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Indian Handicraft & Globalization: In Context of Export

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ABSTRACT

Globalization has made the whole world one compartment and makes a single village a global village. Indian handicraft products have great opportunities both in the domestic and international markets. Main products of handicrafts consist of art metal wares, embroidered and crocheted goods, shawls and art wares, and zari goods, woods wares, hand printed textiles and imitation jewellery. Indian Handicrafts, which constitutes a significant segment of the decentralized sector of the economy, its export has reached at a commendable height. Indian folk art and crafts which are the integral parts of the Indian culture and tradition are in high demand among the western consumers. A lot of manufacturing units are established in rural and small towns, which generate employment for a million of artisans. Indian exports are showing a growing trend. Like every coin has two sides, globalization is not separate from this point it also not only have positive impact on artisans industry but there are some negative consequences too on which this chapter is trying to put some light.

KEYWORDS: Globalization, Handicrafts.

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INTRODUCTION

Through the ages, The Handicrafts of India is popular around the world for its creativity, aesthetics and exquisite craftsmanship. It represents a rich cultural heritage and distinguishes skills that are transferred from generation to generation. Containing infinite variety India's handicrafts has been refined during course of changing history. Main products of handicrafts consist of art metal wares, embroidered and crocheted goods, shawls and art wares, and zari goods, woods wares, hand printed textiles and imitation jewellery. Today, Handicrafts of India are playing a significant role in the developing country's economy by providing employment to a large section of society in villages and towns. It not only preserving the cultural heritage of India, but also generating foreign exchange. One of the distinguish feature of this sector is that it uses indigenous raw material for manufacturing of products. Chattopadhyaya in book "Indian handicrafts" says that Indian handicrafts thrived through ages stimulated by a vigorous folk tradition, a benign culture, and in an age when individualism was cherished and precision valued.¹⁻²

INDIAN HANDICRAFT

Handicrafts is an important sector in our economy and society, various aspects of handicrafts, such as, sociological, economic, technical, cultural, artistic and aesthetic aspects have been studied by a number of scholars. Indian handicrafts reached the almost height of perfection and glory during the Mughal period. But, with arrival of British, the growth of the factory system of mass production was the direct, immediate and most important cause for the decline of Indian handicrafts. Post-independence role and importance of handicrafts in the economic, social and political scene were strongly felt and the industry started to revive again.

Upadhyay in the book "Economics of handicraft industry" feels that without design development, technology advancement and quality improvement, we cannot think of healthy growth of such industry. It has been agreed in responsible quarters that even in the field of handicrafts a certain amount of mechanization ought to be introduced in order to obtain the twofold objective of better finish and rationalization.³

Rao, had made several studies on rural industries especially in Andhra Pradesh. He in his book "Rural industrialization in India" observes that handicraft is one among a few cottage industries, which have a capacity to grow, if appropriate technology is used. He endorses the application of "intermediate technology" of E.F. Schumacher in this context. This great economist was always an exponent of the principle "Small is beautiful".⁴⁻⁵

Ahmed, in his book entitled “Problem and Management of Small Scale and Cottage Industries” expresses that the satisfactory performance in marketing of handicrafts could be possible due to the special interest taken by central as well as state governments to boost up the export of handicraft articles.⁶

GLOBALIZATION

Globalization simply refers to increasing connectivity, integration and interdependence in the socio-economic, technological, cultural, political and ecological spheres. The very concept has many sub-processes which includes, enhanced economic interdependence, increased cultural influence, rapid advancement of information and communication technology, and novel governance and geopolitical challenges that are increasingly binding people and culture of the world more tightly making a global village.⁷

As according to The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy in popular discourse, the term globalization is understood as a little more than a synonym for one or more of the following phenomena/processes: the pursuit of classical liberal policies in the world economy, the growing dominance of western politics, economy, and culture, the proliferation of new information technologies, as well as the notion that humanity stands at the threshold of realizing one single unified community in which major sources of social conflict have vanished. Watson defines globalization as the process by which the experience of everyday life is becoming standardized around the world. To Friedman, Globalization is the integration of markets, finance and technologies in a way that is shrinking the world from size medium to size small and enabling each of us to reach around the world farther and cheaper than ever before. Similarly, Albrow and King define globalization as all those process by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society.⁸⁻¹⁰

HANDICRAFTS OF INDIA

In India, a particular craft have clusters of handicraft artisan who are specialized in production and skills are passed from one generation to another.

Table No.1: The handicraft clusters in India.

