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## Handicraft Production and Employment in Indian: an Economic Analysis

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**Abstract-** Country like India, where tradition, rituals and culture still hold a significant value and importance, crafts have been able to retain its essential matter in the form of many definitions, according to individuals, groups and organisations. Handicrafts commonly refer to hand-made artisan crafts or artisanry. Skilled people create different kinds of items starting from consumer goods to pretty pieces out of paper, wood, clay, shells, rock, stone, metal etc. with the help of simple tools. These kinds of items are called handicrafts owing to the fact that these crafted items are exclusively hand-made without the usage of any machine.

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# Handicraft Production and Employment in Indian: an Economic Analysis

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## I. INTRODUCTION

“Handicrafts are mostly defined as items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and are generally artistic and/or traditional in nature. They are also objects of utility and objects of decoration”. Handicrafts can be defined as products which are produced either completely by hand or with the help of tools. Mechanical tools may be used as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product. Handicrafts are made from raw materials and can be produced in unlimited numbers. Such products can be utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant.

India has an extremely rich crafts traditionally inherited, complex designs, patterns, painfully crafted monuments, temples and sculptures, all are magnificent masterpieces of craftsmanship. All Indian crafts and patterns were mostly representation of everyday living, socio political conditions of the people. Archaeological studies have exposed that the era of manufacture, for a given handicraft item can be deciphered from its production technique, pattern and material used. Indian Handicraft history can be traced back to, as old as, the Stone Age. The art of spinning and weaving of cotton was known from the Harrappans before 5000 years ago. Foundations of textiles in other countries date back to second century BC. Block print fabrics, mainly of Gujarat region, found in Egyptian tombs are the evidence that India was producing enough cotton textiles to export them to other countries, in the medieval ages.

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India is one of the important suppliers of handicrafts to the world market. The Indian handicrafts industry is highly labour intensive cottage based industry and decentralized, being spread all over the country in rural and urban areas. Numerous artisans are engaged in crafts work on part-time basis. The industry provides employment at least six million artisans. In addition to the high potential for employment the sector is economically important from the point of low capital investment, high ratio of value addition, and high potential for export and foreign exchange earnings for the country. It also allows women to participate in their free time using tools they can well manage leading to supplemental income.

## II. OBJECTIVES

- To estimate the production of different handicraft goods in our economy.
- To understand the role of handicraft sector in generating employment.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper is based on the secondary data. The required secondary data has been collected from various old research papers, journals, internet, government intuitions etc. The data has also been taken from various documents such as books, newsletters, reports, magazines, journals, newspaper, internet, as well as from existing literature to understand the current scenario of handicraft industry.

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

*Fayaz Ahamad, (2012)* the handicraft sector has a large potential to generate a gainful employment opportunities to unemployed people and has a great potential for economic development of a country/region like Kashmir, which is known all over the world with its traditional crafts.

*Selim Reza, (2012)* bamboo handicraft helps to develop and upgrade the various nodes in the value chain and its direct impact could be observed in socioeconomic development of rural poor and small producer groups.

*Dr Manjusmita Dash, (2011)* there are about 3500 handicraft items produced in the country and the sector employs 60 lakh artisans working independently or in small co-operatives or firms.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The country of India is the manufacturer of varied kinds of handicrafts, which gained its popularity even in international market. The most known form of handicrafts in India, are discussed below:

*Bamboo Handicrafts:* Handicrafts made from bamboo are one of the eco-friendly crafts in India. The varied items made from bamboo are baskets, dolls, toys, chalani, furniture, mats, wall-hangings, umbrella handles, crossbows, khorahi, kula, dukula, kathi, jewellery boxes and many more. Bamboo Handicrafts are mostly made in West Bengal, Assam and Tripura.

*Cane Handicrafts:* Cane products, a famous form of Indian handicraft include utilitarian objects like trays, baskets, stylish furniture etc. Vellore district of Tamil Nadu is famous for cane handicrafts in India.

