

## **A Study On Rural Handicraft Cottage Industry In Grass Mat**

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### **Abstract**

The vital important factor for economic development of a country is its industrialization. In the process of industrialization, emphasis is given to the three major groups of industries; large-scale industries, small-scale industries and cottage industries. Cottage and small-scale industrial sector plays a dominant role in the economic development of both developed and developing countries. In economic development aspects cottage industries play an important role in context of employment opportunities, equitable distribution of national income, balanced regional growth and development of rural areas. Besides economic aspects, the social role of cottage industrial units are quite significant in achieving various social goals such as removal of poverty, attainment of self-reliance, reduction in disparities in income, standard of living and regional imbalances. Unfortunately, the cottage industry is today under threat of extinction or steep decline because of the competition from the cheaper machine goods and import from other countries. It leads to impact on the lives of many artisans who are switching their professions for survival. Capital, raw materials, technical knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit, which are back bone of successful industrialization, are not available in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu. At this juncture, the present study deals how artisans manage their problem and any support received by the government, NGOs and SHGs. The study is also examining the status of the rural artisans.

**Keyword:** Industrialization, cottage industries, opportunities, equitable, self-reliance, reduction, disparities, imbalances

### **Introduction**

Micro, Medium and Small scale industries constitute the key link in the process of socio-economic transformation of underdeveloped social structures. It is, no doubt, true that in the case of dominantly rural countries, process of transformation either germinating within the rural segment or bringing the later within its orbit of influence will play a crucial role and should, therefore, occupy an important position in their development strategy. It is, however, equally true that rural and urban processes are inseparably interwoven in the socioeconomic fabric. Rural development cannot be operationalized outside the total developmental process straddling the rural-urban continuum. It constitutes a large component of the system is interdependence of vertical shifts of the workforce from the primary to the secondary sector which articulate the total development process. Its contribution to the Industrial development is quite unique.

The Government of India, Union Territories and state governments through different agencies and institutions sponsored by them are pursuing a policy of protecting and promoting small industry. These programmes have become more numerous, varied and detailed which relates to information, consultancy, entrepreneurship, development, training modernization, technology support, industrial estate, raw materials, marketing, finance, reservation, ancillary development etc. In a

developing country like India, small scale units have played a significant role in economic development. Besides economic role, small enterprise with their unique economic and organizational characteristics played social and political role in term of creation of local employment.

The Village and Small Scale industries sector consists of two segments viz. modern and traditional. The village and cottage industries such as handloom, khadi and other allied village industries, handicrafts, Seri-culture and coir form the traditional segment while the modern sector consists of a wide range of modern small scale industries. The role of village and cottage industries in a developing country like India cannot be over emphasized. Developing countries are characterized as labour abundant and capital scarce. Large industries with their stress on latest technical know-how requiring enormous capital investment cannot absorb the growing number of unemployed in the country. On the other hand, village and cottage crafts which employ labour intensive techniques of manufacture can provide immense employment opportunities to masses.

Bamboo is a versatile input and is used as building material, paper pulp resource, scaffolding, agriculture implements, weaving material, plywood and particle board manufacture, basketry, furniture, pickled or stewed bamboo shoots, medicines, etc. Resource management and technical improvements can convert this fast-growing grass into a durable raw material for construction purposes and a wide range of semi-industrialized products. New industrial applications and modern construction design have both demonstrated bamboo's huge potential. The combined value of internal and commercial uses of bamboo in the world is about Rs 50,000 crores annually. This is supposed to double by 2015.

### **Statement of Problems**

Unfortunately, the cottage industry is today under threat of extinction or steep decline because of the competition from the cheaper machine goods and import from other countries. It leads to impact on the lives of many artisans who are switching their professions for survival. Capital, raw materials, technical knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit, which are back bone of successful industrialization, are not available in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu. These are the major problems in small scale and cottage industries in Tamil Nadu.

At this juncture, the present study deals how artisans manage their problem and any support received by the government, NGOs and SHGs. The study is also examining the status of the rural artisans.

### **Review of Literature**

Industry is the key to the rapid economic development because industrialization involves radical transformation of society in all its aspects economic, social, political and cultural. It is true that rapid industrialization is the only effective way of helping the Indian economy to come out of the vicious circle of poverty. To lay sound foundation for rapid industrialization, there is a need for huge investments in key and basic and large scale industries.

