ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to recognize the situation of gender inequality of the artisan women of Santa María Canchesdá, Temascalcingo in the northeast of the State of Mexico.

Theoretical Framework: Based on analysis categories of gender, territory and crafts.

Method: In this study, the qualitative case study approach with a gender perspective was used, using field research techniques such as participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Results and Discussion: The results show that the participation of women in the ceramic making process is central to the local economy, but also, rural women artisans with their work have initiated processes of autonomy that would be repositioning them against the men of the community.

Implications of the Research: It seeks to identify the real participation that women have in the social reproduction of their artisan homes and the expansion of the activity in the community.

Originality/Value: Expand the literature on women potters, regarding the productive and reproductive work they carry out, through empirical evidence of their daily work both in pottery and ceramist workshops and at home, especially in indigenous localities.

Keywords: Rural Women, Artisans, Ceramics, Autonomy.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo visa reconhecer a situação de desigualdade de gênero das mulheres artesãs de Santa María Canchesdá, Temascalcingo, no nordeste do Estado do México.

Referencial Teórico: Baseado em categorias de análise de gênero, território e artesanato.

Método: Neste estudo foi utilizada a abordagem qualitativa de estudo de caso com perspectiva de gênero, utilizando técnicas de pesquisa de campo como observação participante e entrevistas semiestruturadas em profundidade.

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Resultados e Discussão: Os resultados mostram que a participação das mulheres no processo de fabricação de cerâmica é central para a economia local, mas também, as mulheres artesãs rurais com seu trabalho iniciaram processos de autonomia que as estariam reposicionando frente aos homens da comunidade.

Implicações da Pesquisa: Busca identificar a real participação que as mulheres têm na reprodução social de suas casas artesanais e na expansão da atividade na comunidade.

Originalidade/Valor: Ampliar a literatura sobre as mulheres ceramistas, no que diz respeito ao trabalho produtivo e reprodutivo que realizam, por meio de evidências empíricas do seu trabalho diário tanto nas oficinas de olaria e ceramista quanto em casa, especialmente nas localidades indígenas.

Palavras-chave: Mulheres Rurais, Artesãs, Cerâmica, Autonomia.

PROCESOS DE AUTONOMÍA DE LAS MUJERES ARTESANAS QUE PRODUCEN CERÁMICA EN EL CONTEXTO RURAL DEL NORESTE MEXIQUENSE

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Este estudio tiene como objetivo reconocer la situación de desigualdad de género de las mujeres artesanas de Santa María Canchesdá, Temascalcingo en el nordeste del Estado de México.

Marco teórico: Basándose en categorias de analisis de género, territorial y artesanias.

Método: En este estudio se utilizó el enfoque cualitativo de estudio de caso con perspectiva de género, utilizando técnicas de investigacion de campo como la observacion participante y entrevistas semiestructuradas a profundidad.

Resultados y Discusión: Los resultados muestran que la participación de las mujeres en el proceso de elaboración de cerámica es central en la economía de la localidad, pero también, las mujeres rurales artesanas con su trabajo han iniciado procesos de autonomía que las estaría reposicionando frente a los hombres de la comunidad.

Implicaciones de la Investigación: Se busca identificar, la participación real que las mujeres tienen en la reproducción social de sus hogares artesanos y de la expansión de la actividad en la comunidad.

Originalidad/Valor: Ampliar la literatura sobre mujeres alfareras, respecto al trabajo productivo y reproductivo que realizan, mediante evidencias empíricas de su quehacer cotidiano tanto en los talleres alfareros y ceramistas como en hogar, especialmente en localidades indígenas.

Palabras clave: Mujeres Rurales, Artesanas, Cerámica, Autonomía.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the rural area of the northeast of the State of Mexico, in the Mazahua region, the town of Santa María Canchesdá registers dynamics of social, economic change and readjustment in gender relations, which we report in this article. From a gender perspective we ask ourselves what who does in pottery and ceramic production households. Craft work has historically been an activity that is culturally defined as feminine. Through gender, we can see how this cultural
assignment of women artisans has generated exploitation of one sex over another, although men and women carry out the activity of making crafts, it is women who solve an endless number of tasks that generate a much greater burden of activities inside and outside the home.

