

Handicraft Community and Contemporary Issues Focused on Rajasthan

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Abstract- Handicrafts are of great importance as a primary source of income for several families in different parts of the world. Locally, there is a greater engagement, demand for sustainable and swadeshi goods, and a preference for Indian handicrafts as compared to mass-produced articles. Handicraft artists in India are famous for their exceptional artistry as they possess an unmatched sense of colour, design, shape, and craftsmanship. Although there are relatively advanced other industries in India, handicrafts continue to be one of the most ignored sectors. Also, there are no defined advertising techniques, as well as lack of knowledge about the market, which creates problems for the industry. This sector is very labor intensive and scattered across the country as well as in urban and rural areas. Rajasthan is famous worldwide for its colorful culture and traditions, as well as ancient handicrafts. The distinct Rajasthani outfit and male headgear with dhoti strongly denotes one's origin from Rajasthan. Jaipur has many skilled workers who have showcased their skills through many gorgeous items. Some of the best crafts of Jaipur include block printing, bandhani, sculptures, and stone carving. Zari, tarkashi, zardozi, and gotapatti adorn fabrics. In the jewelry and diamond industry, clients offer silver, gold set with precious stones, and enamel painting. Other artworks and crafts available include blue ceramics, ivory carvings, betting craftsmen, miniature artworks on leather, shellac handicrafts, and many more.

This particular sector is still struggling with issues relating to production as well as marketing and advertisement. People who work in the industry, for instance, do not have sufficient opportunities, and entire market segments utilizing the latest technology have begun to dominate the field. The handmade goods sector employs concept marketing instead of mere product marketing. Tourism still remains the largest source of income for Rajasthan. The region is also famous for traditional hand block printing work. Local workers are not provided proper opportunities while large industrial centers with the latest technologies are beginning to dominate the market. Jaipur handicrafts which used to represent the glorious traditions of Jaipur are now

completely artificial due to the mechanized production processes.

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Keywords: Handicraft, Marketing, Tourism, artisans, Rajasthan art, Rural marketing, Education, Community, Economic and cultural development.

INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan is well established for heritages such as steeped forts and centuries-old architectural wonders as well as being a prime location for palace tourism. As a region, Rajasthan is well appreciated across the globe for preserving a rich array of cultures, traditions, and vintage artisanal crafts. Traditional handicrafts are increasingly losing to mechanized counterparts due to efficiency and uniformity. For a long time, there has been no significant substitutes or competition in the market for a wide range of handmade products. A wide variety of items fall under the term “handicrafts.”

Social media has become ubiquitous, and with it has emerged diverse web-based applications which provide platforms for two-way communication and information exchange. It was mentioned that the tourism office of Rajasthan wanted to capitalize on social media and at the same time was underscoring the importance of these forms of technology. Hand block printing is similarly to other cottage industries in that it is decentralized, unstructured, and labor-intensive.

Handlooms and handicrafts, a form of art that encapsulates the essence of civilization, generations of hope and despair, is important not just as a source of employment for artisans, but perhaps even more so. A range of artistic expression such as textile, wood carving, painting, stone carving, gemstone and jewelry

engraving, as well as leather work exhibit the cultural heritage of Rajasthan. The state's tourism significantly drives the economy and greatly influences the social and cultural life of the Rajasthani people. Mukhke-ka-kaam is a type of Rajasthani embroidery which applies gold and silver threads to beautify the fabric. The gold

and silver thread embellished embroidery mukke-ka-kaam is common in Barmer and Jaisalmer regions of Rajasthan. The majority of artisans using this technique belong to Sindhi Muslim and Meghval communities settled in the Thar desert region of Rajasthan.



Silver & Gold Mukka



Outlined by black wool



Sindhi muslim



Meghwal women

Renowned Rajasthani craftsmanship exhibits an artistry and uniqueness like no other. All items considered to be handicrafts are the products of skilled craftsmen artisans.

- **Blue Pottery Handicraft:** Today, numerous individuals sustain themselves through blue pottery crafts. Blue pottery Handicraft has embraced the traditional designs. Common use domestic jugs, ashtrays, urns, vases, tea cups and saucers, plates, glasses, and napkin rings, among other items.



- **Marble Handicraft:** While artisan marble goods are available in various regions of India, the handicrafts from Jaipur stand out for their uniqueness, artistry, cultural significance, and the result of generations of familial craftsmanship.



- **Thewa Art Work (Pratapgarh District):** Thewa art emerged around 250 years ago and seems to have been patronized by royalty. The goldsmith received court status in the family of royals.



