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Social

**PROSPEROUS OF POTTERY INDUSTRY AND THE ARTISANS OF  
MANAMADURAI**



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**ABSTRACT**

*In India, over 260 million live in poverty. Poverty is because of high level unemployment, underemployment, low level of income and increase in debt. Developing rural economy is a prime concerns for every developing country. Continuously efforts were made for improving the social and economic well-being of rural people. The Department of Rural Development within the Ministry of Rural Development has been organized for upliftment of the rural people. Many programmes and schemes have been implemented for the development of rural economy. The schemes aim at generating employment, eliminating poverty, developing infrastructure, social security to the rural mass. Pottery is one of the oldest industries which provide employment to rural people. This sector is characterized by low investment, operational flexibility, local resources and domestic and export opportunity. An object of art made of a composition of clay and sand and baked with earthen color, is Pottery. A cottage industrial society in Manamadurai, more than 120 families of artisans are producing pottery crafts. The economy of this village largely depends on pottery industry. So a study has been made in Manamadurai Pottery Workers Cooperative society to analyze the problem of artisans and rejuvenate the industry.*

**Keywords:**

*Artisans, Rejuvenate, Rural Development, Pottery, Poverty, Underemployment.*

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Pottery is one of the oldest industries which provide employment to rural people. This sector is characterized by low investment, operational flexibility, local resources and domestic and export opportunity. An object of art made of a composition of clay and sand and baked with earthen color, is Pottery. A cottage industrial society where male and female, old and young artisans of

Manamaduari, more than 120 families of artisans are always busy in creating and shaping wide range of enthralling pottery crafts. An Artisans artistic touch adds value to the clay and gives life to the crafts. Manamadurai, in Sivagangai is famous for pottery because of its unique quality of clay.

A cottage industrial society where male and female, old and young artisans of Manamaduari, with 377 members of 287 males and 234 females from Kulalar community and with 2 Schedule Caste as their members were busily working <sup>1</sup>. These families are always busy in creating and shaping wide range of enthralling pottery crafts. Manamadurai, in Sivagangai is famous for pottery because of its unique quality of clay from Water Bodies (Kanmais) like Nedunkulam, Nathapurakki, Sundaranadappu, Seikalathur. With a view to develop the socio-economic condition of pottery artisans at Manamadurai, a society was formed in the year 1946 with the name of “The Manamadurai Pottery Workers Co-operative Cottage Industrial Society Ltd. K.V.I. PMK No-36”.

The main function of the Society is to purchase the finished pottery products from the members and sale them to the open local market and also supplies items to Coimbatore, Tirchi, Erode, Salem, Karaikal, Madurai and Chennai. Sometimes, some items are exported to Malaysia and Gulf Countries (Asokan, I, A.Mayil Murugan, R.Gopalsamy, (Feb-2002)<sup>2</sup>.

This cooperative society benefits directly to generate employment approximately to 35 artisan families and indirectly to 185 private Potters in and around Manamadurai. The society has been encouraging and supporting the artisans through access to credit, purchase crafts, help in marketing, technical guidance, training and technology upgradation, etc.

Red clay hereditary pots, water pots, garden pots, firewood ovens, saw dust ovens, maga chools, nursery pots, dhoop stand, and decorative red clay pottery ware are the products produced in Manamadurai.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

There is a huge demand for handicraft product, but general opinion is that these artisans are not making up-to the expectations in spite it generates employment to many rural uneducated and underemployed workers. So society is formed to meet the opportunities available and to fulfill the needs of the members and for the development of the potter’s community. This prompts the researcher with number of questions. What is the present scenario of the society? Is there any development in the living condition of the artisans? Is there any possibility of bringing back the artisans to their traditional job and providing employment to others? These questions needs an answer and this study will try bring out the facts. The main objectives of the paper is

- 1) To analyze the important changes brought by the society to improve the standard of living of the pottery artisans in Manamadurai.
- 2) To study the present position of employment opportunity in society.
- 3) To identify the strategies adopted by the society to turn around.
- 4) To identify the methods of bringing prosperity to pottery industry.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The Primary data was collected directly from the artisans by an interview with well-structured schedule and group discussions with pottery artisans in Manamadurai. Secondary data was collected from Handicraft Development Commissioner, reports on handicrafts by the Government of Tamilnadu and websites, reports of Planning Commission, Handicrafts Marketing and Service Extension Center, Magazines, Journals, Periodicals, Newspapers, Previous work of scholars, Internet and Books.

