







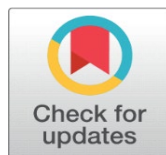
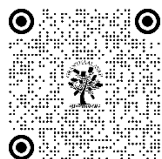
THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN PROMOTING HANDICRAFT INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

In India, the handicraft industry is the second largest rural employment industry after agriculture. Handicrafts are typically produced in the unorganised industry. There was an underestimation of the potential of the handicraft industry, which can play a significant part in the economy. Artisans face low wages, job inconsistencies, a lack of technological expertise, and a lack of new design. Several government and non-governmental programmes are also in operation, but they are either ineffective or do not impact the majority of artisans. In the present study the researchers focuses on the present trends of different handicraft schemes implemented under the 12th five-year plan. The study also explores the ground reality of the existing government's programmes in Jammu and Kashmir towards promoting handicraft industry. The present research will help policymakers create appropriate initiatives to expand the handicraft industry and artisans, as well as change existing plans.

Keywords: Handicraft Industry, Government Policies and Programmes, Trends, 12th Five-Year Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

The Handicraft Industry is a significant part of the Indian economy, providing employment to number of people and contributing to the country's cultural heritage. Handicrafts refer to the creation of decorative or functional objects using traditional techniques and skills, often using natural materials such as wood, clay, textiles, and metals [UNESCO. \(2019\)](#). These crafts are typically produced by skilled artisans who have inherited their craft through generations of family tradition or learned it through apprenticeships.

Handicrafts have a rich history and cultural significance and have been produced by various civilizations throughout the world for thousands of years. They can be found in many forms, including pottery, weaving, embroidery, metalworking, and carving, and are often deeply connected to local traditions and customs [Liu & Deng \(2017\)](#).

In addition to their cultural value, handicrafts have economic and social importance. They provide a source of income for many artisans and their families and can also help to preserve traditional skills and knowledge. Furthermore, the production and sale of handicrafts can contribute to the development of local economies and tourism industries [UNIDO. \(2019\)](#).

India has a rich tradition of handicrafts with a diverse range of products created by skilled artisans across the country. The handicraft industry is an important sector for the country's economy providing employment to millions of people and contributing to the nation's cultural heritage. The handicraft industry plays a significant role in providing livelihood opportunities to rural communities in India. A study conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) found that the handicraft industry provides employment to around 7 million people, most of who are women and belong to marginalized communities [Das \(2018\)](#). The study also found that the industry has a positive impact on the income and standard of living of these communities. The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India's 2017-18 Annual report suggests that 68.86 lakhs are working in the handicraft industry. Of whom 30.25 lakhs are men and 38.61 lakhs are women. In India, production is Rs. 46930 crores, and export Rs. 34394.30 crores in 2016-17. The handicrafts are a significant part of our economy and play a vital role in bringing the material cultural uniqueness of our culture. The handicraft sector has enriched Indian heritage while combining beauty with the utility of the crafts [Madan \(1989\)](#). The handicraft industry is extremely potential-oriented because it retains the interests of millions of craftspeople, not just those present but also new entrants in the handicraft industry [Dar & Parrey \(2013\)](#). The craft sector has increased national income and become a major export resource and has significantly grown as a source of employment [Bhat & Yadav \(2016\)](#).

While attempting to explore the data on the employment scenario in the handicraft industry, [Grobar \(2019\)](#) has found that this sector involves over 10 percent of the total labour force in a number of developing countries of the world. Taking into consideration the case of Peru, this study has also identified various policies and programmes that governments could undertake to preserve and promote the cultural heritage which is embodied in the handicraft production. [Kaushik & Jain \(2015\)](#) have undertaken a study with the prime objective of analysing various government welfare schemes and their impact on the handloom weavers. After taking a total sample of 106 handloom weavers from the Maheshwar city in the Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh, India, this study has found that one-fourth of the total surveyed weavers was not aware of the various government launched schemes like integrated handlooms development scheme, marketing and export promotion scheme, health insurance scheme and so on. This empirical study has suggested for initiation of awareness campaigns from the government in order to ensure the satisfactory usage of various schemes to improve the livelihood and economic conditions of the weavers in the research area. In a similar way, [Singh & Kumar \(2018\)](#) have carried out a study with the aim of exploring various government schemes for the upliftment of people involved in handloom weaving along with the level of awareness among them. Based on the descriptive analysis of the data concerning the awareness and satisfaction level about the government schemes, this study has found that the handloom industry receives a positive

