

“Make in India” -A Tool to Promote the Handicrafts of Koraga Tribe : A Study in Belthangady Taluk

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Abstract

Handicrafts are 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.” India is one of the important suppliers of handicrafts to the world market and this industry is highly labour intensive cottage based which is decentralized. It is the second largest employment sector in India, just after agriculture. Most of the manufacturing units are located in rural and small towns and are usually carried by the tribal community. There is huge market potential for these products in all Indian cities and abroad. 'Make in India' is an initiative program of the Government of India to encourage domestic companies to manufacture their products in India. This study makes an attempt to show how the tribal community can be promoted through this program. The study is basically aimed to analyse the growth of handicraft and its impact on Koraga tribe. These tribes are socially excluded too, even after many years of the independence they do not form a part in the main stream. They constitute the weaker section of the society and also low income group which is excluded not only economically but also socially. As the inclusive growth of the nation is concerned with overall growth of every individual there is need for the special focus on these vulnerable groups which consists the part of weaker section of the society as well as of marginalized society. By keeping in mind the potentiality of their handicrafts and to convey the idea of 'Make in India' to these tribes the paper has been developed.

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Introduction

“Handicraft can be defined, which is made by hand; should have some artistic value; they may or may not have functional utility.” Such products can be utilitarian, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant. India is one of the important suppliers of handicrafts to the world market. According to the national census of handicrafts, undertaken by the National Council for Applied Economic Research the values of handicrafts produced in 2014 were of Rs.26, 213 crore and its contribution in world market is 1.2 percent. It is the second largest employment sector in India, just after agriculture. It is largely decentralized and unorganized sector, being spread all over the country in rural and urban areas and which includes large number of women and people belonging to the weaker sections of the society.

India is the home to large number of indigenous people, who are still untouched by the lifestyle of the modern world¹. With more than 84.4 million, India has the largest population of the tribal people in the world. These tribes are socially excluded too, even after many years of the independence they do not form a part in the main stream. One among such is Koraga tribe of Karnataka, 'Though the Koragas are tribals, they are regarded as ceremonially impure and unclean in the local Hindu society and were considered untouchables by the main stream of social group. The Koragas are the most backward among the tribes of Karnataka state in every respect'². Koraga tribes constitute the weaker section of the society and also low income group which is excluded not only economically but also socially.

At this particular juncture it is disheartening to note that in our country, even after many years of independence, the main focus area of India on 'Roti, Kapda and Makhan' is not shifted and the financial literacy is still an object of the bank to achieve it. Further, one more objective will be added which is the techno-literacy to deal with the bank. Because as far as India is concerned, the technological advancement is on the way to achieve and struggling still on the 4G

network as some of the global countries is on 10G speed. The programs such as financial inclusion showed some success but there are people the struggle to socially and technologically get included.

Make in India is an initiative program of Government of India which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 September 2014. Any project to be successful it should reach the unreached. As such the programme is expected uplift the Koraga tribes through boosting the handicrafts in rural places so that the Make in India would be complete success.

Koraga Tribe

The Koragas are a tribal community found mainly in the Dakshina Kannada, Udupi districts of Karnataka and the Kassargod district of Kerala the area which is often referred as Tulunadu. 'The Koraga community is categorised by the Government of India as a scheduled tribe which has remained backward on all indicators. The community has also been classified as a Primitive Tribal Group,³ Koragas are summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as being a wild tribe of basket-makers and labourers, chiefly found in Mudbidri, Puttur and in Uppinangadi taluk of South Canara⁴. If we look at the pre independence era this tribe was severely excluded from the society as they were employed as scavengers in sanitary department and some skilful in manufacturing of cradles, baskets, and , cylinders to hold paddy etc. Even now their main economic activity is concerned with basket making. 'This being the traditional occupation, the number of people belonging to older generation who are involved in basket making is comparatively more than the younger generation'⁵. The tribe is superstitious also and the very practice of the tribe '*Ajalu*'⁶ where they are treated as slaves has been prohibited with the view to provide the human dignity. The Karnataka Koragas (Prohibition of Ajalu Practice) Act, 2000 received the received the assent of the governor in December 2000.

According to the 2011 Census, the total population of the Koraga tribe in Karnataka is 14794; out of which 7210 are males and 7584 are females. As the present study is restricted to Belthangady Taluk of Dakshina Kannada district the following Table provides census 2011 data.

**Table No. 1 : Population of Koraga in
Dakshina Kannada District**

	Population	Male	Female
Total	4631	2282	2349
Rural	2642	1320	1322
Urban	1989	962	1027

Source: census 2011⁷

It is also of great concern that the depopulation of Koraga tribes in South India, faced serious problems These produce such as poverty, ill health, malnutrition, morbidity etc., leading to mortality together with deforestation, exploitation etc resulted in the depopulation of the tribe⁸.