*Bell Metal Handicrafts:* The hard form of bronze, which is usually used to make bells, is referred as bell metal. This kind of hard alloy is used to make crafts like vermilion boxes, bowls, candle stands, donari (pendants) and many more. This bell metal crafts are mostly prevalent in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and Manipur. In Madhya Pradesh, this form of handicraft is even regarded as "tribal craft".

*Bone and Horn Handicrafts:* Originating in the state of Orissa, the bone and horn handicrafts are famous for creating birds or animal figures, which seems alive. For example, a bird seems like twittering. Besides this, goods like pen stands, ornaments, cigarette case, table lamps, pepper and salt sets, chess sets, napkin rings, laughing Buddha etc. are prepared in Orissa, Karnataka, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh.

*Brass Handicrafts:* Durability of brass items added on to the fame of brassware. Items made of brass like crawling Krishna, Lord Ganesha's figure in different postures, vases, table tops, perforated lamps, ornament boxes, hukkas, toys, wine glasses, plates, fruit bowls and many more are extensively used in many Indian houses till now. These artisans are famously known as "Kansaris". The manufacturing of brassware is mainly done in Rajasthan.

*Clay Handicrafts or Pottery:* With its origination during the Indus Valley Civilization, clay craft or pottery is said to be one of the most primitive form of handicrafts in India. People engaged in pottery are called "Kumhaars". Besides its world famous Terracotta form, pottery has got different forms like Red Ware, Grey Ware and Black Ware. Uttar Pradesh is known for its painted black wares. Besides this, clay ware is also prepared in Krishnanagar West Bengal, Bikaner, Lucknow, Pune and Himachal Pradesh. Items like clay pots, decorative items, jewellery etc. are widely used all over the country.

*Dhokra Handicrafts:* Dhokra, the oldest form of handicraft is known for its traditional simplicity. This

tribal handicraft originated in Madhya Pradesh. The other states involved in this are West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Dhokra is famous for its unique items portraying folk characters. Dhokra jewellery, candle stands, pen stands, ash trays and varied kinds of showpieces are available at every handicraft shop.

*Jute Handicrafts:* Jute craftsmen have created a worldwide role in the field of jute handicrafts. The huge range of jute crafts includes bags, office stationeries, bangles and other jewellery, footwear, wall-hangings and many more. West Bengal, Assam and Bihar, being the leading jute producers, lead the jute handicrafts market in India.

*Paper Handicrafts:* Vibrant colored papers are combined together to form varied crafts like kites, masks, decorative flowers, lamp shades, puppets, hand-fans etc.

*Papier Mache:* the development of Papier Mache come in to existence from the Mughal Era is even a famous handicraft in India.

*Rock Handicrafts:* Prevalence of rock carving, one of the primitive rock art can be seen in the states of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Kashmir, Orissa and Nagpur. Rajasthan, Jaipur and Madhya Pradesh are famous for marble stone carvings. Green colored stone art is the specialty of Madhya Pradesh, whereas, Patharkatti is the unique rock craft of Gaya. Age-old temples of Orissa are the world famous examples of rock craft in India. Numerous utensils, decorative pieces, stone jewellery and statues are made from rocks.

*Shell Handicraft:* From time immemorial, shell handicrafts are one of the demandable crafts in India. Shell Handicraft can be made out of three types of shells like conch shell, tortoise shell and sea shell. Different kinds of goods like bangles, forks, decorative bowls, lockets, spoons, buttons, curtains, chandeliers, mirror frames, table mats etc. are the products of shell crafting. Generally, the places located on the sea shore like Gulf of Manar, Goa, Orissa etc. are the places for shell handicraft.

