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# HANDICRAFT BUSINESS INDUSTRIES: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

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## ABSTRACT

India's rich cultural diversity and heritage offer enormous resource for developing craft products. A significant component of every nation's rich cultural legacy is the handicraft sector. The handicraft industry is extremely important to the economy due to its increased value, minimum capital investment conditions, strong import eventuality, Profitable foreign exchange openings live. With hundreds of channels and thousands of hours of programming available every day, small businesses now have further openings to state their commercials on TV. To achieve a successful relationship, both the advertiser and the outlet must fulfil their scores to each other, just as with any advertising contract. The Indian handicraft industry is very important to the country's economy since it represents India's cultural heritage. After the agriculture sector, it employs the greatest number of people. In addition to supporting thousands of artisans, this industry offers opportunities for millions of people living in rural area and across India to realize their full potential on the social and cultural fronts. However, the majority of handicraft business owners never advertise their products overseas and instead sell locally through agents. This has been linked to a lack of sufficient financial resources to support marketing initiatives as well as marketing expertise. The main barriers to handicraft import are precious packaging and shipping charges, constantly shifting tariffs importer- assessed instrument and quality norms, fake goods, a lack of patent laws, and a lack of invention and creativity among crafters in meeting request specifications and demanding contracts. Any form of industrialization in the arts and crafts must be acknowledged by the consumer market through the exchange of goods in order to create a handicraft that combines innovative design with ethnic and artistic value. The purpose of this paper is to study the goods of globalization of handicraft assiduity & its interpreters, the obstacles that this sector faces, and the programs and enterprise enforced by the Indian government to support this sector.

**Key Words-** artisans, commercials, globalization, industry, innovation, handicraft.

## **INTRODUCTION**

India is a nation rich in ethnic traditions and cultural heritage, and it is also the centre for handicraft goods. India's handicraft industry is a decentralized, unorganized, and extremely labour intensive sector. Due to its high value addition ratio, minimal investment in capital needs, and significant opportunity to generate transfer and foreign exchange profits, the handicraft sector is very significant to the economy.

India's economy and society have undergone tremendous transformation in the last several decades. With the aid of technology advancements and trade and investment regulations, national economies have become more and more integrated into the global economy during the globalization era. This has an impact on people's jobs, means of subsistence, and incomes. All areas of the economy were impacted in 1991 when India opened its doors to multinational corporations, including the handicraft industry<sup>1</sup>. While Indian handicraft exports and employment reached a noteworthy peak, globalization has made it more difficult for artisans to make a living in the handicraft sector due to rising global competition, shifting consumer preferences, and cultural tastes. In the globalized and liberalized market economy, many artisan products are in danger of going extinct. The majority of artisans are not reached by the majority of governmental and non-governmental interventions, or they are ineffective. Instead of improving in the context of globalization, the marginal status of artisans in India's handicraft sector grew worse.

This study will help society's members deal with the difficulties associated with promoting handicrafts. Handicraft companies will learn specifically about tactics designed to promote their industry, obstacles that stand in the way of handicraft marketing their goods, and effective solutions for overcoming these obstacles.

This paper aims to investigate the effects of globalization on the handicraft industry and its practitioners, obstacles that impact this sector, and government initiatives and policies that support the handicraft industry and its practitioners in India. This study specifically focuses on strategy, the effectiveness of the strategy, and the challenges in implementing the promotion strategy.

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<sup>1</sup>Indian handicraft industry and globalization an analysis of issues and challenges, available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331990370>, last seen on 02/01/2024.

## **THE HANDICRAFT INDUSTRY IN INDIA**

Many different art forms are a part of India's rich cultural heritage. There are several centuries of history behind the handicraft industry. In the past, the skill and craftsmanship of the artisans were well-known throughout the world. Since the beginning of time, India has exported handcrafted items. The handicraft industry, which uses traditional skills of artisans in a wide range of arts, such as metal, wood, fabric weaving and publishing, is a major representation of the nation's rich cultural legacy. Crafts created from stone and limestone, goods made from leather, jewellery, etc. This ability is inherited because it is passed down through families as a tradition from generation to generation. The strategies that follow will encourage the handicraft clusters to continue growing and the artisans to continue making a living<sup>2</sup>.

- Training requirements vary by stage
- The construction of infrastructure development.
- Encourage the use of enough labour.
- Insufficient monetary rewards

## **CHALLENGES IN HANDICRAFT MARKETING**

### **1. ILLITERACY AND IGNORANCE OF ARTISAN BORROWER:**

Illiteracy is prevalent among artisans. For female artisans, the issue is extremely serious. Therefore, they don't receive the intended benefit and carry out their trade in an unplanned manner.

Handicraft artists are unable to understand the various plans and policies that have been adopted by various organizations and institutions for the purpose of financing and promoting them because of their illiteracy and ignorance.