Review of literature gives background information to aid the researcher in designing and analyzing the research work. There have been a good number of published works in the form of research papers, reference books, reports, etc. in the area of present topic. An attempt is made in this part of the research study to give a brief account of research literature related to the topic of the present research work. The literature studies that have been conducted reveal the importance of micro and small industries like Grass mat industries in India as well as other countries. This chapter will be covering the historical events and the research on micro and small industries both abroad and in India.

Prasad (1974) in his study highlighted that small-scale industrial sector in India is small only in size but big in achievements. A study conducted by Bhati (1976) states that in a majority of cases, units outside the industrial estates, showed higher rates of surplus. Narayana Reddy (1983) in his doctoral thesis reports that SSI units are to equip themselves with better and improved methods of marketing, disseminated through proper training programmes conducted by the Institute of Marketing, which may be started exclusively. Hence there is a need for creating the Institute of Marketing for small industry at national level.

Nisar Ahmad (1987) had made an effort to critically examine, both at micro and macro levels, the operational and other problems of the small-scale and cottage Industries in India with special reference to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Kigomo (1988) revealed that about 80 percentage of bamboo area is distributed with the southern tropical region of Asia and Africa and South Africa are poorly populated with bamboo.

Nasir Tyabji (1989) analyzed the structure of small-scale Industries and role of small Industry policy as a component of the Indian development process and changes in the structure of Industry and nature of small enterprise development. Sidhartha Shankar Dash (1990) in a study under taken in Balasori district in Orissa attempt to analyse the operational problems in launching SSI units. They conclude that although policies are good, often delay in implementation and faulty implementation upset the entrepreneur's plan and in many cases lead the production process to a standstill.

Venugopal (1993) observed that Governmental agencies set up for promoting village and cottage industries are inactive and their performance is below the level of expectations. He argues that the survival of village and cottage industries depends on their ability to become competitive. Their efforts should be to reduce cost and improve quality through technological upgradation. Pillai (1994) in his study analyzed the future role of small-scale sector in the evolving economic setting and the challenges it may have to face to sustain its place as an important contributor to the development process.

Rajesh Rajashekharani (2003) in his study of the Kerala State Bamboo Corporation covered almost all aspects of the organization. He studies in detail the history and objectives of the firm. For the upliftment of Harijans and Girijans this industry was established and he believes that the Government and the Corporation fulfilled the objective. A brief summary of different types of workers from reed cutters to Managing Director, their appointment, salary and other benefits also are discussed in his work.

### **Methodology of the Study**

The present study has under taken in Kollidam Block of Nagapattinam district, Tamil Nadu. The economy of Nagapattinam district is mainly based on agricultural, non- farm sector, cottage industries, tourism and animal husbandry. However, handicraft is the one of the important non-farm activities in Nagapattinam district. Researcher has focused on a study the socio-economic condition of handicraft workers, employment opportunities in the select study area. For the analysis purpose of the study Kollidam block has selected the handicraft units are spread in this area. In the next level researcher has chosen 20 percent of the workers form the total population of workers in two villages, 1) Kollidam and, 2) Thaikkal village. In each village 20 Grass Mat units are selected (i.e. 40 Grass Mat handicraft units are selected in the study area). At the final level 3 respondent in each units were selected, (i.e. 120 respondent were selected).

**Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the socio-economic status of handicraft workers in study area.
2. To examine the working conditions of handicraft units workers in terms of income and employment.
3. To probe into the problem faced by the handicraft units workers in study area.

**Concepts****1. Cottage industry**

Cottage industry is the one which is run by an individual with the help of their family members with very less amount of capital. Most of the cottage industries do not use power. These industries are mostly run by the local artisans in their own homes. The products produced in cottage industries are usually to satisfy the local demands. They are mostly located in rural areas.

**2. Handicraft units**

Handicrafts are mostly defined as items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and are generally artistic or traditional in nature. They are also objects of utility and objects of decoration.

**3. Employment**

Employment defines the adults who are willing to work and get employment opportunities. It includes all types of employment like government, private, business, agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

**4. Income**

Income is an amount (of goods and services) which is a certain time can be consumed by an entity, without leading to a reduction of capital. Economists use the capital maintenance approach (equity or capital maintenance approach) in determining the income of an entity in a period. Economic concept of income underscores the value of goods and services that can be consumed or consumption ability of an entity. Income is measured based on the ability of an entity to goods and services, which often also referred to as purchasing power (purchasing power) or real income (real income).