support from the government through its various policy interventions. Concerning the awareness level among the weavers, it further reveals that 80.55 percent handloom weavers have awareness about government schemes with health care schemes showing higher level of awareness than others. [Kumar & Kumar \(2018\)](#) have tried to examine the level of awareness of the handicraft schemes among the weavers. After situating their study in Mirzapur area of Uttar Pradesh in India, the authors have found that majority of the weavers have no information about various government-initiated schemes which according to them is the major obstacle in the way of growth and development of handicraft sector. This study suggests for various government interventions to enhance the awareness among the artisans with special focus on those who are living and working in the rural areas.

2. HANDICRAFT SECTOR IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The handicraft activities of Kashmir are known worldwide for its design, quality, and art. It is an extremely labour-intensive industry, requires less capital and is environmentally friendly. Embroidery, crewels, namda, shawls, woodwork, paper machie, carpets etc. are the leading crafts in the manufacture and export of the state [Bhat & Yasmin \(2013\)](#). The traditional handicraft products are well-known throughout the world, and many Kashmiris rely on these handicraft-related jobs, either directly or partially, for their income. The valley's climate is crucial because most people find these traditional handicraft jobs to be very appropriate for making a living during the winter. The handicrafts are an important component of our culture and help spread its material wealth to others. The handicrafts are vital as a cultural legacy. The handicraft industry employs almost 3.50 lakh people. In Jammu and Kashmir, the total output of handicraft items in 2012–2013 was 1843.2 (in crores of rupees), in 2013–2014, it was 17.82, in 2014–2015, it was 2175.00, and in 2015–2016, it was 2234.15. The entire amount of handicrafts exported from Jammu and Kashmir in 2013–2014, 2014–2015, and 2015–2016 is 1695.65, 1287.04, and 1059.4 respectively [Directorate of Economics & Statistics. \(2018\)](#).

3. ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN HANDICRAFT SECTOR

The government plays a significant role in promoting and supporting the handicraft industry through various policies, initiatives, and incentives. The Indian government has adopted a number of initiatives and policies to encourage the development of the country's handicraft industry. The Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) found that government policies such as the Handicrafts Development and Marketing Programme have helped to increase the income of artisans and improve the quality of their products [Kaur & Thakur \(2020\)](#). [Sivasankaran & Sivasubramanian \(2014\)](#) argue that government policies have been instrumental in promoting the growth of the handicraft sector in India. They highlight the importance of initiatives such as the Cluster Development Programme and the Design Clinic Scheme in providing support to artisans and craftspeople. They also suggest that more policies needed to address the challenges faced by the handicraft sector, such as inadequate infrastructure and lack of access to credit. [Raghunathan \(2018\)](#) stated that the government policies have played a significant role in promoting the growth of the handicraft sector, particularly through initiatives such as the Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation and the Tamil Nadu Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society. He also suggests that more initiatives needed to address challenges such as lack of access to finance and inadequate marketing support. [Gupta & Bhatnagar \(2015\)](#) examine the role of

government policies in promoting the handicraft sector in the state of Rajasthan. The government policies have a positive impact on the handicraft sector, particularly through initiatives such as the Rajasthan Small Industries Corporation and the Rajasthan State Handloom Development Corporation. However, they also suggest that more issues need to address such as low productivity and lack of market access.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) stated that government can provide a favorable business environment for handicraft artisans by creating policies that promote entrepreneurship and small-scale businesses. This can be done through the provision of funding and resources, tax incentives, and regulations that support small businesses. The government supports the handicraft industry by providing training and skill development programs for handicraft artisans to improve the quality of their products and increase their competitiveness in the global market [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development \(UNCTAD\). \(2016\)](#). The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in India highlights the importance of training programs in the handicraft industry, stating that skill development is an important area that needs to be focused upon to improve the quality of handicrafts products [Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. \(2019\)](#). The government supports the marketing and promotion of handicraft products by organizing trade fairs, exhibitions, and cultural festivals that showcase local handicraft products. They can also facilitate the participation of handicraft artisans in international trade fairs and exhibitions to expand their market [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development \(UNCTAD\). \(2016\)](#). The National Handicrafts Development Programme in India is an example of a government initiative that aims to promote and market handicraft products by providing financial assistance to artisans to participate in national and international fairs and exhibitions [Government of India. \(2020\)](#). The government provides legal protection for handicraft products through the provision of intellectual property rights such as trademarks, copyrights, and patents. This will protect the originality of the handicraft products and prevent counterfeits [World Intellectual Property Organization \(WIPO\). \(2017\)](#). Furthermore, the government also provides financial support to handicraft artisans by providing access to loans, grants, and credit facilities. This will help them to invest in their businesses and improve their production processes [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development \(UNCTAD\). \(2016\)](#). The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in India provides financial assistance to handicraft artisans through various schemes such as the Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises and the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme [Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. \(2019\)](#).