Some of the reasons for this ignorance are the lack of publicity and expansion in rural areas. Additionally, the artisans believe that they don't receive as much assistance and collaboration from banking institutions because they are small borrowers by nature<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Oza Megha S., study of handicraft industry strategies and its implications in marketing, volume 6,14 february,2019,available at [http://ijrar.com/upload\\_issue/ijrar\\_issue\\_20543847,last](http://ijrar.com/upload_issue/ijrar_issue_20543847,last) seen on 03/01/2024.

<sup>3</sup> Issara solutions, 4 pages, international res jour Mangat Socio Human, PROBLEMS\_OF\_HANDICRAFTS\_ARTISANS, 2020,available at <https://www.academia.edu/44468872,last> seen on 03/01/2024.



## **2. LACK OF BRAND IMAGE:**

Consumers are primarily guided by the brand images of the products they purchase; however, since the handicraft industry is unorganized and millions of artisans work independently to produce these goods, handicraft products lack a specific brand name.

There is no consistency with regards to the product brands. As a result, it has difficulties with various competitors' market perception<sup>4</sup>.

## **3. PRODUCTS QUALITY:**

The largest unorganized industry is handicrafts, and its practitioners have moved from rural to urban areas.

Due to a lack of resources, a decline in the number of skilled workers, and varying environmental conditions, the working conditions of the artisans were discovered to be different. As a result, it is very challenging to safeguard the outstanding craftsmanship associated with the goods, and there is a shortage of assessment tools and a lack of a defined procedure for determining the products quality<sup>5</sup>.

## **4. FOREIGN EXCHANGES:**

One of the biggest obstacles to the export of handicraft goods is foreign exchange, as the exporter only makes a tiny profit when the value of the rupee declines on the global market<sup>6</sup>.

## **5. PROBLEM OF RAW MATERIALS:**

Another major problem faced by handicraft artisans is the problem related to availability of raw materials.

It is difficult for the artisans to gather the necessary quantity of raw materials because of things like deforestation and restrictions imposed from time to time by government.

Let's talk about a few instances. The lack of bamboo in the surrounding areas presents significant challenges for those who make bamboo baskets. Because of soil erosion and deforestation, potters are deprived of soil, fuel, and other necessities. When it comes to beadmaking, artisans are unable

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<sup>4</sup> Dilip\_Kumar\_and\_P.V.\_Rajeev,\_Asian\_journal\_of\_Management\_Science,\_present\_scenario\_of\_Indian\_handicraft\_products\_,\_Vol.2, 26 march, 2013, available at <https://www.trp.org.in/>, last seen on 04/01/2024.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

to buy the entire quantity at once because of financial constraints.

In order to overcome these obstacles, the tradespeople who create bamboo goods, appliques, Mithila paintings, and other items must borrow raw materials from local traders, commission agents, and moneylenders. The repayment plan is set up to be made in terms of the completed goods that the artisans produce, with the loan made in terms of raw materials. It is evident that the artisans do not fully benefit from this process<sup>7</sup>.

#### **6. LESS USE OF POWER:**

Another issue that the artisans deal with is a lack of power. They must replace their conventional tools and machinery with power-driven appliances. For artisans who use handlooms, it is more important. It is evident that during the peak season, when demand is highest, artisans must work around the clock to fulfil their share of the demand. The majority of them fall short of the challenge because of insufficient electricity supply.

#### **7. LACK OF COORDINATION:**

The execution of social development welfare policies pertaining to artisans is not being coordinated among various agencies, which will impede their growth and result in a loss of manpower and the economy.<sup>8</sup>

#### **8. LACK OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES:**

The main institutional issue is the insufficient administrative framework needed to carry out the rural development projects in an efficient manner. The majority of investments are made directly to handicraft artisans without any additional supporting structures being established.

The banks believe that once loans are advanced, their work is essentially done. However, the loan supply is insufficient. It ought to be connected to additional resources made available to the artisan units. If not, funds intended for the benefit of the artisans were disclosed to more fortunate borrowers in the area. This increases the pressure on the programs or schemes intended for the artisans to be successful. Institutional financing agencies that provide credit do not receive cross-

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<sup>7</sup> Supra3.

<sup>8</sup> Monika Dey, International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR), Managerial challenges of handicraft industry: An Indian perspective, 6 pages, 2018, available at <https://www.academia.edu/35745373>, last seen on 04/01/2024.

cutting relationships or coordination in the process of making decisions or overseeing operations. As a result, programs are failing and corrective measures are not being implemented. The fact that there are so many institutional organizations, agencies, and boards operating in the field makes the problems worse. These institutions do not coordinate or work together.