*Silver Filigree or Meenakari or Tarakashi Handicrafts:* Silver filigree or Tarakashi is a creative form of handicraft created from the twisted threads of silver or gold. Silver filigree can be of three distinctive types, Meenakari, Khulla Jaal and Flowers and Leaves. The most famous works of silver filigree includes paandans, tea trays, trinket boxes, earrings, necklaces, bracelets and varied other jewellery. Besides Cuttack in Orissa, Karimnagar in the state of Andhra Pradesh is known for its silver filigree work.

*Weaving or Embroidery Handicrafts:* Weaving mainly refers to the process of cloth production by two thread sets known as weft and warp crossed with each other. This traditional form of handicraft is mostly found in the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Bandhanis, the famous form of weaving are created in Jamnagar and Rajkot. Bihar and Karnataka are known for their embroidery work.

*Wood Handicrafts:* Wood craft is prevalent in India even before stone sculpture came into existence. Varied goods are created by the skilled craftsmen by shaping a piece of wood. Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka,

Kerala and Uttar Pradesh are known for their unique form of woodwork. Axes, toys, utensils, decorative pieces, jewellery and many more designer household goods like lamp shades, candle stands, vermilion boxes, jewellery boxes, bangle holders etc. are some of the common wood crafts used in almost every Indian house.

*Table 1.1 : Number of craft persons across the country*

(In lakhs)

State	Earth	Fiber	Metal	Wood	Stone	Leather	Others	Total Craft Pop.
Jammu & Kashmir	3.7	133.9	1.6	4.9	0.1	0.2	0.0	144
Himachal Pradesh	1.5	9.0	0.8	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	15
Punjab	6.2	171.3	2.5	2.9	0.0	0.3	0.0	183
Chandigarh	0.0	1.9	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2
Uttaranchal	0.0	0.8	1.5	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12
Haryana	5.5	72.5	8.2	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	88
Delhi	5.5	190.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	196
Rajasthan	60.4	140.9	49.7	10.7	46.6	0.0	0.0	308
Uttar Pradesh	340.8	1413.5	43.9	128.3	5.5	0.5	0.0	1933
Bihar	86.5	39.7	1.4	56.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	184
Nagaland	0.0	14.4	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	16
Manipur	0.0	30.4	3.8	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	35
Tripura	0.0	1.4	2.7	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8
Meghalaya	3.4	15.6	0.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	23
Assam	7.9	40.1	2.1	28.7	0.0	0.0	1.2	80
West Bengal	47.8	715.7	48.6	72.8	0.0	53.6	0.3	939
Jharkhand	20.3	78.8	18.5	59.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	177
Orissa	56.1	128.7	18.0	253.8	0.0	0.0	3.5	460
Chhattisgarh	58.2	6.8	3.5	43.8	0.0	0.0	0.8	113
Madhya Pradesh	107.6	104.2	14.3	131.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	359
Gujarat	43.5	416.5	458.4	79.5	51.5	0.0	1.2	1051
Maharashtra	55.9	388.5	57.1	46.1	0.1	0.7	3.1	552
Andhra Pradesh	43.5	587.6	57.6	124.5	0.0	5.2	1.6	820
Karnataka	4.7	208.7	48.7	51.4	2.4	0.0	0.0	316
Kerala	3.3	179.2	43.2	18.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	244
Tamil Nadu	11.9	1072.7	98.4	74.8	0.5	37.1	0.2	1296
Pondicherry	0.3	7.9	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9
Total	974.6	6171.1	985.2	1213.6	106.7	99.9	11.9	9563

Source: Enumeration of Crafts Persons in India (2013)

The above table 1.1 shows the different craft production in different states of our country. The above table shows that crafts vary from state to state; which means each and every state of our country has its specialty in its craft production, either they are well in

earth, fiber, metal, wood, stone, leatherwork or other handicrafts. Above mention table also show that there are 9563 lakhs craft pop engaged with these particular crafts.