We pay attention to reproductive work, but above all to the productive work that artisans carry out daily. We take into account the growing incorporation of women into non-agricultural economic activity, also caused by the opportunities that derive from new types of urban-rural articulations. In this way, on the one hand, the perpetuation of important factors of inequality, usually not recognized or accounted for, is identified; and on the other hand we want to highlight processes in which rural women are increasingly immersed.

It is based on the recognition that women are the pillar of rural economies, especially peasant-indigenous women and small producers, among whom we count artisans, since they are the ones who produce the essential products for family consumption, they are the ones they raise their sons and daughters, they take care of the land, the animals, the home as a whole, the territory. The knowledge, intellectual and physical work of rural women is essential for the reorganization and transformation of regional economies. In this sense, it is necessary to look at the strategy of women's organization as a way to highlight the important role that they have within local development management processes.

After identifying that in Santa María Canchesdá there is a large sector of women who are dedicated to artisanal activity and its commercialization and that the community has a cultural and historical wealth in the production of clay crafts and high-temperature ceramics, in this work we pay attention to women artisans and the gender relations that occur in family artisanal clay and high-temperature ceramic workshops.

The central approach that guides the development of the work is that there is a growth in artisanal activity in Santa María Canchesdá, where potters have become central actors in the processes of social reproduction (productive, material, care and emotional) of their households, however, due to the gender patterns that characterize this territory, these women have not been able to achieve economic autonomy, although there is significant progress in that regard. The objective is to identify, from a gender perspective, the productive and reproductive strategies that women carry out in their homes, in order to achieve their recognition as social and cultural agents and their economic autonomy through the processes of production and marketing of pottery products.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 RURAL WOMEN AND PROCESSES OF CHANGE IN THEIR CONDITION AND POSITION

In the 21st century, the need to highlight the socially constructed differences between men and women remains. Gender inequalities refer to sociocultural and historical constructions that transform sexual differences into hierarchical inequalities that presuppose differentiated access to various forms of power, then the relative importance of the different axes of inequality in which women are placed vary over time, and in space, so in the analysis of specific situations, it is necessary to take into consideration the various ways through which class, gender and ethnic inequalities are interrelated with each other and with other forms of inequality; It is also necessary to investigate how these inequalities can potentially contribute to or minimize the relative disadvantages of some women compared to men and other women.

In Mexico, rural women report work overload due to the number of hours they dedicate to carrying out a great variety of tasks, which are done regardless of the time or day of the week and in more precarious conditions than in the case of Urban women, while in rural areas are characterized (with some exceptions) by high levels of poverty and its feminization, as well as the massive loss of their workforce that is also linked to internal and international migrations and as As already mentioned, the territories inhabited by rural women have low coverage of public services, such as, for example, few or no education and training spaces for women, as well as low levels of investments, which limits the scope of the market of work, and consequently paid work decreases, putting the livelihood of families at risk.

In these contexts, rural and indigenous women, more than men in their communities, must face adverse living conditions to exercise their right to take care of their physical, sexual, and emotional health or to access land ownership. Data from the National Agrarian Registry (2023) show that, in 2018, 21% of ejidatarios were women, by 2023, this participation increased to 26.1%. Of the total number of people who have a certificate that recognizes them as landholders, community members or ejidators, women represent only 27.5%.

Rural areas are experiencing transformations in their economic, environmental and demographic structures, although changes in the presence of women in the various dimensions of public life have been occurring more slowly. It is recognized that greater or lesser transformations are driven by structural conditions, but also by the agency of the population,
the push of women, of new forms of rurality in which gender relations, identities and livelihood strategies homes are a part of those changes.

Given the above, and derived from the resilience capacity of rural women, it is possible to speak of empowerment processes, in some contexts and in certain small groups of rural women who lead and spearhead important efforts in their communities or production units, for example. For example, women organized in cooperatives, heads of households and productive units, artisans, professionals or politicians who hold positions in rural areas or who are responsible for food production, forest care and their own artisanal activity, .