Craft	Cluster/Location
Art metal ware/ metal crafts	Moradabad, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh
Hand printed textiles, carpet	Jaipur
Wood Craft	Jodhpur, Saharanpur
Carpet, embroidery	Srinagar & Anantnag
Hand printed textiles	Jaipur & Barmer, Farukabad, Bagh
Carpet	Bhadohi, Mirzapur
Zari and zardozi	Agra, Varanasi, Bareilly and Surat
Lace and crochet goods	Narsapur
Imitation jewellery	Delhi, Jaipur
Lacquer craft	Channapatna and Varanasi
Dhokra craft	Bastar
Stone carving	Mahabalipuram, Bhubaneshwar, Agra and Varanasi , Jaipur
Applique work	Puri, Ahmedabad and Kutch
Tie & Dye/ Batik crafts	Puri, Jaipur, Bhuj and Pochampalli
Bamboo and cane	Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh in NER, West Bengal, Kerala

Source: Handicraft clusters in India

TYPES OF HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS

Art metal ware - Metal work of India like enameled, engraved and filigree cut work on silver and brassware is a glory of India. Different categories of handicrafts that come under art metal ware are brass metal ware of Moradabad, metal bidri work and dhokra of Andhra Pradesh, bell metal in Madhya Pradesh, etc.

Wooden art ware - Woodcraft of India is famous since centuries and thought to be one of the most primitive arts. Across India, different type of wood art is being practiced. Major producers are Kerala, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh and Assam. The most common varieties of wood used for craft are teak, sal, oak, ebony, mango, sheesham, etc. Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh is famous for its wood works and also referred as “wood city of India”.

Hand printed textiles – India Textiles known for its distinguish art, printed and dyed cotton cloth. For centuries its creative processes flourished as the fabric received royal patronage. Different types of hand printed textiles include kalamkari, tie and dye, block printing, etc. Major centers for tie and Dye are located in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Embroidered goods – In embroidery fabric and other goods are decorated using needle and yarn. Indian embroidered goods have its distinct and rich style. It include Kashmiri work, Zardozi, kasuti, chikankari, Parsi work, phulkari work, etc are some of the designs being practiced in India. Key centers are Amritsar, Jaipur, Lucknow, Kashmir, Bikaner, etc.

Marble and soft stone crafts – Indian unique stone work is appreciated all around world and can be seen in various historical buildings in India. Different types of stones like, marble, soapstone, sand stone are used by craftsmen in India. Few famous cities are Agra, Jodhpur, Chennai, etc.

Papier-mâché craft - It is a unique craft that evolved during the Mughal period and today being practiced by a large number of artisans in India. A large variety of utilitarian items such as vases, houseboat models, as boxes, Samovar, etc in all shapes and having bright colors.

Terracotta zari & zari goods – Terracotta are beautiful reddish colored glazed pottery with different designs. The art of molding terracotta objects was prevalent during the time of Indus Valley civilization. Variety of objects like lamps, drums, flower vases and musical instruments are prepared from clay. Different states have their unique Terracotta styles. Even clay color varies from place to place. Major states are Gujarat, West Bengal, Delhi, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

Imitation and fashion jewellery – India is one of the major exporters in fashion jewellery. Indian jewellery is considered to be highly artistic. The simple motifs are brought from local and developed into artistic patterns. Beside metal, lac is also extensively used for making attractive ornaments. Major centers are in Jaipur, Delhi, Gujarat, Moradabad, Sambhal etc. **Leather craft** – Leather is processed via various shaping techniques and coloring techniques to manufacture artistic leather goods. Leather craft is mostly practiced in Kolhapur, Kanpur, Indore, Barmer, etc.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Marketing Development Assistance Scheme

As an export promotion initiative the Department of Commerce launched a market development assistance scheme. Following activities are supported under this scheme.

1. Assist exporters for export promotion activities abroad.
2. Assist Export Promotion Councils to undertake export promotion activities for their products and commodities.
3. Assist approved organizations/trade bodies in undertaking exclusive non-recurring innovative activities connected with export promotion efforts for their members.
4. Assist Focus export promotion programmes in specific regions abroad like FOCUS (LAC), Focus (Africa), Focus (CIS) and Focus (ASEAN + 2) programmes.
5. Residual essential activities connected with marketing promotion efforts abroad.

National Handicraft Development Programme

The Government has launched the National Handicraft Development Programme to promote Handicraft of India. Under NHDP various schemes are covered. Details of covered schemes are as follows:

Babasaheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana - The scheme aims at promoting Indian handicrafts by developing artisans' clusters into professionally managed and self-reliant community enterprises on the principles of effective member participation and mutual cooperation.

Design and Technical Upgradation Scheme - The scheme aims at upgradation of artisans' skill through development of new design and supply of prototypes of improved/modern equipments to the craft persons, revival of rare crafts to preserve.

Marketing & Support Services Scheme – This scheme aims to develop, expand and sustain marketing of Handicrafts with the objective of augmenting the employment and income of Crafts persons. It also aims to enhance market share of Handicrafts in global markets, conducting Market research, workshops and seminars in India and abroad.