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To assess the current trends of various handicraft schemes implemented by the government in Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2) To explore the ground level situation of policies and programmes of the government towards promoting handicraft industry.

5. METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary sources are used in the current research. The Directorate of Handicraft Jammu and Kashmir, Directorate of Economics & Statistics

Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Newspapers, and research papers were used to gather secondary data.

The primary collected through semi-structured interview schedule and observation. The researcher employed purposive sampling in selecting the blocks from district Pulwama in Kashmir. Out of 11 blocks in district Pulwama, 4 blocks were purposively selected namely Newa, Kakapora, Shadimarg and Aripal. The concentration of carpet weavers, shawl weavers and embroidery workers were founded mostly among these four blocks. Further for the selection of the individual respondents from these four blocks of Pulwama district, the researcher used snowball sampling.

Table 1

Table 1 Distribution of Sample Selected from Blocks		
Blocks	Frequency	Percent
Kakapora	48	26.67
Newa	46	25.56
Shadimarg	44	24.44
Aripal	42	23.33
Total	180	100

Source Field Work

6. SAMPLE SELECTION

In the present study, 180 respondents engaged in the handicraft occupation were selected from the Pulwama district. The sample size was determined through the data saturation theory. Saturation refers to the point at which you have reached a variety of ideas and are no longer getting additional information about the problem under study [Teddlie & Tashakkori \(2009\), 162](#). In saturation, the researcher reaches a point in their analysis where sampling more data will not lead to more information related to their research questions. Researchers are allowed to stop sampling data and round off their analysis. Therefore, the researcher in the present study followed the same procedure, and 180 respondents were selected for quantitative analysis. The number of artisans involved in the handicraft industry not known despite the fact that the State Directorate of Handicrafts has worked out an overall estimation and total artisans involved in the handicraft industry are 0.23 lakhs in 2017-18 [Directorate of Economics & Statistics. \(2018\)](#)

Out of total respondents, 12.22% are carpet weavers, 60% respondents are shawl weavers, and 27.78% respondents are embroidery workers. The ratio of shawl weavers and embroidery workers is significantly higher than the carpet weavers. The crisis in the carpet industry from last few decades is one of the significant reasons for the low presence of carpet weavers in Pulwama District. Other reasons include the free flow of cheap and diverse machine-made carpets in the countryside and fluctuating prices of raw materials. Due to all these reasons, the carpet weavers are being forced to take alternate livelihoods. For the sake of survival, a number of carpet weavers have settled down as shawl weavers or embroidery workers, working either for the middlemen or master weavers.

Table 2

Table 2 Category Wise Distribution of Artisans of Pulwama District		
Category of Artisans	Frequency	Percent
Carpet Weavers	22	12.22

Shawl Weavers	108	60
Embroidery Workers	50	27.78
Total	180	100

Source Field Work

7. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

In social research, various tools and techniques are available through which the researcher can collect data regarding his/her research problem. The process of selecting tools and techniques is dependent on the rationale of research and the population being studied. The interview schedule was the principal method of data collection. The interview schedule was prepared carefully, keeping in mind the objectives of the study. The interview schedule was tested for its reliability and validity through a pilot study carried out on 30 respondents from January 1, 2020 to January 31, 2020. After that, the interview schedule was modified to provide a comprehensive view of the field. Finally, the actual fieldwork was carried out between January 2021 and June 2021.