Approaches to empowerment have been worked on from various disciplines, although community psychology has made substantial contributions by offering cognitive, affective and behavioral elements (Zimmerman and Rappaport, 1988; Montero, 1998). In this line, the approach that empowerment implies a process and mechanisms through which people, organizations and communities gain control over their lives. Additionally, Torres and Leco (2022) note that empowerment must be addressed as a process and situated in a context.

Now, in the case of women's empowerment, we must refer to the community intervention strategies with a gender perspective promoted by the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. In this framework, empowerment is seen as the increase in participation of women. women in decision-making processes and access to spaces of power. The concept also implies a subjective dimension: the awareness of margins of power, awareness occurs at the personal and collective level, and even involves the level of dignity of the person (UN Women, 2011).

In this framework, the term refers to:

Process through which each woman is empowered, enabled and authorized. This is relevant due to the constant disempowerment of women and the difficulties that the world presents to us to enable ourselves, that is, to train ourselves, feel and be capable, and to empower, that is, to have the ability or power to do things. and to live with authority, that is, valued and recognized (Lagarde, 2006, p5).

When talking about gender and empowerment, it means that both women and men have the same powers, that is, to have the conditions to access the same job opportunities, the same distribution of wealth and the same rights and living conditions (Ávila, 2019). Making the point that, in general, rural Mexico is not a favorable context for the empowerment and autonomy of women, so in territories with cultures with high traditional roots, women have developed individual, family and community strategies to advance in the construction of spaces in which they can perform economically and socially.
Female labor force participation is an important variable for women's economic empowerment (Sharma et al, 2024, p6) where, without losing sight of the fact that this process does not occur in isolation from other processes of empowerment, there is agreement with Bustelo (2015) and Maton (2008) when they propose that the process of acquisition—to a greater or lesser extent—of economic power, involves expanding access to assets, widening the margin of negotiation in their homes, and the real possibility of reducing economic stress, possible triggers of conflicts or experiencing violence.

As part of their empowerment, women are creating more social and emotional bonds, because there is a desire to communicate and share their experience with other women, there is an accompaniment between them “[...] when affinity flows between women, the empowerment of one produces in other women pride in themselves, in the other, and a new dimension of identity and bond is created: us” (Lagarde, 2006, p28).

In the case of social empowerment, a relevant reference in this work, women face a gender system that places them at a disadvantage from living in contexts in which gender patterns distinguish between men and women the access and use of various capitals (social, cultural and symbolic) (Macé et al., 2010).

In a macho culture, women have been internalized in the idea of beings of little value, inferior, lacking rational capacity and power to make their own decisions; these discourses that seek to keep women in subordination, have placed them at a disadvantage to access resources, opportunities and rights. In a condition of social disadvantage, the promotion of women's empowerment becomes relevant, understood as the ability to insert themselves in the community, to create supportive social networks to improve their context, share experiences and invite others to join new projects and get involved in the community to participate in decision-making that have an impact on the personal, family and social level, and even at the level of incidence in public policies.

In short, empowerment involves raising women's awareness of their oppression and subordination to participation and organization to generate actions that respond to strategic needs, the latter driven both in the public and private spheres to fight discrimination and stereotypes based on gender or social class. Likewise, these strategies “have to intervene at the level of the ‘condition’ of women, while at the same time, their ‘position’ is being transformed, simultaneously addressing the practical and strategic needs” (Batliwala, 1997, p207). Women's empowerment ranges from individual change to collective action, and involves the radical alteration of processes and structures that reproduce women's subordinate position as a gender.
Rural women in Mexico are at various points in the empowerment process. There is no doubt that the road to equality has been uphill because as they live in a daily life full of tasks as mothers, workers, housewives and wives, they are actresses in the development of strategies to face the economic challenges in their families and homes, even in their communities because these women in performing domestic work and care not only of people and animals but of plots and various community tasks maintain a structure that sustains their community material, emotional, productive and culturally. It is necessary that their condition and position improve, for this, the social context that historically limited the female voice must also be transformed to place it in the marginalization as people, workers, with a citizen, educational disability, etc.