Objectives

The tribes are socially excluded, financially reached but technologically unreached. Hence, the present study is undertaken with the following objectives:

- ❖ To analyse the role of “Make in India” and its impact on tribal community.
- ❖ To understand the potentials of handicrafts by Koraga tribe in Belthangady Taluk.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of study both primary data and secondary data has been collected. The convenience sampling method is used to collect primary data out of large Koraga population of Belthangady Taluk. Structured interview had been conducted to collect the responses in local language such as Kannada and Tulu. 50 respondents consist of male and female were considered. Secondary data is from the published research papers, books and from internet. The data collected from the sample respondents on various aspects has been organized in the tabular form. Such organized data has been analyzed with the help of different statistical tools like average, percentage etc. for easy understanding of the data and for drawing meaningful conclusion.

Review of Literature

As study is concentrated on the Koraga tribals, to understand the tribes culture and socio economic status by taking into consideration their skills oriented towards handicraft and to find the research gap a review of literature was done in this regard. Himank Priyadarshni in her thesis submitted to Tata Institute of Social Science (1997) on entrepreneurship development in tribal regions emphasized the need of training programmes to tribes so has they will be working in organized way to contribute for the socio economic development of community. The tribal regions of Meghalaya and Chotanagpur were covered for the study and emphasized the need to create self employment in which they are skilled. Harikrishnan and Surya Krishna in their research article Promoting Sustainable Livelihood among Tribal Community Community through Traditional Handicraft in Wayanad District, Kerala (2015) concludes with the strong support from both by Govt and NGO's in policy level and progammme level. It has concerned of deforestation and availability of raw materials to handicrafts which will be impacting on the livelihood of tribal. As some of them are waged, the market trend and difficulty in finding the market are the addressable problems that are associated with it. Nidhi Vas (2014) in paper, Indian Handicrafts and Globalization: A Review – looks into the matters that are connected with globalization increasing impact on Indian handicrafts and craft persons, as foreign fashion industry borrows a great deal from Indian appliqué motifs and saree designs and ethnic Indian wear for their fashion shows.

Limitations

- ❖ The present study is done taking into consideration of the Koraga tribes in Belthangady Taluk only.
- ❖ Time constraints were the problem to conduct the detailed study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The structured interview was conducted with a set of questions; the responses were recorded and organized as follows. In the first

section, the demographic profile of respondents is presented. Where this section has classified into categories and 50 respondents responded for the study.

Profile of respondents

The selected 50 respondents include Koraga tribes of Belthangady taluk of Dakshina Kannada district. A profile of respondents on the basis of age, gender, education and income are presented below:

Table No. 2 : Profiles of Respondents

Source: Survey

Table No.2 reveals the demographic profile of the Koraga tribes who have responded. On the basis of Demographic profile we can make the following analysis. Most the respondents were female that is 72 percent and the respondents were of the age group between (25 to 50years) that consists of 60 percent of the total respondents. About the educational qualification it is important to notice that 46 percent of them are not availed formal education and some have studied till 5th Standard. Where most of them earn below Rs.5,000 per month and the source of it is the sale of these baskets in the market. The segment of women is more marginalized among the tribal's and the same can be seen through this data about that education qualifications also but they are skilled to undertake the task in which they are trained.

Table No. 3. Preferred Production

Source: Primary data

Table No. 3 shows that 56 percent of the respondents are producing bamboo products which indicate that in the rural places of Belthangady area these raw materials are easily available for their production. Moreover 28 percent of the respondents produce hand ware products while 16 percent of them produce wood ware. Metal and wood needs skilled labour but these respondents are not exposed themselves to it as it is quite costly when compared to the handmade bamboo products.

Table No. 4 Availability of Convenient Place to Market*Source: Primary data*

It was one of the main results of the study that there is dearth of convenient place to market their product. The societal gap that exists, also discourages them to go for direct marketing. As a result they take the help of the retail shops who serve to be middlemen for the goods produced by Korags. It is a clear indication of the lack of facilities and Government support in the rural area even though it is the second largest employment sector in India just after the agriculture.