For the present study, the required information was also collected from different secondary sources. In secondary sources, books, articles published in journals, various websites, census data, NGOs' reports, and literature, etc. were used. The various reports of the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicraft), Ministry of Textiles, Directorate of Economic and Statistics J&K, and Planning Commission, etc. were reviewed. In addition, the Maulana Azad Library at Aligarh Muslim University, the Library of the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicraft), the Library of the University of Kashmir, and the Library of the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology in Srinagar were consulted.

8. SCHEMES FOR THE HANDICRAFT SECTOR

The Central and State Governments identified that handicrafts are a vital financial activity, with their labor-intensive character and broad dispersal across the nation, constitute a crucial economic activity. The '*All India Handicraft Board*' established in 1952 which come under the control of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. The '*Indian Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd (IHDC)*' established in 1958 which was later retitled as '*The Handicrafts & Handlooms Exports Corporation of India Limited (HHEC)*' in 1962. In the early 1970's Government focused on preserving craftsmanship, upgrading skills and the welfare of artisans, but the Government changed its focus to improve export market potential in 1980's and 1990's. In order to take suitable approaches to encourage the export of handicrafts, the '*Carpet Export Promotion Council*' and the '*Export Promotion Council of Handicrafts*' were established in 1984 and 1986 respectively. Special focus is given to ensure that a sufficient number of craftsmen get benefit from all development plans. The Twelfth Five Year Plan aimed to improve the design and productivity of Indian craft industries in the manufacturing services market. Initiatives such as training and seminars for design development have been endorsed. In the previous years, too, many of these initiatives were organized. However, previously designed products/designs for the end product were not used effectively [Ministry of Textiles. \(2012\)](#).

The *Office of the Development Commissioner of Handicrafts (D.C.H)* is the main agency implementing all Central Governments' handicraft schemes. It assists the Government in formulating and implementing policies for the promotion and

development of handicrafts. It identifies new/lesser known or weakening handicrafts and issues related to artisans, offers marketing, economic and technological assistance to craftsmen to allow them to be empowered by promoting them with the help of their regional offices and field units through various development schemes. Development Commissioner of Handicrafts has launched the various schemes during the 12th five-year plan under the one Umbrella scheme- *National Handicraft Development Programme (NHDP)* to highlight a holistic approach to the development of handicraft sector. The National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP) is an important initiative aimed at promoting the growth of the handicraft sector in India. The NHDP was launched in 1995 by the Ministry of Textiles and has been instrumental in providing support to artisans and craftspeople across the country. The 12th Five-Year Plan seeks to create a competitive global environment that provides sustainable livelihoods for craftsmen to achieve balanced socio-economic progress and inclusive growth. In accordance with its 12th Five-year Plan, the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts has adopted the following initiatives:

Table 3

Table 3 Funds Released in Jammu and Kashmir for the Production and Promotion of the Handicraft Sector Under Handicraft Schemes 2015-2016 (in Lakhs)						
State	Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana	Design and Technology Upgradation	Research and Development	Human Resource Development	Marketing support and Services	Comprehensive Welfare
J&K	56.84	19.05	17.99	89.8	9	*
India	1883.04	1687.16	602.24	1948.1	2638.85	244.93

Source Office of Development Commissioner Handicrafts

Note * Welfare Scheme state-wise funds not released

9. BABA SAHEB AMBEDKAR HASTSHILP VIKAS YOJANA (AHVY)

The key goals of this scheme are the sustainable development of craftsmanship through the involvement and empowerment of craftspeople, including women. The main aspects of this scheme are to mobilization of craftsmen into self-help groups (SHGs) and full support for growth.

Table 4

Table 4 Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (AHVY) and Artisans Benefited in Jammu and Kashmir				
State	Artisans Covered under AHVY			
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
J&K	14688	4900	-	410
India	90547	88996	-	13080

Source Office of Development Commissioner Handicrafts

(-) = Not available

10. DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY UP-GRADATION

The aim of the scheme is to provide financial support for the central government-sponsored institutions, improve skills through training, recording,

protection, and revival of rare and deteriorating crafts, provide financial help for state-built institutions, including design centres, design banks and museums.