Currently, it is recognized that women are the main responsible for the transmission of knowledge, which ranges from the perpetuation of the history of their peoples to technical knowledge, such as agroecological management, seed selection, reproduction of plants in extinction, medicinal uses of herbs or the creation of crafts that reflect the culture of their peoples (García and Baca, 2020).

In the local and rural context, women actively participate in the productive structure, but they do so in a marginal, subordinate and invisible way as economic agents and with contempt for the reproductive and productive work they do. One of the purposes of this work is to make socially visible the contribution of women to the development of the community, through the case of Santa María Canchesdá. In this town, women have been and continue to be responsible for creating many of the crafts that distinguish the community.

It is a rural territory with an indigenous presence where the artisan woman converges in the daily life of the domestic. The activities that women carry out as artisans have been building bonds, family and community, which little by little have been spinning the structures that give support and positioning, although the latter remains veiled, hidden, as if avoiding confronting the gender system of the community.

Craft work is linked to the traditional knowledge that certain groups or people in a community have, that is, they are the product of a culture and are often associated not only with work (craft) but also with the symbolic order. Craft work has adapted to the changes and needs that are presented historically, in addition these knowledge are differentiated between men and women and often there is some specialization of both, this according to the sexual division of labor (Sales, 2013).

For Jiménez (2017) being an artisan involves doing a type of work that involves the manual. The craft work does not include very elaborate techniques or advanced technology, since the instruments used are very basic, in addition to the craft production requires enormous
doses of creativity and care in the preparation of the pieces. In addition, it is considered that the craft work involves working in a group, the participation of the community is fundamental because it materializes the transmission of intergenerational knowledge, from parents to children and from grandparents to grandchildren. It is essential for the domestic group that all members know the process of craft work, even if there is a sexual division and by generation of craft work.

The artisanal practice remains in force as a way of life. Artisanal work is one of the strategies of sustenance and reproduction of multiple rural domestic groups, it is through crafts that not only receive monetary compensation, they even meet the needs of expression and reaffirmation of their identity as a people. In the processes of artisanal production and in the realization of commercialization, the families of artisans are organized for work, decision-making, in this framework, generate different burdens and opportunities for the members of the group (Rojas et al., 2010).

The production of handicrafts has gone from a value of use to a value of exchange (Parra et al., 2007), and this makes them sources of income. Although craftsmanship requires a large amount of time that is invested in the production of the pieces to be marketed, it is common for the production and creation process of the pieces to be carried out under conditions of gender inequality, for example, the elaboration of crafts is considered a domestic task and is associated with the work of women since it is common for workshops to be found in the home.

2.2 POTTER WORK IN TEMASCALCINGO

Temascalcingo is located in the north of the State of Mexico, in 2020 there were 66,414 inhabitants, women represented 52% of the total population. Women in this municipality have a higher average number of children (2.7 children) than the state average (2 children). In addition, they have fewer years of average formal education than those achieved by men, the records are 8.3 years for men and 7.8 years of average schooling for women in the municipality (INEGI, 2021).

The participation of women in economic activities shows important changes in the municipality. An example is the economic participation rate that more than doubled in a decade, going from 21.6% of women aged 15 years and older than in 2010. economically active at 55.2% in 2020. Another piece of information about the important changes in the local social and economic organization is the percentage of households headed by women, while in 2010 family households headed by a woman reached 16.8%, in 2020 it was 30.2%. of female-headed
households (INEGI, 2011, 2021), there is no doubt that in the last decade the women of Temascalcingo have expanded their presence in various social dimensions, which also means more workload.

Territorially, Temascalcingo has 85 localities (INEGI, 2020), in 45 of them, there is a record of artisanal production: pottery and ceramics, cardboard and paper, chandlery, vegetable fibers, lapidary and quarrying, wood, metalwork, goldsmithing and jewelry, saddlery and leatherworking, textiles and glass working. According to the Institute for Research and Promotion of Crafts of the State of Mexico (IIFAEM, 2023), the main crafts are pottery and ceramics with 75.43% of the total craft production; followed by the production of textiles (12.42%) and work with vegetable fibers (5.01%), which represent, respectively, the second and third most prominent crafts.