- **Kathputlis:** The Kathputli dance and performance is one of the foremost tourist attractions in Rajasthan. Kathputlis, as they are called in the local dialect, are the renowned puppets of Rajasthan who's string puppets are produced in the Jaipur and Jodhpur cities.



Increased population and demand are among the drivers of the commerce of handcraft products. Jaipur was well known for its crafts which included block printing, bandhani, sculptures, and stone carving. The cultural heritage of the pink city includes its handcraft industry. In the region of Gujarat, wooden blocks are commonly used to print fabrics, while in Rajasthan a form of hand block printing and dyeing was developed specifically for cotton textiles. In India, block printing is one of the traditional handicrafts of the state of Rajasthan where they carve patterns on wooden blocks, color them, and stamp those blocks on cloth.

As reported by the Rajasthan Tourism Board, the Pushkar region and its tourism are greatly benefiting from a newly introduced Development Master Plan which aims to further strengthen the region within the Development time frame of 2011 to 2031. In the Khadi fairs organized in various districts, the Rajasthan Khadi and Village Industries Board annually promotes and sells handcraft products from local artisans and craftsmen. In both groups, most participants acknowledged the economic benefits, although they raised concerns about the ecological effects of the initiative. A textile art is anything that is produced wholly by hand or with basic tools.

India has some wonderful artists and craftspeople that are skilled in creating functional and aesthetic items such as adornments, decorations, and other forms of art. In India, the textile art form as well as handicrafts are important cultural elements that preserve history and promote advancement concurrently.

Purpose of the Study

This essay aims to highlight the significance of the handicrafts sector in Rajasthan, India, analyzing its impact on the national economy. The objectives are elaborated as follows:

- Explore the growth of the Rajasthani handicrafts industry while examining the multiple factors impacting the craftsmen's standard of living and working conditions.
- Analyze the existing opportunities and threats within the marketplace's environment.
- Explain the challenges facing the sector and recommend practical policy responses.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand the marketing techniques employed in the handicraft sector, this study resorts to secondary data consisting of various scholarly articles, journals, and government documents. It is at once descriptive and investigative. The handicraft industry is a key subsector of agriculture and an important source of livelihood in India. It is the second most important source of employment in most developing and economically underdeveloped countries.

Handicraft Classification:

Handicrafts are classified into two categories:

- Articles of everyday use
- Decorative items

The variety of fabrics, precious and semi-precious metals, wood, stones, ceramics, and glass illustrate the artistry of craftspeople. Textiles are example of handicrafts. For tourist's heritage sites, Rajasthan is one of the states that is well known because of its culture and history. So, it was selected for this study. Meghwal weavers of Rajasthan are mostly engaged in shawl weaving along with other hand crafts like leather work, leather tanning, shoe making, etc. Originally, pattu fabrics were made of around two-foot broad bands. Spun and woven fabrics and women's embroidered garments are found in Rajasthan which showcases ethnic handicrafts. Policies and planning of any destination's tourism development should be aimed at the needs of the local region.

Textile based handicrafts:



Figure 1: Pattu weaving uses extra weft yarn.

In India, hand-printed textiles—ranging from bed coverings and sheets to dress materials, upholstery, and even tapestries—incorporate various techniques like block printing, screen printing, batik, kalamkari, and bandhani. In addition, India is famous for its embroidered textiles made of silk and cotton which are often embellished with mirrors, shells, jewels, and metal. Other surfaces that have been embroidered include velvet, felt, and leather. Aside from the notable designers, block printers, weavers, and packers in the industry, there is a considerable number of people in this sector—almost five hundred thousand—and this has a tremendous impact.

Clay, Metal and Jewellery:

Brass, copper, bronze and bell metal all have diverse ranges of applications. Refinements and accessories consist of enticing ornaments. They include classic and modern styles, made of base and precious metals and semi-precious stones.

Woodwork:

In India, wooden objects can be elaborately decorated or simple. One can find toys, furniture, and even ornamental pieces which exhibit the skill and creativity of the artisan. India is especially famous for lacquered wood products.

Stone Craft:

The Indian stone crafts heritage is exemplified by intricately shaped stoneware crafted from marble, alabaster, soapstone, etc., which is adorned with semiprecious stones.

Glass and Ceramic:

The branch of glass and ceramic products is emerging rapidly within the scope of Indian handicrafts. The

artistry of mouthblowing glass is nostalgic. With their glass and ceramic shapes in numerous colors, they will appeal to Indians while also delighting Western audiences.

Marketing practices in Handicraft:

The concept of selling products goes beyond simply selling items as done in the handmade products industry. The essence of the industry lives in product design and development. These products are crafted to suit the end consumer. The traditional craft is salvaged by the designer-artisan ingenuity. The elasticity of handicraft demand is high, with an increase in income level able to drive up consumption. Wealthy nations are experiencing growth in demand for such products.