Research & Development Scheme – Under this scheme studies are conducted for feedback on economic and social and aesthetic and promotional aspects of Handicrafts.

Development of other crafts in J&K - To create J&K Handicrafts and Handmade Textiles clusters as centres for excellence with well-integrated forward and backward linkages.

Handicrafts Artisans Comprehensive Welfare Scheme - The objective of the scheme is to provide life insurance protection to the Handicraft Artisans between the age group of 18-60 years.

Setting up of Hastkala Academy in Delhi - To support preservation, revival and documenting of the handloom/handicrafts under PPP mode.

Infrastructure & Technology – Provides funds for building Infrastructure.

Human Resource Development Scheme - To provide training in special fields to staff working in O/o DC (H) and NGOs.

O/o DC (Handicrafts) - To formulate, implement and monitor handicraft policies and programmes and coordinate with State Governments

Museum - Upkeep and maintenance of museum

Training & Extension - These are administrative expenditures which are to be met by this office for closed departmental centers. Accordingly, no plan outlay is proposed.

INDIAN HANDICRAFT EXPORTS

Exports of Handicrafts have shown an increase of USD 653.06 million (i.e. INR 4242.42 Crores) from US \$ 3884.91 million (INR 23504.42 Crores) to US \$ 4537.98 million (INR 27746.84 Crores), an increase of 16.81% (18.05% in rupees term) over the similar period in 2013-2014 (EPCH, 2015).

Some factors responsible for the success of the sector in the international market include:-

1. Low capital investment

2. High value addition
3. Negligible import content
4. Easy availability of raw material and labour
5. High export potential
6. Large labour pool
7. Traditional skills
8. Production of eco-friendly handicraft products on growing environmental awareness
9. Product innovation with the help of international designers.

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON HANDICRAFT OF INDIA

Present handicraft market is quite competitive; a cut-throat competition is faced by the artisans engaged in trade. The process of globalization has created opportunities for the developing world to compete with the developed and make a dent in selected domains (for Example, globalization helps in earning foreign exchange through exports in the handicraft sector, while on other hand it has dropped demand of few traditional goods due to increased in choices by global products.

Positive Impact of Globalization

1. In past, developing countries were not able to tap on the world economy due to trade barriers. With help of globalization developing countries are increasing their economic growth.
2. Competition between countries all over the world as well as inside particular country boosts because of Globalization. Indian Handicraft are already high in quality with globalization it got better.
3. Globalization is a great way of forming closer bonds with the rest of the world. As when it takes place across a nation, it gets wider worldly exposure. Indian artisan are now bonding with artisan across world and improving their designs.
4. With the help of Globalization, now any developing country can be benefited from the already existing latest technology. Today many artisan in India use modern machines to produce goods.
5. India exports handicrafts to United States and Import capital goods. Globalization provides more efficient markets; it is something, for what every economy strives.
6. Increased competition: - With more competitors to fight over market share, each company has to constantly look to improve their goods or services or create more value for their customers.

Negative Impact of Globalization

1. India has been a large exporter of the handicrafts over the years and the exports trend has been increasing year by year. Owing to increase in imports from China, the Indian domestic handicrafts production market has been affected.
2. Globalization is criticized for increasing wealth gap between the rich and poor; In India many argue that globalization has only benefited middle man but artisans are still poor as they don't have direct market access.
3. Another argued negative of globalization is that it takes jobs away from one country and provides it to another country; hence leaving lots of people without the opportunities that they deserve. In context of Indian Handicraft India's Pottery is currently suffering from influx of cheap Chinese products.
4. Today many of India's traditional craft are on edge of extinction due to lack of sufficient demand. Globalization increased interaction among people belonging to different cultures and countries; it causes a loss in tradition and values. For example Lac products from district of Nabarangpur are threatened to get extinct due to lack of demand and raw material.

CONCLUSION

The handicraft industry is distinguished in terms of infrastructure, policy scenario, government support, trade strategy and the way industry is defined. The Indian handicrafts are the products of tiny and cottage sector, which are largely unorganized and the products are handmade, while other competing countries have organized and large scale manufacturing oriented industry. This can have both advantages and disadvantages for India. Advantage are in terms of employment creation, while disadvantages in terms of low cost production. For Indian Handicraft it can be surely concluded that handicraft products has a very bright future in global market, but it is also facing negative consequences of globalization. Today, handicrafts exports are showing positive growth we should not forget that the challenges artisans are facing. These challenges will slowly take the industry towards mode from where we have to start again. Although government is taking several measures to make the thing well, but there is a need to do more & provide the strategic direction and action plans to evolve systems, so that the Craft persons and their industry can grow & survive this competitive era of globalization.

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