Likewise, with IIFAEM records (2023) it is possible to identify that in the production of these crafts, women make up 46% of the artisans. In general, craft work in the municipality is divided by gender roles (sexual division of labor), under this logic the involvement of men occurs in those crafts that demand greater physical strength, for example, lapidary work and quarrying, but it remains unexplained why only men are dedicated to jewelry and glass work. As can be seen in Figure 1, the activities least marked by the gender stereotype are plant fibers and pottery and ceramics.
Processes of Autonomy of Craftsmen Women Who Produce Ceramics in the Rural Context of Noreste Mexiquense

Figure 1
Temascalcingo. Participation of women and men in the various craft branches, 2023

Source: own elaboration based on data from IIFAEM (2023).

Women stand out in candle making, textiles and gastronomy. In the case of pottery and ceramics, they are 42% of the total number of people dedicated to this craft activity, which is the most outstanding in the municipality, and who are part of the study presented here.

In pottery and ceramic production, the IIFAEM (2023) has 21 locations registered as producers in the municipality, the five main ones are: Santiago Coachochitlán, Santa María Canchesdá, San Juanico Centro, Mesa de Bañí, La Estanzuela, Bombaró. The towns with the highest production are Santiago Coachochitlán with 48.38% and Santa María Canchesdá, which produces 28.33% of Temascalcingo's ceramics and pottery.

3 METHODOLOGY

The research is a case study with a gender perspective to identify the gaps that unequally distance women and men from the benefactors of human and sustainable development (Castañeda, 2008).

The field research included constant tours of the town, visits to workshops and home-workshops; We were looking for an approach to record, from direct observation, dynamics in the production of crafts. The interviews with the artisans took place in the summer of 2023.
With the visits to the family workshops of the artisans it was possible to record the domestic and care activities that the women do alongside their artisan work, so, in the Conversations with the women, with guide in hand, investigated the productive and reproductive work of their homes. The semi-structured interview technique was used and in total 27 were conducted.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 WOMEN IN POTTERY AND CERAMIC PRODUCTION IN SANTA MARÍA CANCHESDÁ

Santa María Canchesdá is a rural town, of Mazahua culture and identified as an ejido, in 2020 it had a population of 1,898 inhabitants, of which 998 were women. For that same year there were 509 family homes (INEGI, 2020, 2021). It is located at the “entrance” to the municipality (Temascalcingo) and on the side of the Mexico-Morelia-Guadalajara highway.

There are testimonies from local people who say that they have always worked with clay. Previously, Santa María Canchesdá was known as the “town of pots”, because only pots of all sizes were made, mainly the large ones, the molera casseroles that they wear the black fret. Thus, the town is historically a pottery town and until a couple of decades ago, this trade was combined with the planting of corn and animal husbandry. Currently, the economic income of households in the town is based on pottery production, high-temperature ceramics and molds, which are made in family workshops, derived from this production of merchandise, its sale and resale (in the case of intermediaries) is a parallel and central economic activity in the community.

Ceasing to be agricultural producers, especially corn, has relevance in the local economy; they now depend on comparing food produced in neighboring towns such as the Solís Valley and the municipal seat. In Temascalcingo, inter-municipal and inter-regional trade in raw materials is intense. To make low and medium temperature crafts, white clay is mainly used, which is obtained in the producing localities, while red clay is brought from Michoacán (neighboring entity) mainly from Tlalpujahua. In the case of medium and high temperature ceramics, producers have a local materials supplier or request shipments Dolores Hidalgo, Guanajuato.

Santa María Canchesdá has a total of 470 adults dedicated to crafts, 43% (204) are women, 98% of the artisans in this town are potters and ceramists (IIFAEM) (2023). Craft production is based on family organization, this allows a certain cohesion and care for the...
permanence of knowledge, and in general, in the group’s activity, mainly in the face of situations such as ups and downs in sales or due to the migrations and mobility of some of them. the members, especially the men.

There are eight high-temperature ceramic factories, which employ people from the locality, but also from nearby municipalities. These people deal with tasks such as handling materials that require intense physical work, preparing the paste or Place the pieces in the oven. The best-known factories are three: Tradición Mazahua, Cerámica Santa María and López Covarrubias, obviously, in them, the number of workers is greater.