From Manamadurai of Sivaganga District, traditional pottery artisans those who are performing clay craft for generations were chosen for the study. There were 120 families in village practicing this craft. The livelihood of those families largely depends on pottery industry. Among them, all the families with younger generation artisans were also taken for study. Census method was used for the study. The entire artisans from family was contacted to find out the socio economic condition of them, working condition of the society, governance, and societies contribution towards the artisans improvement were analyzed by focused group discussion and interview and made necessary analysis and interpretation.

#### ***PERFORMANCE OF THE MANAMADURAI POTTERY SOCIETY***

Once the society was making loss because of lack of management, participation of members, innovation, and technological up-dation. But from 2008-2014 the society was showing continuous growth. The society has brought economic development to the potters of Manamadurai. <sup>3</sup>According to the report submitted by Manamadurai Pottery Co-op Society, the share capital of the society was Rs 30,630/-. The own land under and used by the society is about to be 2 Hectors. In which they have their own finished goods godown, work shed, clamp kiln, pug mill, wire cut bricks and tiles with 25 HP motor, electrically operated potter's wheels etc.

***Table 1: Production, Sales, Profit and Loss of the society***

S.No	Year	Production	Growth	Sales	Growth	Profit	Growth	Loss
1.	2008-09	2353466	-	2834378	-	309878	-	-
2.	2009-10	2378107	1.01	2866598	1.01	213544	0.69	-
3.	2010-11	2137774	0.89	2508023	0.87	50258	0.24	-
4.	2011-12	2968711	1.39	3465608	1.38	277249	5.52	-
5.	2012-13	2464458	0.83	2882606	0.83	230608	0.83	-
6.	2013-14	3952373	1.61	4619308	1.61	312505	1.36	-

Source: Annual report of the Manamadurai Potter's Society 2013-2014

From above table it is inferred that the society is running successfully and showing profit. But the growth rate has fluctuation because of the change of leadership during those periods in the society.

#### ***PROSPERITY OF THE SOCIETY AND THE ARTISANS***

##### **Management:**

Society has grown because of its proper management from the period 2008- 2014, there was election in the society and members were elected by democratic way, artisans are members.

Members participate effectively in the process of society. The members plan each and every activity of the society. They have well organized members who had effective control over the work and unorganized artisans into organized artisans. The society directed the members and the artisans to complete the work as well as work for the welfare of the artisans.

**Marketing:** Main function of the society is marketing. They organized all the artisans and made them as member of the society. The artisans will produce crafts according to the need of the society. Then the society will procure all the finished products from the artisans. Price will be fixed by the society, as all the members are pottery artisans they know the cost of the product and pricing will be cost based. The society will store the goods in the warehouse of its own. Then they market the crafts for whom the order has been placed or to the customer who are visiting the society. Transports are arranged by the customer or if it is requested by the customer.

**Innovation:** The society has brought tremendous changes in the pottery industry in manamadurai and to its artisans. Before 2008 the artisans were producing only house utilities, and flower pots. But now they have diversified their crafts. Red clay hereditary pots, water pots, garden pots, firewood ovens, saw dust ovens, maga chools, nursery pots, dhoop stand, and decorative red clay pottery ware like pen stand, wall hangings, deities, statues, are produced in Manamadurai. Society have two advanced clamp kilns where all the potters can use and they have finished goods godown, well-conditioned work shed, pug mill, wire cut bricks and tiles with 25 HP motor, electrically operated potter's wheels etc. so the artisans do not suffer during rainy season. They complete the work within given period of time. It has brought back the artisans to its precious profession by providing employment with adequate income.

### ***PROBLEMS OF POTTERY INDUSTRY AND THE ARTISANS***

Pottery industry face problems at every stage of their operation, from buying of raw materials, production of craft, raising of finance and marketing of goods. So this industry is not in a position to secure the internal and external economies of scale.

The major problems which has been identified in this sector are

- Raising adequate finance.
- Inadequate Raw material and old production methodology.
- Inappropriate technology and improper Infrastructure.
- Lack of training for new changes.
- Lack of Marketing Network.
- Increase in Competition.

There is lack of training because artisans cannot spend much time on training. As these artisans have small level of income younger generation are moving towards medium and large scale industries for employment. There is little or no scope for expansion and growth due to dearth of labour.