**5. Grass Mat**

A mat is a generic term for a piece of fabrics or flat material, generally placed on a floor or other flat surface. The mats made from *Cyperus pangorei* (Korai in Tamil) are called "Korai paai" in Tamil and can be found widely in the households of Tamil Nadu. (usually in the size 2 mtr. x 1mtr).

**Analysis and Interpretations**

In this chapter the researcher presents the analysis of the study of the surveyed area. This chapter is based on primary data collected through a field survey in study area. This chapter is deliberate to make a view of handicraft industry workers socio - economic profile of the surveyed respondents and testing of hypotheses has been clearly analyzed.

Table: 1 Gender wise classification of the respondents

| S.No | Gender       | No. of respondents | (Percentage) |
|------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1.   | Male         | 50                 | 42.0         |
| 2.   | Female       | 70                 | 58.0         |
|      | <b>Total</b> | <b>120</b>         | <b>100.0</b> |

**Source:** Computed

Presents table the gender – wise classification of the surveyed respondents the majority 58 percentages of the respondents are female and remaining 42 percentage of are male respondents. Involvement if female is high in handicraft activities because of this skills and time for this type of activity.

**Table: 2 Age wise classification of the respondents**

| S.No         | Age            | Gender   |          | Row total  |
|--------------|----------------|----------|----------|------------|
|              |                | Male     | Female   |            |
| 1.           | Below 25 years | 4(3.0)   | 10(8.0)  | 14(12.0)   |
| 2.           | 26 – 35 years  | 9(8.0)   | 24(20.0) | 33(28.0)   |
| 3.           | 36 – 45 years  | 22(18.0) | 14(12.0) | 36(30.0)   |
| 4.           | 46 – 55 years  | 7(6.0)   | 18(15.0) | 25(21.0)   |
| 5.           | Above 55 years | 8(7.0)   | 4(3.0)   | 12(10.0)   |
| Column total |                | 50(42.0) | 70(58.0) | 120(100.0) |

**Source:** Computed

Age group is divided into five categories such as below 25 years. 26 to 35 years. 36-45 years. 46-55 years and above 56 years of the surveyed 120 respondents 12 percentages of the respondents were falls under the age group of below 25 years. The 28 percentage's of the respondent belonging to age group of 26 - 35 years. 30 percentages were found in the age group of 36 - 45 years. 21percent were belongs to the age group 46 - 55 years and just 10 percent falls within the age group of above 55 years.

**Table: 3 Education wise classifications of the respondents**

| S.No         | Type of Education       | Gender   |          | Row total  |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|------------|
|              |                         | Male     | Female   |            |
| 1.           | Primary                 | 10(8.4)  | 28(23.2) | 38(31.7)   |
| 2.           | Secondary               | 22(18.5) | 24(20.0) | 46(38.4)   |
| 3.           | Higher Secondary        | 12(10.0) | 16(13.2) | 28(23.3)   |
| 4.           | Technical Qualification | 4(3.4)   | 1(0.8)   | 5(4.1)     |
| 5.           | Degree                  | 2(1.7)   | 1(0.8)   | 3(2.5)     |
| Column total |                         | 50(42.0) | 70(58.0) | 120(100.0) |

**Source:** Computed

Exhibits educational qualification of the surveyed respondents the majority 38.4 percent of them has education up to secondary education. 31.7 percent has completed primary level and only 23.3 higher secondary. 4.1 percent respondents were completed technical level of education. 2.5 percent where completed degree level of education.