Most of the artisans learned as children or adolescents to make crafts, mainly from clay. The fact that this knowledge is acquired at these ages is a reference to the fact that the center of transmission of knowledge is in the family environment, which is, in turn, a productive unit that is sustained by the intergenerational involvement of its members, not only in the nuclear family, but the extended family that includes cousins, daughters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nephews, etc.

4.2 (RE) PRODUCTIVE WORK AND AUTONOMY ONGOING

To address the processes of economic empowerment of rural women in Santa María Canchesdá, in addition to the territorial references that have been shared, it is necessary to incorporate into the analysis the voices or direct references that the ceramic producers and potters interviewed shared with us.

In these opportunities to approach women, it was possible to obtain information about the production process and their participation in it. However, here we present the interpretation of the experiences and reflections regarding their productive and reproductive work, which some of them shared with us. the artisans interviewed.

It is important to say that these women consider themselves artisans, this even when various tools, machinery, instruments, even molds are used, but the artisans say that their hands are also used, “there is always an intervention from us with the materials and tools.” (Julia, Santa María Canchesdá, 2023), also:

“[…] making crafts not only involves the work that is going to be done with your hands and with supports, everything starts from the moment you conceive the idea, you start thinking about how you are going to do it, and it depends on what pieces you are going to make, what materials, what quantity or what colors are going to be used […] you are always there with all your attention and aware of everything and seeing what turns out and if not to correct it” (Aurelia, Santa María Canchesdá, 2023).
Mothers are the ones who, through play, introduce sons and daughters to teaching, first of all pottery, instructing boys and girls to make small pots. It is women who transmit artisanal knowledge, although men and women are dedicated to crafts. The making of pottery (working with clay) is masculinized, the reason given is that “it is a very heavy craft.” Meanwhile, the production of high-temperature crafts is led by women, they are pioneers.

In the 1970s, the Government of the State of Mexico, through the Ministry of Labor and the State House of Crafts, implemented the Alto Fuego Regional Development Program and Santa María Canchesdá was the town chosen as a pilot center to train in high temperature ceramics, this choice was justified precisely in the pottery tradition of this town, women and men interested in learning this Japanese technique participated in the training, over time more women than men are in the production of high temperature ceramics, a trade that is currently an identity reference of the municipality.

The family ceramic workshops are made up mostly of women, their intellectual, physical and creative work is crucial in the production of these crafts, the women are familiar with the entire process, they are in charge of creating the decorations because their families and they consider themselves more creative and careful, also warm, supportive, cooperative and kind (De la Varga and Galindo, 2024, p4). Particularly, the decoration process, in the opinion of basically all the people interviewed, is the most laborious and meticulous, demanding neatness, detail and innovation.

The women also mix materials, polish, give the final finishes, propose other types of crafts to increase sales, they are the ones who manage the business and the home, which are usually in the same place, that is, they have a family home-workshop. It is the women who really know how many pieces are made and how many are sold, they know how those who collaborate work, they can tell what material is missing, in reality they are the head who organizes the business and the home.

The adult men of the family group participate more in the commercialization of the merchandise so their tasks are involved in “loading” the parts into the vehicles, selling, collecting payment, this does not mean that women do not participate in this part of the process, since they take orders, they negotiate with suppliers, but also with buyers. The mothers and their daughters are in charge of collecting the money so that their husband or father can make the payments in case the money he carried on his trips to purchase supplies is not enough or when he returns with “the sale” they guide the resource to cover what is needed. Now, this involvement does not mean that they decide everything, no, they take care of it intellectually.
and operationally, but there is always, to a greater or lesser extent, the supervision or authorization of the husband or father.

However, there are cases in which only women own the factory, in that sense they have greater economic autonomy. This is the case of sisters Teresa and Lorena, high-temperature ceramic artisans whose factory has expanded and they already have recognition for the quality and size of their production, but they still have challenges because they commented the following: “for us it has been difficult, The experience is satisfactory, but we have not finished equipping ourselves, it has been a lot of effort” (Lorena, Santa María Canchesdá, 2023).