Table 5

Table 5 Design and Technology Upgradation Scheme (DTUS) and Artisans Benefited in Jammu and Kashmir

State	Artisans Covered under DTUS			
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
J&K	300	310	60	-
India	13040	9080	11200	4520

Source Office of Development Commissioner Handicrafts

(-) = Not available

11. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Human Resource Development (HRD) programme aims to provide a strong manufacturing base, high quality product and the required methods, processes, and creative designs for the professional and skilled work force in the handicraft industry to meet consumer needs. There is also a provision for the imparting the soft skill that craftsmen think is important to enable them to successfully conduct their own business.

Table 6

Table 6 Human Resource Development Scheme (HRDS) and Artisans Benefited in Jammu and Kashmir

State	Number of Artisans Benefited Under HRDS			
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
J&K	360	110	-	200
India	11090	8650	9895	8940

Source Office of Development Commissioner Handicrafts

(-) = Not available

12. MARKETING SUPPORT AND SERVICE SCHEME (MSSS)

The Marketing Support and Service Scheme (MSSS) scheme aims to increase the access of artisans to various markets through proper channels and also to create awareness among consumers and the public at large about handicrafts both in domestic and international markets.

Table 7

Table 7 Marketing Support and Service Scheme (MSS) and Artisan Benefited in Jammu and Kashmir

State	Number Artisans Benefited under MSS			
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
J&K	632	473	650	-
India	38862	39653	24536	14357

Source Office of Development Commissioner Handicrafts

(-) = Not available

13. GROWTH TREND ANALYSIS OF HANDICRAFT SCHEMES IN 12TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana is showing a better growth trend in Jammu and Kashmir except 2015-2016. The Design and Technology Upgradation also shows a good growth rate in all years except in 2014-2015. The Human Resource Development Scheme shows a poor growth rate in all years. While the Marketing Support and service Scheme show a better growth rate in all years except 2013-2014 (Table 8). The performance of the Jammu and Kashmir handicrafts scheme in the year 2012-2013 is showing a better growth trend in all the schemes.

Table 8

Table 8 Growth Trend Analysis of Handicraft Schemes in 12th Five-Year Plan in Jammu and Kashmir						
Schemes (J&K)		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana	Value	2800	14688	4900	-	410
	Growth Rate	-	(425%)	(75%)	(0%)	(-85%)
Design and Technology Upgradation Scheme	Value	280	300	310	60	-
	Growth Rate	-	(7%)	(11%)	(-79%)	(0%)
Human Resource Development Scheme	Value	500	360	110	-	200
	Growth Rate	-	(-0.28%)	(-0.78%)	(0%)	(-0.6%)
Marketing Support and Service Scheme	Value	480	632	473	650	-
	Growth Rate	-	(32%)	(-1%)	(35%)	(0%)

Source Office of Development Commissioner Handicrafts

Note Taking 2011-2012 as the base year.

Growth rate= Current year-base year/ base year x100

14. GROUND REALITY OF THE GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

The Indian handicraft sector plays a significant role in the economy. In India, the Ministry of Textile is responsible for policy making, regulating the functioning and operation of this industry. There are several other bodies¹ and organizations which help to formulate and execute these policies. The Central Government and State Governments have been attempting to develop the handicraft industry and promote weavers through different schemes and programmes. The government develops and implements numerous policies and programmes to improve technological knowledge, socioeconomic conditions, and the well-being of artisans.

¹ Other Bodies include, The Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts and Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC).

However, the artisans must have proper and sufficient information about such efforts in order to reap their benefits.

Table 9

Table 9 Distribution of Artisans Regarding Awareness of Government Schemes, Availed Benefits, Type of Benefits and Possession of Artisan Registration Card										
Category of Artisans		Awareness of Govt. Schemes		Take Benefits		Type of Benefits			Registration Card	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Training	Loan	Both	Yes	No
Carpet Weavers	N	16	6	12	4	2	4	6	14	8
	%	72.73	27.27	75.00	25.00	16.67	33.33	50.00	63.64	36.36
Shawl Weavers	N	35	73	24	11	9	7	8	28	80
	%	32.41	67.59	68.57	31.43	37.50	29.17	33.33	25.93	74.07
Embroidery Workers	N	15	35	10	5	3	6	1	18	32
	%	30.00	70.00	66.67	33.33	30.00	60.00	10.00	36.00	64.00
Total	N	66	114	46	20	14	17	15	60	120
	%	36.67	63.33	69.67	30.30	30.43	36.96	32.61	33.33	66.67