### **9. A HIGHLY UNORGANIZED SECTOR WITH LOW WAGE:**

Due to their inability to cover even their most basic expenses, artisans are largely responsible for their dire financial circumstances. Most of the craftsmen still lead impoverished lives. They lack the funds to purchase modern tools and equipment, as well as premium raw materials.

In addition, there is a shortage of hierarchical structure in this sector of the economy. A significant portion of the artisans employed in this industry would rather work alone. Out of all artisans, 42% worked from home, and only 9% received formal employment benefits<sup>9</sup>.

## **LEGAL PERSPECTIVE: LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

### **1. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW:**

Intellectual property law has given Indian crafts the essential legal protection against infringement.

- **Trademarks:**

Trademarks are used to identify and differentiate the products or services of a specific company or business. Among other things, trademarks can be made up of unique words, letters, numbers, illustrations, photos, forms, colours, or advertising slogans. They are used to identify the source of products or services in order to set them apart from comparable or identical goods made by rival companies. Authentic handicrafts can gain more consumer recognition and commercial value by registering and using a trademark. Upon registration, the owner of the trademark has the sole authority to stop third parties from using their mark on the same or confusingly similar products or services. Additionally, trademark law protects against others registering deceptive marks. For instance, when an individual applies to a trademark that fraudulently suggests that the item being sold has an indigenous history in order to persuade people to buy it, the registrar is

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<sup>9</sup> A report by DASRA 'Crafting A livelihood: building sustainability for Indian artisans' 2013, last seen on 04/01/2024.

required to reject the application<sup>10</sup>.

- **Copyright Act,1958:**

According to the Copyright Act, sound recordings, cinematographic films, and original literary, dramatic, musical, or creative works all have copyright protection. Still, no right of ownership exists in a cinematographic picture if a significant portion of the movie violates the copyright of another work, nor does copyright exist in a sound recording if copyright in a literary, dramatic in nature, or musical production is violated during the sound recording process. Software that is written for computers is protected as "literary work." These are the rights granted by the Copyright Act.

- Recreating what was created using any format—print, audio, or visual.
- Utilize the piece for a play or musical performance that is open to the public.
- Create duplicates or footage of the work of art using mediums like audio cassettes and DVDs.
- Disseminate it in different formats<sup>11</sup>.

- **Protection Under Geographical Indications of Goods Act, 1999**

As per this legislation, arts are defined as articles created by hand, frequently utilizing basic instruments, and typically possessing artistic and/or traditional qualities. Both functional and decorative items are among them. The TRIPS Convention states that national laws were intended to protect traditional handicrafts through geographical indications. A mechanism for GI registration is provided by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, which also clarifies the meaning of registered proprietor and authorized user, both of whom have the authority to file a lawsuit for infringement. As of 2006, the GI Registry had nearly thirty GIs registered, including traditional handicrafts like the Andhra Pradesh Kondapalli toys. The government is crucial to this registration effort because it has the ability to register traditional handicrafts on its own, thereby becoming the prima facie holder of the handicrafts. Since most craftsmen who make these items are unaware of the value of what they have created, this protects not only the traditional handicrafts but also the right of craftsmen to realize the value of their labour<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-rn2023-5-5-en-intellectual-property-and-traditional-handicrafts.pdf>, last seen on 24/1/2024.

<sup>11</sup> Available at <https://bnblegal.com/article/copyright-law-implication-protection-traditional-handicrafts-india/>, last seen on 24/1/2024.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

- **Design Act,2000:**

The Designs Act's Section 2(c) defines the design right, which grants the sole authority to apply a design to any article in any class for which the design is registered. The primary legislation protecting traditional handicrafts' external appearance is the Design Act, but it only safeguards the object's design not its actual content. For instance, the Designs Act of 2000 only protects the miniature design not the entire rice model when miniatures are drawn on a single grain of rice, as is the case with rice crafting in Rajasthan. It is important to carefully read both sections 2(c) of the Copyright Act, 1957 and section 2(d) of the Designs Act, 2000 in order to distinguish between the design on the object and the object itself. It is important to remember that the Designs Act only protects non-functional elements of designs; as a result, a design that is primarily functional is ineligible for a design right<sup>13</sup>.

## **CHALLENGES OF GLOBALISATION FOR ARTISAN AND HANDICRAFT INDUSTRY**

The internationalization affects employment opportunities, ways of living expenses, and incomes through changing the financial framework, costs, consumption possibilities, and patterns. The introduction of new technology and heightened international competition have presented the handicraft industry with numerous challenges.

Their products cannot compete with machine-made goods, and they are forced to leave their traditional skilled occupations in search of alternative means of subsistence. They also face miserable socioeconomic conditions. Their crafts and products are no longer required. Manufactured in factories, uniform, and low-cost goods have substituted many items that were previously created by artisans. Globalization and mechanization have led to a progressive large-scale machine production of goods that were formerly created by artisans. The economic standing of the artisans is being impacted by the introduction of modern technology products like metallic utensils, plastics, and ceramics, which are gradually replacing the usefulness of native craft items in both rural and urban areas. As a result, and this is still the case, craftsmen are losing both their popularity in society as well as their traditional farmer's markets.

