Rep. Policy Gaps Study on the Crafts Sector in India. All India Crafts & Craftworkers Welfare Association . Accessed July 19, 2023.  
<https://www.aiacaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Final-Policy-Gaps-Study.pdf>.
- ◆ National Skills Development Mission A Framework for Implementation §. Accessed July 20, 2023.  
<https://www.msde.gov.in/sites/default/files/2019-09/National%20Skill%20Development%20Mission.pdf>.
- ◆ “Rajasthan’s First Handicraft Policy.” GK Today, November 8, 2022.  
<https://www.gktoday.in/rajasthans-first-handicraft-policy/>.
- ◆ “25,46,285 Women Working in Handloom Sector of Textiles Industry.” Press Information Bureau. Ministry of Textiles, March 16, 2022.  
<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1806546>.
- ◆ “Gender Equality Plan 2022 to 2026.” UK Research and Innovation, July 11, 2022.  
<https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-gender-equality-plan/gender-equality-plan-2022-to-2026/#section-work-life-balance-and-organisational-culture-objectives>.
- ◆ “AHRC equality, diversity and inclusion action plan: research and innovation by everyone, for everyone”. UK Research and Innovation. March 14, 2023.  
<https://www.ukri.org/publications/ahrc-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan/ahrc-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan-research-and-innovation-by-everyone-for-everyone/#section-ahrc-updated-edi-action-plan>
- ◆ “Reports and Publications.” Comic Relief.  
<https://www.comicrelief.com/funding/reports-and-publications/>.
- ◆ “DCMS Leads the Way in Gender Equality.” Diversity UK, July 2, 2014.  
<https://diversityuk.org/dcms-leads-way-gender-equality/>.
- ◆ “Equality and Diversity Information .” Equality and Diversity Information.  
<https://www.napier.ac.uk/about-us/university-governance/equality-and-diversity-information>.
- ◆ “Equality Objectives and Reports.” University of the Arts London.  
<https://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/public-information/equality-objectives-and-reports>.
- ◆ “Culture for Gender Equality Questions & Answers .” UNESCO.  
[https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/info\\_sheet\\_gender\\_equality.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/info_sheet_gender_equality.pdf).
- ◆ “Art and Culture.” Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.  
[https://www.ficci.in/api/sector\\_details/2](https://www.ficci.in/api/sector_details/2).
- ◆ “FDCI X Lakmé Fashion Week Brings Gender-Neutral Fashion To Ramp.” Outlook, 2022.  
<https://www.outlookindia.com/art-entertainment/lakme-fashion-week-brings-gender-neutral-fashion-to-ramp-photos-188468>.
- ◆ “Celebrities, the Fashion Industry, and Global Partners Unite to Launch Anti Gender Violence Global Program at Lakmé Fashion Week.” The World Bank, 2015.  
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/03/17/celebrities-fashion-industry-global-partners-unite-anti-gender-violence-global-program-lakme-fashion-week>.
- ◆ “Lakmé Fashion Week: Indian Designers Collaborate with Usha Silai.” Fashion Network, 2018.  
<https://in.fashionnetwork.com/news/lakme-fashion-week-indian-designers-collaborate-with-usha-silai,943348.html>.
- ◆ “Manifesto For A Fashion Revolution.” Fashion Revolution.  
<https://www.fashionrevolution.org/manifesto/>.