Source field work

There are various schemes available for the handicraft artisans associated with the carpet industry of Kashmir, but most of them are not able to reach the beneficiaries, either due to their unawareness or the cumbersome procedure involved in availing those schemes. The lack of awareness among carpet weavers results in the non-utilisation of various schemes which are meant for their upliftment. Only 36.67% of the artisans and the majority 63.33% of the artisans are not aware of any kind of government scheme.

The field investigation also reveals that the artisans only have elementary knowledge about some of the schemes. They denied ever witnessing any government awareness programmes or campaigns. Among the category of artisans, the level of awareness is high among carpet weavers than shawl weavers and embroidery workers, making dependent weavers and wage workers a more vulnerable and destitute group than independent weavers. Out of total 180 respondents, only 66 respondents are aware about the schemes, out of which 46 respondents are availing the benefits of government schemes.

While looking into the governmental initiatives, the researcher inquiries about what kind of benefits the carpet weavers receive. 30.43% of the artisans have learned the skills from the government run training centres. 36.96% of artisans were getting some form of governmental loan. While 32.61% of artisans receive the loan and training benefits from the government. During the field investigation, many respondents reported that they were unable to get loans due to complicated process of sanctioning of loans or involve unethical² means.

The possession of the Artisan Registration Card which entails several benefits is an important aspect of the artisan's development. Only 33.33% of the respondents have possession of these cards. Being registered with the handicraft department means entitled to receive various benefits and can help to promote their upliftment. While majority 66.67% of the respondents do not have these cards. Among the

²Many artisans claim that individuals with influence and connections to local politicians were given loans and looms while the poor and needy were left with nothing.

category of artisans, non-possession of a registration card is seen more among shawl weavers and embroidery workers. The non-holding of the artisan card exposes them to exploitation by middlemen and master weavers.

Table 10**Table 10 Distribution of Artisans Regarding Whether the Government Promoted the Handicraft Sector and Modes of Promoting**

Category of Artisans	Government Promoted the Craft		Modes of Promoting				
	Yes	No	Finance/ Loan	Training	Exhibitions/ Publicity	Export Promotion	
Carpet Weavers	N	18	4	10	4	3	1
	%	81.82	18.18	55.56	22.22	16.67	5.55
Shawl Weavers	N	38	70	15	12	8	3
	%	35.19	64.81	39.47	31.58	21.05	7.89
Embroidery Workers	N	20	30	6	10	2	2
	%	40.00	60.00	30.00	50.00	10.00	10.00
Total	N	76	104	31	26	13	6
	%	42.22	57.78	40.79	34.21	17.11	7.89

Source Field Work

It is necessary to promote traditional arts and crafts, especially when they are in danger of becoming extinct. Whether it's due to modern market pressures, a lack of financial aid, or poor marketing, every craft is under threat in today's globalised world. Considering the centuries-long history of Indian handicrafts and their role in conserving the country's rich cultural heritage, each and every craft demands proper planning to promote it and revive those that have already vanished. The [Table 10](#) shows the opinions of the artisans regarding the whether government is promoting the handicraft industry. 42.22% of the artisans opined that government agencies promoting the craft. While the majority 57.78% of the artisans reported that the government did not promote the craft. Among the category-wise of artisans, the majority of the carpet weavers stated that the government promoted this craft, while the majority of the shawl weavers and embroidery workers reported that the government did not promote the craft at all.

The respondents who were in favour of the government promoting the carpet handicraft were asked about how the government promoted this craft. 40.79% of the artisans reported that the government promoted the craft through finance³ and providing loans to the artisans. 34.21% of the artisans stated that the government promoted the handicrafts through training⁴. 17.11% of the artisans reported that the government promoted the handicrafts through exhibitions/publicity in different craft-melas and trade fairs at different tourist destinations. Exhibitions and publicity have proven to be an effective instrument in stimulating demand for handmade

³ The government has framed the Credit Plan Scheme for weavers which aim at to provide financial assistance for setting up self-generating units. The weavers are giving accessible and simple credit through this scheme. The scheme entails for 90% bank loan assistance and a 10% promoter contribution for unit setup costs. The handicraft department offers registered weavers a 10% interest subsidy on loans that are approved by the banks in advance for five years.