The global market presents tough competition for the handicraft sector, which affects the artisans

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<sup>13</sup> Supra 11

who make handicrafts. There is competition in terms of price, timeliness, design, pattern, and quality. Another trend affecting the craft industry is the desire for low-cost, high-quality machine-made goods. For example, Chinese manufacturers of crafts produce competitive, lower-cost machine-made goods that outsell high-quality goods, making it difficult for some craft producers to remain in business. Craft manufacturers lack the funding, equipment, and facilities needed to operate their businesses, such as factories or workshops.

Because machine-made goods have flooded the market, handmade product sales have consequently drastically decreased. In the increasingly globalized and liberalized market, traditional crafts must remain beautiful, affordable, and maintain quality to remain competitive. Regretfully, the customers are under the impact of free imports of low-cost manufactured goods and the decline in the use of handmade goods<sup>14</sup>.

## **POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR HANDICRAFT**

### **INDUSTRY AND ARTISAN**

The goal of the Indian government, state governments, and different non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has been to protect the variety of crafts that are exclusive to their countries. To ensure that a large number of artisans benefit from all developmental schemes, extra attention is being paid. The twelfth five-year schedule aims at creating a highly profitable global marketplace for the handicraft industry, provide artisans with reliable means of subsistence, and encourage inclusive growth and balanced socioeconomic development. The Department headed by the Commissioner for Development of Arts and crafts has implemented the following plans to advance and grow the handicraft sector under its twelfth five-year plan.

#### **1. NATIONAL HANDICRAFT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (NHDP):**

Several schemes under the Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hast Shilp Vikas Yojana (AHVY) have been launched by this program. This plan's primary goal is the sustainable growth of handicrafts through the involvement of artisans, including women, which will empower them.

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<sup>14</sup> Ishfaq \_ Majeed, \_ American \_ international \_ journal \_ of \_ Research \_ in \_ humanities, \_ arts \_ & \_ social \_ sciences, Indian \_ Handicraft \_ Industry & Globalisation: An \_ Analysis \_ Of \_ Issue \_ and \_ Challenges, available online at <http://iasir.net/AIJRHASSpapers/AIJRHASS19-127.pdf>, last seen on 05/01/2024.

**The primary components of this plan are:**

- Mobilizing artisans and conducting assessments of baseline
- Programs for sells advertising & promotional assistance
- Plan for Create & Technological Upgrades
- Plans for developing staff members
- Plan for advancement and research

**2. PLAN FOR MEGABYTES GROUPS ARTISTIC CREATION DESIGN:**

The Mega Cluster approach aims to support cluster production and infrastructure that has remained disorganized and is unable to keep up with technological advancements and modernization.

Additionally, these clusters support the social advancement of artisan communities and offer skill training. Additionally, it links craftspeople with potential customers and support networks such as microcredit agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Through teaching and training artists and their advancement participants regarding quality assurance, responsible company procedures, current market conditions, and "standards of excellence" in manufacturing and promotion, it also increases the interest and appreciation of craftsmanship among consumers in general. Across several Indian states, there presently 2864 collections in operation<sup>15</sup>.

**3. THE COMPREHENSIVE WELL-BEING PROGRAM FOR HANDICRAFTS ARTISTS:**

The Unorganized Workers Social Security Act (UWSSA), 2008's Schedule II served as the foundation for this social security program. This scheme, which consists of two sub schemes, aims to address the health and insurance needs of artisans.

- The Handicrafts Artists Aam Admi Bima Yojana (AABY)<sup>16</sup>
- The Rajiv Gandhi Shilpi Swasthya Bima Yojana (RGSSBY)<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> Supra 14

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

## **SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION**

With India's opening to international businesses during the period of market liberalization and economic reform, the global village has come to pass. Nowadays, everything in the world is connected. Specifically, this change has created a number of challenges for handicraft artisans and does not improve their situation.

As a result, artisans were forced to look for other sources of income, endure terrible socioeconomic conditions, and be excluded from their traditional skilled occupations.

It may be suggested that the required actions need to be taken in order to properly survey the current artisan units. Some non-formal education that is closely tied to their trade should be provided to the artisans. Programs for essential training increase their effectiveness. For effective marketing, large-scale exhibitions and workshops that double as sales should be planned.

One of the areas that needs the most attention is the supply of information and direction. In fact, a variety of policies and initiatives directly impact handicraft makers. The handicraft artisans fail to take the advantage of these programmes due to their ignorance. So proper information should be given to them.

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