Besides:

“One of the biggest difficulties in the process of having the factory has been the construction of the warehouse, to do it we had to seek government support, it was not something that we had resources to invest in, it was managed, we organized with other artisans and Yes, we also had advice from one of my brothers-in-law to enter trades and all that [...] then for construction, it was very difficult because it was new to us, we did not know how much material is needed for this, what amount of cement, rod, we did not know but we were solving it and we will hardly forget it, right now we have great satisfaction, it is a goal that we achieved, we feel capable because this is something that is not done or seen often” (Lorena, Santa María Canchesdá, 2023).

Women who have ventured into making ceramics are often not well regarded in the community, since it is considered inappropriate for a woman to be on the street buying materials to make ceramic pieces or interacting with men to do business. This situation is mainly suffered by “single women”, when there is a husband or men at home, observations tend to decrease even when women carry out transactions with male workers, suppliers or buyers.

The women of Santa María Canchesdá involved in the production of high-temperature ceramics continue to expand their presence in the activity, working between nine and ten hours in the workshops to have orders on time. Your day is intense. Women, especially those who are mothers, get up between five and six in the morning to do household chores, prepare breakfast and lunch in the afternoon, take their sons and daughters to school, return to do more housework, cleaning or care and around nine in the morning they are already in the workshop where they will be solving the daily routine of production, but at the same time they are attentive to the family, for example, that the children eat, that they do their homework. In the case of employees who have small sons or daughters, they take them to the workshop and take care of them there.

The participation of women in the ceramic making process is very relevant, since they are pioneers and their participation is in each phase of the process. Of all the people who work
in the family ceramic workshops, the majority are women, but the most important thing is that they are knowledgeable about the entire process, since, if someone is missing a day or at any time, one of those who is You can take your place and continue with the process. When orders are delivered, or they have sales at their homes, they are the ones who really know how many pieces were made, how many were delivered or how many pieces were actually sold. We read these references as daily and sustained practices that dislodge the sexual division of labor in artisanal production. Perhaps, we cannot speak of full autonomy in these women, but we do consider that they are in the process of deconstructing autonomies.

5 CONCLUSION

The empowerment of women is a desirable and undoubtedly necessary process because it contributes to individual well-being and has positive impacts on their groups, especially on the women in their family. The artisan woman creates and recreates her spaces through the use of the tangible and intangible resources to which she has had access, either through generational transmission or because they themselves decided to get involved and learn. The life of artisans in a rural context of the Mexican Altiplano is complex.

These women, before being potters and artisans, in the case of some, are first wives and mothers who carry out domestic activities and carry out care work, as established by their gender roles. There are also those women who do not have a husband or daughters and sons and are fully dedicated to the production, sale and promotion of their crafts, because if something is very marked in some of these family workshops, it is that their degree of conjugality is very important, because especially in ceramics, single or divorced women have stood out and been pioneers. This condition has an impact on the decisions that are made, regarding their economy, way of producing or the time they dedicate to their work in the workshop. In one way or another, the working day for these women artisans doubles or triples, due to the hours spent in the domestic care and productive sphere being greater than that of men, which undoubtedly has an impact on recreational and coexistence activities, social.

The artisans of Santa María Canchesdá, in their daily lives, have built family and even community organization logic to solve productive and reproductive work. They are also the main supporter of ceramic and pottery production. Some of them have even developed community and external networks. This is to incorporate the activity with various economic, social and even political branches, from connections for the supply of raw materials, contacts for the marketing of its products or participation in political processes and management of
government support. We could say that, in different dimensions, according to the conditions and characteristics of their family groups, with their work the potters and ceramists create and recreate the structures through which they are generating conditions for their empowerment process.

The greatest challenge represents strengthening rural women and their craft activities, through the creation of better conditions for their growth and empowerment, since they have the talent, know-how and sense of art that pottery entails as heritage, state and national. The research and public policy agenda involves continuing to work on reducing gender inequality gaps, the care system and comprehensively strengthening the rural territories where Mexican artisans live and work.

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