These units have to face several difficulties in the marketing and distributing their crafts. Most of them do not have their own marketing network. They find it difficult to sell their output at remunerative prices due to higher cost of production and non-standardized quality of products. They cannot afford to spend much on advertising, sales, promotion, marketing research, etc.

They have to sell their products at throwaway prices due to weak bargaining power and immediate need for money. They also face stiff competition from machine made products. Serious problem of artisans are credit problem for, rejection of consignment, inordinate delay in payment, etc.

### ***REJUVENATION OF ARTISANS THROUGH PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES IMPLEMENTED BY GOVERNMENT***

The Government has been encouraging and supporting the sector through policies for infrastructural support, technology up-gradation, accessing credit; it has been offering packages of schemes and incentives through its specialized institutions in the form of assistance in obtaining finance; help in marketing; technical guidance; training and technology up gradation, etc.

#### ***SCHEMES UNDER 12<sup>TH</sup> FIVE YEAR PLAN (2012-2017)***

As given in the preface of this report, five subgroups had been constituted for deliberations on the handicrafts sector. Based on the recommendations of the subgroups, the existing DC (H) schemes were modified, and two new schemes have been introduced. The modifications made in the existing schemes can be classified broadly into four categories, and the justification for these changes is as follows:

**Increase in the financial allocations:** This modification has been made in all components of all schemes. All members of the sub-groups had unanimously demanded for this change owing to the inflation observed in the markets. It is essential to align the schemes to the current market trends to make them sustainable for the future.

Modifications to the eligibility criteria and number of participants in some scheme components. This change has been made in view of (a) performance of the Working group report on components in the previous financial year (b) the challenges faced by the DC(H) staff and implementing partners in implementation of the components e.g ensuring the requisite number of Enhancement of allocation for each cluster from Rs 20,000/- per artisan to Rs 30,000/- per artisan for 5 years.

Repositioning of infrastructure components from the schemes: All infrastructure components have been clubbed under the new 'Infrastructure and Technology development scheme' This ensures focused approach to development of infrastructure which is the most important need of the handicraft sector today. Renaming some of the scheme components to reflect the true nature of the activities being undertaken in the component and remove complexity.

Along with these modifications, the key set of recommendations for each scheme are summarized as follows:

#### **1) Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojna:**

Focus on a strong marketing strategy; hiring qualified and committed designers Design Workshops to be conducted based on proper market research and creation of a digitized design bank.

Stress on improving baseline surveys – increase time period from 3 to 6 months.

Important note:

All components given in the scheme can be implemented departmentally also by the offices of DC(H) at any point in time.

**Classification of clusters into 3 categories:**

- Tier I: Small clusters with 100-1000 artisans;
- Tier II: Mid-sized clusters; No of artisans - >1000 & <5000;
- Tier III: Export oriented clusters; >5000 artisans;

**2) Design and Technology up-gradation scheme:**

- The prototypes developed in the design workshops and integrated projects must be allowed to be showcased.
- Young designers should also be sponsored to attend these marketing events.
- Revamp the process of empanelment of designers at DC (H).
- Introduce Young craft persons award/scholarship (under 35 years of age) to encourage and give recognition to the younger generation of crafts persons.
- Scholarship scheme for children to be extended to children of all craftsmen.
- Exporters may be considered for financial assistance for engaging national & international Designers.

**3) Marketing Support and Services scheme**

**Domestic marketing:**

Initiate new consumer awareness scheme for domestic markets. Well managed, authorized kiosks/ shops at museums, airports, hotels, railways stations, metros etc may be supported. Introduce component for artisans to tie up with big retail chains and display their products. Make provision of hiring expert event management companies to organize the marketing events. Craft bazaars/melas to be planned in advanced to ensure participation and avoid repetitive locations/participants. TA may be given to all artisans participating in fairs and exhibitions on actual basis.

**International marketing:**

Budgetary provisions under each head have to be modified to meet the current market trends and cost. Budget for overseas exhibitions should also account for interpreter cost along with the cost of contributing factor in the respective countries. Provisions for setting up of warehouses abroad for use by Indian exporters may be considered. Special focus on the development of products to meet the export market requirements.