Table No. 5: Method of Marketing the Products

Method of marketing	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Street vendors	0	0
Door to door	12	24
To the shops	38	76
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

The survey revealed that 76 percent of the respondents market their products to the shop keeper which will be sold to the ultimate consumers and 24 percent of them are marketing by door to door delivery system selling to the households. Profit margin will be low if it passes through the intermediary. The result is that they have very weak bargaining power so through 'Make in India' Government should build such an organisation in the rural places like APMC

where these products can be sold to the customers directly thereby increasing the profit margin of these vulnerable groups

Table No. 6 : Awareness of the New Technology and Market

Source: Primary data

Another important outcome of the study is that the respondents are unaware of the new technology and the current market trends which exists for the handicrafts. This is because they are far away from the technologies and they lack the marketing knowledge. This can be overcome through providing them by organising effective training program on adoption of technology and making them aware of the usage of technology which decreases the cost of production.

Table No. 7: Promotional Activities

Source: Primary data

From the study it is inferred that the respondents fail to undertake any of the modern promotional activities to boost up the market for their products. But the Indian handicrafts fetch high demand in international market and India is one of the important supplier of handicrafts to the world market.

Table No. 8 : Availability of the Product Through Online

Source: Primary data

Table No. 9 reveals that even though everything is computerised in this present scenario, the products of this community are not available online. Make in India will be successful if the handicraft produced by these people in the corner of these world is made available throughout the world.

Major Findings

Most the respondents were female that is (72 percent) and the time respondents were of the age group between (25 to 50) years that consists of 60 percent of the total respondents.

About the educational qualification it is important to notice that 46 percent of the total respondents are not availed formal education and some have studied till 10th standard.

Majority of the respondents(56 percent) earn below Rs. 5,000 per month and source of it is sale of bamboo products like baskets to the shops and to those who need as 56 percent of the respondents are producing bamboo products and no respondents were found who earn above Rs.10,000 per month.

There is no timely delivery schedule followed by the respondents. There is also no adequate supply of information of new technology and current market trends to the respondents.

They are confined to the rural areas and untapped market, Lack of promotion of products and no innovation in production.

Suggestions

Majority of Koragas donot have formal education. Especially, women who are engaged in the production of handicraft are more in number. In order to uplift them the necessary training in terms of innovations their handicrafts need to be provided. The nearby University and Colleges must train them in terms of skills they posses.

Handicraft exports need to be the area to be given higher importance by the government. Internet will be one of the major channels for the distribution of handicrafts products through E-commerce. Opportunity for expansion should be provided in order to widen their market through making handicrafts available through online. The

linkage of technology and tribal's need to be done. In the future where the world is going to be ruled by smart phones and modern technology The governments project such as rural wi-fi may work positively to upload the work of tribal's and create the market

If this sector is developed wisely, there will high potential for employment and export turnover for these products may increase. The Koraga women and especially the youths of tribals are with potential skills but they need to be guided properly. Make in India can become a tool to boost the handicraft of tribes if it reaches the unreached.

A structured market need to be set up in Urban areas to provide the space to exhibit the goods that are produced by the different tribal communities as they do not sell their goods in established market. Colleges need to market the goods of tribals as a part of social responsibility and extracurricular activities.

Conclusion

The handicraft has tremendous potential for growth in world market as also in India. So as a part of "Make in India" programme, The Government should concentrate on these rural areas and which will ultimately make India a developed one. Unless the rural places and people are developed there is no development. So the nationwide programme of the Government should take into consideration of such rural people and must boost their handicraft at the international level which will bring success of the mission. A woman from rural place should be able to sell her products to another corner of the world using latest technologies. This will make the mission success. Technology plays a major role in uplifting the tribal. (T T Model) Technology for Tribal's need to be the aim of further functions. These tribes should find it more convenient to deal with ATM machines than to visit the banks.

¹ <http://www.ecoindia.com/tribes/>

² Selvadurai.M, (2011), Koraga: A Dravidian tribal community,<
<http://nattramiz.blogspot.in/2011/06/koraga-dravidian-tribal-community-dr-m.html>>

³Malnutrition high among Koraga children. The Hindu. 2012 Feb 11

⁴Thurston, Edgar, (1909), Castes and Tribes of Southern India, government press, madras (425)

⁵Chaudhari k Sarit & Chaudhari Sen Sucheta (2005) Primitive tribes in Contemporary India vol 1, Mittal publications (128)

⁶'Ajalu' - Ajalu practice includes differentiating between Koragas and persons belonging to other communities, treating them as inferior human beings, mixing hair, nails or any other inedible or abnoxious substance in the food and asking them to eat that food and to make them to run like buffaloes before the beginning of Kambala. **The Karnataka Koragas (Prohibition of Ajalu Practice) Act, 2000**

⁷Government of India, Census. 2011. [accessed on December, 2016]. Available from: <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/PCA/ST.html>

⁸M.Nalinam, (2013) Depopulation of Koraga Tribes in South India, IOSR Journal Of Humanities and social sciences vol8 issue 4

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