⁴ Training Programme aimed at providing elementary and advance training to the weavers with a stipend of Rs. 500 per month during elementary training and Rs. 700 per month for advanced training. The duration for elementary training is one year and for advanced training is two years.

products. Only 7.89% of the artisans suggested that the government promoted this craft through export marketing.

15. MAJOR FINDINGS

The present study findings show that Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana, Human Resource Development Scheme, Marketing Support and Service Scheme, and Design and Technology Upgrading Scheme were the main schemes introduced by the Indian government for the promotion of handicrafts in India. The similar schemes were identified in Kerala for the promotion of handicraft sector under 11th five-year plan [Lekshmi & Sha \(2014\)](#). The year 2012-2013 has been best for all handicraft schemes in Jammu and Kashmir. Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana and Market Support and Service Scheme exhibit a positive trend at the national level and in Jammu and Kashmir, whereas the remaining schemes perform poorly. Regarding awareness of government schemes, the findings reveal that most of them are unaware of government schemes. The embroidery workers and shawl weavers are unaware of government schemes than carpet weavers. Therefore, a lack of awareness among artisans results in the non-utilisation of various schemes which are meant for their upliftment. The present study finding is supported by [Kumar & Kumar \(2018\)](#) who argued that most of the artisans have no information about the various government schemes of handicrafts. The artisans who are aware of the government schemes are taking the benefits and the majority of carpet weavers are taking government benefits. The majority of carpet weavers receive both loans and training. While shawl weavers receive training and embroidery workers receive loans only. The majority of the artisans do not possess artisan registration cards. The non-possession of registration cards is higher among shawl weavers and embroidery workers. The majority of the shawl weavers and embroidery workers stated that the government is not promoting their occupation, while most of the carpet weavers responded positively. The government is promoting this handicraft industry through loans, training programmes, exhibitions, and export marketing. It has also been found that majority of the carpet weavers and shawl weavers stated that the government is promoting their occupations by providing them loans, while most of the embroidery workers are in favour of the government promoting this craft by providing training to the new entrants. The present study findings is supported by [Jena \(2010\)](#), who in his study argued that majority 58.72% of the artisans responded that government didn't promoted the craft, while 41.72% of the artisans responded in favour of government promoted the Pipili craft of Orissa

16. CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that despite of the implementation of the various schemes by the government the situation at the ground level is not satisfactory. The government is unable to formulate comprehensive policies to improve the handicraft industry of Kashmir. Artisans, who are the key actors in the handicraft industry, live a miserable life and are bound to abandon their tradition, based skilled occupation. Occasionally, the government formulates a variety of handicraft policies and initiatives, but the majority of the policies are unfortunately not so effective. The artisans blame the government for their continuous misery as various governments failed to help artisans to maintain their occupation. The government's task earlier was to improve the condition of weavers, but the government's challenge at the moment is to save the traditional handicraft industry and artisans from extinction. The artisans accuse the government of their plight. It has not assisted the artisan in maintaining their profession. The Jammu and Kashmir Handicraft department

registered only 1.67 million of the four million artisans in the Kashmir valley. 2.33 lakh artisans are unregistered; consequently, they receive no benefits from various government schemes [Malik \(2018\)](#).

To preserve their occupation, there is a need to conduct a census of the artisans of Kashmir to know their exact figures and trends that will help to frame effective policies. The government should involve more and more craft-based organisations, SHGs, and NGOs to save not only the handicraft industry but also the livelihood of artisans. Before we lose them one by one, we must do something for them, so maintain a sustainability as their occupation is also eco-friendly. It is necessary to break them free from the cycle of poverty by making them aware of various government programmes aimed at their development. They should be encouraged to take part in different programmes that teach them how to work independently and how to use existing policies. They should be given special attention if we are to see something from golden hands; hands that have popularised Kashmir around the world in the way that nature has made it. Before it is too late, let's awake each other about the significance of their work.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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