Other areas of special focus addressed in the MSS scheme are:

**Brand Building:** Focus on creating the ‘Handcrafted in India’ brand and promotion through dedicated campaign.

**Geographic Indications:** supporting post-GI and pre-GI activities at various levels.

**Marketing of handmade carpets:** CEPC to be made eligible for seeking funds under the scheme.

**Entrepreneurship development.**

#### 4) Human Resource Development Scheme:

##### Improve effectiveness of training programs

- Guidelines should be developed for syllabus/training modules.
- Concept of participatory training may be adopted.
- Publicity of training programs.
- Introduce computer based training programs.
- Strengthening monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

##### Improve infrastructure provision at training centres

Only agencies that display demonstrable capability of market linkages, network relations with technology institutions, should be provided sanctions for such programmes. Procedures for processing of applications for sanction of various programmes must be streamlined.

#### 5) Handicrafts Artisans Comprehensive Welfare Schemes’

- Increase number of OPD/IPD facilities: Empanelled list of hospitals needs to be revised to cover Government Hospitals.
- Increase financial coverage
- Reducing medi-claim settlement period: All claims should be settled within 30 days and in exceptional circumstances, 45 days.
- Improve identification and monitoring mechanisms
- Sum insured to be increased from the existing Rs.15,000/- to Rs.30,000/ and Rs.50,000/- incase of critical illness.
- The limit of Rs.7,500/- should be increased to Rs.15,000/- for OPD
- Introduction of new pension scheme

Focus on creating synergy with programs of other ministries and departments to avail benefits for the Handicraft artisans on a priority. The areas of synergy are:

- Housing and infrastructure in the locality.
- Support for up-gradation of sanitation.
- Equipments like solar lighting to improve living condition.

Non plan scheme of ‘Financial assistance to artisans.

#### 6) Research and Development Scheme:

Regular studies to be commissioned for gathering market intelligence on saleable designs and trends.

Various areas of research that are proposed to be the focus for the next 5 years are

- Environment impacts of craft processes and compliance.
- Occupational health and safety issues.
- Low cost tools and equipments.
- Regulatory compliance issues.
- Geographic Indication.

## 7) New Schemes

### 1) Infrastructure and Technology Development Scheme:

The scheme aims at the development of world class infrastructure in the country to support handicraft production, and enhance the product quality and cost to enable it to compete in the world market.

**The objectives of the scheme are as follows:**

- To develop infrastructure in an equitable manner to support handicraft industry in the country.
- To ensure availability required technology, product diversification, design development, raw material banks, and marketing & promotion facilities in nearest vicinity possible.
- To enhance the competitiveness of the products in terms of increased market share and ensuring increased productivity by higher unit value realization of the products.
- To improve the resource pool of skilled persons in the country by developing high class institutes those provide certified courses and degrees in Handicraft field – enhancing skill development in the country.

**Components repositioned from the AHVY scheme are:**

- Establishment of craft based resource centre.
- Setting Up of E-Kiosks.
- Setting up common facility centre.
- Setting up raw material bank.
- Setting up of facility centres by exporters and entrepreneurs.

**Proposed new components of the infrastructure scheme:**

- Craft Institute upgradable to University Crafts Village
- Integrated Handicraft park.
- Advanced Handicraft training schools.
- Structuring & revitalizing existing institutions into centre of excellence & syndication of their activities.
- Testing Laboratory.
- Restructuring of Regional Design and Technical centres.

The artisans may be organized in the form of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) to ensure stakeholder participation, sustainability of operations as well as ensure that the artisans derive benefits from the Scheme.



### **Strategies for rejuvenation:**

- Initiate and maintain of self-help groups that offer financial guidance and credit, promote savings, protect from unfair debt burdens, and creating opportunities for artisans.
- Creating offers on skills training and capacity-building workshops to increase economic independence, empowerment and local employability to artisans.
- Developing traditional handicrafts into small businesses units which can produce saleable goods.
- Provide entrepreneurial skills training to conduct feasibility studies, perform cost/benefit analyses, write business plans, acquire financing, and initiate start-ups.
- Research and development process with information and communication technology.
- Expand and increase exposure to microfinance programs.
- Offer marketing, distribution, pricing and management training to society members.

### **8) CONCLUSION**

The Government has been encouraging and supporting the sector through policies for infrastructural support, technology upgradation, preferential access to credit, reservation of products for exclusive manufacture in the sector, preferential purchase policy, etc. It has been offering packages of schemes and incentives through its specialized institutions in the form of assistance in obtaining finance; help in marketing; technical guidance; training and technology up gradation, etc. But there are lots of unorganized sectors like handicrafts where these schemes cannot reach. So government can have channelized body for reaching the artisans. These sectors should be concentrated which can generate more employment in rural areas.

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