Handicrafts designs:

The wishes of the market determine the design of the product. An artisan uses three main design types: traditional, modern, and a fusion of both. Traditional, or dated styles are referred to as conventional designs. Nonetheless, contemporary designs match the changing preferences and interests of consumers.

Product planning and development in handicraft:

Planning within product development is evident even in the domain of handicrafts.

Artisans typically plan and refine products to perfect a particular skill. Handicrafts result from a combination of artistry, craftsmanship, and creativity, which blends into one cohesive product.

Expansion in handicraft:

Increasing the production capacity of tiles illustrates the idea of expansion as a core business concept. Furthermore, expansion may be pursued to meet greater demand or even in anticipation. Regardless of the strategy, funding is always a prerequisite. Some methods include mechanization, increasing installed capacity, or hiring additional staff.

Pricing:

Price signifies the amount required to acquire a good or service. Price serves as the backbone to the entire transactional activity while simultaneously representing its monetary form. Both ends of the transaction have always come to a consensus on pricing through negotiations, often to counterbalance

demands. A single price for every buyer, however, has only emerged recently.

Fixing the price in handicraft:

Due to a number of reasons, craftsmen are unable to calculate the true cost of manufacturing pericline without knowing the actual cost that went into these components.

Consequently, they struggle to determine the pricing relative to the production costs. The artisans assert that their pricing aligns with market feedback, as well as the prices provided by their master artisans, dealers, and cooperative societies. There exists a hierarchy in price setting among craftsmen, master craftsmen, dealers, and cooperative societies regarding handcraft items. Respondents believe that dealers and cooperative societies play a substantial role in price determination for handicrafts.

Taxes in handicraft:

As with most things, there is a distinct variation in the sales tax applied to handmade goods. As is currently the case in states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Kerala, the government is reportedly considering removing the sales tax for handicrafts. With the removal of sales tax, handicrafts will be priced lower, resulting in a higher demand. In a free market, artisans find it incredibly challenging to thrive without government measures to support them.

Place:

Distribution pertains to the processes involved in relocating products from creators to users and final consumers. Some firms engage in direct selling to customers, while others do so through dealers, master craftsmen, or sales outlets.

Master craftsmen and dealers might sell some of their works to sales emporia which directly reach customers through their outlets in India's major cities. The existing methods for dissemination of handicrafts still possess some limitations.

Promotion:

These corporate sponsors and multinational firms could be persuaded to utilize and promote handicrafts in the gifts they provide. Corporate residences with bespoke logo merchandise designed to be bestowed by them to their corporate counterparts represent a considerable market segment which requires sustained

strategic marketing initiatives. Their marketing, and especially the gift packaging, presentation and descriptive materials on the product, its attributes, the artisan, as well as the branding must consider important elements such as quality, consistency, craftsmanship, and sustainability.

Advertising of the handiwork:

The respondent does not practice advertisement. The artisans due to their small business size are unable to advertise individually. The Corporation has undertaken the initiative of advertising through public relations, exhibitions, brochure printing, and participating in trade fairs. Moreover, the Corporation is installing billboards at strategic tourist locations which should serve as useful advertisement.

Two other methods to build visibility would be attending trade shows or assisting in sending research and trade groups to other regions of the country to promote specific skills.

Promotions in handicraft:

Handicraft sales promotions, like other forms of advertising offer additional temporary incentives to visit or make a purchase. They include samples, bonus offers, and promotions, games and exhibits, package inserts, discounts, and displays. The goal of sales promotion is primarily to support other elements of the promotion mix and improve their performance over a set period of time.

CONCLUSION

It can be described as Jaipur's traditional community of craftsmen and artisans facing an existential crisis. While the Indian Government sponsors and runs promotional programs for these small-scale handicraft businesses, they do not have any other form of traditional support. There is a decline in the total number of handicrafts produced due to increasing demand production cost. If goods are manufactured an masse to serve the open market, the essence of traditional handicrafts will be lost. The local workers and business owners in the mini handicraft industry are exploited by the middlemen and whole sellers who corner most of the profits. To secure the competitive edge of Indian innovation in the global arena, the craft must serve as a source of inspiration for industrial design, and for communication design. The

handicrafts industry is vast as well as important for the economy of the country. A consumer taking pleasure in the item is most likely to pay a price far greater its market price. The state of Rajasthan has always been famous for its arts and crafts. Every city in Rajasthan has its unique offerings.

A major sector of the Indian economy, which employs artisans even from rural and backward regions, is its handicrafts industry.

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