**Table: 4 Income wise classifications of the respondents**

| S.No         | Annual Income     | Gender   |          | Row total  |
|--------------|-------------------|----------|----------|------------|
|              |                   | Male     | Female   |            |
| 1.           | Below – 1,00,000  | 12(10.0) | 16(13.3) | 28(23.3)   |
| 2.           | 750001 – 1,00000  | 12(10.0) | 25(20.8) | 38(31.7)   |
| 3.           | 100001 – 1,50,000 | 15(12.5) | 17(14.2) | 32(26.7)   |
| 4.           | Above – 1,50,000  | 11(9.2)  | 12(10.0) | 22(18.3)   |
| Column total |                   | 50(42.0) | 70(58.0) | 120(100.0) |

**Source:** Computed

Table brings out the detail about family annual income of the respondents. Around 31.7 percent of the respondent's family annual income falls under the category of `75000 to `1,00000/-. The 26.7 percent come under ` 1,00001 - ` 1,50,000/- percentage of annul income. 23.3 percentages of the respondents annual income fall on below ` 50000/- and remaining 18.3 percentage of the respondents where earning above `1,50000/-.

**Table: 5 Family assets wise classification of the respondents**

| S. No | Family Assets value   | Gender    |           | Total (Row) |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
|       |                       | Male      | Female    |             |
| 1.    | Below – `2,00000      | 14 (11.8) | 26 (21.6) | 40(33.4)    |
| 2.    | ` 2,00001 – ` 3,00000 | 22 (18.5) | 28 (23.2) | 50(41.7)    |
| 3.    | ` 3,00001 – ` 3,50000 | 10 (8.3)  | 10 (8.3)  | 20 (16.6)   |
| 4.    | Above ` 350,000       | 4 (3.4)   | 6 (5.0)   | 10 (8.3)    |
|       | (Column)Total         | 50 (42.0) | 70 (58.0) | 120 (100.0) |

**Source:** Computed

Table shows that the detail about family assets of the respondents. The maximum number of the respondent's i.e 41.7 percent of assets falls under the category of `200000 to `300000/-. The 33.4 percent come under below ` 200000/- and 16.6, 8.3 percentages of the respondents total assets fall on ` 3,00001 – ` 3,50000 and above ` 350,000 /- respectively.

**Table: 6 Family savings wise classification of the respondents**

| S. No | Saving per year | Gender    |           | Total (Row) |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
|       |                 | Male      | Female    |             |
| 1.    | Nil             | 18 (15.2) | 28 (23.1) | 46 (38.3)   |
| 2.    | Below 50,000    | 16 (13.3) | 20 (16.7) | 36 (30.0)   |
| 3.    | 50,001 – 75,000 | 12 (10.0) | 12 (10.0) | 24 (20.0)   |
| 4.    | Above 75,000    | 4 (3.5)   | 10 (8.2)  | 14 (11.7)   |
|       | (Column)Total   | 50 (42.0) | 70 (58.0) | 120 (100.0) |

**Source:** Computed

Table lights on the detail about family savings of the respondents in study area. The maximum number of the respondent's i.e 38.3 percent has no savings. The 30 percent come under below ` 50000/- and 20, & 11.7 percentages of the respondents total savings fall on 50001 – 75000 and above ` 75,000 /- respectively.

### Major Findings

From the analysis, some major finding are arrived and it is follows,

- The study magnitude the grass mat artisan's status in the study area of Nagapattinam district.
- In the grass mat cottage industries maximum numbers of works are women gender in nature.
- The age group of the respondents is fall on between 25 years to 55 years in both categories.
- When go through the education level of the respondents are under higher secondary levels in both genders.
- The income level of the respondents is lies in maximum of ` 150000/per annum of a family.
- The family assets is also very margin amount i.e., it falls on ` 2,00001 – ` 3,00000 at maximum.
- The family annual savings are also very minimum level when compared to other cottage industries.

## Suggestions

Based on the data availability the primary sources and findings of the study, the one or two suggestions are offered for development and promotion the handicraft industries in Nagapattinam district

- To increase the level of employment generation, government should take some measures to increase revenue and employment generation.
- In order to increase the income of handicraft industries, government must provide well marketing facilities in rural and urban areas; especially for rural artisan and private handicraft artisan.
- Transport and communication play an important role for the handicraft industry. There is need to improve in transport and communication in all districts. Roads must be connects with urban centers, so that artisan can able to reach market in time and sell their product easily.

## Conclusion

To conclude these foregoing discussions of the present study, the handicraft industries in study area have potential to generate more employment and income. Despite having some difficulties like, high cost of production, poor marketing, low demand and inconvenience transportation. In spite that handicraft sector still performing well in the district. Government can work together for the improvement of handicraft industries. By implementing new policy, schemes and programmes for increase employment level and income.

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