## VI. INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

India is known as the land of handicrafts, numerous artisans are engaged in craftwork on part-time basis making diverse crafts from pottery to baskets, stone ware, glass ware, handmade paper products and other utility items made of locally available material. The industry provides employment to over six million artisans, which includes a large number of women and

others belonging to weaker sections of society. In addition to the high potential for employment the sector is economically important from the point of low capital investment, high ratio of value addition, and high potential for export and foreign exchange earnings for the country. It also allows women to participate in their free time using tools they can well manage leading to supplemental income.

*Table 1.2 : Number and Distribution of Craft Persons across Employment Status in Rural areas  
(In lakhs)*

Medium Used	Self Employed		Regular Salaried		Casual Labour		Others	
	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)
Earth	9.9	75.8	0.3	2.2	2.0	15.1	1	6.9
Fiber	26.5	53.5	3.5	7.1	8.2	16.5	11	22.8
Metal	3.0	40.7	0.2	2.7	3.3	44.6	1	12.0
Wood	13.2	69.6	0.1	0.5	3.3	17.3	2	12.6
Stone	0.4	63.0	0.2	29.9	0.0	6.9	0	0.2
Leather	0.0	13.5	0.2	60.3	0.0	9.7	0	16.5
Others	0.1	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.5	0	38.5
Total craft	53.2	59.0	4.5	5.0	17	18.7	16	17.3

Source: Enumeration of Crafts Persons in India (2013)

The above table 1.2 shows that the different handicrafts of rural areas such as earth, fiber, metal, wood, stone, leather and others are generating employment in rural areas like 53.2 lakhs self employment, 4.5 lakhs regular salaried, 17 lakhs casual

labour and 16 lakhs by other handicrafts. In the above table their percentage share is also given such as 59.0% self employment, 5.0% regular salaried, 18.7% casual labour and 17.3% of other handicrafts.

*Table 1.3 : Number and Distribution of Craft Persons across Employment Status in Urban areas  
(In lakhs)*

Medium Used	Self Employed		Regular Salaried		Casual Labour		Others	
	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)	Numbs (lakhs)	Share (%)
Earth	1.08	37.5	0.47	16.3	0.4	14.8	0.9	31.4
Fiber	11.67	29.0	12.61	31.4	4.6	11.4	11.3	28.1
Metal	3.15	53.7	0.74	12.6	1.1	18.6	0.9	15.1
Wood	1.02	29.7	0.01	0.3	0.0	0.8	2.4	69.2
Stone	0.00	0.2	0.66	99.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Leather	0.02	2.8	0.49	60.0	0.3	31.2	0.0	5.9
Others	0.03	28.6	0.02	12.9	0.0	0.0	0.1	58.5
Total craft	16.99	31.5	15.00	27.8	6.4	11.8	15.6	28.9

Source: Enumeration of Crafts Persons in India (2013)

The above table 1.3 shows that the different handicrafts of urban areas such as earth, fiber, metal, wood, stone, leather and others are generating employment in urban areas like 16.99 lakhs self employment, 15.00lakhs regular salaried, 6.4 lakhs casual labour and 15.6 lakhs by other handicrafts. In the above table their percentage share is also given such as 31.5% self employment, 27.8% regular salaried, 11.8% casual labour and 28.9% of other handicrafts. If we compare the employment generated by handicraft in rural areas and in urban areas, it clearly revealed that in rural areas it is generating more employment comparative to urban areas.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Indian Arts and Crafts of each age reflect the culture, traditions and activities of that particular period. Every age, every dynasty, every empire has its influence and essence in the crafts belonging to those times, therefore making India's heritage dissimilar and culturally rich. Indian craftsmen carefully made numerous designs, complicated and beautiful in a variety of hand-crafted items. These have been famous over centuries. Indian handicrafts, though initially made plain for daily use by ancient man, the craving for aesthetic appeal soon resulted in the development of numerous designs and motifs. The beauty of Indian textiles spread far and wide even during the ancient trade. Besides that Indian handicraft plays vital role in employment generation with low investment. Large populations are engaged with this sector directly or indirectly. So government should have to do care this eco friendly and near to the ground invested sector.

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